

## Joni and Friends Chapter Introductory Letter

Dear Friend,

We praise God for your interest in ministry to families affected by disabilities, and thank you for your inquiry about the possibility of forming a Joni and Friends Chapter. It is always inspiring and humbling for us to see that God calls people like you, who are willing to sacrifice for the Kingdom of God as Christ works in and through Joni and Friends (JAF).

The purpose of JAF Chapters is to “*accelerate Christian ministry to families affected by disability*”. In doing so, Joni and Friends seeks to empower Christians and churches in cities and towns across the United States to partner in ministry with Joni and Friends in ways they deem most appropriate for their locale and as detailed in a local Chapter Memorandum of Agreement (CMOA) developed in concert with Joni and Friends.

Chapters can come into being under two scenarios: 1) A church sponsored chapter formed and operated under the direction and control of local church leadership known as a *Church Chapter*. 2) A multi-church non-denominational chapter, known as a *Non-Denominational Chapter*.

Chapters allow our good *Friends* maximum local flexibility and autonomy in ministry to those affected by disability, yet with spiritual and fiscal accountability to JAF. After meeting basic requirements and awarded a Chapter status, the local Chapter is given the use of the good name of Joni and Friends, i.e. a “Joni and Friends Chapter”, and the good will and support of JAF to fulfill the commission of Jesus Christ according to Luke 14: 15-24. They may raise funds utilizing the name of Joni and Friends as a Chapter of Joni and Friends. While we urge local program and programmatic flexibility and creativity that best fits each chapter’s community, spiritual giftedness, resources, and culture, each Chapter is required to participate in a “significant manner” in at least one major Joni and Friends program (as determined in the CMOA) – Family Retreat, Wheels For the World, Church Outreach, or Special Delivery.

As detailed in the CMOA, Joni and Friends will provide guidance, training, outreach materials, spiritual inspiration and support. This will include all of Joni and Friends published materials at reduced cost to the Chapter. Chapters will also be allowed to utilize Joni and Friends staff, who will mentor them in fund raising, and program and ministry development.

The following will more fully describe Chapter Program, and will detail requirements to become a Joni and Friends Chapter:

- Each chapter requires a minimum of three Chapter signatories, who will make up the initial Chapter Executive Committee (EC). Chapter signatories are willing to accept the responsibility of forming and administering the chapter – its duties, responsibilities and ministries. See the two addendums to this letter for a basic chapter policy: 1) for a *Non-Denominational Chapter* or, 2) a *Church Chapter*. The Executive Committee (EC) will always have three and only three members who will oversee, direct, and administer the Chapter locally. The Joni and Friends Director of Field Operations, his designee, or his superior will oversee and direct all Chapters.

- Each Executive Committee Member will review the information enclosed (JAF Information Packet) as to the description of the ministry of JAF, including our Vision Statement and Purpose Statement. Each EC member will read and/or complete the following to familiarize yourself with our founder and our ministry philosophy: 1) Joni by Joni Eareckson Tada (Zondervan); 2) When God Weeps Joni Eareckson Tada (Zondervan); and/or the When God Weeps Bible Study & Video; 3) How to Create an Effective Disability Outreach in Your Church, by Joni Eareckson Tada; and we recommend Barrier Free, by Joni Eareckson Tada (Zondervan). All materials can be ordered through Joni and Friends. Also recommended is an online or cassette course from Reformed Theological Seminary called “Disabilities and The Church” by Andrew J. Peterson, Ph.D. (800/227-2031 or RTSvirtual.org – see Registrars page on Electives).
- Complete and mail a letter of interest signed by the three Chapter signatories or Chapter Executive Committee (EC) Members explaining what you believe God is calling you to as a group in regards to disabilities ministry in your locale. You should also include your vision and goals in ministry to the disabled, and how your vision and goals would work in concert with the vision and goals of Joni and Friends. Your application letter and signature will affirm you have met the above EC requirements and that you agree with and will adhere to the Chapter requirements and policies including the JAF Statement of Faith.
- Each Chapter signatory is asked to send a resume of his/her education, work and ministry history along with three references, one of who must be your pastor (see following requirements). In listing your references you are giving us permission to contact them to discuss your application for ministry as an EC Member of JAF.
- To be a qualified applicant and to remain in good standing the three Chapter signatories, and subsequent EC members are required to be in regular attendance and in good standing with a local church whose pastor would agree with our Statement of Faith (enclosed).
- Provide a letter of reference from your pastor or appropriate associate pastor recommending you for this ministry. The letter will also need to make reference that your church is in agreement with our Statement of Faith.

Again, thank you for your interest. We look forward to serving you and assisting you in your call according to Luke 14: 15-24 to minister to families affected by disability.

For further information please contact:

Rev. Dan’l C. Markham  
 Director, US Field Operations  
 Joni and Friends  
 P.O. Box 3333  
 Agoura Hills, CA 91376-3333

[dmarkham@joniandfriends.org](mailto:dmarkham@joniandfriends.org)  
 Office: 818/575-1736  
 Cell: 818/590-1736

**Basic Policy for the Operation of a Joni and Friends *Non-Denominational Chapter***

- Chapter signatories of the chapter are considered the Charter Executive Committee (DEC) of the chapter for the first two years (Charter Term). The Chapter Executive Committee (EC) members will amongst themselves annually select a Chairperson, Secretary, and Treasurer. CEC Members will be eligible for two additional two-year terms subsequent to the Charter term of two years. At the second election (occurring after the Charter Term is finished) EC positions will have staggered terms as determined by the EC. A partial term (less than two years) will not be computed as a full term. Thus, those filling a partial term will be available for two subsequent two-year terms. Given EC elections will be held in September each year, the first partial year (Jan – August) of service by a CEC member will not count as the first year in office.
- Each Non-Denominational Chapter will be required to raise a minimum of \$500 in start up funds to be used to open a chapter account (sub-fund) with the Joni and Friends Accounting Office (Comptroller).
- The EC will be required within the first year of the Chapter's inception to form an Advisory Board of not less than five and not more than nine members. The Advisory Board Members will be encouraged and expected to attend EC meetings.
- The EC may form committees, task forces, and/or other ad hoc working groups, as they deem necessary and helpful to accomplish the work of the ministry as determined by the EC.
- The CEC with the concurrence of Joni and Friends, Director of Field Operations (DF)), will select replacement CEC members if an EC member resigns or he/she is removed from his/her position. Joni and Friends, the Executive VP or his designee, reserves the right to remove EC members from their position with or without cause.
- All EC members must meet the qualifications and requirements of Chapter CEC members. We encourage that new EC members be elected from the Advisory Board or a chapter committee or work group. Thus, new EC members have proven their devotion to the local ministry and are well apprised of its operations. The Advisory Board may make nominations for EC member positions to the EC.
- Regular EC Member positions will be up for election, nominations received by and elections determined by a vote of the EC, every two years (with the concurrence of the DFO and/or his/her designee) in Sept. of each year.
- Regular EC Members may be re-elected for two additional two-year terms, thus a total not to exceed three terms. A partial term will not be counted as a term.
- Joni and Friends encourages local autonomy and chapter flexibility and creativity in ministry development and operations. However, if necessary Joni and Friends (the Director of Field Operations, his/her designee or an appointee of the Executive VP of JAF) has the responsibility and right to override any and all EC decisions, to terminate and/or replace any EC members, and to terminate any chapter.
- Within the first three months of operation the EC will submit to the JAF Director of Field Operations (DFO) or his/her designee an annual operating plan delineating programs, projects, and fund raising goals and objectives for the first year of operation.
- Subsequently, by Dec. 1<sup>st</sup> of each year the EC will be submit to the DFO or his/her designee an annual operating plan for the coming year along with an updated list of EC Members and Advisory Board Members and their current contact information.
- The Chairperson will Chair all EC meetings.

- The Chairperson is the primary liaison with JAF – the DFO or his/her designee.
- The EC will meet at least six times a year to conduct ministry business, but may elect to meet more frequently. All EC members and Advisory Board Members will be notified at least a week in advance of all EC Meetings. While Advisory Board Members are expected to attend any and all EC meetings, they will not be voting members at EC Meetings. All meetings will have agendas and be run by Robert's Rules of Order. All notices and agendas for EC meetings will be copied to the DFO.
- All programs, projects, and expenditures require the approval of the EC. The Chair of the EC may utilize the Chapter's petty cash fund (ceiling of \$50.00 per month or another amount set by VP of Administration and Finance of Joni and Friends), but must do so with the concurrence of the Chapter Treasurer. The Treasurer will balance the Chapter's petty cash fund as directed by the Comptroller on a monthly basis. The Treasurer will report all financial activities to the EC at their next regular meeting.
- Under the designated direction, guidelines, and reporting procedures of the Vice President of Administration and Finance the Chapter will establish its own local checking account for the purposes of paying ministry expenses. The checking account will be limited to a balance of no more than \$1,000. Checks will require two signatures. All three EC members must be signatories on the checking account. In setting up the checking account additional signatories on the checking account must be the Director of Field Operations and the Vice President of Administration and Finance, who need to be authorized to utilize and/or close the account with only one of their signatures required. Checking accounts must be balanced monthly and reports submitted to the Comptroller as directed by the Comptroller. A checking account report of activities will be provided at the next Chapter meeting to the EC.
- In addition to utilization of the petty cash fund and the Chapter checking account the EC may request advance payments or reimbursement payments for ministry expenses from JAF through the JAF Comptroller. All such payments requests must be signed by two members of the EC and then approved by the DFO or VP of Administration and Finance.
- Advance payments, reimbursement payments, and the petty cash fund can only be replenished by money raised by the Chapter and deposited into the Chapter's sub-fund at Joni and Friends.
- The Chapter account must be maintained in a positive operating balance at all times. Advance payments or reimbursements can only be approved if the Chapter account has a positive balance to cover such expenses.
- All funds raised or received by the Chapter for the Chapter and Joni and Friends, i.e. by its EC Members, Advisory Board Members, and volunteers must be recorded on the standard Income Submission Form (provided by the Comptroller) by the Chapter Treasurer and forwarded to Joni and Friends to be deposited in the JAF Chapter sub-fund as directed by the JAF Comptroller.
- All Chapter capital purchases, i.e. equipment, office furniture, etc., and all Gifts In Kind (GIK) must be recorded, and such records must be provided to the Comptroller per the direction of the Comptroller. Said capital purchases and Gifts in Kind, while perhaps used by the Chapter, are by law owned by Joni and Friends and thus must be recorded and carried on the books of Joni and Friends.
- The Joni and Friends Comptroller will provide reporting due dates, reporting forms, and any specific financial reporting requirements, as he/she deems necessary.
- All donations to the JAF Chapter, i.e. Joni and Friends, are tax deductible.

- Joni and Friends reserves the right to contact chapter donors for purposes of accountability and to further the mission, goals, and objectives of Joni and Friends.
- The Chapter may not commit the chapter to pay for any goods or services that would cause the Chapter to exceed its financial resources.
- The Chapter may not sign any contracts whether for purchases or services without the approval of Joni and Friends, i.e. approval by the Vice President of Finance and Administration or his/her designee.
- The Chapter may not hire any employees unless approved by the DFO and the VP of Administration and Finance.
- Five percent of all funds raised by the Chapter will be provided to Joni and Friends on a monthly basis for administrative purposes in regards to accounting, accountability and oversight, training and resources provided for chapters.
- Because all chapters are founded and operated under the auspices of the Joni and Friends 501 c (3) non-profit corporation all funds are ultimately under the control of Joni and Friends. The Chapter may use all funds raised by the Chapter for the purposes of the chapter ministry as agreed upon in this CIL and Chapter Memorandum of Agreement with Joni and Friends.
- The Secretary of the EC will record and store all EC meeting agendas, attendance, and minutes, and will see they are passed on in good order to subsequent Secretaries of the EC. Such records will be made available to any JAF executive staff member (Director or Vice President) who may require/request them.

## **Basic Policy for the Operation of a Joni and Friends Church Chapter**

- The formation of a Joni and Friends Church Chapter first and foremost requires the approval of the local church government of the sponsoring church – the church’s governing body, senior pastor, and/or leadership team. A letter from the church leadership supporting the formation of a chapter is an initial requirement to process an application for chapter status.
- Chapter signatories of the chapter are considered the Executive Committee (EC) of the chapter for the first two years. The Chapter EC members will amongst themselves select a Chairperson, Secretary, and Treasurer.
- Each Church Chapter will be expected to raise funds within the confines and guidelines of the local church for disability ministry purposes. Said funds will be donated to the local church for the Joni and Friends Church Chapter activities, and will be under the control of the local church. The church government will determine how said funds will be raised, expended, and accounted for.
- Each Church Chapter will be expected to participate in a “significant manner” in at least one of the following Joni and Friends’ primary programs: Wheels For The World, Family Retreats, or Special Delivery. This will be detailed in a Chapter Memorandum of Agreement (CMOA) with Joni and Friends.
- The EC will be required within the first year of the Chapter’s inception to form Advisory Board, i.e. a chapter support committee of not less than five and not more than nine members. The Advisory Board Members who must be approved by the local church government will be encouraged and expected to attend EC meetings.
- With the approval of the local church government the EC may form committees, task forces, and/or other ad hoc working groups, as they deem necessary and helpful to accomplish the work of the ministry as determined by the EC
- The EC with the agreement and support of the local church government will select replacement EC members if an EC member resigns, his/her term is up for re-election, he/she is removed from his/her position.
- All EC members must meet the qualifications and requirements of Chapter EC members. We encourage that new EC members be elected from the Advisory Board or a chapter committee or work group. Thus, new EC members have proven their devotion to the local ministry and are well apprised of its operations. With the approval of the local church government the Advisory Board may make nominations for EC member positions to the EC.
- EC Member positions will be up for election, nominations received by and elections determined by a vote of the EC, every two years (with the concurrence of the DFO and/or his/her designee) in Sept. of each year.
- EC Members may be re-elected for two additional two-year terms, thus a total not to exceed three terms.
- Joni and Friends encourages local autonomy and chapter flexibility and creativity in ministry development and operations. However, if necessary Joni and Friends (the Director of Field Operations, his/her designee or an appointee of the Executive VP of JAF) has the responsibility and right to encourage the local church government to override any and all EC decisions, to terminate and/or replace any EC members, and to terminate any chapter if EC actions are deemed detrimental to the cause of Christ, local church or Joni and Friends.

- Within the first three months of operation the EC will submit to the JAF Director of Field Operations (DFO) or his/her designee and the local church government an annual operating plan delineating programs, projects, and fund raising goals and objectives for the first year of operation.
- Subsequently, by Dec. 1st of each year the EC will be submit to the DFO or his/her designee and the local church government an annual operating plan for the coming year along with an updated list of EC Members and Advisory Board Members and their current contact information. The local church may make have its own planning and reporting procedures that the Chapter will need to adhere to.
- The Chairperson of the EC will Chair all EC meetings.
- The Chairperson is the primary liaison with JAF – the DFO or his/her designee.
- The EC will meet at least six times a year to conduct ministry business, but may elect to meet more frequently. All EC members and Advisory Board Members will be notified at least a week in advance of all EC Meetings. While Advisory Board Members are expected to attend any and all EC meetings, they will not be voting members at EC Meetings. All meetings will have agendas and be run by Robert’s Rules of Order. The local church government may make exceptions or additions to these requirements.
- It is expected that the local church will have fund raising and expenditure accounting procedures that cover the operation of the Church Chapter to insure fiscal, moral, and spiritual integrity.
- We encourage the local church to financially support the Church Joni and Friends Chapter.
- Each Church Chapter will provide an annual service fee paid with the Chapter application and subsequently in November of each year to Joni and Friends to support the Joni and Friends Chapter Program that includes training, materials at reduced cost, and other services from Joni and Friends at the following rate: churches under 250 membership - \$200-250 per year; churches with membership of 250-500 at \$250-500 per year; churches of 500-1000 membership at \$500-1000 per year; churches over 1000 membership at \$1000-2500 per year.
- The Secretary of the EC will record and store all EC meeting agendas, attendance, and minutes, and will see they are passed on in good order to subsequent Secretaries of the EC. Such records will be made available to any JAF executive staff member (Director or Vice President) who may require/request them.

**NOTE:**

*Joni and Friends reserves the right to amend some of these requirements, not including agreement to our Statement of Faith, in order to be respectful of local church and denominational church government and doctrinal distinctives so all of our Friends in Christ can be Chapter partners. For those churches and/or denominations who agree with our Statement of Faith, it is our desire to be flexible to work within their distinctives in order to assist the Church to fulfill its mandate from Christ in regards to disability ministry (Luke 14:15-24).*