



# Irresistible Church Training

*For Disability Ministry*

Presented by



## Call Me Friend Presentation Outline

## How to Use:

This script lays out suggested talking points and content pulled directly from the specific book/resource highlighted. Here are a few things to know before you begin to use these scripts:

1. **Bold Type** is what you say. *Italic type* are suggestions and instructions.
2. The script is laid out with wide margins for easier reading without too much side to side eye movement. Sentences and paragraphs are broken up by phrasing and suggested pauses. = indicates a thought, phrase, or slight pause. • indicates you need to click over to the next slide or animation.
3. In the *Italics* you will find suggestions for customizing the material with personal stories or examples.
4. Please retain the Irresistible Church logo and the Joni and Friends logo on each slide, with the exception of slides added for your church's purposes.
5. The first few slides will be similar in each presentation. If you are doing more than one session in a day, we suggest you present these slides in the first session and eliminate them in later presentations on the same day. (*You could also use them to encourage participation, or "test" the audience and ask them to define an Irresistible Church*)
6. We have added suggested resources for each presentation. If you would like to purchase these, please visit [joniandfriends.org](http://joniandfriends.org).

## **Call Me Friend Presentation Outline:**

**Main objective:** To give practical guidance on including people of all ages with special needs in the life of the church through the use of a “buddy ministry.”

**Supplies:** *Bible* with all passages marked, copy of *Call Me Friend* book for each participant, Family Ministry Profile for all, PowerPoint in handout form, pens for each person.

### **Suggested resources for sale with *Call Me Friend*:**

*Joni: An Unforgettable Story*

*Beyond Suffering Bible*

*Real Families, Real Needs*

*Another Kind of Courage*

*Same Lake, Different Boat*

## SLIDE 1: The Irresistible Church Series



*Use this slide while people arrive. If you want to add music to this presentation go to Insert, Media, Audio/Audio on my PC. Select the song and a small music icon will appear in the*

*corner of the slide. Music should automatically begin when you start the slide show.*

## SLIDE 2: Call Me Friend



*The music will stop when you switch to this slide. Share your heart for this training! What motivated you to lead this session, and what do you hope to accomplish?*

**SLIDE 3: Luke 14:21, 23**



*It's always good to begin the presentation with an open Bible. We suggest teaching using the Beyond Suffering Bible.*

**OPEN YOUR BIBLE:** Read Luke 14: 21-23

- = **Luke 14 shares the story of a man giving a banquet, providing a glimpse into God's heart for all people.**
  
- = **Through this scripture we see that God's desire for those who have been marginalized is...**
- = **To be fully welcomed and**
- = **embraced by the church, just as this man insisted those with disabilities**
- = **join him at his banquet.**
  
- = **Why?**
  
- = **Because according to the Bible**
- = **every person has equal worth and value**
- = **by virtue of being created in God's image.**
  
- = **Each person is an indispensable part of the Body of Christ with unique gifts and abilities.**
- = **Every part (every person) is necessary for the body (the church) to function as God intended**

## SLIDE 4: What is an Irresistible Church?



### *Read Together*

- = **“An Irresistible Church is an authentic community built on the hope of Christ that compels people affected by disability to fully belong.”**

### *Repeat*

- = **As a body of believers, we want to use Jesus as a model**
- = **to create a church family that compels people with disabilities to come in**
- = **so that His house may be full.**
- = **Close your eyes right now and imagine with me what this might look like. Keep them closed and listen to my words:**
  
- = **Instead of creating another program, let us think for a moment what the church might look like if everyone,**
- = **regardless of special needs, or extraordinary abilities**
- = **were embraced as a fully functioning member of the body of Christ.**

- = **Regardless of cognitive processing, verbal communication,**
- = **behavioral struggles, or physical ability,**
- = **each member would be valued as a person,**
- = **flawlessly created in the image of God.**
- = **Would this church be irresistible?**
  
- = **What would this church say to anyone who is skeptical?**
  
- = **That there is a place for them in God's family?**
- = **What about the unemployed father and his family,**
- = **the addict,**
- = **the young mother going through divorce, the chronically ill, the widowed,**
- = **the young single girl searching for God's purpose in her singleness,**
- = **the perfectionist,**
- = **the young adult dealing with a mental illness who needs acceptance...**
  
- = **This would be the church of Luke 14,**
- = **where people are urged and compelled to come in.**
- = **This is easy to think about, but real change is hard.**
- = **To simplify this a bit, there are two things that people affected by disability overwhelmingly agree that they desire from the Church.**

- = **Accessibility to existing structures, programs and people.**
- = **And acceptance and a sense of belonging extended from others within the church.**
- = **Sounds simple enough, so how do you start?**
- = **A great place to create this sense of belonging is to provide a buddy who can call them friend...**

## SLIDE 5- Agenda



- **In the next 30 minutes we will begin by looking at definitions of terms and exploring what a Buddy Ministry really is.**
- **We will look at the purpose of buddies and what they can provide to their friends with disabilities. We will spend most of our time looking at how a Buddy Ministry works and how it serves families.**
- **Then we will spend a little time looking behind the scenes to understand how we can organize our ministry and set it up for long term health.**
- **We will then step onto the Front Lines and consider what it might look like to recruit, train, and support the buddies in your ministry so they can be the hands and feet of Jesus.**



## SLIDE 6 – What is a Buddy Ministry?

THE IRRESISTIBLE CHURCH

### What is a Buddy Ministry?

A Buddy Ministry is a program of the church designed to support the disability community by pairing an individual with a disability with a buddy during church services so that they can participate within the mainstream programs of the local church.



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*Read the definition on the slide and explain this in your own words. How does this play out in churches where buddies are used? Give examples.*

- = **Scripture is full of famous pairs who bring to life the truth in Ecclesiastes 4:9 which says, "Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their toil." Jesus sent his disciples out in pairs because he understood this truth.**
- **“A Buddy Ministry is a program of the church designed to support the disability community by pairing an individual with a disability with a buddy during church services so that they can participate within the mainstream programs of the local church.”**

## SLIDE 7 – What Buddies Provide



- **Buddies provide discipleship...**
  - = **To create a buddy ministry without the commitment to disciple those with disabilities is to miss the entire heart behind this ministry.**
  - = **The buddies working in your ministry should display the fruits of the spirit and have the heart of discipleship.**
  
- **Buddies provide friendship...**
  - = **A buddy should create a give and take friendship with their friend.**
  - = **Creating clear boundaries and expectations can guard buddies from feeling like they need to be inseparable from their friends.**
  
- **Buddies provide safety...**
  - = **Students with autism, for example, are more likely than typical children to run or bolt from safe places. Therefore, providing a 1-on-1 buddy can help to ensure their safety.**
  - = **Buddies can help friends steer clear of foods they are allergic to and other environmental hazards.**

- = They can also help friends learn more appropriate ways to handle situations that may lead friends to self-injurious behavior.
- = Research suggests that people with disabilities are 3 times more likely to be sexually abused than other people.
  
- = Have each volunteer complete a background check and personal history form as a precautionary method.
- = Keep doors open and the classroom visible.
- = Provide accountability and remain above reproach, *even* if the volunteer is trusted! Appearances are important for developing trust with families.

## SLIDE 8 – What Buddies Provide



- Buddies provide participation...
  - = Buddies can help our friends participate in activities and game
  - = They can also help friends navigate social situations and create friendships with others
  - = We need to take care that buddies are not participating *for* their friends but helping their friends participate on their own.
- Buddies also provide communication assistance...

- = **Buddies can be the voice that advocates for their friends.**
- = **Buddies can facilitate communication between their peers, church leadership, and even their parents! By helping their friend communicate what they're learning at church, buddies can help parents disciple their children at home.**
- = **Most importantly, buddies can help their friends communicate with God by modeling God's love for our friends.**
- **Lastly, buddies provide positive behavior reinforcement...**
- = **Particularly for friends with low language skills, buddies are crucial to understanding that most behavior is a form of communication.**
- = **Everyone is an individual, and understanding what causes particular behavior, and what certain behaviors are meant to community requires someone who is with the individual on a regular basis.**

*For more information about understanding behavior as a form of communication, read the Irresistible Church book titled "Responding with Compassion."*

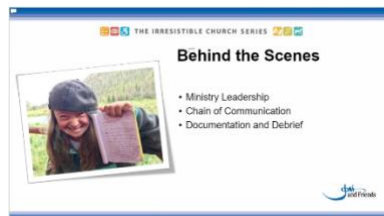
## SLIDE 9 – Activity: What Buddies Provide



*This activity should take 5 to 6 minutes. Break your audience into pairs or small groups to encourage discussion. Use the talking points below to introduce the activity.*

- = **What characteristics do you think would help facilitate these six things?**
- = **When we consider who should be buddies, we don't need to look for people with experience surrounding disability.**
- = **We need people who have the heart of Christ. Who do you think would be able to share Christ's love with someone with a disability in our church?**

## SLIDE 10 – Behind the Scenes



*Take time to fill out this section with information about your particular ministry structure!*

- **Ministry leadership**

*Who coordinates with volunteers?*

*Who coordinates with senior church leadership?*

*Who coordinates with families?*

- **Documentation and Debrief**

*What sort of documentation do you have regarding policies and procedures?*

*How do buddies record their friend's weekly activities? We recommend a journal to record positive growth, difficulties, injuries, prayer requests, etc.*

## SLIDE 11 – On the Front Lines: The First Steps to Getting Buddies



*Take time to determine your expectations for volunteers ahead of time. This section depends on the particulars of your ministry.*

- **Terms of service:**
  - = **Buddies need to know what's required of them! Make clear time, commitment, and character qualities that are necessary for your buddies.**
  
- **Recruiting buddies:**
  - = **The first step is always prayer, asking for God's wisdom.**
  - = **We need to reach out to different groups of people, including small groups, youth and young adult groups, to partner with other ministries.**
  - = **We don't want "just anyone" to serve, but anyone is capable of serving if they have the heart of Christ.**
  
- **Training buddies:**
  - = **Everyone should have a basic training on disability awareness and etiquette.**

*You can download initial training on disability etiquette from [THIS LINK](#).*
  - = **The more information buddies know about their friend the better they can come alongside and build a friendship.**

*You might want to show a Parent Intake Form as an example of providing information for the buddies about the child they are serving.*

- = **For more information please read Engaging Game Changers.**

## **SLIDE 12 – Lisa’s Story**



*Take this time to tell the story of how the Buddy Program has impacted a family. Edit this slide to match your story, or use the story below.*

- = **Before Lisa and her husband ever received the diagnosis of autism for their first son, Lisa would be called into the Sunday school classroom to assist her son.**
- = **Lisa never complained about the constant interruption in her spiritual life because she knew her son would be happier with her than struggling in class.**
- = **One Sunday, the pattern changed.**
- = **Lisa turned the corner to the children’s wing at church, and heard screams coming from the classroom.**
- = **These were not screams of defiance, or squealing with delight. These were screams of terror.**
- = **She ran into the classroom, and found her son being pinned down in a chair by an older gentleman.**
- = **Upon questioning the volunteer, Lisa learned that her son had not harmed**

**another child, been defiant, or been a danger to himself.**

- = He had simply been unable to settle down that morning.**
- = Lisa took her son, and left the classroom with a broken heart.**
- = The one place her family had always been accepted now felt like a place where she was no longer welcome.**
- = Staying involved in church became a challenge, as Lisa and her husband felt no one understood or cared about the needs of their family.**
- = The began to drift away.**
  
- = But this was not the end of the story!**
- = God had a different plan.**
- = Two volunteers, Tim and Molly, approached Lisa and asked her to bring her son back to Sunday school.**
- = Lisa initially refused, but week after week, Tim and Molly extended their invitation.**
- = Eventually, Lisa dropped her son off, now accompanied by Tim or Molly.**
- = Every week, they smiled when Lisa brought her son, and every week they were smiling when Lisa picked him up.**
- = “Please bring your son again next week! We really love spending time with him!”**
- = Because of Tim and Molly’s service as buddies, they were able to share the love of Christ with a hurting family.**



## SLIDE 13 – The Details



- **Pairing buddies with friends:**
  - = **Pairing the right buddy with the right friend is critical for everyone's success.**
  - = **For example, we wouldn't pair an energetic student with a tendency to run off with someone who has limited mobility.**
  - = **We also need to consider age appropriate partners.**
  - = **A child needs an adult buddy, but as our friends enter middle and high school, they typically enjoy being paired with someone their age, and their peers are at a maturity level where they can be a responsible buddy.**
- **When a diagnosis is suspected:**
  - = **It is never appropriate to try and diagnose or ask the parents to get their child tested for a disability.**
  - = **We don't serve a diagnosis or a specific disability in this ministry.**
  - = **We serve people.**
  - = **If a friend is having difficulty participating in mainstream activities because of cognitive, behavioral, or social reasons, we can always ask the parents for suggestions and adaptations that they think may be helpful.**
- **Family volunteers:**

- = **While it may be tempting to recruit family members of someone with a disability to serve as a buddy, we need to be cautious.**
- = **While we don't want to prevent people from serving in a ministry they're passionate about, it may be the more loving thing to encourage siblings and parents to serve in other ministries.**
- = **Allowing family members to explore their gifting in different ministers may be a better way for us to serve them.**

- **Scheduling:**

*How will you handle scheduling volunteers? Clear policies and expectations for when commitments need to be made is a benefit to everyone.*

*It's also often a good idea to schedule a "floating" volunteer to help serve as support if someone needs it, or to partner with an unexpected guest.*

- **Buddy support:**

*Remind your volunteers who they can talk to when they need support during the service, and who they can reach out to during the week!*

## SLIDE 14 - Irresistible Church Site



*Remind your audience that Call Me Friend and other books related to serving families affected by disability are available as free downloads at [IrresistibleChurch.org](http://IrresistibleChurch.org).*

## SLIDE 15 - Questions



*Don't forget to fill in your own contact information.*

*Close in prayer.*