

## **DISABILITIES POLICY**

### **Peoria Christian Reformed Church**

An estimated one in five North Americans has a disability, demonstrating that disabilities are a natural part of life and may be acquired at any time. Whether physical, mental, intellectual, or sensory, many of the worst barriers faced by people with an impairment result from attitudes and environments that we create and could change, rather than from the functional limitation itself. Such attitudes and environments exclude people from church.

We believe that everyone should have the opportunity to participate, contribute, and belong to our community. We also believe that people with disabilities positively affect and enhance human diversity and community life. Therefore, in keeping with biblical teachings, with our theological beliefs, and with decisions of our denomination regarding people with disabilities, we, the governing body of Peoria Christian Reformed Church, adopt the following policy.

1. In this congregation, we value people with disabilities as created in the image of God, as partners to the covenant, and as co-laborers in the kingdom of God.
2. We consider all people – with disabilities and without – to have gifts from the Holy Spirit, and we encourage everyone to enrich congregational life by practicing their faith and using their gifts in ministries of discipleship, leadership, and mission.
3. We will endeavor to integrate people with disabilities into all ministries and activities of the church. This includes worship, education, small groups, outreach, activities, etc.
4. We will seek to name, understand, and attend to the special spiritual, physical, and psychological needs of those affected by disabilities, including care givers, and will offer training to respond appropriately to disability issues and to raise awareness in our congregation.
5. We agree to comply with applicable laws about reasonable accommodation. We seek to remove all barriers to participation with ample discussion by all parties concerned in order to accomplish this goal in an open and reasonable way.

(Adopted by the Council of the Peoria Christian Reformed Church, April 2015)