

**Avon United Methodist Church**  
**The “Garden”**  
**Special Needs Ministry**

This skit was written for Disability Awareness Sunday in March 2010 at Avon UMC. The goal of the Special Needs Ministry team and the writer was to raise awareness and portray how the church as the body of Christ can help others. This is a more Christ-centered goal than bringing about pity.

**The Balloon Skit – created by Penny Hanlon**

Oftentimes, with special needs families or those caring for their medically ill loved one, people around them may be unaware of their spiritual, emotional and social needs. Because of this lack of awareness, families can become isolated and may struggle unnecessarily in their daily lives.

The goal of the balloon skit is to bring awareness to the congregation of the unique struggles of the families and then show them how the church can be a help to families along the way.

(The balloons each represent the activities/struggles of family life. You want to make sure that you do not have too many balloons to juggle because it will look impossible to help them. We would also suggest that you have someone on the side throwing the next balloons in as the narrator reads the story.)

There is a narrator reading the story while the scene begins.

Begin with 2 balloons – husband and wife start as single individuals, juggling 1 balloon each. When they come together, it indicates that they are joined in marriage.

- The woman stands on one side of the aisle juggling her balloon and walking toward the center aisle
- The man stands on the other side of the aisle juggling his balloon and walking toward the center aisle
- They meet in the center aisle, each juggling their balloons in the air. The narrator focuses on how they both enter marriage, working and helping each other
- They juggle their two balloons together as they walk down the main aisle

Add a balloon – they have a child.

Add another balloon – they have another child. Now they are balancing work, children, and marriage.

Add another balloon – they have church, sports, and school activities. The narrator talks about the activities that the family is involved in.

Add another balloon – their child gets sick.

Add another balloon – they see multiple doctors. The narrator focuses on how the parents are trying to figure out what is wrong, what is the diagnosis, what do they do next.

Add another balloon – they now need to balance the medical issues. The narrator begins to go over medications, weekly doctor visits, special diets, therapies, rehab. This can be as general or specific as needed.

Add another balloon - medical bills. The narrator focuses on how they are trying to get a handle on their finances.

As the balloon juggling becomes chaotic, you need to have people from the congregation stand up and help the parents “juggle” their balloons. (We had our friends sitting in the congregation ready to stand up and help when the narrator started to list ways for the congregation to help the families. This was their cue to stand up and help us juggle our balloons)

As the narrator begins to list the ways the congregation can help, i.e. Volunteer for the special needs ministry team, help with respite, give financially, whatever ways the church is offering to help, then the parents juggle their balloons out into the congregation and they naturally help to keep the balloon in the air. This gives a visual to the congregation to show them how they can be a part of sharing God’s love to the body of the church.