

Synod of Victoria and Tasmania

DISABILITY ACTION PLAN

2019 – 2022



Uniting Church in Australia
SYNOD OF VICTORIA AND TASMANIA



equipping Leadership for Mission

Acknowledgements

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ASSEMBLY'S STATEMENT OF ACCESS AND WELCOME

The 15th Assembly in 2018 considered the important issue of disability access in all areas of the Uniting Church's work and activities and adopted the **Statement of Access and Welcome** as below:

In accordance with the Uniting Church *Basis of Union*, the church is a fellowship of reconciliation, "a body within which the diverse gifts of its members are used for the building up of the whole, an instrument through which Christ may work, and bear witness to himself".

In light of this, the Uniting Church affirms that:

- (a)** Christ is most fully present when all people in the Body are unconditionally accepted as people of worth. All people are created in the image of God, including people with disability;
- (b)** along with all members, the faith, gifts, hopes and dreams of people with disability are to be valued and honoured;
- (c)** God is a God of justice and peace, who seeks reconciliation amongst all people.

In seeking to be a community of reconciliation, the Uniting Church acknowledges that for many people with disability its life and faith has not always borne witness to this vision.

The Uniting Church seeks:

- (a)** to embody a community life that in its theology and practice is accessible to all people;
- (b)** to ensure that within its own life, people with disability are treated justly and have their hopes and rights realised;

(c) to advocate for justice and equality for people with disability in the wider community.

The development of this Plan is in response to the Assembly Resolution:

To encourage each Synod to develop Disability Action Plans in accordance with the federal *Disability Discrimination Act 1992*, with the aim of eliminating access barriers pertaining to:

- (i)** Attitude/Theology and access and welcome;
- (ii)** Communication; and
- (iii)** Physical environment.





MODERATORS' STATEMENT OF SUPPORT

It gives us great pleasure to commend this Disability Action Plan 2019-2022 as a resource that can help the whole church become more open to the inclusion of all people as beloved ones of God.

This plan builds on previous documents in this Synod and the work of many people to ensure that people with disabilities can more fully participate in the life of the Uniting Church.

It also reflects the *Statement of Access*

and Welcome adopted at the 2018 Assembly and the World Council of Churches *Gift of Being – Called to be a Church of All and for All*.

The plan reflects our commitment to be a community of justice and inclusion and our desire to ensure that every member can exercise their gifts in the life of the church and in serving the world. A plan such as this is important in helping us move from desiring to be communities of hospitality to being communities that have concrete actions



and plans to embed our hope in the way we worship, the policies we have, the layout of our buildings, the language we use, and so much more.

We lament that the church has not always been a community of reconciliation and welcome for people with a disability and their families. As a church we are the poorer for this failure to welcome the gifts of all members.

We rejoice in the growing diversity of the church which enriches the life of the whole church and is a powerful witness to God's loving embrace of each person. We pray that this plan might help the church become a place

where all find encouragement to grow in faith and exercise their gifts in service of God's reign.

Grace and peace,

Sharon Hollis
Moderator 2016-2019

Denise Liersch
Moderator 2019-2022

DISABILITY ACTION PLAN CONVENOR

At the heart of the goals and strategies of this *Disability Action Plan* is hospitality and what takes place in a meal shared, a common experience or a journey together. This is one of our central calls as Christian communities. The writer of Hebrews reminds us that “*in welcoming and entertaining strangers, we welcome angels without knowing it*” (Hebrews 13:2).

An Action Plan has implications, legal and otherwise, that are being asked or required of us. Whilst we cannot avoid some of the economic implications of being an “*accessible*” community, there is renewed hope and energy for the vision if approached from the motif of hospitality. We are invited to consider the ways in which those known to us, or not so well known to us, can access a faith community. How do we find each other? What attitudes and values will be encountered? Are there roadblocks: physical, attitudinal, emotional and historical which affect the ability to be communities of hospitality?

Based on what people marginalised by disability express is important when seeking connection with a faith community, three needs underpin the responses needed by congregations and Synod (both Operations and Institutions).

These needs, as described in the Easy English supplement, are:

- ▶ To get into the place
- ▶ To feel welcome
- ▶ To have a say about involvement and contribution.

In developing your response, refer to the prompt questions in: “*What response is required?*” (see page 12)

This Action Plan complements the strategies of access and equity already undertaken by a number of congregations and services of the Uniting Church, and challenges us to continue our vigilance.

The Action Plan will be submitted to the federal Human Rights Commission, as a sign of the Synod’s commitment to finding intentional means of eliminating discrimination towards people with disabilities.

All content in the Plan is also available at:

- ▶ <https://victas.uca.org.au/ministry-mission/disability-inclusion>

On behalf of equipping Leadership for Mission (eLM), I thank everyone who has contributed to the development of this work. My prayer and hope is that hospitality in the name of the Uniting Church always finds “*the stranger being entertained in our midst*”.

Yours in ministry,



Rev. (Deacon) Andy Calder
Disability Inclusion Advocate
Synod of Victoria and Tasmania

THEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

“The theology of disability is central to our understanding of what it means to know who God is and to know what it means to be a human being living fully under God.”¹

This bold claim reminds us of the importance of thinking theologically about disability as well as allowing the experience of disability to shape the ways we think and talk about God.

When it comes to the church, the mandate clearly represents universal justice and equity. The Hebrew prophets were particularly concerned about justice for people on the margins of society, those who were ignored because of stigma and difference. The New Testament carried that message of justice – illustrated by the stories of hospitality in which Jesus was either guest or host.

The biblical tradition provides us with a clear mandate for addressing issues of injustice and inequity, based upon the fundamental claim that all human beings are created in the image and likeness of God (see Genesis). The prophets of the Hebrew Bible remind the community of God’s concern for justice, especially for those who experience oppression or suffering at the hands of others (see Isaiah 58:1–9; Amos 4:1–5; 5:21–24). Those who are stigmatised because of disability are loved by God and are to be welcomed into the community (see Jeremiah 31:8; Micah 4:6–7; Zephaniah 3:19). Jesus of Nazareth also proclaimed that call for justice (see Luke 4:14–30) and welcome (see Luke 14:12–24). The emphasis is on God’s hospitality, offered in Jesus Christ and embodied in the community of his followers.

While hospitality is about welcoming a person into our midst, it is also about recognising the *person’s living reality*. It means validating *that person’s world*. Among other things, this entails being sensitive to their situation, without being embarrassed by it; being empathetic without condescending; being there with another person without intruding into their independence. It also means anticipating the areas of possible discrimination and exclusion in order to ensure the church does not become the “*disabler*”.

This is not simply a call for generosity of spirit, though that is assumed, but it is a call for structural justice. Jesus and the prophets were not simply concerned with the plight of the poor and the widow; they also protested against religious and societal structures that contributed to oppression of the vulnerable.



THEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

This means that followers of Jesus should ask: *in what ways do religious and societal structures maintain discrimination against people with disabilities? In particular, how do the structures of the church create or maintain discrimination towards people with disabilities in the life of the faith community?*

Christians are called to critique and to resist those cultures and attitudes that perpetuate discrimination. This is not only a case of providing better physical access to church buildings. While this is one obvious gesture towards hospitality, it is not enough. We must also pay attention to and, where necessary, critique the ways that the church goes about developing policy, planning and programming, the structures and procedures of our meetings. The lived experiences of people with disabilities in our churches and society takes us to the heart of our theology, how we understand God.

Many people labelled by disability experience life as living “*outside the mainstream*”. That means living outside the “*norms*” of society and leads people with disabilities to create alternative accounts of what counts as worthwhile or valuable.

As Kerrie Thorne says: “*As a person with a disability I have to define my own way. I have to work out what I value, what I’m trying to do with my life, what quality of life or hope I have. Often what I come up with may not be looked upon as worthwhile to others - it can be quite an individual thing.*”²

This means, for example, that the notion of *achievement* takes on a new meaning. Assumptions about what is normal can also be oppressive.


While society measures achievement in terms of a hierarchy of skills, knowledge, wealth, or competitive success, the person with a disability, who is often excluded by such criteria, may view achievement in other ways.

On this basis, the person with a *disability stands over and against* many of the norms and expectations of our culture. Excluded from this culture of achievement, disability confronts it. This raises the question of whether and how the church works to support disabled people in this task of critique and resistance. It also invites us to think about the ways that the church measures normality or success or achievement. Whose voice do we include and listen to?

As well as struggling with questions surrounding *disability*, the church also needs to wrestle theologically with its understanding of *able-ness*.

When we think about God, we often portray God as perfect in the sense that God is complete, all-knowing, all-powerful, absolutely and completely independent. On this definition, the call to “*be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect*” (Matthew 5:48) is a call to strength, independence and self-reliance.

Yet, Christians believe that we can know what God is like by looking at Jesus. This means that when we think about ideas of perfection, we need to think about the way that Jesus shows us what God’s perfection actually looks like. In Philippians 2:6–11 we are told that Jesus refuses to exploit his equality with God. Instead he takes the path of self-emptying and humility to the point of suffering and death. Both the Hebrew scriptures and the New Testament talk



about God's self-giving love (see Hosea 11:1–4; Galatians 2:20; 1 John 4:10). This kind of love is what defines God's perfection.

We are called to love others as God loves us in Jesus. As Walter Wink puts it, the call is to therefore be "*all inclusive, as your heavenly parent is all-inclusive*".³

This means that we need to re-think our understanding of suffering. Dietrich Bonhoeffer writes that "*the Bible directs us to the powerlessness and suffering of God; only a suffering God can help*".⁴ God in Jesus Christ conquers not through mighty power but through weakness. It is the *disabled* God on the cross who suffers with and for us.⁵ In Jesus, God becomes the suffering companion who understands the experiences of the other, who speaks to our human experience, and who offers love and hope.

From this understanding of God as the suffering and loving God, Christians and the church are called into relationships with people with disabilities. People are seen not in terms of their relative "*able-ness*". Instead, they bear witness to the nature of divine love, and remind us that God sees the world in the way

the person with a disability experiences it. As Jesus reminded his followers, he is present in a very concrete way in the stranger, the poor and the hungry (Matthew 25:31-46).

The task of the church is not to necessarily bring a person with a disability into the world of the church, rather to see that person as someone who is made in the image of God, and whose experience points us to the nature of God's love.

In working to develop alternative accounts of what is valuable and worthwhile in human life, people with disabilities remind us of the need to critique many of the "*norms*" of our society. Our relationship with people with disability is, in the light of the gospel, one of companionship, solidarity and cooperation in the task of working for justice.

By engaging with the theological question "*who is the God we worship?*" we are called to action. An *Action Plan*, such as the one contained in this document, becomes a framework to help the people of the Uniting Church live out the implications of a theology of disability that recognises all people as being created in the image of God.

¹ John Swinton, "Who is the God We Worship? Theologies of Disability; Challenges and New Possibilities". *International Journal of Practical Theology*, 14 (2011): p 272 – 307.

² Kerri Thorne, "Outside the Mainstream". Published in *Challenging Disabled Practices: Talking about Issues of Disability*, 1997 Dulwich Centre, Adelaide p 27 - 30.

³ Walter Wink, *The Powers that Be: A Theology for a New Millennium*. 1998 Galilee Doubleday Sydney. p 167.

⁴ Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Letters and Papers from Prison*. 1953 SCM London. p.164.

⁵ Burton Cooper, "The Disabled God". Published in *Theology Today*. 1992 Princeton, NJ.

WHAT RESPONSE IS REQUIRED?

An *Action Plan* is what it says it is: a plan for *action*.

The *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* recommends that government, business and service providers prepare their own Action Plans. The aim is to improve equity and access for people with disabilities and reduce complaints under the Human Rights Commission. Organisations are urged to register their plans with the Commission and the Synod will lodge this Plan. Lodging an Action Plan indicates the seriousness with which the organisation treats equity and access. The Commission may take the service provider's Action Plan into consideration when determining a complaint, such as assessing whether the adjustments required by the complainant pose an unjustifiable hardship on the organisation.

The development of an Action Plan is voluntary, but it does provide a good opportunity to comprehensively and intentionally address the issue of

access. What is also important is that the very process is in itself educational.

In relation to people with disabilities, and remembering the three expressed needs in the Easy English document:

- ▶ To get into the place
- ▶ To feel welcome
- ▶ To have a say about involvement and contribution,

engage the following questions and prompts with reference to the *Matrix of Actions 2019 – 2022* within this Synod Disability Action Plan (see page 16).

(i) Church Council and Presbyteries

- Has your Council or Standing Committee recently reviewed its response to people's needs?
- Have you communicated with people directly affected about potential changes and improvements?
- Have you assessed the current situation with reference to Objectives and Strategies listed in 1.1 to 1.3 of the Matrix, and *Steps in developing your response?* (see pages 13 & 16)

(ii) Synod Operations

- Have you and your governing body or manager reviewed Objectives and Strategies listed in 2.1 to 2.9 of the Matrix, and *Steps in developing your response?* (see pages 13 & 16)

(iii) Synod Institutions

- Have you and your governing body reviewed Objectives and Strategies named in 3.1 of the Matrix and with reference to *Steps in developing your response?* (see pages 13 & 16)



STEPS IN DEVELOPING YOUR RESPONSE

Remember, people with disabilities and family members are the experts. Begin the conversation within your setting and make a start (“small” between two people if needs be) using the following guidelines.

1. Assess the current situation

Before any response can be made, there needs to be a review, or audit, of the present situation in the organisation, regarding access and equity.

This will require:

- a review of the buildings and facilities to isolate problem areas.
- a review of procedures, programs, services and activities regarding their “accessibility”.

These reviews may be helped by using a checklist. The Synod of Victoria and Tasmania has a self-audit checklist.

“What the audit comes down to, is clarifying those services, programs, procedures and facilities that make it difficult and sometimes impossible for people with disabilities to take part, remembering that what applies to one person with a disability may not affect another. The spin-off is that access is opened to a much wider group of people generally.”

Andy Calder

The audit will need the involvement of people with disabilities, carers, family and friends outlining how they experience obstacles and difficulties. A tour of buildings may be a beginning, followed by issues of accessing programs and activities, worship services, materials and information.

2. Working out solutions

The problems isolated by an audit then need to be addressed. This is a stage when consultation with resource people outside the organisation may be helpful. For example, a congregation may consult with another congregation as to how they dealt with various access issues. Schools and agencies may also find value in similar resourcing.

Appropriate representation is essential. *Participation needs to be genuine and comprehensive.* Consideration needs to be given to representing some or all of the following interests and people:

- a) People with disabilities
- b) Carers, family members or friends of a person with a disability
- c) People of different ages
- d) Intercultural considerations
- e) Finance, property and architectural interests
- f) Educational and communication skills
- g) Theological and liturgical knowledge/skills.

Such expertise may not always be available from within your organisation, in which case external advice and input needs to be sourced.

STEPS IN DEVELOPING YOUR RESPONSE

3. Communication

If a response is to be effective, it needs to be understood and owned by the whole congregation or Synod Institution. The way the response is formulated and implemented will be crucial for its overall effectiveness.

The following questions and consideration need to be taken into account:

- How will consultation inside and outside the organisation be achieved?
- How will your working group communicate its plans and timelines (minutes, displays, newsheets, announcements, bulletin boards, stories, website, social media)?
- How will your working group get feedback from the members of the organisation, including clients, and others (eg. parents of children, clients of a drop-in Centre, families of residents in a nursing home, etc.) as to its progress?
- How will your working group consult with people with disabilities, taking into consideration the diversity of disability, including those outside the organisation who may be potential members or clients?
- What provision is there for alternative methods of communication to ensure that people with disabilities have clear access to information and able to offer feedback?

4. Setting priorities and goals

Priorities need to be established.

The following criteria may be useful as a framework in which to decide:

- Which changes can be made immediately and which ones will

take time?

- Which changes will benefit the most number of people?
- Which changes will be the simplest to achieve?
- Which changes can be afforded at this time?
- Which changes can be linked to other changes going on within the organisation?

How the priorities are set may depend upon the nature and size of the organisation. It is important to see how the priorities are inter-connected and how they fit the overall response and policy.

5. Implementation

The success of your response or action plan depends on sufficient time given to deciding on and documenting how it will be implemented.

- Who is going to carry out and/or take responsibility for the work being done?
- By what date is it to be completed?
- Who will maintain communication with members, clients and people with disabilities?
- If major building alterations are required, what provision has been made to ensure that services continue safely?
- Have all the relevant bodies in the organisation been consulted (not merely informed) as to the changes and their effect?
- What arrangements have been made to review the on-going progress? Will the working group continue to meet and review?
- Have you developed an appropriate policy statement for your organisation?



6. Review and evaluation

It is important to incorporate review and evaluation procedures. This will mean reviewing not only the completed works or initiatives, but also how the ongoing review will take place.

Whoever is chosen to carry out the review needs to be able to represent the interests of people with disabilities, and provide the necessary feedback regarding achievement of the set goals. Consideration needs to be given to whether there will be annual or biannual reviews which could possibly be conducted in conjunction with other organisational reviews.

Some questions and issues to be considered are:

- Is there still a need for on-going education?
- In what ways can access and equity matters be integrated into the overall conduct and management of the organisation?
- How far are access and equity issues part of the internal framework of people's thinking and planning?
- Have all the needs, uncovered by the access audit, been met?
- Have new needs or issues arisen since then?
- What more needs to be done?

MATRIX OF ACTIONS

2019 - 2022

The overall key objectives are to eliminate discrimination and enhance positive attitudes and participation.

Keep in mind the three principles from the Easy English document:

- ▶ To get into the place
- ▶ To feel welcome
- ▶ To have a say about involvement and contribution.

1. Church Councils and Presbyteries

OBJECTIVES	STRATEGIES	TIMELINE	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	RESPONSIBILITY
1.1 To ensure disability issues are at the forefront of considerations	1.1.1 That worship and meetings are held in accessible venues	Ongoing	Full participation of all people wishing to attend	Church Council and Standing Committee of presbytery
	1.1.2 That presbytery and congregations work with Property Services prior to modification or construction of property. Use of self-audit checklist and possibly Synod's Disability Access Fund (DAF)	Ongoing	Increasing numbers of compliant buildings based on missional priorities	Presbytery, Church Council and Synod Property Services
	1.1.3 Display and promote access symbol on front notice board, websites and in information about Church activities	Ongoing	Increasing numbers of accessible buildings, and people with disabilities utilising them	Church Council
1.2 To ensure people with disabilities are able to fully participate in worship, social and leadership roles	1.2.1 Attitudinal change of belief in all people as gifted, and made in the image of God	Ongoing	Increasing presence and involvement of people with disabilities in life of UCA	All members of UCA
	1.2.2 Promote and use Circles of Support model	Ongoing	To enhance friendship and supportive relationships with people with disabilities and their families/ carers	Church Council and Synod's Disability Inclusion Advocate



1. Church Councils and Presbyteries, continued

OBJECTIVES	STRATEGIES	TIMELINE	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	RESPONSIBILITY
1.2 To ensure people with disabilities are able to fully participate in worship, social and leadership roles	1.2.3 Use of Synod Mental Health Kit for purposes of support, discussion, Bible Studies, liturgy	Ongoing	Decreased stigma re mental illness, and increased acceptance of individuals and families living with mental illness	Church Council and congregations
	1.2.4 Participation in Mental Health First Aid Courses (MHFA)	Ongoing	Increased awareness and knowledge	Church Council and Synod's Disability Inclusion Advocate
	1.2.5 Use of training and resource materials, liturgical resources, large print format, audio loops and personnel able to encourage inclusion and active participation	Ongoing	Increase numbers of people with disabilities participating positively in the life of the UCA	Congregations and Synod's Disability Inclusion Advocate
1.3 Development of Disability Action Plans, to promote universal access, and eliminate prohibitive practices. To be developed in consultation with people with disabilities	1.3.1 Congregations and presbyteries to undertake annual audit of buildings, and consider attitudes and practices which exclude people with disabilities	Ongoing	Individual and achievable goals and plan developed	Congregations and presbyteries

MATRIX OF ACTIONS 2019 - 2022

2. Synod Operations

OBJECTIVES	STRATEGIES	TIMELINE	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	RESPONSIBILITY
2.1 Discern particular responses with First Peoples	2.1.1 Liaise with First People's Disability Network (FPDN) and Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress (UAICC)	Ongoing	Enhanced supports as needed for indigenous people with disabilities	Disability Inclusion Advocate and UAICC
2.2 Ensure Synod/eLM events and activities are accessible	2.2.1 Develop a Checklist re Disability Access	By mid-2020	Development, distribution and promotion	Disability Inclusion Advocate and Synod Standing Committee
2.3 To ensure property of UCA is compliant with access requirements	2.3.1 Property Services review Access Guidelines template according to relevant legislation and specifications. For purpose self-auditing of congregations and institutions, including camping	Complete by December 2019	Promotion of and notification to all sectors of UCA	Property Services and Disability Inclusion Advocate to review
2.4 Support congregations with self-audit process	2.4.1 Property Services to explore integration of Access Guidelines with OH&S audits	Commencing 2020	Implementation of renovations and upgrades according to legislation and planning authorities	Church Councils and Property Services
2.5 Provide funds for minor access upgrades for congregations	2.5.1 Ensure Disability Access Fund (DAF) is relevant to current needs	Complete review by February 2020.	Review of DAF and notification to congregations and presbyteries	Property Application Review Team (PART)/ Disability Inclusion Advocate
2.6 To ensure people with disabilities are able to fully participate in worship, social and leadership roles	2.6.1 Develop theological rationale and statement re disability inclusion, with reference to camping, cultural diversity, young people and children. Also with a focus on autism.	2019 - 2020	Clarity as to gospel imperative of justice and life-affirming relationships	Disability Inclusion Advocate and relevant eLM staff

MATRIX OF ACTIONS 2019 - 2022

2. Synod Operations, continued

OBJECTIVES	STRATEGIES	TIMELINE	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	RESPONSIBILITY
2.6 To ensure people with disabilities are able to fully participate in worship, social and leadership roles	2.6.2 Develop Study Kit/ information for congregations related to WCC's 'Gift of Being'	December 2020	To enhance theological perspectives regarding inclusion and welcome	Disability Inclusion Advocate
2.7 Enhance communication with people with disabilities	2.7.1 Review usage of Relay Service, Easy English and Communication Access symbols. Also review web-based responses	Ongoing	For Synod Switchboard, Synod communications. Relevant training to be provided	Communications between Synod staff and congregations to further enhance this response
	2.7.2 To collect and develop a repository of positive images/stories for use in UCA communications	Ongoing	To enhance quality profile and interactions	CoMS and Disability Inclusion Advocate
	2.7.3 When publicising events images of people with disabilities be included	Ongoing	Stock of images for CoMS to be developed. CoMS staff to gain "disability friendly" awareness	CoMS and Disability Inclusion Advocate
	2.7.4 Participation in Mental Health First Aid Courses (MHFA)	Ongoing	Increased awareness and knowledge	Synod staff, including camping
2.8 Study/ academic opportunities are accessible for lay and ordained students	2.8.1 Review current processes and enhance awareness of needs	Mid 2020	In accordance with Australian Higher Education Standards	Pilgrim Theological College and Disability Inclusion Advocate
2.9 To ensure the Synod is aware of its employment obligations under the DDA 1992	2.9.1 To ensure non-discriminatory policy re-employment of people with disabilities	December 2019	To review and confirm Synod's policy, with more people with disabilities applying for UCA employment	HR re Lay Staff Agreements and relevant policy

MATRIX OF ACTIONS 2019 - 2022

3. Synod Institutions

OBJECTIVES	STRATEGIES	TIMELINE	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	RESPONSIBILITY
3.1 To ensure clear policy statements which promote universal access, and eliminate discrimination, and prohibitive practices. To be developed in consultation with people with disabilities	3.1.1 Review and develop access and equity policies in line with DDA 1992 and all relevant statutory requirements	During course of next 12 months	Organisations produce policies in consultation with people with disabilities/families and advocates	Uniting Victoria and Tasmania Uniting Age Well
	3.1.2 Encouragement to develop access and equity policies in line with DDA 1992 and all relevant statutory requirements	During course of next 12 months	Encouragement to produce policies in consultation with people with disabilities/families and advocates	UCA Schools



RESOURCES

In the past decade or two there has been an expanding interest in the field of disability and spirituality, as it relates to practical responses. The resources listed below are some examples

Theological and Sociological Writings

► Kathleen Black, *A Healing Homiletic: Preaching and Disability*, Abingdon Press, 1996.

► Brian Brock, *Wondrously Wounded: Theology, Disability, and the Body Of Christ*. Baylor University Press, 2019.

► Brian Brock and John Swinton, *Disability in the Christian Tradition: A Reader*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: W.B Eerdmans Publishing, 2012.

► Erik Carter, *Including People with Disabilities in Faith Communities*. Paul H. Brookes Publishing, Maryland, 2007.

► Nancy Eiseland, *The Disabled God: Toward a Liberatory Understanding of Disability*, Abingdon Press, 1994.

► Nancy Eiseland and Don E. Saliers, eds. *Human Disability and the Service of God: Reassessing Religious Practice*, Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1998.

► William Gaventa, *Disability and Spirituality: Recovering Wholeness*. Waco: Texas, Baylor University Press, 2018.

► Christopher Newell and Andy Calder, eds. *Voices in Disability and Spirituality from the Land Down Under*, New York: Haworth Press, 2004.

► Tom Reynolds, *Vulnerable Communion: A Theology of Disability and Hospitality*. Grand Rapids: Brazos Press, 2008.

► Amos Yong, *The Bible, Disability and the Church: A New Vision of the People of God*. Grand Rapids: W.E. Eerdmans Publishing, 2011.

► *Journal of Disability and Religion*, Routledge, Taylor and Francis Publishing.

Information about DDA, Human Rights and Website Accessibility

Australian Human Rights Commission

► www.humanrights.gov.au/sites/default/files/content/legal/FDL/2011/5_DDA.pdf

Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission

► www.humanrightscommission.vic.gov.au/index.php/discrimination

Office for Disability in Victoria

► <https://dhhs.vic.gov.au/office-disability>

Web Content Accessibility Guidelines

► www.w3.org/WAI/standards-guidelines/wcag/

Synod of Victoria and Tasmania - Uniting Church in Australia

Property Access Audit (also under review as part of this Plan).

Contact Property Services:
03 9251 5200.

RESOURCES

Support Agencies

Agencies which support people with disabilities provide advice and information. Some of them may provide access audit services and some are NDIS providers.

Though this list is not exhaustive, the following organisations can be contacted as follows

Occupational Therapy Australia

- ▶ www.otaus.com.au/
- 📍 5/340 Gore Street, Fitzroy, 3065
- ☎ 03 9415 2955

Independence Australia

- ▶ www.independenceaustralia.com/contact-us
- ☎ 1300 704 456
- ✉ theteam@iagroup.org.au

Noah's Ark

- ▶ www.noahsarkinc.org.au/
- ☎ 1800 819 140
- ✉ hello@noahsarkinc.org.au

Vision Australia

- ▶ www.visionaustralia.org/
- 📍 454 Glenferrie Road, Kooyong, 3144
- ☎ 1300 84 74 66

VicDeaf

- ▶ www.vicdeaf.com.au/
- 📍 Level 4, 340 Albert Street, E. Melbourne, 3002
- ☎ (03) 9473 1111
- 🗨 TTY 9473 1199
- ✉ info@expression.com.au
- 📱 **SMS/FaceTime** 0402 217 586

Scope

- ▶ <http://www.scopevic.org.au/>
- 📍 830 Whitehorse Road, Box Hill, 3128
- ☎ 1300 4 72673

Yooralla

- ▶ www.yooralla.com.au/
- 📍 Level 14, 595 Collins Street, Melbourne, 3000
- ☎ (03) 9666 4500

Uniting Prahran

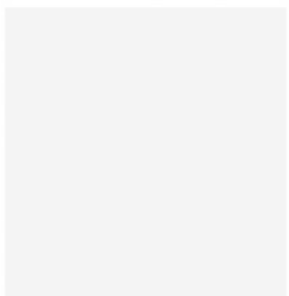
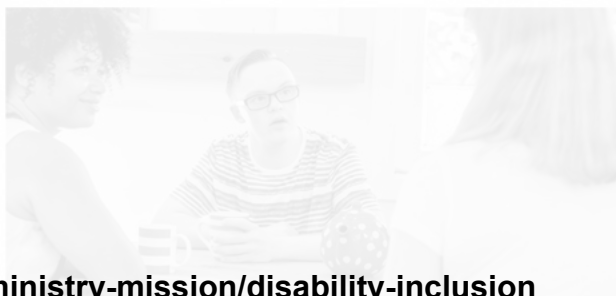
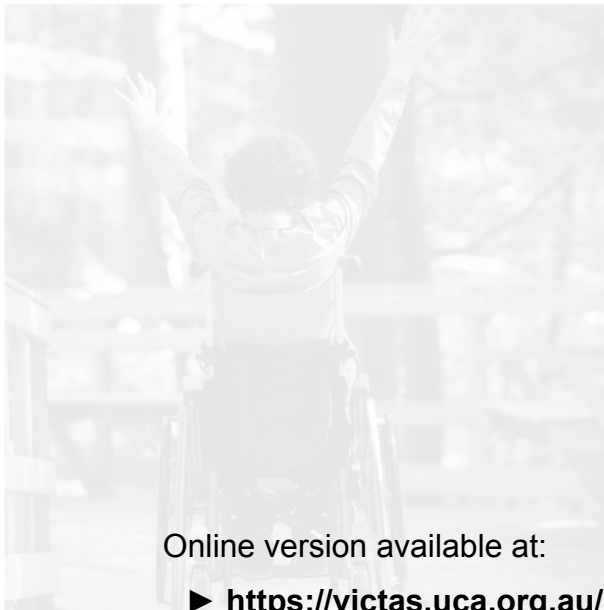
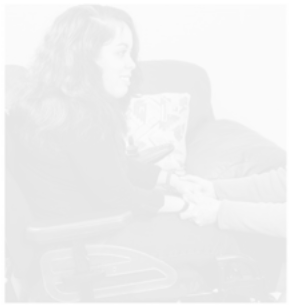
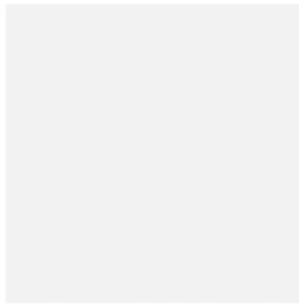
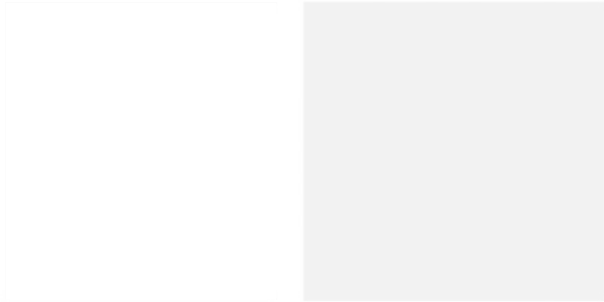
- ▶ www.prahranmission.org.au/
- 📍 211 Chapel Street, Prahran, 3181
- ☎ (03) 9692 9500

Victorian Advocacy League for Individuals with Disability (VALiD)

- ▶ www.valid.org.au/
- 📍 130 Cremorne Street, Richmond, 3121
- ☎ (03) 9416 4003

CBM – Luke14

- ▶ www.cbm.org.au/get-involved/church



Online version available at:

► <https://victas.uca.org.au/ministry-mission/disability-inclusion>

