



DisAbility Awareness Sunday

A SPECIAL SUNDAY KIT

CALIFORNIA-PACIFIC ANNUAL CONFERENCE
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

INTRODUCTION

The Justice and Compassion Ministries and the Office of Communications of the California-Pacific Annual Conference have partnered to provide every local church with a Special Sunday Kit for worship preparation and social action.

Included in this kit are the following:

- the vision for the cause
- ways to take action
- a story of ministry
- a liturgy idea
- a flyer

Special thanks for this kit goes to Sharon McCart, Facilitator of the Cal-Pac Task Force on DisAbility for serving in leadership of this cause in our Annual Conference and the United Methodist Church.

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VISION & ACTION

When people of all levels of ability are joyfully welcomed into our congregations and become full participants in the life of the church, the Realm of God will be among us and within us!

We need all of us, with all of our gifts from the Holy Spirit, to be complete as the body of Christ! The vision is this----circles within circles of people of all abilities, diverse in every way. Music begins to play, the music of the spheres, arranged by the Creator.

The people called Methodists can take action by:

- Observing Disability Awareness/Access/Special Gifts Sunday on October 13, 2013 or any other Sunday that works for your congregation with a special offering (please send all checks, noting Disability Awareness Sunday #002-000-23287 and which are made payable, to California Pacific Annual Conference, PO Box 6006, Pasadena CA 91102-6006)
- Hold a disabilities welcoming training workshop for congregational leaders
- Conduct an Annual Accessibility Audit of your church

Each congregation is a microcosm of this large paradise, with everyone participating, no one resenting the extra help someone needs, no one being turned away by stairs or stares, no resentment when our prayers are unsilenced. Just all loved with the very heart of God.

May it be so!

Sharon McCart, Facilitator
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A STORY

Before mid-semester, Naty Rico was struggling in her studies and in danger of dropping out in her first semester at University of California, Irvine.

Navigating the large, hilly campus was difficult due to her disability and she often fell. She could not get to the library to study and even getting to class was hard work. She had never let her disability slow her down before, but this time was different.

Anne Hawthorne, Director of Kid City, contacted the Cal-Pac DisAbility Ministries Task Force, asking for help with getting Naty a mobility scooter. The idea was to raise enough funds in purchasing one.

Sharon McCart, Facilitator of the task force, began making contact with those who might be able to assist. Soon, Naty had a scooter and no more problems getting around on campus! Her grades have improved and she is no longer in danger of dropping out.

Last Spring, Naty even gave campus tours to more young people from Kid City and the University gave her an award for her work in organizing students to work for better campus services for people with disabilities!

Naty's future looks bright in every way because of the people called Methodists across our Annual Conference whose hearts are open to sharing the gift of life to all of God's creation.

This DisAbility Sunday, the work will continue with those who are differently able with God's help and our faithfulness!

LITURGY IDEA

The following is a possible order of worship. Keep in mind that church leaders and clergy need to set an example both in their interpersonal interactions and in the choice of words, themes and lessons.

(Source: UMCOR's Disability Awareness Page)

Call to Worship

LEADER: Lord, how awesome it is that we can gather here today and loudly sing praises to your name, and know that we are standing in your presence!

PEOPLE: Lord, I can't stand. I use a wheelchair and there is no place for my chair.

LEADER: It really is great, Lord, that we are able to hear you speak to us through the proclamation of the word this morning!

PEOPLE: I'm sorry, God. I didn't hear what was said.

LEADER: And, Lord, it's so fantastic to be able to read your Word along with the pastor, and to recite the creeds, and litanies.

PEOPLE: This morning my vision is dim, God. I cannot read the bulletin.

LEADER: Lord, we really feel blessed that we understand everything that is happening around us in the church in this hour.

PEOPLE: God, why do I learn so much slower than others, and must feel, week after week, that I do not really belong here?

ALL: Open us, O God. Make us accessible to your Spirit, and accessible to all your people.

Adapted from Rev. Dave Wade

LITURGY IDEA

(Source: UMCOR's DisAbility Awareness Page)

Opening Hymn

He Leadeth Me – Hymn 128

Prayer of Confession

Almighty and creating God; we come before you today as people who are separated from one another by fear, prejudice, and ignorance. By our language, actions and facilities we declare insiders and outsiders in our lives and in our church. Forgive us and create in us the vision of opening our hearts, minds, and doors as wide as the love of God, so that no one is left outside. Help us to reach beyond ourselves to discover the joy of community. Give us the patience to discover that all people have gifts and abilities to share with our community of faith. We pray in Jesus name. Amen

Adapted from Southeastern United Methodist Agency for Rehabilitation (SEMAR) 2004

The Words of Assurance and Pardon

Old Testament Reading

Isaiah 53:1-5

Prayers and Concerns

Presentation of Offerings

LITURGY IDEA

(Source: UMCOR's Disability Awareness Page)

The Anthem

The Doxology

The Children's Message

Things to think about...

...children are curious. Encourage them to ask questions. Give them honest answers. More often than not people with disabilities would rather be asked about their disability than have a curious child stare at them and wonder.

...have a child with a disability help with the children's message. Not as the center of attention, but as an expert on the subject.

...ask a child with a disability what they wish people without disabilities knew about them or their disability.

...ask the sibling of a child with a disability what they wish the world knew about their brother or sister.

The Hymn of Preparation

Here I am, Lord – Hymn 593

The Gospel Lesson

Mark 2: 3-11 – Through the roof

LITURGY IDEA

(Source: UMCOR's Disability Awareness Page)

The Message

Things to think about...

...when planning and writing your sermon, challenge yourself to place an emphasis on the four people who lifted the paralytic man to the roof and then lower him inside. These four people provide a perfect example of appropriate social interaction and early solutions to structural barriers.

...portray individuals with disabilities as people with gifts, talents and abilities. Try to move away from the general attitude that people with disabilities need sympathy and healing.

The Affirmation of Faith

Hymn of Dedication

Joyful Joyful, We Adore Thee – Hymn 89

The Benediction and Sending Forth

On Eagles Wings – Hymn 143

LITURGY IDEA

(Source: UMCOR's Disability Awareness Page)

Benediction Response

As we seek to have open hearts, open minds and open doors... Help us to move beyond opening the door to welcome only those who can climb the steps to enter. Help us to move beyond opening our hearts to love only those who look like us. And help us to move beyond opening our minds to accept only those who think like us. Help us to create an environment, in our church and in our community, where all are welcome. In your name we pray. Amen

Adapted from Rev. Dr. Thomas W. Binford, III

The Postlude

*The Congregation will stand if they are able and if they so choose.

The Hymn selections can be found in The United Methodist Hymnal, 1989

The New Testament and Gospel readings are from the New Revised Standard Version

Special Thanks to Dr. David Gray and Rev. Eric Pridmore for their input and expertise.

This worship resource was prepared by Jennifer Yound for UMCOR Health



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LOCATION:

DATE: