You Restored the Sparkle to Their Eyes!

Read all about Family Retreat At Home inside!
Decades of quadriplegia have taught me a powerful lesson: The glory of God is always brighter when he works through the darkest of times. A broken neck certainly taught me that. And Joni and Friends has experienced it during the COVID-19 crisis.

When the virus shut down many of our Family Retreats, we immediately went to prayer (waiting for COVID-19 restrictions to lift was not an option)! Soon, we heard God’s clear message to us; he wanted Joni and Friends to do something fresh and first-hand.

When we asked him for his new plan, God helped us come up with all kinds of brilliant, creative ways to reach even more special-needs families. Family Fun Nights on Zoom... Kids’ Story Time... Family Retreat at Home... Worship Night... Family Drive-Thru... One-on-One Mentoring... Sibling Time... and lots more.

God’s new plan goes far beyond offering Family Retreats during the summer. The Lord used the pandemic to help us design scores of fresh ways to reach many more families living with disability. And we’re doing it year-round.

We’re even calling this new plan Family360. We are now touching disabled people and their families in creative, ongoing ways... and doing it every month of the year!

As the saying goes, when God gives you lemons, make lemonade—it’s exactly how I feel about this season of COVID-19. When Satan opposes God’s ministry, we always know that “a great door for effective work has opened for us.” Can you sense our excitement?! If so, join Ken and me in praying that many more families struggling with disability will hear the Good News of Jesus through our year-round plan.

Disabled people and their families are desperate for hope in this difficult season, and Joni and Friends now has non-stop ministry for their non-stop needs. So, join me in giving a special gift to spur on our efforts—thank you for your non-stop, year-round love and support!

A great door for effective work has opened... even though many oppose me.

1 CORINTHIANS 16:9

Ken loves making special needs families smile!

I don’t think the families ever stopped smiling through this whole Family Retreat at Home event!
DOING NOTHING IS Not an Option!

Coronavirus may have closed down retreat centers this summer, but it didn’t stop us from sharing God’s love with children and families impacted by disabilities. Far from it! When our traditional Family Retreat plans needed to be put on hold temporarily, Family Retreat At Home was born, and the Gospel was delivered right to families’ front doors!

Neko, who has Down syndrome and Graves’ disease, loved every aspect of Family Retreat At Home. “It’s been so good for him to interact with others this way,” explained his mom, Elizabeth, who has also been blessed by the connections made during the Joni and Friends Moms’ Bible study groups on Zoom. It may be different than being together in the same room, but God’s Word and the incredible support of everyone involved—staff, volunteers, and other families—is the same.

Neko’s sister Charity, who also has Down syndrome, worshipped the Lord with streamers. It was one of her favorite parts of our traditional Family Retreat, and it’s now become part of her Family Retreat At Home experience. Her mom Elizabeth explained that after being isolated for so long due to shelter-at-home restrictions, Family Retreat At Home was a welcome and much needed connection to the outside world. Thank you for reminding these weary families that they are not alone!

Liz and her daughter Paige, who has Down syndrome, look forward to Family Retreat all year. Liz couldn’t contain her tears when she learned that COVID-19 was trying to threaten her chance to connect with other moms of children with special needs. But when she saw the sparkle in her daughter’s eyes as our Joni and Friends volunteer dropped off a beautiful care package full of personalized gifts and encouragement, Liz’s hope was renewed.

Through Christ-centered crafts, Bible stories, worship and personal connections with other families via Zoom, Liz and Paige experienced the love of God in powerful and tangible ways. Thank you for showing them and special needs families all over the country that social distancing can’t get in the way of God’s embrace!

“Turn and answer me, O Lord my God! Restore the sparkle to my eyes...”

Psalm 13:3

See Family Retreat At Home in action at joniandfriends.org/FamilyRetreatAtHome

Turn and answer me, O Lord my God! Restore the sparkle to my eyes...
Your prayers and support are bringing special needs families closer and closer to Jesus through Christ-centered respite events. With schools closed and therapy sessions at a standstill, the moms and dads of children with disabilities are all-out depleted from their 24/7 caregiving responsibilities. More and more marriages are falling apart during this global pandemic as spouses buckle under the strain of disability and isolation. But your prayers are reversing that trend!

All across the country, Joni and Friends respite events are not only ministering to children with disabilities, they’re carving out time for husbands and wives to have some much needed time together away from the demands of their caregiving routines. As families arrive at these special events, they’re met with the heavenly reminders that they are loved and valued. And while their children enjoy interactive Bible crafts, lessons and worship—all socially distanced, of course—moms and dads are given a gift card for dinner so they can have a long-anticipated date night knowing their children are safe and happy.

Five-year-old Sawyer and his family loved our Joni and Friends Tennessee respite event. Sawyer has arthrogryposis, preventing him from being able to walk on his own. But he and his parents were able to see past the hardships of disability through the joy and laughter your support gave them. For Sawyer's family and for countless others like theirs, respite is a bridge to the Gospel. God bless you for sending relief and renewed hope to special needs families!

Our mouths were filled with laughter... Then it was said among the nations, ‘The Lord has done great things for them.”

PSALM 126:2

And after their date night, parents are reunited with their children to experience godly entertainment that brings joy to all. “Thanks for letting me hear people laugh again!” said one father who had been discouraged by COVID-19 restrictions. Indeed, laughter is good medicine!

In John 9, Jesus says that disability is not a result of sin, but an opportunity for God's glory to be revealed. This unique online conference will strengthen the body of Christ, mobilize the church to action, and connect regional and global leaders in disability ministry for partnership.

Join live with presenters and participants from around the world, or access the content on demand at your convenience, translated into five languages including Spanish, Mandarin, Portuguese, Russian, and Hindi.

More info and registration at joniandfriends.org/globalaccess
During coronavirus, people really need the Body of Christ,” said Sergiy. “We are keeping in touch with the families we serve through the phone, computer and Zoom prayer meetings—letting everyone know they are not alone and reminding them of the greatness of our God!” Sergiy, Nataly and their ministry partner Galyna are meeting practical needs by delivering groceries to families with disabilities, and they’re meeting spiritual needs through online Bible studies and webinars for parents. Please keep them and the families they serve in your prayers.

Like cold water to a weary soul is Good News from a distant land.

PROVERBS 25:25

COVID-19 Update

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Joni’s Christmas Cards
Available Now!
with a new design featuring art by Joni Eareckson Tada

Joni’s beautiful new Christmas card, The Glow of God’s Glory, was designed from her felt tip pen sketch of the Grand Teton Mountain Range. With sparkling, iridescent snowflakes on the mountains, tree branches and ground, you can send the glow of God’s glory to all of your friends and family, reminding everyone far and wide that God’s love always prevails—even through a pandemic! When you purchase these Christmas cards, you send “Good News of great joy” to little children and families impacted by disability worldwide.

Available exclusively from Joni and Friends

Product Details:
• 5¼" x 7¾"
• 15 cards & 16 envelopes per box
$12
BC32

Christmas Eve Night
In Christmas Eve Night, Joni painted a frigid scene in contrast to a glowing mountain church—a church where people are gathering on Christmas Eve to celebrate the amazing birth of Jesus Christ!

Interior Message:
A Savior was Born to bring Freedom from Sin
The Angels sang, “Peace on Earth; Good will Toward men”
Oh, Spirit Come Fill us; we so Long to Grow
Please Make our Hearts Pure like Fresh-fallen Snow

Have a Blessed Christmas
Celebrating the Savior of the World...
Jesus Christ!

Product Details:
• 5¼" x 7¾"
• 15 cards & 16 envelopes per box
$12
BC28

King of Kings
Joni recaptures the moment when the three wise men presented their expensive gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh to the newborn King of Kings. It was a night like none other—God the Son intervened in history, bringing His light and salvation to all!

Interior Message:
As you seek the King of Kings,
May you Find Him in the Serenity of the Season
In the quietness of your Heart
And in the mystery of every Advent Moment
Wishing you a Blessed Christmas!

Product Details:
• 5¼" x 7¾"
• 15 cards & 16 envelopes per box
$12
BC27

100% of all profits go directly to support disability ministry!

TO ORDER: • Mail order form • Call toll-free: 800.736.4177 • Online: joniandfriends.org/store • Phone: Text ORDER to 818.707.5664