God’s Love is Unstoppable!

COVID-19 couldn’t stop the love of God poured out through Wheels for the World. Read all about it inside!
When it comes to disability, you’ve got to be up-close and personal. A disability, fraught with needs, cries out for practical support, and that’s something you can’t do at a distance. So, while COVID-19 presented its challenges, our valiant Joni and Friends’ teams were not about to distance themselves from already-isolated families with a loved one who’s disabled. With a little creativity and innovation, we answered their cry!

We quickly discovered we can do powerful hands-on ministry while maintaining safeguards for everyone’s health. It happened at many events but enjoy here the highlights of just a few – our South Carolina Warrior Getaway, our Family Retreats up in Oregon, and our international outreach with our in-country partners in Peru. Our Joni and Friends’ teams truly adorned the Gospel – hands-on help always beautifies the message of salvation and draws attention to the loveliness of Jesus. Yes, everyone experienced the touch of Christ!

Our Lord never said to a disabled person, “Here’s the Gospel. I love you. Now go in peace and I hope your needs get met.” The Gospel must always be coupled with evidence of Christ’s love. So, be encouraged! Special-needs families are being served, disabled people are being lifted out of isolation, people are still getting wheelchairs and Bibles, and best of all, everyone is hearing the salvation message of Jesus.

Friend, you are doing something about the heartfelt needs of the hurting and wounded people we serve. And speaking of gratitude, you really blessed me with all the many donations and notes honoring my birthday in October... wow! We are putting it to work as we invest your many expressions of love into changing lives for Christ...God bless you for your heartfelt, hands-on, happy partnership in the Good News!

“\[If one of you says to them, ‘Go in peace; keep warm and well fed,’ but does nothing about their physical needs, what good is it?\]

JAMES 2:16
"War zones have a way of traveling home with you," explained one combat veteran at our Warrior Getaway. "Even when that Warrior comes home, war is ever by his side."

It comes in the form of Post Traumatic Stress (PTS), Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI), and moral injury – which is the guilt and shame that follows veterans home from active duty. Whether there is a physical disability or not, these invisible disabilities become the enemy our veterans—and their families—must battle each and every day.

As one of the Army veterans explained at our September South Carolina Warrior Getaway, "I feel like I never came back." That soldier returned home from the war in Afghanistan ten years ago.

Another veteran said it this way, "My body is back, but my soul stayed over there." And his wife went on to say, "Transition from war to civilian life is excruciating.

And that’s exactly why Joni and Friends is dedicated to serving the men and women who have served us and our country in combat. Be it in Vietnam, Afghanistan or Iraq... the darkness and depression that follows our veterans home begs for the light of the Gospel. And at our Warrior Getaways, the Good News of Jesus flows as freely as the healing tears coming from veterans, their spouses and their children.

Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom.

2 CORINTHIANS 3:17

Chris, whose name has been changed to protect his anonymity, joined the Army when he was 18, giving four years of his life to selflessly defend us and the many freedoms we enjoy each day. Deployed to both Iraq and Afghanistan over the course of those four years of service, Chris now battles continuous seizures as a result of the multiple Traumatic Brain Injuries he experienced during combat. His life is painfully isolated – not because of COVID-19, but because his invisible disabilities make social interactions nearly impossible.

"I don’t want to end up another casualty," he confessed. And his concerns are heavy. With suicide rates for veterans estimated at 20 every day, the toll that combat takes on our servicemen and women cannot be ignored. Thank you for standing with us in honoring and protecting our veterans through our Warrior Getaways!

"God’s gonna make me whole again. Some day I’ll be unbroken." That is the heart’s cry of our veterans. And as they poured out their pain to the pastors, counselors and other veterans at the Warrior Getaway – with some veterans telling their stories for the very first time even after decades of civilian life – they found the love of God and the hope of community. "At Warrior Getaways, healing begins."

That healing is experienced by the whole family. One veteran’s wife said it best, "We met amazing people who love Jesus, love serving people, and understand so much of what our life has been the past few years. Our hearts are full."

Thank you for making a way for our veterans and their families to experience true freedom in Christ! As one veteran explained, “You actually see miracles here at the Warrior Getaway because you’re watching the healing process at work.” This Veterans Day – and every day – please pray for these heroes who sacrificed so much for us.
40 WEEKS BEING THE Hands and Feet of Jesus

When COVID-19 put a halt to sending teams overseas, we asked you to pray, and your prayers birthed a whole new way of serving called 40 Weeks.

- Working with essential in-country healthcare providers, we're spending one day a week for 40 weeks to transform the lives of families impacted by disability in Peru. These therapists can only get one day off from their hospital jobs each week, and they're choosing to spend that one day serving the least of these in their communities.

- But Kandy and the other people impacted by disability left the outreach with much more than a wheelchair that day. Their spiritual needs were met when they heard the Gospel, got their own Bible and Joni book in their language, and prayed to receive Christ! And their immediate practical needs were met, too, as each family was given care packages full of food such as eggs, beans and rice.

- Gathering together first to pray for the families that would be served each day, these selfless volunteers prove once again that social distancing mandates are no threat to the power of prayer! And Kandy, a prayer warrior who showed up to serve others in her old, broken down wheelchair, was custom fitted into her very own new wheelchair that same day!

- Through your partnership, we're doing everything possible to make sure these special needs families living in poverty have the gift of mobility given through a wheelchair, right alongside basic necessities such as food and hygiene supplies that sustain life and ensure dignity. Because the Gospel must always be coupled with tangible evidence of Christ's love!

- Be sure to look for future Joni and Friends newsletters where you will find continuous updates from our 40 Weeks of service, and you'll hear powerful stories of transformation... just like Karolay's story. She is featured on this month's cover, and her story is coming soon!

- “Coronavirus has made life so hard for these people, that without the food we’re providing, they would starve.”

JASON HOLDEN, Vice President of Global Operations for Joni and Friends.

- Silvestra is 84 years old and suffers greatly from physical disabilities, Alzheimer’s disease, and the impact of COVID-19 in her community. But when she received a new, properly fitted wheelchair along with nourishing food and the hope of the Gospel, “God fulfilled her heart’s desires.” And not just for Silvestra, but for her two daughters, as well. These two women selflessly care for their aging mother’s needs 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Seeing their mother receive a wheelchair, and seeing the Lord provide for all their needs, infused new life into Silvestra’s weary daughters. Silvestra and her family remind us all that no matter how long we’ve been waiting for our prayers to be answered, God is on the move. Thank you for showing the world that God’s love never fails!

- Beto, who has cerebral palsy, is one of the young men served through our 40 Weeks of service in Peru. His family was overjoyed! “This is a dream come true from God and helps us understand that God is love. He cares for us and our needs!” And Beto, hearing Joni’s story, felt truly inspired to never stop dreaming and striving to fulfill the plans God has for his life. Your prayers and support are delivering biblical truth to those who need it most!

- Because of the Lord’s great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail.

LAMENTATIONS 3:22
YOU MADE

In-Person Family Retreats Possible Again

When retreat centers started opening up again, we were ready, and so were the special needs families we serve!

During our two weeks of in-person Family Retreats in Oregon, families impacted by disability found renewed hope and new life after months of social isolation.

“Life is hard,” confessed the sibling of a child with disability. “It’s full of incredible frustration and grief. I wonder if strangers will always hate me and my family.” Those words are so heartbreaking and such a heavy burden to carry. But after a week of Family Retreat, that sibling was able to declare, “Life is priceless. Life is beautiful.” Thank you for giving families new hope through their hardships!

The Happy Grams were flowing all week, sharing God’s love and Christ-centered encouragement with every family member there, and giving everyone the freedom to express their faith in Jesus. These notes full of Bible verses and words of affirmation will continue to put smiles on the faces of moms, dads, and children for many months to come, reminding everyone that no matter what our circumstances, God is always by our side!

The parents of children with disabilities received much needed time to reconnect as spouses, strengthening them for the day to day challenges surrounding 24-hour caregiving. Not only did they experience God’s unconditional love for their special needs children, they also renewed their commitment to one another after years – and for some, decades – of struggles. Marriages on the brink of divorce are renewed at Family Retreat!

Everyone at Family Retreat glories God through their gifts at the Talent Show!

Your prayers and support of Family Retreat bring about new hearts and new perspectives, too! Colleen, a young lady with Down syndrome, loved her time at Family Retreat. But it was her mother, Merry, who received a true miracle...

“I was blown away by Family Retreat,” Merry explained. She witnessed everyone there loving her daughter exactly the way God created her, Merry began to see past the bitterness in her heart and now loves her sweet daughter as never before.
We gratefully acknowledge contributions given in memory or in honor of loved ones to further ministry in the disability community. To give a gift in memory of a loved one or in honor of a special occasion, visit joniandfriends.org/donate or contact Joni and Friends at 818.707.5664.
Brand-New 2021 Planner Gift Set!

Joni’s beautiful 2021 Planner, designed from her *We Three Kings* painting, is now joined by two new, matching products! Sip your favorite beverage from this beautiful, stainless-steel tumbler and store your favorite jewelry and trinkets in this colorful, ceramic dish. Each product is sold separately, or purchase the set and save! This is the perfect Christmas gift for your friends and family this year, and most important, all proceeds go to further disability ministry worldwide. *Available exclusively from Joni and Friends*

A. 2021 Planner
Product Details:
- Size: 7” x 9”
- NIV Scripture text
- 12-month agenda planner
- Updated content for monthly and weekly sections
- Chronological Bible Reading Plan

$16

B. Starry Night Jewelry Dish
Product Details:
- Size: 5.3” x 4”
- Ceramic
- Featuring Quote from Joni: “One of the most wonderful things about knowing God is that there’s always so much more to discover.”

$18

C. Starry Night Tumbler
Product Details:
- Size: 6 ¾” x 3.375”, 20oz
- Stainless steel, plastic lid, BPA free
- Vacuum Insulated
- Silicone straw included
- Bible Verse: Psalm 33:11

$25

The Starry Night Set Buy all three and save! $50

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