

SHARING *Hope* THROUGH HARDSHIP



Nada is the proud recipient
of our 250,000th wheelchair!

from the heart

“Seek first his kingdom and his righteousness,
and all these things will be given to you as well.”

MATTHEW 6:33

What do you seek first? What moves you through the morning and lingers in your thoughts before you drift off to sleep? Our world will clutter your mind and distract your heart if you let it. According to the news, there is an infinite stream of calamities that demand your attention. Across your devices, algorithms will bombard you with images of what you “must” have, right now!

I can just hear Jesus quietly respond with the words of Matthew 6:31–32: “Do not worry, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them.”

But how, amid all the noise, are believers to hear the only Voice we really need to hear? The Lord Himself provides the answer in Matthew 6:33: “Seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.”

As disciples of Christ, we must take one simple yet monumental

step—to seek *first* His kingdom and His righteousness. What does this mean? Ask the Spirit to keep Jesus in front of your thoughts. Study his Word and set prayer as a priority throughout your day. Make much of Jesus in your heart (and calendar), and draw near to the only One who can set your feet unshakably on the path toward true righteousness.

Next, conduct an honest assessment. Would Jesus Christ be pleased by your thoughts and plans? How about your daydreams or your internet search history? Ask Jesus to fill every corner of your heart and into the spaces where you spend your time. Ask Him to reveal a selfish desire you need to release, or bring to mind a person you should forgive. Tune into His prompting to engage a person struggling with loneliness or to reach out to a fatigued special needs family.

Here’s the amazing thing about bowing to Him as the only rightful Lord of our lives: not only does a person focused on Jesus find wholeness and fulfillment in Him, but Matthew 6:33



promises, “... all these things will be given to you as well.” God delights in providing for His people who seek and trust in Him; He also pours out blessings through such people for the benefit of others.

For instance, when I started Joni and Friends back in 1979, answering stacks of letters from people struggling with disability, my friends and I kept Jesus first in every response. It’s why this ministry has expanded so far beyond my kitchen table, vibrant through our constant focus on Jesus Christ and dedication to the Gospel.

And this month, as we celebrate custom-fitting our 250,000th wheelchair to a precious girl in Thailand named

Nada through our *Wheels for the World*[®] program... Oh Friend, I am praising God! Because Jesus is pouring out blessings through you as you seek Him. And in this, He fulfills His promise that “all these things will be given,” *through you*, to disabled people around the world.

In the glorious name of Jesus,

Joni Eareckson Tada
Founder, Joni and Friends

Celebrating a Kingdom Milestone... **250,000** Wheelchairs!



For just over a year now, I've had the privilege of serving as your Joni and Friends President. In this role, I have seen God move through this ministry in powerful ways. Today, I am delighted to share with you about my truly remarkable experience serving on my first *Wheels for the World* outreach in Thailand, which also marked the delivery of our 250,000th wheelchair!

In the months to come, I am excited for you to learn more about Nada, the delightful girl whose wheelchair brought us to the quarter-million mark. But first, I want to unpack the deep kingdom impact represented in the number of lives we are celebrating.

Like everything we do at Joni and Friends, *Wheels for the World* began with sharing the Gospel. Traveling to share the Good News of Jesus in the Philippines in 1989, Joni's heart broke as she watched a woman army-crawl across a dirt road, unassisted and disregarded by those around her. In that moment, the Holy Spirit moved Joni to do something for that woman and millions like her worldwide.

In 1994, Joni's prompting from God in the Philippines translated into Joni and Friends delivering our first wheelchair to a child in Ghana. From that day, our outreaches have grown, fueled by the faith, love, and commitment of our staff, volunteers, and friends like you. And since the beginning, each person we provide with a wheelchair not only experiences the life-change of mobility. They encounter the practical love of Jesus demonstrated by our skilled physical therapists and mechanics who are committed to sharing the Gospel in word and deed with every individual and family we serve.

While in Thailand, I loved watching the detail and care that goes into fitting

each wheelchair. Like the ministry of Jesus on earth, each interaction was personal, showing every wheelchair recipient and their family that they are worthy of diligent care and infinite dignity. You should have seen the parents watching intently as our team made adjustments to their child's wheelchair, and the joy in their eyes when the fit was just right, holding their loved one safe, secure, and free like never before.

The beauty of hitting a number like 250,000 is that every number has a name, every name has a story, and every story matters to God. It's why I'm so grateful that we treat each wheelchair delivery as an opportunity to make an eternal impact on the recipient's life by connecting them to a local church where they can grow in faith.

So yes, let's celebrate 250,000 wheelchairs delivered, but we can't stop there. Join Joni and me in praising God for the love of Jesus reaching our precious recipients, their families, and their communities. And give thanks for the Savior's love poured out through you, our faithful partners and volunteers.

Friend, you are an essential part of God's glorious kingdom work that touches millions of lives through Joni and Friends. Thank you for partnering with this ministry as we move onward and upward toward 500,000 wheelchairs... and a world where every person with a disability finds hope, dignity, and their place in the body of Christ!

Shawn Thornton
President, Joni and Friends

Wheels for the World, **Changing** *Lives Through the* **Lives** *Decades*



1994 Ghana

God was starting something big at our first *Wheels for the World* outreach in Ghana.



Early 2000s Peru

In the early 2000s, Joni and Ken traveled to Peru with *Wheels for the World*, sharing the Good News of Jesus.



Early 2000s Cuba

Joining a *Wheels for the World* outreach in Cuba during the 2000s, Joni and Ken loved ministering to the people with disabilities we served.



2003 India

In 2003, Joni and Friends delivered our **25,000th** wheelchair through *Wheels for the World* to a child in India.

Continued on next page



2005 East Asia

In 2005, eleven years after our first *Wheels for the World* outreach, Joni went to East Asia to meet and serve more people living with disabilities, offering the love of Jesus.



2014 Ghana

In 2014, we delivered our **100,000th** wheelchair through *Wheels for the World*, this time to a boy named Ebenezer in Ghana.

2021 El Salvador

In 2021, our **200,000th** wheelchair was given and custom-fitted through *Wheels for the World* to a boy named Levi in El Salvador.



2026 Thailand

This year, our **250,000th** wheelchair was given to eleven-year-old Nada in Thailand. Like every *Wheels for the World* recipient, Nada and her mother received the Gospel message, a Bible in their language, and a copy of Joni's Scripture-filled autobiography.

Our impact, since 1994
811 outreaches in
72 countries

Join Joni, Ken, and our entire Joni and Friends team in rejoicing over God's grace poured out through *Wheels for the World* since 1994. And join us in praying for the power of Jesus to lead **onward and upward toward 500,000 wheelchairs!**

God's Blessings Flow

From North Carolina ▼

When their daughter, Jenny, was born with Down syndrome more than 50 years ago, Cherry and Ron were not prepared for disability to become part of their family. But, even amid their initial fear and anger, God met Cherry, Ron, and Jenny with deep love.

As Jenny grew up, her parents always pointed her to Jesus. Jenny recalls, "When I was younger, I spent a lot of time asking God, 'Why did you make me with Down syndrome?' The Lord showed me that I am not a mistake, but I am a precious gift."

Today, Ron lives with Alzheimer's and Cherry has been diagnosed with skin cancer. One day, just as Cherry felt especially overwhelmed, she received a call from one of our team members suggesting that she sign up for *Family Retreat*. As Cherry says, "I decided we would come, thinking it might be the last trip we would get to take as a family." She couldn't imagine the love, joy, and hope that awaited them.

Arriving at *Family Retreat*, Cherry, Ron, and Jenny were met with the warm welcome of cheering volunteers. "It was like driving into a huge hug," Cherry says. "I told my family, 'They actually see us!' It was like a breath of fresh air. It was so powerful."

Jenny immediately connected with her volunteer buddy and had a blast throughout the week. "I enjoyed every minute," she says. Meanwhile Ron enjoyed deep connection with other dads and Cherry found what she calls, "the most authentic Christian fellowship I have ever experienced!"

Toward the end of *Family Retreat*, our team assured Cherry that, through every hardship, she, Ron, and Jenny are part of our Joni and Friends community—now and for eternity! Thank you for providing this precious family with a powerful experience of belonging in the body of Christ!



Through Your Love

From Louisiana ▼

Bailey is 30 years old and full of joy as she travels around the state of Louisiana and even the U.S. representing some of her favorite sports including bowling, horseshoes, swimming, and more. For years, Bailey and her mom, Lorna, have traveled near and far to make sure Bailey meets new friends and uses her God given talents and abilities.

But Bailey's life isn't easy. She was born with Williams syndrome, a rare genetic condition marked by developmental delays and medical challenges, some which can be life threatening. Given the challenges they face, Bailey and Lorna have often felt like no one really understands what their life is like... until they discovered *Family Retreat*.

Lorna loves the fact that, at *Family Retreat*, Bailey is celebrated for who she is. She is not seen as different, just valued and loved. As Bailey says, "My favorite part of *Family Retreat* is that I am brave enough to try new things here, things I never knew I could do, like rock wall climbing and drumming. I always see Jesus at *Family Retreat*. Everything here reminds me of Him, and I never want to leave."

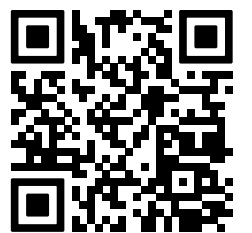
"I feel so blessed," says Lorna, "to be with other parents who struggle with the same things I do. We share without being judged. And I enjoy the quiet time. It allows me to reconnect with my thoughts and to lean on God. Bailey and I leave each year with heavy hearts knowing it will be another full year before this happens again, but we look forward to other Joni and Friends events throughout the year."

Thank you for showing Lorna and Bailey they are not alone—that they belong, now and forever, in the body of Christ!



Bless your loved ones & share the love of Jesus!

Your gift given **in honor** or **in memory** of a loved one brings the hope of the Gospel to people living with disabilities worldwide! View your loved one's name on our online Tribute Wall at joniandfriends.org/tribute or by using this QR code!



JONI'S 2027 PLANNER IS HERE!

Featuring her *Fishing on the Lake* artwork, Joni's 2027 Planner is an invitation to experience the peace of Christ by abiding in Him, every day and in all circumstances. We live in a troubled world, and our hearts long for peace.

Drawing upon Scripture, deep personal reflection, and a lifetime of following her Savior, Joni designed this Planner to help us all find true peace by trusting Jesus, the Prince of Peace, throughout 2027 and into eternity.

"For this Planner, I chose artwork rendered in wild watercolor. Why? Because I pray God will use this year to help you loosen your grip and surrender the attractive illusion of control. You see, in surrendering to our Creator and Lord Jesus, trusting Him to hold the outcomes of the family struggle, health challenge, or financial uncertainty, you will find a sweet, unshakable peace." – Joni



Product Details:

- Size: 6.5" x 9.25"
- 12-month agenda planner
- Chronological Bible Reading Plan
- Gold spiral binding
- Lay-flat design
- Interior 2 pocket pages
- Updated monthly & weekly sections
- High quality paper stock

\$22

*100% of proceeds directly advances
ministry to children and families living with disability.*

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