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Congregational Accessibility Network Quick Checklist

Welcome to the **Congregational Accessibility Network (CAN)**! This “Checklist” is intended to help your congregation take a quick survey of its accessibility to persons with various disabilities, including mental illness. It is a condensed version of the more detailed **Congregational Assessment Survey** (the “Survey”), an essential part of a larger process that is outlined on the CAN website. The Checklist is available online at <http://www.canaccess.org/accessibility/quick-checklist/>.

The Checklist is intended to (1) **give your congregation a quick overview** of how accessible you are, (2) **serve as a discussion starter** to encourage you to start a more thorough study process, and (3) **encourage you to make a congregational commitment** to become more accessible to persons with all kinds of disabilities, and then **to take action on that commitment**.

The full Survey awards an emblem for congregations that meet certain criteria in any of the following accessibility categories: **Mobility, Hearing and Language, Vision, and Support**. The following Checklist follows this same outline without going into as much detail. At the end of the checklist is information on how to become a part of the **Congregational Accessibility Network**.



Mobility. This indicates accessibility to the building and grounds including **Parking, Entrances, Interior hallways, Restrooms, and Worship Area**. Congregations are highly encouraged have also accessible **Classrooms and Fellowship/Gathering Area**.

Parking: Accessible parking spaces are provided and are clearly marked with an upright sign with the universal accessibility symbol. **These spaces are of two types:**

- **Van Accessible** with 8 foot wide aisle – at least one for parking lots of 400 spaces or less.
- **Car Accessible** with 5 foot wide aisle – 1 for each 25 spaces up to 100, then for each 50 spaces up to 200, then each 100 spaces up to 400.

An additional **Van Accessible** space is added above 400. Above 500 total spaces, calculate 2% with 1/8 of those **Van Accessible** rounded up to the next whole number and the rest **Car Accessible**.

Entrance: At least 36 inches wide via **Ground level**, a **Ramp** (maximum incline of 1:12), or an **Elevator or lift** (certified) from a smooth, level accessible path from an accessible parking space. A covered drop off area to discharge passengers is also recommended.

Additional considerations:

- There is a platform with at least a 5 foot level turning radius at the entrance
- Handrails are provided on ramps
- Elevator or lift is large enough to accommodate a power wheelchair along with a standing attendant.
- **Automatic doors** are recommended wherever possible. **Manual doors** should be easy to with one hand without the need for tight grasping, pinching, or twisting wrist.

___ **Interior hallways** are level or have an incline of no more than 1:12 with a barrier-free width of at least 48". At least one section of coat racks is low enough to be accessible. **Carpets and rugs** are no more than 1/2-inch thick. **Door handles** are of the lever type that are able to be opened and closed with minimum effort.

___ **Restrooms** At least one restroom accessible to users of wheelchairs and others with mobility issues is available for both men and women. This can be provided through a **family/companion restroom** (highly recommended) or a **restroom stall** within the standard facilities **for each gender**. **Accessible restrooms** must meet certain specific criteria including the following:

Accessible family/companion restrooms meet the following criteria among others:

- Clearly marked with the universal accessible sign.
- Have entrance doors at least 32-inches wide that swing into the hallway and have lever door handles that do not require tight grasping, pinching, or twisting wrist to operate..
- Have at least a 5 foot wide turning radius.
- Wall-mounted grab bars are 33-36 inches high next to and at the back of the commode.
- The toilet seat is 17-19 inches high.
- The sink counter is no more than 34 inches high, has a knee clearance of at least 27 inches high, 30 inches wide and 19 inches deep, and hot and cold handles that do not require tight grasping, pinching, or twisting wrist to operate.

___ **Worship Area. Seating** is provided (preferably scattered site cutouts) so that a wheelchair user can sit beside family members. The **leadership area** (chancel, platform, bimah, minbar) is accessible to persons with mobility.

___ **Classrooms.** At least one classroom is accessible to wheelchair users.

___ **Social/Gathering Area** is accessible to wheelchair users.

Hearing and Language -- Two separate emblems are possible in this category.



Hearing. Assistive Listening Devices (ALD) and other aids are provided for persons who are hard of hearing.

___ **Sound System.** A clear audible sound system, equipped with at least one microphone, is regularly used in the main worship area during the worship service.

___ **ALD.** The sound system in the main worship area includes individual Assistive Listening Devices (ALD) for people who are hard of hearing.



Sign Language interpretation is provided to enable communication between hearing persons and those who are deaf.

___ **Sign language interpretation** is provided in either American Sign Language or another locally used signed English system.



Vision – Visual aids are provided for persons who have difficulty seeing.

- Adequate Lighting is provided throughout the worship area.
- Large Print worship materials (at least 14-point type) are provided.
- Worship materials are projected on an overhead screen. Note: This can be a suitable alternative for many people to large print materials.
- Auditory accommodations** are recommended such as verbal announcements and introduction of new hymns/songs prior to the worship.
- Aids to persons who are **blind** are highly recommended, including trained **greeters and ushers**, raised letters and Braille signs at doorways to rooms, **Braille materials** for worship.



Support – The congregation supports inclusion of persons with disabilities through awareness-raising, education, support groups, and provision for individual differences in gifts, behavior, and learning style.

Minimum criteria may be met in a number of ways including the following:

- Mission Statement** language addressing intentions for inclusion of persons with disabilities.
- Awareness and Education Activities** such as disabilities or mental health awareness Sundays, sermons, and educational events.
- Individual and Family Needs Questionnaire** (available from CAN).
- Library Resources**.
- Training opportunities** on disabilities and/or mental illness are provided and promoted.
- Special Education Services** are offered, through classroom integration, special education classes and/or **Individual Spiritual Formation Plans (ISFP)**.
- Referrals**. Congregational leaders have a working knowledge of counseling professionals and appropriate agencies in the community to whom they can refer people.
- Gift discernment** includes consideration of persons with disabilities, including mental illness.
- Individual and Family Supports** such a **benevolence fund, respite care, and support groups** are provided.
- Special Diets**. Special diets (e.g. diabetic, gluten-free) are considered when food is served.

Interested in doing more? Fill out the form below and contact us via phone, email, web, or fax.

Your name: _____ Congregation _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Fax _____ Email _____

Congregational Website _____

Additional information: