

DISABILITY CONCERNS MINISTRY (DCM)

Presbytery of the Twin Cities Area

Purpose and Goals

The DCM was established in 2004 and exists as a collaborative ministry within the Presbytery of the Twin Cities Area (PTCA) for the purpose of:

- Promoting awareness of disability issues in the presbytery in a comprehensive way;
- Challenging local congregations to be inclusive Christian communities;
- Resourcing congregations as they strive toward full inclusion of persons with disabilities;
- Raising awareness in congregations regarding social justice issues that effect the lives of persons with disabilities.

Rationale

The advocacy and focus of DCM is crucial to the integrity of the ministry of the PTCA, as it has been estimated that at least one in five persons and families live with a disability. This includes an increasing number of children. Some disabilities are more apparent in their manifestations and some are less so, but all can affect a sense of inclusion and welcome.

We affirm the spirit of Paul's first letter to the Corinthians (chapter 12) that all Christians and congregations have mutual gifts to share:

We are called, regardless of our abilities or limitations, to grow and live into the Body of Christ. No one is excused from the gladsome task of discipleship. As the body of Christ, it is our responsibility to remove all barriers and share the Gospel. In doing so, we reveal to the world a glimpse of God's Kingdom, challenging all systems and constructs that deny the full humanity of any person. Equally, the Gospel is a challenge to those Christians with disabilities to grow in discipleship and service to the Gospel.

The PTCA has been an advocate with people with disabilities as well as developing resources on disability awareness for individuals, congregations, and the presbytery. In 1995, the 207th General Assembly approved a policy statement that included action requested in an overture initiated by the PTCA. For a number of years, resources produced by Presbyterians for Disability Concerns included contributions by individuals from the PTCA. We believe that the policy recommendations are consistent with the actions approved by the PCUSA and also with progress made by this presbytery.