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Through the Roof Charitable Trust
Ltd. Is a UK Registered Company
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Registered Charity Number
1087788.

BELONG OR BEGONE?

How friendly is your church?
Dare to take the board game challenge!



BELONG OR BEGONE?

How friendly is your church?

How to play:

For 2-8 players

You will need:

- 1 game board
- 1 dice (supplied but you will need to cut it out and glue it)
- 8 coloured counters (supplied, but you will need to cut them out)
- 39 Friendship cards
- A Bible (optional but recommended)

The object is to progress around the board from the attendance zone, through the inclusion zone to the belonging zone. The first player to reach the “part of the furniture” square is the winner.

Set out the board in the middle. Shuffle the 40 friendship cards and place 20 on each of the 2 marked spots on the board. Each player should select a coloured playing counter. The first person to throw a 6 starts, and play continues clockwise.

The first player throws the dice and moves her counter forward the indicated number of places. She then takes a Friendship card from one of the piles and reads it aloud, then follows the instruction on the card. The card is then replaced at the bottom of the pile. Play then passes to the next person, and continues until one player reaches the final square.

Optional: the Bible verse can be looked up to find out something the Bible teaches on friendship.

In 2014 Through the Roof carried out a survey of disabled Christians to find out about their experience of church. Among the many experiences which people described to us, one factor stood out: there is a lack of real, genuine, deep friendships between disabled people and their fellow church members. Some churches had not taken seriously the role of disabled people in their midst; others were doing much to be more inclusive. But even in some of the most successful of them, disabled people reported that while they were included, provided for and even, in the best examples, given opportunities to minister, the biggest lack was finding true friendship which extended into the rest of life and was not just restricted to church activities.

We at Through the Roof recognise that there is some anxiety in the general population about befriending disabled people, a fear of doing or saying something that might give offence or of being unable to meet a need that arises. A survey by SCOPE revealed that 67% of people admit to avoiding contact with disabled people.

But what disabled people want and need from friendship is exactly the same as everybody else wants and needs—the opportunity to form deep, reciprocal relationships in which both parties are known, appreciated, loved, valued and encouraged.

We have taken a look through the Bible to find out what it has to say, and we have identified 40 characteristics of Biblical friendship. These 40 characteristics are listed in either positive (present) or negative (absent) form on the 40 Friendship cards in this game. We hope that as you play it in your small group, you will read what the Bible says about friendship, and discuss how you can befriend disabled people who come to your church so that they pass from mere attendance, beyond inclusion in church life to become some of your closest friends.