

CONGREGATIONAL AUDIT



of
***Disability Accessibility
& Inclusion***



www.pcusa.org/phewa/pdc



Introduction

Congregational Audit of Disability Accessibility & Inclusion

This Congregational Audit of Disability Accessibility & Inclusion was prepared by the Presbyterians for Disability Concerns (PDC) leadership team, in consultation with the Presbyterian Church (USA) Disability Consultants. Learn more about PDC and the Disability Consultants at www.pcusa.org/phewa/pdc.

The Audit is intended to assist a congregation in taking seriously the call for the church to be the full embodiment of the household of God and a “house of prayer” for all peoples (in this instance persons who have a disability). As approximately 19% of any given population has some type of disabling condition, the issues represented by this Audit affect more congregational members than we would typically think. Some persons have disabilities, but because their disability is not visible to the eye (i.e. hearing impairment, MS, chronic fatigue syndrome, etc.), they may be under our radar. Sometimes persons with disabilities are regular worshippers, yet have not been invited into the social network and active involvement in the life of the congregation. Some persons may be hesitant to request special accommodations because of the desire to not appear needy or because of embarrassment. Families, with a member having a disability, are also affected in major ways by the church’s welcome or inattention to the family member with a disability. Parents may not bring their child with a disability to church because they may be uncertain as to the receptivity of the congregation or the logistics that require them to be with their child rather than participating in worship or other ministries of the church. Physical and attitudinal barriers may prevent children and/or

adults and their families from experiencing a full life of faith. Unless intentional efforts are made to ensure that congregations are fully welcoming and inclusive of persons with disabilities (or any other vulnerable or marginalized peoples), we may remain unaware of the ways that our buildings and approaches to ministry exclude persons.

Secondly, this Audit is intended to help congregations pinpoint specific areas for present and future concentration of effort. Each faith community is different and the steps to increased accessibility and inclusion will be different based on the disabilities represented in your congregation, your ministry endeavors and your particular house of worship. An Audit can help assess where your congregation is currently and where you can most effectively take steps to become more inclusive. The Audit is designed with suggested resources (endnotes) to help in implementation plans. Many of these resources are available from the PC(USA).

We suggest that this Audit be a tool for conversation and ministry review by a variety of persons within your congregation. Good accessibility and intentional efforts for inclusion benefit everyone. The ramp, initially designed for wheelchair users, can also be used by parents pushing a stroller and by persons making heavy deliveries. Remember that architectural accessibility is only a first step.

Don’t try to make all the changes at once. Some ideas can be implemented easily and some become longer-range goals. Select the most important issues to tackle, those that will bring the biggest benefit. Complete the audit every year, chart your progress and celebrate your progress toward full inclusion.

If you have questions about the Audit or implementing the actions you would like to take, please contact the PHEWA Office at 1-888-728-7228 x5800. Our Disability Concerns Consultants are also available to help:

Rev. Raymond Meester
Consultant for hearing
(402) 477-3401
Raymond@HeritagePres.org

Rev. Sue Montgomery
Consultant for mobility/accessibility
(814) 797-1226
suemontgomery@windstream.net

Rev. Rick Roderick
Consultant for visual disabilities
(502)423-8195
rickrod@insightbb.com

Elder Milton Tyree
Consultant for developmental disabilities
(502) 429-6244
miltontyree@bellsouth.net

May the words “welcoming to all” ring true in the PC(USA)!

Introduction *(continued)*



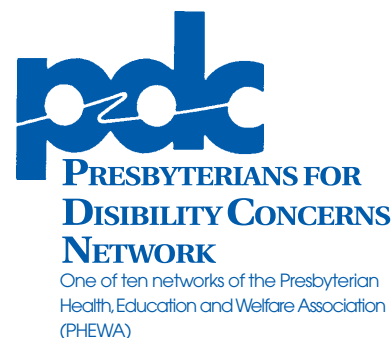
Recommendations for Completing this Audit:

- 1. Appoint a Task Force.** This task force should be comprised of several persons with disabilities who are part of your congregation (or outside your congregation if necessary), as well as a staff person, an elder, someone involved on the property committee, and another individual or two who has interest and enthusiasm for this endeavor (possibly a family member of a person with a disability or a professional in some disability-related field).
- 2. Study the policy,** “Living Into the Body of Christ: Towards Full Inclusion of People with Disabilities,” using the study guide that follows the policy. The Task Force is encouraged to invite other people to participate in this aspect of their work. While studying the document is optional, by doing so, the Task Force will become acquainted with the recommendations for the wider church and the PC(USA)’s commitment.
- 3. Review the Audit and note the different persons/ministries who might give input** on the various issues. While it would be easy for several people to complete the Audit quickly, it will be more effective for the Task Force to use this as an opportunity to see the work as ministry. It will also increase congregational commitment when it becomes time to implement plans.

For example, the clerk of session and church staff may have the best information of who in your congregation has a disability, the type of disability, and what ministries persons are involved in. The director of children’s ministry will be able to provide the names and number of children with special needs and how the children are integrated into worship, church school classes and activities.
- 4. Have conversations with persons with disabilities in your congregation** to hear their experiences and to get their perspective on what actions would have the greatest impact for them and others with disabilities. Don’t assume what would be best for others. Ask, listen and engage them in this process. There is a saying in the disability community, “Nothing about us without us!” Involving persons with disabilities in this Audit is an act of inclusion.
- 5. Have conversations with family members of persons with disabilities** to hear their experiences within your congregation and to hear their perspectives and ideas for increasing inclusion.
- 6. Complete the audit.**
- 7. Celebrate the ways that you are already welcoming and inclusive congregation.** You might like to write up some stories for your church newsletter or website highlighting these things. PHEWA is always on the lookout for congregational stories. They become models of ministry for the wider church.
- 8. Review the resources provided in the End Notes following the Audit,** and contact persons in your congregation with particular expertise in disability issues (persons with disabilities, family members, caregivers, physical therapists, occupational therapists, special education teachers, disability specialists, etc.) for further resourcing. You will also want to research organizations in your community that could help you to address the issues you have identified.
- 9. Determine the three most crucial accessibility and inclusion areas** that you will address first. You might also want to identify several areas to be addressed in future years. Prioritize a list of action steps and make recommendations to the session. Note: don’t try to do it all at once but build a solid foundation for sustainable ministry with persons with disabilities.
- 10. Consider asking that the Task Force become an ongoing ministry** of the church to keep abreast on issues related to disability and assisting other ministry areas in implementing plans within their program area.

Presbyterians for Disability Concerns (PDC) would love to hear about your church’s experience with this Audit and your progress in attaining your goals.

In deep appreciation for your faithful service,
PDC Leadership Team





A Congregational Audit of Disability

Accessibility & Inclusion

This audit was produced by Presbyterians for Disability Concerns (PDC), a network of the Presbyterian Health, Education and Welfare Association (PHEWA). Visit PDC and PHEWA online at www.pcusa.org/phewa. Contact: PHEWA, 100 Witherspoon Street, Louisville, Kentucky 40202-1396

Our Commitment to the Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities

	Yes	No	Action Needed
Leadership			
Our church's leadership has made a commitment to be intentional in our welcome and inclusion of persons with disabilities. ¹	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
We have developed a Disability Task Force to keep issues related to the welcome and inclusion of persons with disabilities on our congregation's radar and to strategize with various ministry areas as appropriate. ²	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Our congregation receives periodic disability awareness training. Our pastor(s), staff and congregational leaders are urged to attend and to use the awareness gained in carrying out their respective ministries. ³	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
A group within our congregation is studying the 2006 GA policy statement, "Living into the Body of Christ," and the accompanying study guide and will inform the congregation of insights gleaned and actions taken by our congregation in this regard. ⁴	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
We invite persons with disabilities to help us assess our building and ministries for barriers to participation. We take seriously such perspectives and engage these persons in setting the plans and priorities for removing barriers. ⁵	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
We are committed to a ministry with persons with disabilities, rather than ministry to persons with disabilities.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
We encourage persons with disabilities to share their gifts and skills through the various ministries of our church and support their involvement in these ministries. ⁶ Persons with disabilities serve as...			
• Greeters and ushers?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Liturgists or lay readers?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Choir members, soloists, musicians?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Teachers or presenters?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Members of congregational committees?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Members of outreach opportunities?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Church officers?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Staff and pastoral positions?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Other: _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

A Congregational Audit of Disability *(continued)*



Our personnel policies include employment and reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities.⁷

Yes	No	Action Needed
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Worship

Our greeters/ushers are instructed regarding appropriate ways in which to interact with and anticipate the needs of individuals with a variety of disabilities.⁸

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------

Our preaching and teaching is positive in the portrayal of persons with disabilities and of their contributions, not just their needs; scripture related to miraculous healings is taught and preached with sensitivity to those who are living with disabilities and their family members.⁹

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------

At least once a year our congregation observes a Disability Inclusion Sunday (Access Sunday) focused on lifting up disability-related issues and our intention to be a church where persons with disabilities and their families find true inclusion and participation.¹⁰

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------

Our pastoral staff is sensitive to adapting the administration of the sacraments to persons with various disabilities. Individuals are consulted as to what will be best for their situation rather than assumptions made on their behalf.¹¹

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------

We use unscented candles and have gluten-free bread and juice available for the Lord's Supper.¹²

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------

We periodically remind our congregation about allergies and encourage them to refrain from wearing perfume, after-shave lotions and scented deodorants or have designated a "scent-free" area for the 15% of the population who has some type of chemical sensitivity.

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------

Our pastoral staff is committed to assisting persons with disabilities (including those with cognitive disabilities) in becoming church members.¹³

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------

Ministry Programs

When planning congregational activities, we make every effort to consider how to make the activity inclusive of our friends with disabilities and extend "reasonable accommodations."

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------

We station greeters at main entrances to assist persons in-and-out of cars or para-transportation and in-and-out of buildings back to their transportation.

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------

If a member of our congregation becomes disabled, we stand ready to be of assistance in locating needed government and community resources.¹⁴

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------



A Congregational Audit of Disability *(continued)*

	Yes	No	Action Needed
We don't expect family members to take the lead in ministering to their family member with a disability unless they volunteer. ¹⁵	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Specialized ministries are designed only when all attempts at mainstreaming have been exhausted and when deemed essential to meeting the needs of the specific individual with a disability. In these cases particular care is also taken to finding other inclusive ways to involve these individuals in the life of our congregation. ¹⁶	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
We offer training/consultation to our church school teachers to assist them with issues they encounter in teaching children with disabilities. ¹⁷	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
We train members to serve as church companions/peer tutors to assist individuals with disabilities who need one-on-one assistance. ¹⁸	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
We recognize that parents and siblings of persons with disabilities may carry a heavy load and our congregation seeks to provide practical support and respite care as needed.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
We have educational resources in our library about disability awareness and various disabling conditions. ¹⁹	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
We use our website to share our commitment to inclusion of persons with disabilities and to provide visitors with information about accessibility that might enhance or diminish their participation. ²⁰	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
We have reviewed our church's emergency procedures and worked out various scenarios to meet the needs of persons with disabilities which an emergency situation might require. We also stand ready to help members of our congregation with practical service in case of a personal or community-wide disaster. ²¹	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
We attempt to discover where persons with disabilities live in our community and extend an invitation to them to attend our church. ²²	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fellowship			
We endeavor to get to know each person with a disability and to involve them in the social network of our congregation. ²³	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
We communicate our willingness to assist persons with disabilities with transportation needs to church services and activities, and facilitate those arrangements if appropriate.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
At church meals, we ask our friends with disabilities if they would like assistance and how they would like to be assisted.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

A Congregational Audit of Disability *(continued)*



	Yes	No	Action Needed
We understand that guide/helper/service dogs must be allowed to accompany their owner everywhere they go (including eating areas). ²⁴	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
We maintain regular contact with our “members at home” to keep them connected with our community of faith and to minister to their spiritual needs. ²⁵	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Our Commitment to Accessible Communication

Our church provides, or will provide on request, the following in alternative formats (large print, Braille, audio-taped, electronic materials, etc.): ²⁶	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Bibles or scripture readings	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Worship bulletins (including announcements)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Hymnals/song sheets	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Sermons	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Educational materials/handouts	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
We provide/are willing to provide sign-language interpretation for worship and other ministry events when needed/requested. ²⁷	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
We provide adequate lighting, directed to the face of the speaker, for persons who read lips, and adequate general lighting, throughout the building.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
We have a good quality sound system.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
We provide assisted listening devices for worship, Christian education classes and small group meetings. ²⁸	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Our Commitment to Architectural Accessibility

Contact the **Dept. of Justice ADA Technical Assistance Program** at **(800)514-0301 VM or 800)514-0383 TTY** for state specific information and technical assistance.

Parking

We have assessed our church’s membership to identify who would benefit from accessible parking and have added additional spaces for visitors.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
We have accessible parking spaces (9 feet wide plus 6 feet wide access aisles) for cars and at least one space for a lift-equipped van (9 feet wide plus 8 feet wide access aisles and 98 inches of vertical clearance).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



	Yes	No	Action Needed
The paths of travel are at least 38 inches wide for a wheelchair, with a slope of no more than 5% (paved surfaces preferable).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Curb cuts are available on church property sidewalks.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Ramps

Ramps, longer than 6 feet, have sturdy railings on both sides. The handrails are smooth, undecorated and installed 34-38 inches above the ramp surface.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The ramps have a non-skid slope no greater than 1 foot rise in 12 feet and a width of no less than 36 inches.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Stairs

Stairs have a non-slip surface and slightly raised abrasive strip on the top step to warn people where stairs begin.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Stairs have rails on at least one side (both sides preferable), with extensions beyond the top and bottom stairs.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Entrances/Doors/Doorways

Clear signage directs members and visitors to accessible entrances/restrooms.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
A “drop off” zone has been established near building entrances.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
We have electronically operated external doors or provide greeters at accessible building entrance(s).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Door handles are no higher than 48 inches and operable with a closed fist (lever handles or push bars preferred) and can be opened by exerting no more than 5 lbs pressure (interior doors).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Door openings are at least 36 inches wide and at least 32 inches clear.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Clear passageways are at least 38 inches wide.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Sanctuary, Fellowship & Classrooms

“Pew cuts” for persons with wheelchairs, service dogs, and/or walkers are scattered throughout the sanctuary/classroom areas so that persons with disabilities can sit with their family/friends.(Pew cuts can be easily made by shortening several pews by 36 inches).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
---	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------

A Congregational Audit of Disability *(continued)*



	Yes	No	Action Needed
There is room at the back of the sanctuary/classroom for those individuals who prefer to sit in the back or who need to move around. Folding chairs are available for family and friends to join them in this location.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Seating space is available, with extra legroom, for people who have casts, use walkers, etc.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
There is wheelchair access to the communion table and chancel area.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The choir area allows wheelchair users to participate.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The pulpit is accessible.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The carpeting is low-pile and tightly woven so wheelchairs and walkers can be easily used.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Our meeting rooms have good acoustics.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Elevators

There is an elevator to insure access to the sanctuary and all major program areas, if the building requires it.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
There are both visible and verbal/audible door opening/closing and floor indicators.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The call buttons/controls are no higher than 42 inches from the floor, with Braille lettering.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Restrooms

Pictograms or symbols identify gendered restrooms and accessibility symbols identify accessible restrooms (using Braille or raised characters recommended).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
There is at least one accessible bathroom on each floor (these may be unisex and labeled as family restrooms for multiple use).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The accessible stall is at least 36 inches wide, with 48 inches clear depth from door closing to front of commode, and has a 32 inch door that swings outward. The stall door is operable with a closed fist, inside and out.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
There are grab bars, one adjacent to the commode and one behind the commode, to facilitate transfer from a wheelchair.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



A Congregational Audit of Disability *(continued)*

There is a sink with 29 inches of clearance from floor to bottom of the sink that is operable with lever-type handles.

Towel dispensers are no higher than 40 inches from the floor.

Yes	No	Action Needed
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Telephones

There is at least one phone with push button and volume controls, which is no higher than 48 inches from the floor.

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------

The following disabilities are represented in our congregation (if a person has multi-disabilities, list them in each category applicable):

NUMBER:	Children	Youth	Adults	Elders	Deacons	Pastors/Staff
Limited mobility						
Visual impairment						
Hearing impairment						
Speech impairment						
Cognitive disability						
Learning disability						
Environmental impairment						
Known hidden disability						

ENDNOTES

- 1 The National Organization on Disability has developed three principles of commitment for churches to either use or adapt regarding being intentional in their welcome and inclusion of persons with disabilities. See www.nod.org, click on "Religious Participation," then click on "Accessible Congregations Campaign."
- 2 See article, "Creating a Task Force on Disability Issues for Your Church," on the PHEWA/PDC web site.
- 3 There are a number of ways that disability awareness training can be offered. Begin by asking congregation members with a variety of disabilities, family members, and disability-related professionals (i.e. special education teachers, physical therapists, occupational therapists, social workers, caregivers, etc.) to discuss what type of training to provide and who might be presenters for that training. If your Presbytery has a Disability Awareness Task Force, seek their advice. Contact other disability-related professionals in your community if additional assistance or speakers are needed (i.e. Independent Living Councils, The ARC,



etc.). The video, “The Ten Commandments of Communicating with People with Disabilities,” can be borrowed from the PHEWA office. “Tips on Interacting with People with Disabilities,” a publication of the United Spinal Association can be downloaded at www.unitedspinal.org/pdf/DisabilityEtiquette.pdf. The book *Different Members One Body: Welcoming the Diversity of Abilities in God’s Family* (Witherspoon Press) and *That All May Worship: An Interfaith Welcome to People with Disabilities* (National Organization on Disability) have a wide variety of information which could be used in a disability awareness training. While simulation exercises were once thought to be a good way to help able-bodied persons feel what it is like to have a disability, that is no longer felt to be true. Simulations can create more misunderstandings. Instead, focus on having persons with disabilities who can share about their lives and experiences. “Developing Awareness about Persons with Disabilities in Children, Youth or Adults,” and a bulletin insert with some general guidelines about interacting with persons with disabilities are also available on the PHEWA/PDC site.

- 4 Download the policy statement and study guide from the PHEWA/PDC website.
- 5 See “Advocacy: A Young Person’s Perspective” on the PHEWA/PDC website.
- 6 See chapter 3, “Recognizing the Gifts of Persons with Developmental Disabilities, Mental Retardation, Mental Illness and Other Brain-Based Illnesses,” *Different Members One Body: Welcoming the Diversity of Abilities in God’s Family* and “Varieties of Gifts – One Body, One Spirit,” on the PHEWA/PDC website.
- 7 See chapter 6, “In Service to the Church – Embracing Our Workers,” *Different Members One Body: Welcoming the Diversity of Abilities in God’s Family*.
- 8 Disability awareness training is highly recommended for ushers and greeters (see endnote #2 for ideas).
- 9 See article, “Sermon Tips and Ideas,” on PHEWA/PDC website. *A Healing Homiletic: Preaching and Disability* (Abingdon Press) is an excellent resource for articulating theological and biblical interpretations of gospel narratives in a way that is sensitive to persons with disabilities.
- 10 Each year the Presbyterian Church (USA) designates a date to celebrate our commitment to inclusion. PDC provides materials to aid congregations in their planning. Worship, education and advocacy materials are included. These materials can be downloaded from the website or requested from the PHEWA office.
- 11 See “Stories from Celebration of Sacraments,” on the PHEWA/PDC website.
- 12 See “Making Communion Elements Accessible for People with Allergies,” on the PHEWA/PDC web site.
- 13 See “The Word in Action,” about a man with Down Syndrome, receiving membership into his church on the PHEWA/PDC website.
- 14 If your congregation has a Parish Nurse, that individual will know appropriate community resources. In most places in the country, the Crisis Clinic now offers assistance to persons with disabilities, their family members and friends through their 2-1-1 Community Information Line. Call 2-1-1 or go to their website at www.crisisclinic.org/disability.html for more information.
- 15 Read “Advocacy: A Mother’s Perspective,” on the PHEWA/PDC website.

- 16 See “Lost and Found: An Integration Story” and “Curriculum Adaptation: Special Approaches for Special Needs” on the PHEWA/PDC website.
- 17 A good resource is *A Drama of Love: A Christian Educator’s Guide to Creating Classes Where Everyone Belongs* by Judith Mullet and Paula Snyder. Available at <http://tinyurl.com/5jxgt> or contact AdNet at 1-877-214-9838. (As stated above, however, we do not recommend “simulation exercises”)
- 18 Read “Bring on the Church Coach!” on the PHEWA/PDC website.
- 19 See the bibliography of resources on the PHEWA/PDC website.
- 20 The Graphic Artists Guild Foundation has made disability access symbols available for downloading from their website, <http://www.gag.org/resources/das.php>.
- 21 See the PHEWA/PDC website for “When Emergency Strikes...A Call to Care,” “Creating a Personal Support Network,” and “Church Emergency Information Form.”
- 22 The National Organization on Disability (NOD) has helpful suggestions as to how to locate people in your community who have disabilities. See www.nod.org, click on “Information and Resources,” and then click on “Locating People with Disabilities in Your Community.”
- 23 See the PHEWA/PDC website for “The Household of God: Practicing God’s Economy,” “Building Relationships of Mutuality,” and “Circles of Friends: Building Community with a Person who has a Disability.”
- 24 See “Guide Dogs” on the PHEWA/PDC website.
- 25 See “Friends at Home” on the PHEWA/PDC website.
- 26 See “Alternative Formats, a Tool for Full Inclusion,” “Make Your Church More Accessible” and “Preparing a Church Bulletin for Braille.” Also see chapter 2, “Communication Access” in *Different Members One Body: Welcoming the Diversity of Abilities in God’s Family*.
- 27 The entire worship service, including announcements, liturgical text, prayers and sermon, should be scripted and given to a sign language interpreter several days before the day of worship. Persons who are deaf and sign interpreters should be consulted as to the best placement of the interpreter and seating for those using this service.
- 28 See “Assistive Listening Devices” on the PHEWA/PDC website.



**PRESBYTERIANS FOR
DISABILITY CONCERNS
NETWORK**

One of ten networks of the
Presbyterian Health, Education and
Welfare Association (PHEWA)

www.pcusa.org/phewa/pdc