

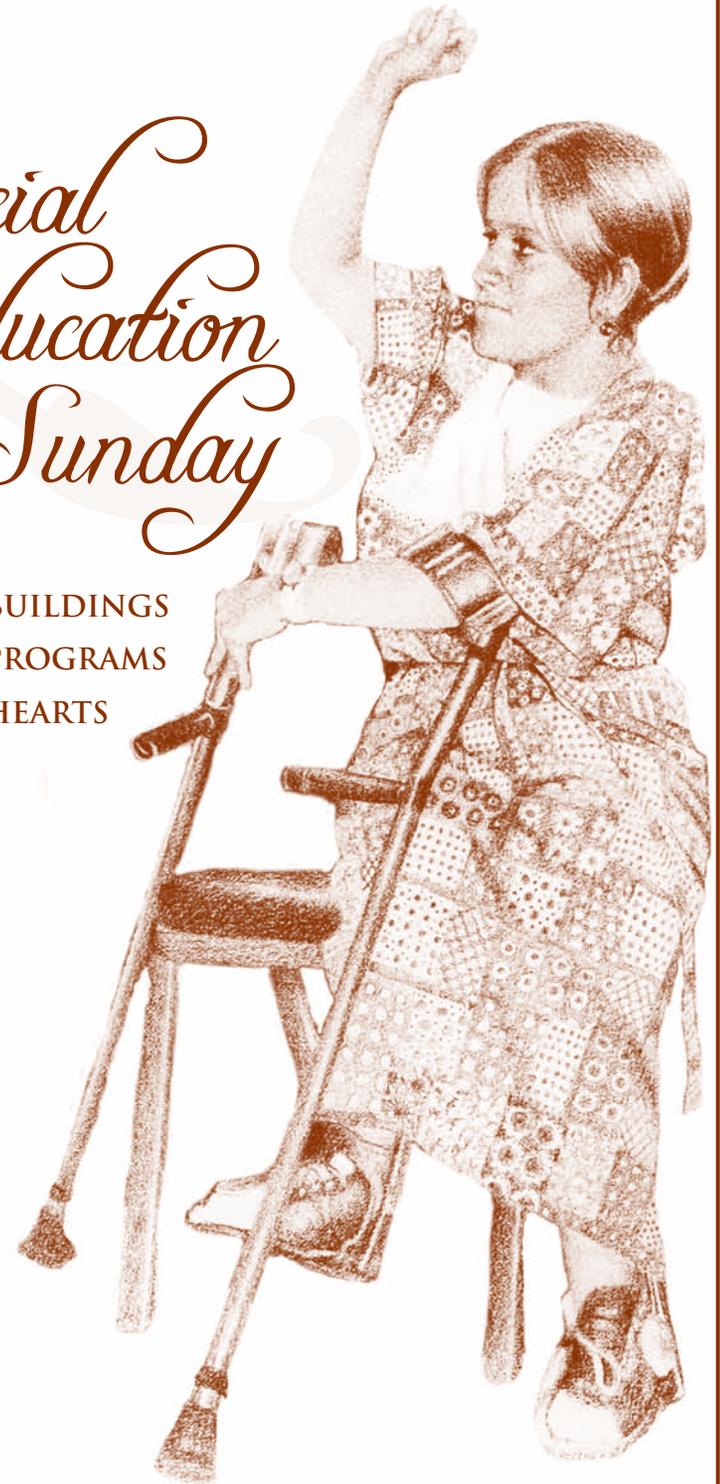
Special Education Sunday

ACCESSIBLE BUILDINGS
ACCESSIBLE PROGRAMS
ACCESSIBLE HEARTS



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ACCESSIBLE PROGRAMS
ACCESSIBLE HEARTS



She went to church with her family, but could not get in. The building was not accessible, as it had no ramp or elevator to help her past the stairs. Some men of the church carried her up the stairs. The family asked for a special class for their daughter with special needs, but no class was available. The programs of the church were not accessible. A place was found for her, but the class did not meet her special needs. Some complained about the family's presence – they thought the girl with crutches disrupted the dignity of the service. Their hearts were not accessible.

What would happen if the young woman pictured on the front came to your church? Would she find an accessible congregation, or would she find closed hearts and blocked doors? The greatest barriers people with disabilities must often overcome are not accessible buildings and programs, but accessible hearts. When hearts are open, programs and buildings become accessible.

North Carolina Baptists believe in open doors. This is why many churches have made their buildings accessible to people with mobility challenges by adding ramps, elevators, bathrooms with bars and wide doorways. North Carolina Baptists believe in open hearts. This is why churches have started special programs for people with developmental disabilities. Churches with open hearts find ways to include people with special needs in the life of their church. Churches with open hearts develop mainstream programs and self-contained classes as needed. Churches with accessible programs and buildings are churches that care deeply about people.

Is your heart open? Is your church accessible? If you want to learn more about open hearts and accessible buildings and programs, the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina wants to help. Almost 200 churches in North Carolina have intentional Developmental Disabilities ministries. Will yours be next? For more information, contact Donnie Wiltshire at (800) 395-5102, ext. 5630 or 5629, or visit www.ncbaptist.org.



Baptist State Convention of North Carolina • Milton A. Hollifield, Jr., *Executive Director-Treasurer*
205 Convention Drive • Cary, NC 27511 • (919) 467-5100 • (800) 395-5102 • www.ncbaptist.org

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