



CHARITY WATCHLIST

Joni & Friends



ABORTION

- In an episode of her [podcast](#), Joni Eareckson Tada discusses “safeguarding the vulnerable” from abortion. In the episode description, it states:

Abortion is the worst form of discrimination against people with disabilities. Joni and Friends is praying for and working toward the day when every life is considered sacred.

- Joni & Friends [publishes](#) a story in 2025 regarding January as Sanctity of Human Life Month:

January is Sanctity of Human Life Month. And as public conversations surrounding abortion and medically assisted suicide continue to pinpoint people with disabilities as the best candidates, it's time to ask an uncomfortable but all-too-timely question: Do people with disabilities deserve to live?

Of course, the answer is yes. But if we peel back the thinking behind many common medical and legislative practices, it appears that the prevailing opinion—at least in practice—is no.

In fact, over the past few decades, non-invasive prenatal testing has dramatically influenced who gets to be born. And it has uncovered just how deep our culture's bias against disability runs. Of pregnancies with a prenatal diagnosis of Down syndrome, roughly 67% are terminated. When it comes to a prenatal diagnosis of spina bifida, termination rates increase to around 70%.

- Joni & Friends statement on abortion in its [2020 policy brief](#):

The practice of ending the life of a preborn child who has been diagnosed with a disability is becoming more prevalent. Instead of eliminating persons with disabilities while they are still in the womb, communities should work together to change hearts, minds, and the conditions that make life with a disability more difficult.

The practice of ending the life of a preborn child who has been diagnosed with a disability is becoming more prevalent. Instead of All human beings, no matter their age, stage of development, or level of functioning, are persons with fundamental moral rights—including the right not to be killed intentionally. the conditions that make life with a disability more difficult.

First, abortion— whether for disability-related reasons or not—must be opposed vigorously, both as a matter of individual choice and as a matter of public policy. Second, rather than attempting to eliminate persons with disabilities while they are still in the womb, we should work together to mitigate the conditions that make their lives more difficult, including discriminatory and biased social attitudes and practices.

- Statement [on human life](#) from “What we believe”:

We believe that human life is sacred from conception to its natural end. We believe that since all life is sacred, every human being has value and deserves dignity. As such, we must have concern for the physical and spiritual needs of our fellow man.

Joni and Friends

joniandfriends.org

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Mission

To communicate the Gospel, equip churches, and disciple people affected by disabilities.

Focus

Christianity, disabilities, rehabilitation, retreats

LGBTQ+

- Joni and Friends' [statement on marriage](#):

We believe God's plan for human sexuality is to be expressed only within the context of marriage, that God created man and woman as genetically unique biological persons made to complement each other in marriage if God wills.

God instituted monogamous marriage as the exclusive union of one male and one female as the foundation of the family and the basic structure of human society.

CONTRACEPTION

- A [press release](#) in 2014 shows Joni and Friends' disagreement with the American Academy of Pediatrics promoting birth control options to teenagers rather than abstinence:

*In a policy update issued two weeks ago, the American Academy of Pediatrics is advising doctors that discussions on sexuality and birth control options should be a part of routine care for young people with disabilities. The new policy suggests that teens with disabilities should have access to oral contraceptives, patches, injections and IUDs – the statement also urges pediatricians to recommend the use of condoms every time they have sex. What saddens me, is that the Academy does not mention abstinence, let alone advise doctors to encourage parents to administer sex education. When it comes to raising a special-needs child, parents invest too much in their well being to simply “abdicate” the responsibility of sex education to others – and only a parent knows when a child with, let's say, an intellectual disability is ready for such information. **Parents should retain their authority to teach their children with disabilities about sex and responsible behavior.** Matthew 10:21 speaks of a time coming when “children will rebel against their parents.” And perhaps this new policy statement from the American Academy of Pediatrics is, indeed, a sign of the times.*

EMBRYONIC STEM CELL RESEARCH

- In 2020 Joni Eareckson Tada writes about her and the organization's disapproval of human embryonic stem cell research promoted during the Bush and Obama presidencies, due to its destruction of human life:

*This month as we celebrate the sanctity of human life, I think of how valuable the fight is for even the tiniest of lives. I am reminded of my time with President George W. Bush and our campaign to restrict federal funding for research on stem cells obtained from human embryos (ESCR). I was honored to take part in many press conferences and symposiums with President Bush and his team of advocates, making it clear that **such research was totally unethical – it meant the destruction of human life.** However, in the following years, President Obama lifted the Bush-era ban on embryo research resulting in millions a year in federal funds toward embryo-destructive research.*



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