

Presbytery of the Twin Cities Area

DISABILITY CONCERNS MINISTRY POLICY

Because, one in five Americans lives with a disability, readily apparent or hidden, that significantly limits one or more major activities;

Because it is anticipated that many members of our congregations and our Presbytery will, at some point, have a disability, especially as they reach elderhood;

Because our call to share our faith and reach out to the many people who have a disability can be accomplished only as we become accessible both in space and attitude;

Because, some persons who have a disability and who have valuable gifts to contribute to the common good of our church, Presbytery, and congregations, are prevented from participating fully in the life of the Body of Christ;

Because, the attitude of our society has dramatically changed toward full-inclusion of persons who have a disability since the national Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 2004;

Because, barriers do exist in architecture, in communication for those with visual, mental, or hearing impairments, and in attitudes that reflect a lack of sensitivity or understanding that deny those who have a disability the dignity and respect which includes access to spiritual nurture that is equal to those in the non-disabled community;

Because, the life of Jesus, his works, and his teachings, provide a clear basis for our Presbytery's commitment to non-discrimination, integration, and inclusion; and,

Because, we believe that God requires the Church to protect these rights and to exercise spiritual and moral leadership by its preaching, teaching, and practice,

Be it the policy of The Presbytery of the Twin Cities Area and its Disability Concerns Ministry to commit to the encouragement of each congregation, committee, facility, and gathering of the Presbytery to enable all people to participate fully in all ministries of the Presbytery through:

- Working to ensure that all may worship, serve, be served, learn, and grow as valued members of the Christian community,
- Examining barriers, both physical and attitudinal, that prevent persons with a disability to live fully in church community and to strive to rectify such barriers,
- Committing to the urgency that existing and future sites within the presbytery be modified or designed, as financially feasible, to adhere to the guidelines of the Americans with Disabilities Act, and,
- Making resources available to assist in fulfilling these commitments which result in expanding opportunities while profoundly enriching our life of faith.