

RCA Church Policy on Disabilities

First Reformed Church – St Catharines



An estimated one in four North Americans has a disability, demonstrating that disabilities are a natural part of life and can be acquired at any time. Whether physical, mental, intellectual, or sensory, many of the barriers faced by people with disabilities result from attitudes and environments more than the disability itself.

We believe that everyone should have the opportunity to participate, contribute, and belong to our community. We also believe that disabilities positively affect and enhance human diversity and community life.

Therefore, in keeping with biblical teachings, with our doctrinal standards, and with decisions of the General Synod of the Reformed Church in America regarding people with disabilities, we, the consistory of *First Reformed Church – St Catharines*, 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 of us affected by disabilities, including caregivers or service animals, and will offer training to respond appropriately to disability issues and to raise awareness in our congregation.**
- 5. We will modify any policy, practice, procedure, or architecture that tends to exclude those of us with disabilities from any aspect of congregational life.**

Adopted by the Board of Directors

Of First Reformed Church – St Catharines

on *November 13, 2014*

For more information:

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Our AIM: Accessible, Inclusive, Missional churches engaging and engaged by people with disabilities