**Use this template to personalize an awareness letter and send it to your clergy person. Let your clergy person know what your place of worship can do to be more inclusive for people with intellectual or developmental disabilities.**

**Consider including a picture of you and your loved one with your letter. Remember Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month is just that, a month to highlight your loved one and show the wonderful contributions they make to society.**

Dear (Pastor, Minister, Rabbi, etc.)

My name is \_ and I have been a member of *[name of place of worship]* for *[Duration of time]*. March is National Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month and I want to take this opportunity to speak with you about community inclusion for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

As you know, my *[son/daughter]* is *[age]* and has *[intellectual disability, developmental disability, Down Syndrome, etc.]. [He/she]* lives *[at home group home, etc.]* with *[me, sister/brother, etc.].* My *[son/daughter]* spends *[his/her]* days *[working, at a day program, volunteering, etc.].*

*(If your loved one has attended your place of worship with you, describe your experience. If they have not attended with you, explain what barriers you face in including your loved one in services and what your place of worship can do to help include your loved one.)*

As you create programs and carry out initiatives please think about ways to include my [son/daughter]. I welcome you to use National Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month as an opportunity to learn more about people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their incredible accomplishments to our community.

For more information visit The Arc of New Jersey’s developmental disabilities awareness website at www.disabilityawarenessnj.org. Or feel free to use me as a resource for personal stories and information. Please contact me at \_\_.

Thank you for your dedication to our community.

Sincerely,