

The main heading should be: **HELP YOUR CONGREGATION DEVELOP DISABILITY MINISTRY**

I want to delete the words "TASK FORCE" because developing a disability ministry does not require a task force, and is a ministry that crosses over many committees in a church. I also don't want to scare people away from starting disability ministry, thinking that they need a task force in order to develop disability ministry.

Using the subtitle: **EXPAND YOUR OUTREACH THROUGH DISABILITY MINISTRY** is fine, though it seems a little redundant with the main heading. I'll see if I can come up with something better.

Article 2:

Learn the difference between empathy and pity when interacting with people with disabilities. The difference may seem subtle but makes a huge difference to people with disabilities.

Article 3:

Learn what defines a disability and the differences between disability, impairment, and handicap. Using these words correctly is important to people with disabilities and helps you to relate better to people with disabilities without being afraid of using the wrong words.

Article 4:

Learn to use Disability Friendly Language. Using people first language is the start of recognizing that people with disabilities are indeed people first and their disability is lower down on the list of who they are.

Disability Ministry Task Force



Disability Ministry Task Force

Mission: *To equip the Church to reach out, include, and encourage full participation of people with disabilities and their families in the life of Christ's Church.*

Vision: *To see people with disabilities and their families welcomed and included as members of Christ's Body, the Church.*

This is a continuing series of articles about reaching out to people with disabilities to welcome them into the Church of Christ. The goal is to start and continue addressing the needs of people with disabilities so that no person or family affected by a disability is turned away from the Church of Christ.

Sympathy versus Empathy

One definition of the word sympathy is, "A feeling of pity or sorrow for the distress of another." It is very familiar to people with disabilities. While this may be well intended, it can be felt as pity and can be hurtful when expressed as pity. While the cause of the disability and the continuing complications associated with the disability may be difficult for the person with the disability and those close to the person with a disability, pity is not what the person wants or needs. Empathy is defined as, "The ability to identify with or understand another's situation or feelings." While nobody can know how a person with a disability feels about their disability, trying to look through the eyes of the person with a disability is the first step in showing compassion for the person with a disability.

Please let the Disability Ministry Task Force (DMTF) know about the physical accessibility of your church (disability-min@cnh-icms.org). The DMTF would like to add to the CNH website churches that are disability friendly in any way so that people with disabilities can find your church and know that they are welcome. The DMTF is ready to come to your church to make a presentation on disability ministry and how your church can become an irresistible church to people with disabilities.