

**PARENTING
A CHILD WITH
SPECIAL NEEDS**

SPECIAL NEEDS MINISTRY

Whether you have just recently received a troubling diagnosis, are moving into a new stage of care, or have just started attending this church, we want to be a source of encouragement and hope as you fulfill your calling to be a parent of a child with special needs.

Parenting a child with physical or mental disabilities can bring a whole new level of physical and emotional stress for parents. But it also brings a level of joy others rarely comprehend. We believe every child is a gift from God made in His image and reflecting His dignity, and that those caring for these children are worthy of special honor and support.

YOUR BLESSING

While these children may be limited in certain physical and/or academic pursuits, they can thrive in the most important arena of life – the spirit. Children who can't understand the written word of God embody what it means to love and be loved as one totally dependent upon the Giver and Sustainer of life. And those honored to serve these children are given a unique connection with the God whose image they bear – seen in a gazing smile, a shrieking laugh, or an unspoken moment of delight.

YOUR CALLING

You have one of the most difficult yet vital calling, having been called to serve a special child as though serving Christ himself (Matthew 25:40). It is vital to embrace the call daily and to lay down your life as a servant. Philippians 2 says: "Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus, who... made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant." That call is especially real in the midst of the never-ending sacrifices demanded of you.

YOUR CHALLENGE

Whether your child has mild or severe needs, you require replenishment in order to stay faithful and avoid burnout. You need practical help, periodic breaks, and spiritual nourishment. Of course, making that happen can be difficult because very few offer to help and those who do may not understand what to do or just how hard it can be. That's why this church wants to serve your family and make it possible to attend services.

EASTVIEW RESOURCES:

Special Needs Sunday Programming/Care: Michelle Maris mmaris@eastview.church

Parents of Special Needs Care Group; Adults with Special Needs Class; Facebook page: Eastview Christian Church Special Needs Ministry

RECOMMENDED RESOURCES:

- **Unbroken Faith** by Diane Dokko Kim
- **Different Dream Parenting** by Jolene Philo
- **Soul Cries** by Theresa Regan
- **Hope for the Caregiver** by Peter Rosenberg;
- **The Life We Never Expected: Hopeful Reflections on the Challenges of Parenting Children with Special Needs** by Andrew Wilson
- **The Lucky Few** by Heather Avis
- **Scot Over and Make Room** by Heather Avis
- **I Am Strong** by Dr. Lamar Hardwick
- **Bible Promises for Parents of Children with Special Needs** by Amy Mason
- **A Special Hope Podcast** by Sarah Broady.