



Christian Talking Book Publications

November 30, 2023

Talking Book Library - Dissolution and a Transformation

The directors of the board of Christian Talking Book Publications, operating as Talking Book Library (TBL), are announcing that TBL will be ending its current ministry and transferring its support and resources to Joy Beyond Vision Community (JBVC), a similarly-minded faith-based charitable mission that offers a more broad-based ministry to the needs of visually impaired persons.

For several years, TBL has been negatively affected by many factors that placed the ministry under severe hardship, so that its relevance and sustainability have become serious issues. These factors include the rapid changes in the world of publishing, advances in technology, the fall-out from the COVID pandemic and the subsequent drastic decrease in the level of donations and availability of volunteers.

When TBL first began in 1986 there were few accessible talking books available for visually impaired persons (VIP's). It became the mission of TBL to meet their Christian literature needs. Since that time, over 2000 titles have been narrated and produced by dedicated volunteers. Today, however, there are many publishers who professionally produce audio books of all genres, including titles in religion and spirituality, that can be freely loaned from public libraries. This development, as well as the use of advanced software applications that can adapt text to life-like speech, has been a real challenge for TBL to compete financially and practically in a timely manner.

Recognizing these challenges, the TBL Board has sought God's guidance for providing solutions and strategies for meeting other literature and community needs of visually impaired people. We see JBVC as a divine response to TBL's dilemma. JBVC is a Christian faith-based organization that has been serving VIP's since 2006. Of its several community-minded mission objectives, for example, one includes the assistance to VIP's to access printed materials. JBVC currently also has a practical ministry in the training of VIP's in vocational skills in the JBVC Cafe at the Gibson Community Centre where TBL already has a recording booth for narrating books in Cantonese and Mandarin. A full descriptive statement of its mission and vision is available at joybeyondvision.ca.

We believe that, with God's leading, the spirit of TBL's ministry will be fully integrated into JBVC and enhance that mission. Our loving God has faithfully been alongside TBL throughout all its challenges



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from first becoming independent from Christian Blind Mission, its difficulty with financial support, leadership changes, and moving to different studio locations. With each challenge, God provided His guidance for solutions. Now after much prayer we believe He is directing us again to make this innovative transformation.

The change will take effect officially on January 1, 2024 and allows for the resources and assets of TBL, including the TBL brand, to infuse and strengthen JBVC so that its mission of sharing the gospel with visually impaired persons, and helping them to overcome life's barriers, can be more effectively realized. The compassionate spirit of TBL's mission will live on and encompass the work of JBVC.

Practical implications for TBL mean that the recording studio at St. John's Anglican Church, (Light on the Hill) Richmond Hill will be closed ending all production there. (JBVC will use the recording booth that TBL already had at the Gibson Centre for its audio needs.) TBL will transfer its recording booths, office equipment, entire digital content, and material resources, but not its list of contacts to JBVC in order to protect the personal information of our contacts. For those of you who want to continue supporting the ministry to VIPs, we strongly encourage you to consider transferring your service, your personal information, and your donations to JBVC. Tax receipts for donations made to TBL in 2023 will be distributed by the end of January 2024.

The ending of TBL's audio book production may be a disappointment for many dedicated volunteers and staff who have faithfully provided a committed service for over thirty years. We express deep gratitude to all the donors, narrators, editors, production personnel, library managers and other volunteers. Your service has meant so much to VIPs.

Finally, we must give thanks to God for His ongoing presence and guidance over the years as we tried to offer life-transforming audio materials that stimulate spiritual growth in the lives of persons who are blind, print-disabled or orally reliant. We believe we are continuing to be guided by Him and pray that this transformation will broaden the support that can be given to the VIP community.

The Board of Directors
Christian Talking Book Publications