

DISCUSSION GUIDE

Enabling Hearts



Disability Ministry in Asia Series

Enabling Hearts

A Primer for Disability-Inclusive Churches

Edited by Leow Wen Pin

A Guide for
Ministry Team Discussion
in Churches

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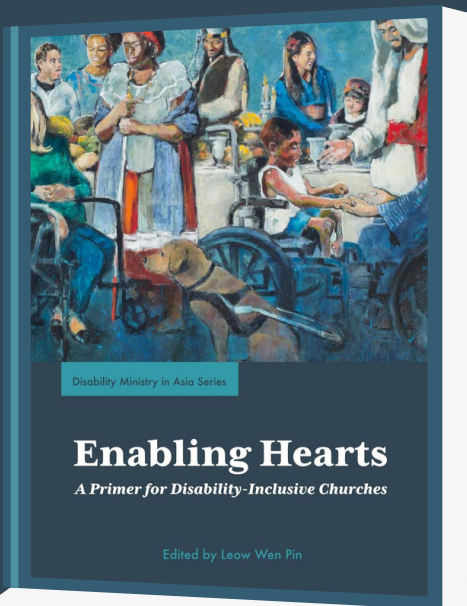
Introduction

The ***Enabling Hearts Discussion Guide*** is a guide for churches to facilitate disability ministry team discussions on the contents of KIN's disability ministry primer, ***Enabling Hearts: A Primer for Disability-Inclusive Churches***.

Through such small group discussions, the following can be achieved:

1. A deeper understanding about the theology of disability and how disability ministry can be undertaken, and
2. A greater alignment among discussion group members to empower teamwork and unity.

This guide is primarily targeted at disability ministry leaders and volunteers, as well as church leaders.



How to use this Guide

Each member of the discussion group should obtain a copy of ***Enabling Hearts*** (available directly from KIN¹ or from Graceworks²).

The discussion should be completed over 5 to 7 sessions.

Sessions 1–5 should be considered compulsory.

Sessions 6–7 are optional and may be skipped if time is tight, though it would be ideal if the group could complete these sessions as well.

All members should be informed in advance of the book chapters for discussion, and read them prior to each session. It is suggested that each session comprises:

1. An opening prayer
2. Discussion over the questions provided
3. Discussion on the action items
4. A closing prayer

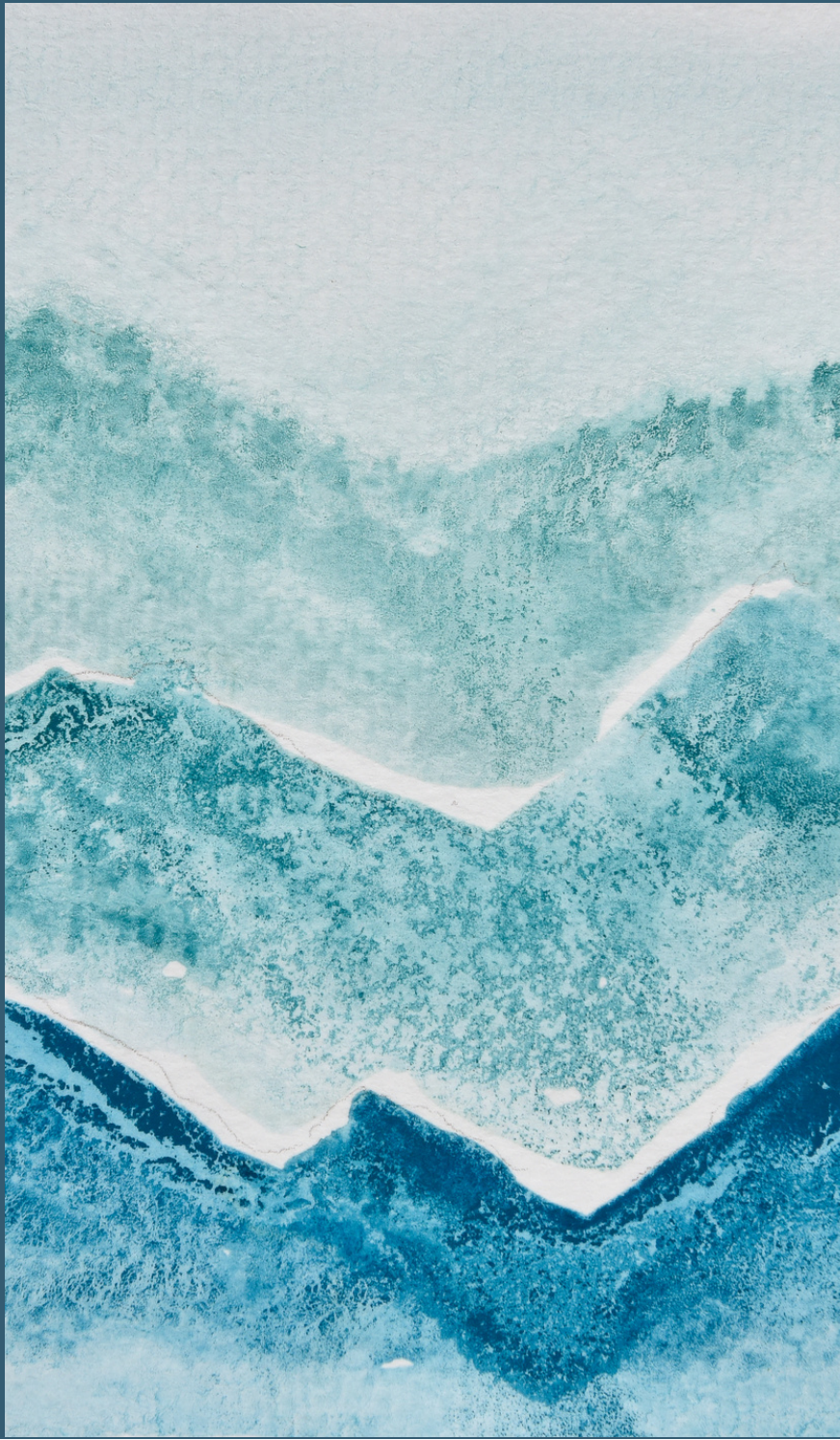
Each session should last for 1–1.5 hours.

¹ Contact KIN here: kin.org.sg/get-started

² Go to graceworks.com.sg

SESSION 1

Disability Theology



Pre-reading

Enabling Hearts: **Chapter 1**

Key Learning Points

- Disability is a result of society, not just the individual.
- We must address unhealthy myths about disability.
- There are several reasons for including people with disabilities, one of them being that they are gifted by the Holy Spirit to be disciples and disciplemakers.

Discussion Questions

1

What are your thoughts about disability being “both a product of society and of the individual”? (p. 2)
What implications does this have for churches?

2

What disability myths or superstitions do you know?
How does the Bible address them?

3

Share your thoughts on this line:
“A Church that is truly disabled is one that excludes people with disabilities.” (p. 10)

Action Items

Draw an image that you think best represents an inclusive church.

Share your image with your team and explain your thinking behind it.



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Action Items

Share other theological questions you have concerning disability.

How can you find out the answers to these questions?

SESSION 2

Roadmap for Ministry



Pre-reading

Enabling Hearts: **Chapter 2**

Key Learning Points

- The disability ministry journey is progressive yet iterative.
- It comprises development at the level of the self, team, church, and beyond.

Discussion Questions

1 How can you prepare yourself for growth as an individual?
(Step 1)

2 How can prayer be a key element of your
ministry team's life? (Step 2)

3 Review the disability ministry team that you currently serve in.
Is it sufficiently diverse? (Step 3)

Action Items

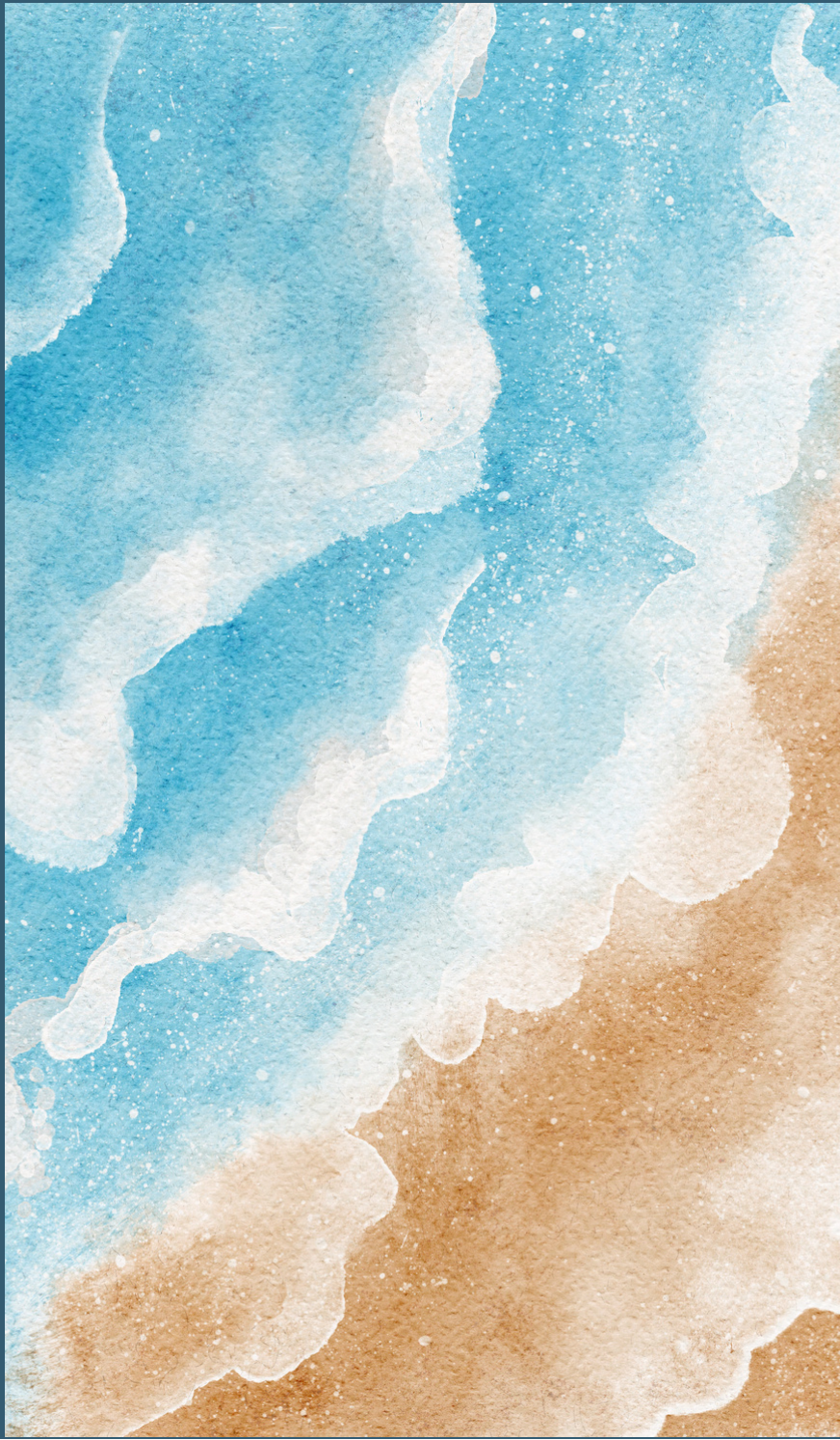
Think of what steps you can take to better understand your congregation and the community that surrounds your church.
(Steps 4–5)

NOTE

If needed, KIN can help a church's disability ministry team undertake a study to better understand their congregation/s and their church's context.

SESSION 3

Singapore's Disability Landscape



Pre-reading

Enabling Hearts: **Chapter 3**

Key Learning Points

- Disability is common and growing in Singapore.
- The disability sector in Singapore is quite developed, but there is still room for growth especially in churches.
- Local churches have many opportunities to contribute and transform the local disability landscape.

Discussion Questions

1

What are the socio-cultural issues surrounding disability in Singapore? How might this impact the work of your disability ministry team?

2

What disability services are available in Singapore? How might the work of your disability ministry team complement these services? How should disability ministry in a church differ from social services?

Action Items

Find out more about disability ministry in Singapore by reading
KIN's Singapore Disability Ministry Survey 2023:
bit.ly/sdms2023report

Find out more about social services to persons with disabilities
by visiting:
www.enablingguide.sg

Identify the social services that might be relevant to people with
disabilities in your congregation.

SESSION 4

Understanding Disability



Pre-reading

Enabling Hearts: **Chapter 4**

Key Learning Points

- Neurodevelopmental disabilities are common in Singapore.
- There are many misconceptions and myths surrounding such disabilities.
- Churches need to actively find ways to educate their congregations about such disabilities.

Discussion Questions

1

The disabilities listed in this chapter are “invisible” disabilities. Why are such “invisible” disabilities more likely to be misunderstood by members of the congregation, compared to “visible” disabilities?

2

What are practical ways that your disability ministry can adopt to raise awareness of such “invisible” disabilities?

Action Items

Find out which disabilities are most common in your church.

Note: If needed, KIN can help a church's disability ministry team undertake a study to better understand their congregation/s and their church's context.

Invite a person with an “invisible” disability (ideally one with lower support needs) to dialogue with your disability ministry team.

If such a person is not available, consider dialoguing with a caregiver to a person with an invisible disability.

SESSION 5

Discipleship



Pre-reading

Enabling Hearts: **Chapter 9**

Key Learning Points

- Discipleship is the relationship between God and believers – it is both individual and corporate.
- Discipleship is about following after Jesus, not just the accumulation of facts and knowledge.
- The Church needs to reconsider how its practices are lived out so that people with disabilities can be included in discipleship.

Discussion Questions

1

Do you believe that people with disabilities can be *disciplemakers*, in addition to being disciples? Which individuals in the Bible or in church history have disabilities but are also disciplemakers?

2

How might the discipleship of people with disabilities look like?

3

How can your disability ministry make discipleship a core part of its work?

Action Items

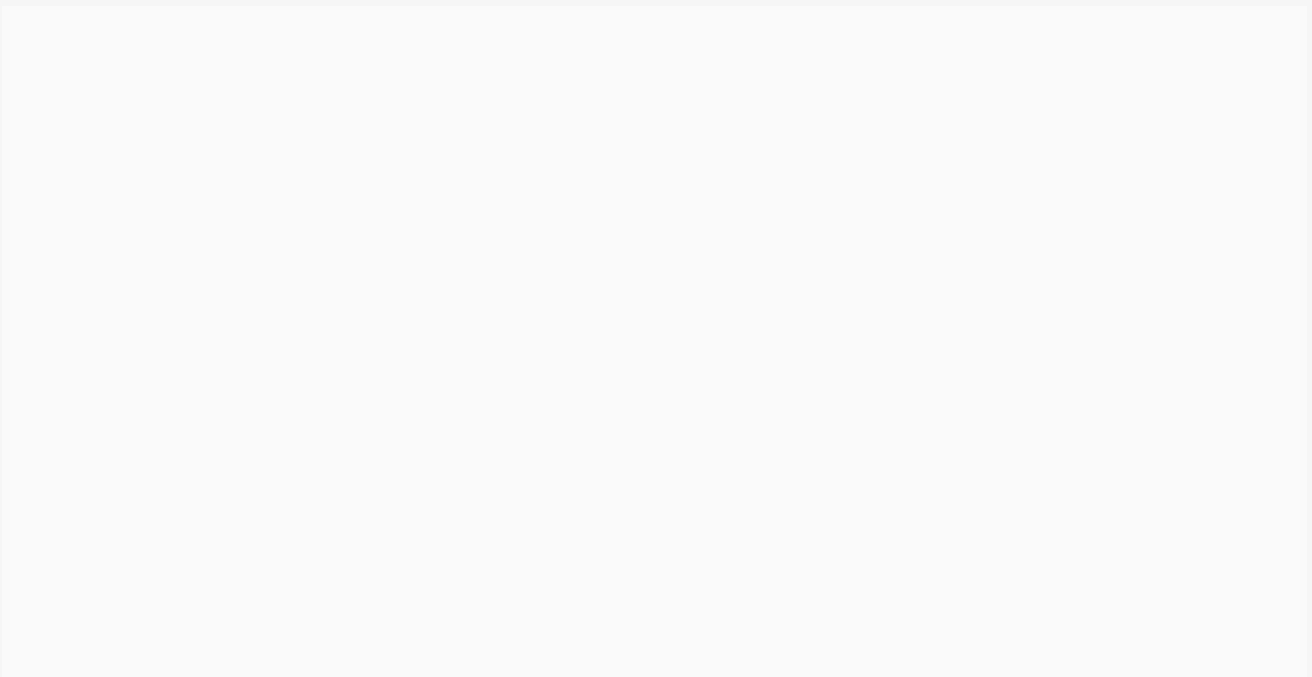
Discuss which discipleship gap is most applicable for persons with disabilities in your congregation.

Brainstorm a list of ways that might help to fill this gap.



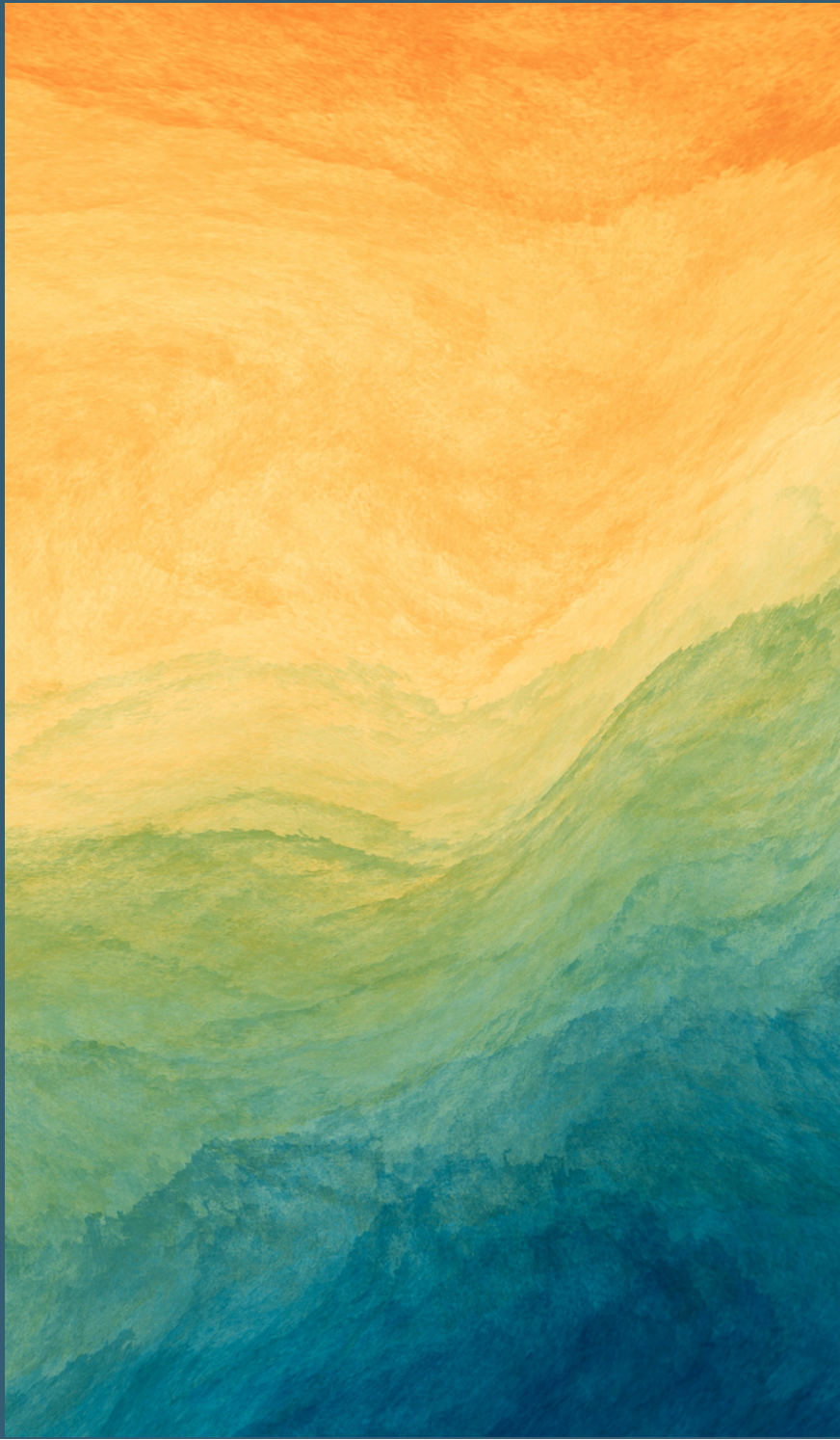
Discuss whether there are areas of your church's culture and practice that might be hindering the discipleship of people with disabilities.

How might you address these areas?



SESSION 6

Specific Disabilities



Pre-reading

Choose relevant chapters
from *Enabling Hearts*:
Chapters 11–17

Key Learning Points

- Understanding the nature of a person's disability and its cultural context is key to inclusion.
- Inclusion is not just letting people with disabilities be present, but giving them a community where they can flourish as disciples and disciplemakers.

Discussion Questions

1

What are some stereotypes about the disabilities which you have read about? Do you think others in the congregation might hold such stereotypes too?

How can your ministry help to address such stereotypes?

2

Based on your reading, what are some concrete strategies your ministry could adopt that might be relevant to people with specific disabilities in your congregation?

Action Items

Identify some concrete ways for your team to learn more about these specific disabilities.



Arrange to visit a ministry to persons with these specific disabilities (either Christian or not) in order to get a fuller personal experience of such individuals.

(The Action Items from Session 4 could also be considered for Session 6.)

SESSION 7

Case Studies



Pre-reading

Choose relevant chapters
from *Enabling Hearts*:
Chapters 18–21

Key Learning Points

- Setting up and developing a disability ministry is an extended journey.
- It is also a joyful experience where we can see God work in the midst of human challenges.
- We should persevere in faithfulness, prayer, and obedience as a disability ministry.

Discussion Questions

1

In the chapters that you read,
how did each disability ministry team form?
What lessons can your team draw from their experience?

2

What needs did each ministry seek to meet?
How successful were they in doing so?

3

How did each ministry progress over time?
What adaptations did they make?

4

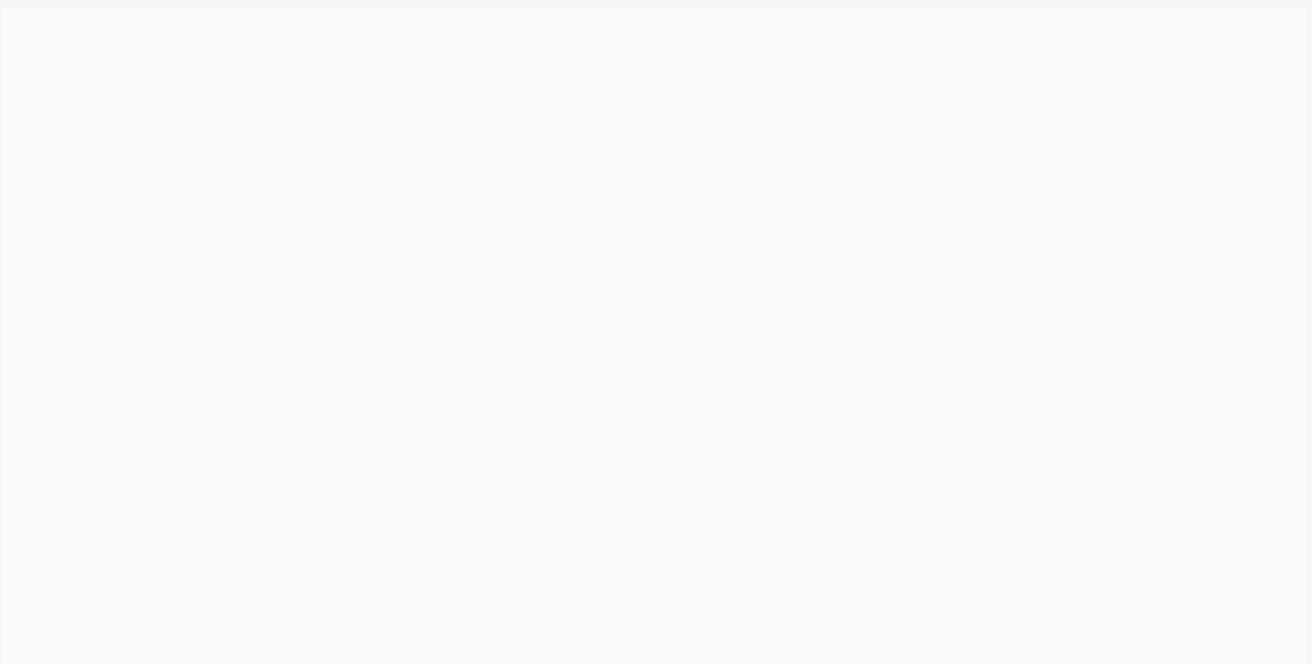
How do you see God working through each ministry?

Action Items

Brainstorm the vision of your disability ministry team.



Craft the core values that will guide the work that you do. In particular, think about how your values relate to the core values of your church as a whole.





KIN is a disability mission organisation that enables the Church to welcome and disciple people of all abilities.

It does so through partnering churches by connecting, equipping, and resourcing them in their inclusion journey.

Services offered by KIN include training, consultancy, preaching and more. To find out more, go to: **kin.org.sg**



The Centre for Disability Ministry in Asia is KIN's research unit, dedicated to the mission of producing context-relevant resources to enable disability ministry in Asia.

To find out more, go to: **kin.org.sg/cdma**

How to Give to KIN

The work of KIN is funded by the generosity of donors. Please consider giving to us through the following means:

PayNow: UEN: T19SS0269K
Bank Transfer: DBS 017-906218-7

After transfer, please write to admin@kin.org.sg so that we can issue you a receipt promptly.

Praise for

Enabling Hearts: A Primer for Disability-Inclusive Churches

“[*Enabling Hearts*] challenge[s] churches to consider whether their physical spaces, legal policies, and language from the pulpit truly welcome people with disabilities.”

– ***Christianity Today***

“Wen Pin has done a fine job of priming leaders for a deeper engagement, given how much of a struggle it can be to even name ableism as a problem to be encountered by the Church.”

– ***International Journal for the Study of the Christian Church***

Authors

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Revised Edition

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CDMA
CENTRE FOR DISABILITY MINISTRY IN ASIA