

# **Accessibility Committee of the Commission on Congregational Life, New Hampshire Conference, UCC**

## **Mission Statement**

The mission of the Accessibility Committee of the New Hampshire Conference of the United Church of Christ is to help congregations become more accessible and, therefore, more inclusive to all people who come to worship and serve by:

1. Increasing sensitivity to and understanding the needs of persons with disabilities;
2. Facilitating just representation of persons with disabilities within and without our congregations;
3. Providing opportunities and resources for congregations to learn more about the Americans with Disabilities Act and inspiring a complete elimination of attitudinal barriers that unconsciously exist within our minds and hearts toward our brothers and sisters who are disabled.

Approved by the Commission on Congregational Life,  
New Hampshire Conference, UCC, March 23, 2004

## **Committee Members**

Joyce Beairsto, Chair  
Jami Boyle  
Laura-Jean Gilbert  
Cheryl Killam  
Rev. Jan Shepherd

## **Activities and History**

The Accessibility Committee began in 1992 as a task force, charged with responding to the resolution passed by General Synod that churches have a moral responsibility to be inclusive to our brothers and sisters with disabilities. In 1994, the task force presented a resolution to the delegates at the New Hampshire Conference Annual Meeting which began the process of churches doing self examinations regarding their accessibility and reporting this information annually to the conference for ten years. As of 2001, 82 churches had reported on such activities, which ranged from providing large-print bulletins to installing elevators within their structures.

In 2001, the task force also published a report regarding the changes needed within church facilities in order that clergy with disabilities be employed. This report was based on a national study on the increasing number of seminarians with disabilities who are finding few, if any, churches with appropriate accommodations. The national study was sent to all search committees in New Hampshire.

In 2002, the task force presented a resolution calling on the conference to examine itself to

assure that all meetings sponsored by the NHCUCC would be held in accessible locations. That resolution passed, although not unanimously, and is now in effect.

In 2003, the task force officially became the Accessibility Committee of the Commission on Congregational Life of the New Hampshire Conference, UCC.

Since 2002, the task force/committee has sponsored sessions on accessibility topics at each Prepared to Serve Conference except 2006. The committee has also presented an exhibit and workshop at each Annual Meeting of the Conference. Beginning in 2005, the committee is offering to provide such workshop sessions to association meetings.

## **RECOMMENDED RESOURCE LIST**

### **UCC ACCESSIBLE WORSHIP RESOURCES**

**New Hampshire Conference, UCC Accessibility Committee:**

**United Church of Christ Disabilities Ministries Resources:**

<http://www.uccdm.org/resources.html>

**New Curriculum: Any Body Everybody Christ's Body:**

<http://www.uccdm.org/A2A/anybody.pdf>

**A Checklist for Youth for Determining Accessibility:**

<http://www.ucc.org/worship/ways/pdf/ww43-7.pdf>

**UCC Access Sunday information:** <http://www.uccdm.org/accesssunday.html>

### **TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE FOR ACCESSIBLE FACILITIES AND ACCOMMODATING INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES**

**New Hampshire Governor's Commission on Disability:** 1-800-852-3405 (toll-free in NH)...request the Access to Worship Checklist by contacting the Accessibility Specialist at extension 4177, direct line 603-271-4177, or by email at [cheryl.killam@nh.gov](mailto:cheryl.killam@nh.gov).

**New England ADA and Accessible IT Center:** 1-800-949-4232,

<http://www.adaptiveenvironments.org/neada/site/home>

**National Organization on Disability Religious Participation:**

<http://www.nod.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=Page.viewPage&pageId=9>

**National Ctr for the Stewardship and Preservation of Historic Religious Properties –**

*Partners for Sacred Places:* <http://www.sacredplaces.org/>

*Planning for Accessibility:* <http://www.sacredplaces.org/PSP-InfoClearingHouse/articles/Planning%20for%20Accessibility.htm>

**Accessible Faith – A Technical Guide for Accessibility in Houses of Worship:**

<http://www.rff.org/noteworthy/accessible.html>

**Exclusion-Proof your Sanctuary:**

[http://www.churchbusiness.com/articles/637/637\\_071Feat2.html](http://www.churchbusiness.com/articles/637/637_071Feat2.html)

## **FUNDING SOURCES**

**New Hampshire Charitable Foundation – Applying for a Grant:**

<http://www.nhcf.org/page16898.cfm>

**Christopher Reeve Foundation – Quality of Life Grants:**

[http://www.christopherreeve.org/site/c.ge1MLPOpGjF/b.1029299/k.6F3C/How\\_to\\_ApplyGuidelines.htm](http://www.christopherreeve.org/site/c.ge1MLPOpGjF/b.1029299/k.6F3C/How_to_ApplyGuidelines.htm)

**Faith-Based Initiatives:** <http://www.whitehouse.gov/government/fbcj>

**US Dept of Labor – Office on Disability Policy – Grants for Faith-Based Organizations Serving People with Significant Disabilities:**

<http://www.dol.gov/odep/archives/grants/community.htm>

**Robert Wood Johnson Foundation:** <http://www.rwjf.org/applications/projects.jhtml>

**Grants for Non-Profits for Religious and Social Change:**

<http://www.lib.msu.edu/harris23/grants/2religio.htm>

**Jessie Ball DuPont Fund Religion Initiative:**

<http://www.dupontfund.org/grants/religion.asp>

**FundsNet:** <http://www.fundsnetervices.com/disabili.htm>

*FundsNet sources A – Z – scroll to bottom of page to select the section of the alphabet you're looking for:* <http://www.fundsnetervices.com/found-aa.htm>

## **INFORMATION ABOUT DISABILITIES**

**Disability is Natural:** <http://www.disabilityisnatural.com>

**Disability Etiquette – A Guide from United Spinal:**

<http://www.unitedspinal.org/pdf/DisabilityEtiquette.pdf>

**Children's Books about Disabilities:** <http://ericec.org/fact/kidbooks.html>

**Disabilities Books:** <http://disabilitiesbooks.com/index.html>

**Faithability – encouraging awareness and discussion on religion, disability and spirituality issues:** <http://www.faithability.org/>

**Family Village on Worship:** <http://www.familyvillage.wisc.edu/worship.htm>

**More than Just Ramps:** <http://www.morethanjustramps1.homestead.com>

**American Association on Mental Retardation, Division on Religion and Spirituality:**  
<http://aamr.org/Groups/div/RG/>

**Boggs Center on Developmental Disabilities Faith-Based Supports:**  
<http://rwjms.umdnj.edu/boggscenter/projects/faithbased.htm>

## **PRODUCTS AND DESIGN INFORMATION**

**The Boulevard – Barrier-Free Construction information:**  
[http://www.blvd.com/Barrier\\_Free\\_Construction/](http://www.blvd.com/Barrier_Free_Construction/)

**Church Business:** <http://www.churchbusiness.com/>

**Disability Resources:** <http://www.disabilityresources.org/RELIGION.html>

**Making Text Legible:** [http://www.lighthouse.org/print\\_leg.htm](http://www.lighthouse.org/print_leg.htm)

**Effective Color Contrast:** [http://www.lighthouse.org/color\\_contrast.htm](http://www.lighthouse.org/color_contrast.htm)

**Refurbished Equipment Marketplace (1-800-427-3338):**  
<http://www.nhassistivetechology.org/rem/#about>

**Universal Design:** <http://www.makoa.org/accessable-design.htm>

**The Center for Universal Design:** <http://www.design.ncsu.edu/cud/>

**Wheelchair Net Worship Resources:**  
[http://www.wheelchairnet.org/WCN\\_Living/worship.html](http://www.wheelchairnet.org/WCN_Living/worship.html)

## **SPECIFIC RELIGIONS/DENOMINATIONS**

**Calvin Institute of Christian Worship:**  
<http://www.calvin.edu/worship/stories/disability.php>

**National Apostolate (Catholic) for Inclusion Ministry:** <http://www.nafim.org/>

**Christian Council on Persons with Disabilities:** <http://www.ccpd.org/>

**Episcopal Church Special Needs:**  
[http://www.episcopalchurch.org/8020\\_61433\\_ENG\\_HTM.htm](http://www.episcopalchurch.org/8020_61433_ENG_HTM.htm)

**Episcopal Disability Network:** <http://www.disability99.org/>

**Evangelical Lutheran Church in America:**  
<http://www.elca.org/disability/inclusion/language.html>

**Joni and Friends Ministries:** <http://www.joniandfriends.org/>

**National Council on Churches Committee on Disabilities:**  
<http://www.nccusa.org/nmu/mce/dis/>

**National Jewish Council for Disabilities:** <http://www.njcd.org/>

**Council for Jews with Special Needs:** <http://www.cjsn.org/Home.asp>

**Presbyterian Health Education and Welfare Association:**  
<http://www.pcusa.org/phewa/networks/pdc/access.htm>

**Rest Ministries – Christian understanding and compassion for those living with chronic illness:** <http://www.restministries.org/>

**Unitarian Universalist Association – Accessibility/Equal Access (links on left side):**  
<http://www.uua.org/programs/idbm/accessibilities/>

**United Methodist Church – General Board of Discipleship:**  
[http://www.gbod.org/worship/?act=reader&item\\_id=1820](http://www.gbod.org/worship/?act=reader&item_id=1820)

**United Methodist Church – Global Ministries – Disability Concerns:** <http://new.gbgm-umc.org/umcor/work/health/disc/>

**Vision New England – Disability Ministries:**  
[http://sites.silaspartners.com/CC\\_Content\\_Page/0,,PTID14438|CHID114785|CIID,00.html](http://sites.silaspartners.com/CC_Content_Page/0,,PTID14438|CHID114785|CIID,00.html)

**World Council of Churches Ecumenical Disability Advocates Network:**  
<http://www.wcc-coe.org/wcc/what/jpc/disabil.html>