

INCLUSION IN WORSHIP

A Ministry to Welcome Worshippers of All Abilities as Active Participants

TEN EASY WAYS TO WELCOME PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES IN THE AREA OF AFFIRMATION

- 1. Include children, youth and adults with disabilities in worship as cantors, ushers, musicians, altar servers, gift bearers, lectors, etc.**
- 2. Make a well-rounded committee on inclusion part of your congregation's governing council to increase meaningful participation for worshippers with disabilities.**
- 3. Educate the entire congregation about disability issues by periodically running pieces in your bulletin about hospitality and welcome. See "How You Can Make a Difference" in this toolkit.**
- 4. Train ushers and lay leaders as role models to include and welcome worshippers with disabilities and their families.**
- 5. Reinterpret disability narratives in the scriptures as "healing" not "curing" stories or reference biblical leaders who had disabilities in homilies and sermons.**
- 6. Place an "inclusion box" in the worship space with paper and pencils for suggestions for better inclusion.**
- 7. Observe an annual Inclusion Awareness Day to celebrate how your congregation welcomes worshippers with disabilities. Visit www.inclusioninworship.org for ideas.**
- 8. Consult a person who uses a wheelchair, walker or crutches when planning renovations or additions.**
- 9. Understand that previous negative experiences may cause individuals with disabilities to initially decline your invitation to participate. Don't hesitate to extend additional invitations.**
- 10. List accessible features and supports available in a permanent "For your comfort and convenience..." section of the bulletin or worship aide.**