

THE INCLUSIVENESS OF CHRIST

People with disabilities are no different than anyone else and they want to be treated with the same respect. Just because they have mental retardation or are in a wheelchair does not mean that they are “not normal”.

They are children of God, and as an usher or greeter, you should do everything in your power to make them feel welcomed and loved. Treat them just as you would any person that enters your church, or any person that you meet in your day-to-day activities. Christ made no distinction between those with disabilities and those without.

**WE MUST IMITATE
CHRIST'S ATTITUDE.**



COMMISSION ON DISABILITIES

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Commission on Disabilities
VIRGINIA CONFERENCE OF THE
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

A GUIDE FOR USHERS AND GREETERS TO NURTURING INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES THROUGH HOSPITALITY



“We envision churches where all God’s people are welcomed at table, nurtured and transformed to be Christ to others in the world.”

Virginia Conference Vision Statement

BEING SENSITIVE TO INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES

It is our responsibility as a church to be as inclusive towards all of God's children as possible. There are people with disabilities in every community, and they must feel included in order to experience the love that exists within the Christian Community. Ushers and greeters are often the first members of the congregation they meet. This poses the unique opportunity and responsibility for you to demonstrate God's love to all of the people who pass through the doors of the church. The love that you show as an usher or greeter may be interpreted as the attitude of the entire church.

- As with all people you meet, identify yourself as you greet them, acknowledge their presence, learn their name, and call them by their name.
- Keep a pad and pencil handy to communicate with a visitor that

cannot speak or uses sign language. Be patient with those with speech impairments.

- Don't be afraid to ask people with visible disabilities if you can help them in any way. They will appreciate your concern and can best let you know exactly what they need.
- Speak clearly and distinctly. Speaking clearly is more helpful to the hard of hearing or deaf than raising your voice. If the person is visually impaired or blind, he or she will better understand you if you speak with clarity.
- If someone has an interpreter, make sure to look at that person rather than the interpreter. If your

church has someone who interprets the service, make sure the person in need of the interpreter is seated in a place where the interpreter is easily visible.

- If there is someone with a mobility impairment (e.g in a wheelchair), find a place to sit that person that still makes him or her feel included. Do not put the person in the back or in a place where they will feel in the way. Be attentive to that person both before and after the service.
- Even if you think that a person may be unable to read, make sure that you offer him or her a bulletin.
- Speak directly to people who have mental retardation. Do not direct your comments to them through their family or friends.

"BUT WHEN YOU GIVE A BANQUET, INVITE THE POOR, THE CRIPPLED, THE LAME, AND THE BLIND. AND YOU WILL BE BLESSED"... LUKE 14.13-14