



Accessibility and Program Grant Application

The Commission on Disabilities has set aside funding to assist local churches in working their way toward total accessibility (accessibility grants) and to assist any church and/or organization wanting to establish new programs (program grants) to reach and serve individuals with disabilities. These funds are limited and will not cover the entire cost of most projects. However, through the awarding of a grant, the Commission is offering its support to efforts toward full inclusion of all persons in worship and Christian education experiences and to advocacy for the needs of persons with challenging conditions. Funds are made available through the contributions of the United Methodist Men, United Methodist Women, local churches, individual donors, and other church-related groups. Only one grant per calendar year will be considered for a church.

Accessibility Grants: The *Book of Discipline* calls upon the board of trustees of each local church, in cooperation with the health and welfare ministries representative, to conduct an annual accessibility audit of their building, grounds, and facilities to discover and identify any physical, architectural, and communication barriers that impede the full participation of people with disabilities and to make plans and determine priorities for the elimination of all such barriers. Once an audit has been completed and priorities established, a church may apply for an accessibility grant. A visit by members of the Grants Committee of the Commission may be required. Technical support from the Commission is available upon request. Grant maximum: \$700.

Program Grants: The *Social Principles* of The United Methodist Church clearly address the rights of persons with disabilities. The Church and society are called on to protect the civil rights of persons with disabilities and to be sensitive to, and advocate for, the full inclusion of ALL people in the community of faith and in the larger world community. To this end, the Commission on Disabilities of the Virginia Conference is charged with providing advocacy, education, and direct services on behalf of persons with challenging conditions, affirming that **ALL PEOPLE** are **ONE** in the Body of Christ. Churches and/or organizations may submit proposals for new programs and services to the Commission for assistance with startup costs. Grant maximum: \$500.

To be considered for grant funds, complete the attached form with the required signatures and submit it to the Commission on Disabilities. A copy of the mini-audit must accompany a request for accessibility grant funds. Each grant request will be reviewed by the Grants Committee and presented to the full Commission on Disabilities for approval. If you have questions or need more information, please contact the Commission on Disabilities.

RESOURCES

Accessibility Audit for Churches: Creating Access for Persons with Physically Challenging Conditions. Workbook for local churches to discover barriers which make church buildings inaccessible to persons with disabilities. It includes a question and answer survey, methods for modification, a supplementary resource and architectural diagrams that are easy to read. Currently under revision by the General Board of Global Ministries. A copy of the original publication should be available for loan from each District Office or from the Office of Lay Life and Work, Disabilities, and Older Adult Ministries.

Signs of Solidarity. (#2088) This revised resource will provide congregations and annual conferences with basic information needed to create deaf, late deafened, hard-of-hearing, and deaf-blind ministries and enhance programs that are already in existence. This book includes curriculum designs for Christian Education programs and models of deaf congregations that are working effectively throughout our denomination. Available through Cokesbury (Price: \$7.00).

Claiming the Promise. A 27-minute video story of three United Methodist pastors with physically challenging conditions. Designed to help local churches, including pastor-parish committees, to understand the gifts and strengths of persons with physically challenging conditions. Three different versions of Claiming the Promise are available, all 27 minutes in length: Version I has standard visuals and sound track; Version II is open-captioned, with visible text of the sound track displayed at the bottom of the screen, for hearing-impaired users; Version III has a supplemental audio track which includes spoken descriptions of scenes and action for sight-impaired users. Available from EcuFilm, 810 Twelfth Avenue S., Nashville, TN 07203-4744; Tel. (800) 251-4091, <http://www.ecufilm.com/> Rental \$18.00; Sale \$24.95.

Widening the Circle. A 26-minute video highlighting the stories of two United Methodist congregations who have opened their doors wide for total inclusiveness of persons with physically and mentally challenging conditions. The churches are diverse in size and location but share the common goal of full access for all. Three different versions of The Widening Circle Video are available, all 26 minutes in length: Version I has standard visuals and sound track; Version II is open-captioned, with visible text of the sound track displayed at the bottom of the screen, for hearing-impaired users; Version III has supplemental audio track which includes spoken descriptions of scenes and action for sight-impaired users. Available from EcuFilm, 810 Twelfth Avenue S., Nashville, TN 07203-4744; Tel. (800) 251-4091, <http://www.ecufilm.com/> Rental \$18.00; Sale \$24.95.

DISC (DISabilities Concerns) is for persons living with physically or mentally challenging conditions, their friends, families, caretakers, lay associates, and clergy. This web site and e-mail list offer information related to disability concerns, yet add the dimension of spiritual care. Materials available on developmental disabilities, mental illness, creative writing by or related to persons with disabilities, and resources in the area of disability ministry for both individuals and faith communities. <http://gbgm-umc.org/disc/>

Commission on Disabilities Accessibility and Program Grant Application

Date _____ District _____

Church Name: _____

Street Address: _____

City, State, Zip Code: _____

Local Church Contact Person: _____

Office Phone: _____ Home Phone: _____

E-Mail: _____

REASON FOR APPLICATION:

Be specific and give details where possible.

FOR ACCESSIBILITY GRANTS:

Have state and local codes for accessibility been followed? Yes No If not, why?

Can you provide drawings or pictures that will assist the Commission to fully understand your needs and grant request?

Yes No If yes, please submit your drawing/pictures with the application.

FOR BOTH ACCESSIBILITY AND PROGRAM GRANTS:

Attach to this form:

- _____ 1. A written statement describing the project and anticipated total cost of what you propose to do.
- _____ 2. A copy of the accessibility audit for your church/facility.

Which of the following categories will this grant project assist?

- _____ Mobility (physical disabilities)
- _____ Developmentally Challenged
- _____ Deaf and Hearing Impaired
- _____ Blind and Visually Impaired
- _____ Other Areas of Disability (Please Specify: _____)

Guidelines for Awarding Accessibility and Program Grants

1. All accessibility grants awarded are to be used for **existing structures**. All new construction must follow applicable state and local codes for accessibility according to law.
2. Local churches may apply for a single grant request per calendar year.
3. Actual work on the proposed project must begin within the calendar year when the grant is awarded. Otherwise, the church or organization will need to apply again.
4. An on-site consultation may be required in order to assess the need to be met by the proposed project.
5. Payment will be after approval of the grant committee of the Commission on Disabilities.
6. Technical support is available upon request.
7. All recipients of grants from the Commission on Disabilities must be connected to The United Methodist Church in the Virginia Annual Conference and provide a service to persons with disabilities.

Statement of Intent to be Signed by Local Church Representative

We agree to use the funds provided by this grant within a period of six (6) months unless the Commission on Disabilities (COD) has granted an extension. We also understand the need to re-apply if the work is to begin later than the specified six (6) months period. If we do not use the grant as requested, said funds will revert back to the COD. It is also understood that we are to account for funds if requested by the COD.

Signature of Church Representative

Date

Certification by District Superintendent

Does this project require approval by the District Board of Church Location and Building? Yes No

If yes, give date approval was granted: _____

By affixing my signature to this application, I endorse its request.

District Superintendent Signature

Date

Return this application with the necessary attachments to:

Commission on Disabilities, PO Box 5606, Glen Allen, VA 23058.

Questions? Call 1-800-768-6040 or 804-521-1100 ext. 153 or e-mail: MarthaStokes@vaumc.org

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY:

Date Received _____

Grant Awarded _____

Grant Delayed or Denied _____ Basis: _____