

Book of Government

Ch 4-4 What about our disabled family members?

There are families whose children will never be able to make a confession of faith, who will never leave the care of their parent(s). There are young adults who, because of trauma, will be unable to express themselves in their faith.

May we incorporate language that acknowledges the realities of so many families that will require a different level of spiritual nurturing than described in 4-4a?

Ch 8-3 **A1.** May we address families that have a significantly disabled member who come to a covenant understanding of baptism? For example, their adult son that cannot communicate being allowed to be baptized.

B1. The Active Roll does not truly reflect the composition of a church based on this definition of who is considered an Active member.

The diversity of the Body of Christ described in 1 Corinthians 12 demands another look at how we measure our congregations. My church would argue we have two young men, because of their autism, that will never be capable of being “active members” by definition and yet certainly belong as members if we truly take 1 Corinthians 12 seriously.

D2a. This language may suggest to some that only the person has challenges keeping them from participation. There may be physical or even attitude barriers at church that keep them away.

D2d. When trauma or chronic illness is involved, one year may be an unrealistic expectation for returning to active participation.

I am actually praying that no church member would ever be considered for inactive status when trauma or a disability is involved. However, our language makes no provision anywhere for trauma or disability.

Ch 19-4 **C1.** Adding “the disabled” to this list brings our attention closer to Christ’s as noted in Luke 14. “And other suitable activities” does not satisfy this language need.

Ch 20-4 **A3.** We need a disability ministry facilitator/educator. Disabilities should impact ALL aspects of our church organization. We must recognize its importance by providing guidance, and specific support to help each church respond as God intends. There is no “one size fits all” response to this subject and a facilitator will help navigate resources and ideas.

Book of Discipline

Ch 2-3 In relation to G8-3D2d... may we express that providing spiritual nurturing care should never have a time limit based on obvious circumstances of chronic conditions?

Book of Worship

Ch 2-1 **A.** Are we certain we do not have barriers in our worship that challenge an individual's accessibility? What if they can't get in the door, can't participate like everyone else? What if someone can't physically hear the message, can't process quickly?

A3. May we consider the needs of our profoundly disabled as it relates to our sacraments?

Ch 2-4 Persons with disabilities are hindered all the time.

B. We have inadvertently relegated worship to a select few by not being proactive in meeting the needs of those who are differently abled.

Ch 3 **2G.** The inability to make a profession of faith should not be limited to children. This is of specific concern for families who come to a covenant understanding, whose "children" are now older.

3J. Please consider that those with disabilities have a place at the Lord's Table as Jesus taught in Luke 14, and modeled in 2 Samuel 9.

Ch 7-4 **C3.** May we build on the language already present – "concern of God for the conditions of people?" Disability is certainly a "condition of people" that, if we are serious about God's sovereignty in all things, we will acknowledge is part of His will. And we must respond with intentional love and support.

Ch 7-5 The disabled are missing from this section. We must we use language that suggests we are ministering "with" instead of ministering "to." We must be intentional about acknowledging every "member of the body" as described in 1 Corinthians 12.

Acts of Assembly

94-11 (pg 199) Please consider adding "vulnerable populations" to this screening requirements to address elderly and disabled.