

PTCA Policy on Disabilities

Commissioners at the March meeting of Presbytery took a bold step forward. By adopting a new Presbytery policy on disabilities, they affirmed Paul's message in I Corinthians 12: 4-7 that all Christians have gifts and abilities to share with the church. This policy serves as a model for congregations and a challenge to other presbyteries. The policy includes these provisions:

1. Continue to hold stated meetings and other Presbytery-wide events in settings that are accessible for worship, business, fellowship, and dining (Provide information on building accessibility in the call to the meeting).
2. Provide *sign language interpreters* when requested in a timely manner.
3. Provide printed materials in alternative formats (large print or digital) as requested.
4. Encourage speakers to read aloud projected materials that have not previously been made available.
5. Require that all loan requests for funding new construction or remodeling of church property include provision for accessibility.
6. Encourage speakers and leaders to use person-first language when referring to persons with disabilities. For example, use "a woman who is blind," rather than "a blind woman." Use inclusive language. For example, use a statement like "Please rise in body or in spirit" rather than "Please rise".
7. Encourage the nominating committee and COR to seek out persons with disabilities for leadership positions in Presbytery, Synod, and General Assembly.
8. Encourage inclusion of people with disabilities in worship leadership.

For the PCUSA policy on disabilities, see "Living into the Body of Christ" at <http://www.pcusa.org/search/?criteria=Living+into+the+Body+of+Christ>