

Christian Congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses
Congrégation chrétienne des Témoins de Jéhovah



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TO ALL CONGREGATIONS

Re: Electronic publications on jw.org for the blind or visually impaired

Dear Brothers:

We are pleased to inform you that publications designed for use by those who are blind or visually impaired are now available on jw.org for download. These include files for magazines, books, and *Our Kingdom Ministry* for use with Braille notetakers and screen readers. Please find below general information about the use of these files.

- (1) **Braille notetaker files:** A Braille notetaker is a portable electronic device with a refreshable Braille display and may include a voice-synthesis function. Notetakers that utilize the notetaker (BRL) file format are typically used by those who are able to read Braille. After notetaker files are downloaded from jw.org, these files can be loaded onto a personally owned, portable notetaker device.
- (2) **Screen reader files:** A screen reader is a computer program that audibly reads the text as it is displayed on a computer screen. Files for screen readers are available in Rich Text Format (RTF) and are particularly useful to blind or visually impaired persons who cannot read Braille. After RTF files are downloaded from jw.org, they can be loaded onto a personally owned computer that has screen-reader software.

These new file formats for various publications will be released progressively in a number of languages, and they can be found under the “Publications” tab of jw.org. The *Watchtower* and *Awake!* magazines became available for download with the June 2014 issues. These are listed along with the other downloadable file formats, such as EPUB, MOBI, and PDF, for each publication. Publishers who feel that they could benefit from these new file formats may make their own arrangements to download the files. If any assistance is needed, publishers may contact their local body of elders. Additionally, those interested in receiving automatic downloads of newly-posted magazines in BRL and RTF formats may do so by using the “Podcasts” link.

It is our hope that this provision will assist in caring more fully for the spiritual needs of those who are blind or visually impaired.

Be assured of our warm Christian love and greetings.

Your brothers,

*Christian Congregation
of Jehovah's Witnesses*

cc: Traveling overseers

8/3/14-E

PS to body of elders:

At the next Service Meeting, please arrange for an announcement to be made to the congregation that a letter on the above-noted subject will be posted on the information board. Additionally, arrangements should be put into place immediately to assist publishers or interested ones who are able to make use of the notetaker (BRL) or Rich Text Format (RTF) file formats. Your positive spirit and willingness to help these individuals are greatly appreciated.

Some who associate with your congregation may already subscribe to the magazines and other publications in the BRL and RTF file formats. Currently, the branch office maintains an electronic mailing list of individuals who are approved to receive these files via e-mail. For the time being, the branch office will continue to provide these files via e-mail to these individuals. However, now that many of these files are available for public download, please encourage any who are blind or visually impaired in your congregation to obtain these files from jw.org if possible. Please take the initiative to provide assistance. This may require assigning selected publishers to give regular assistance to help these individuals download the files. In the case of magazines, the “Podcasts” link can be used to download automatically the newly-posted content. Once it can be verified that the subscriber can access the needed files on his own or with assistance, please use the jw.org Inbox feature to inform the Shipping Department that the electronic subscriptions for that individual can be canceled.

There are some publication files, such as public talk outlines, that will be available for download only by elders who have access to the restricted areas of jw.org. The elders should be alert to distribute these files promptly to those who qualify to receive them. When items are requested that are not posted on either the public or the restricted areas of jw.org, a request should be submitted to the branch office as outlined in chapter 16 of *Literature and Magazine Request Guidelines* (S-56).

Please note that there is no change to how publications in the embossed Braille format should be requested or distributed. For information regarding what is available in this format, please refer to the *Braille Publications List* (S-58). Requests for publications in this format should be submitted on behalf of the reader using jw.org or the *Braille Request Form* (S-59).