



DisAbility Ministries
The United Methodist Church



Ohio Disability & Ministry Collaborative **February 2022**



ANNOUNCING

Church Accessibility Grants Now Accepting Applications

Do you know if your church is accessible for members or guests who primarily use a wheelchair for mobility? Do you have a church project in mind to make your building more accessible? Or are you looking for ways to help improve your worship space so that all people of all ages and abilities may feel included and loved by God? Then this new grant opportunity through the West Ohio Conference could be right for you and your church.

The Disability and Ministry Team of the West Ohio Conference, now known as the Ohio Disability and Ministry Collaborative, are thrilled to announce that they are piloting a grant program to fund projects for the improvement of church accessibility in the West Ohio Conference. Churches with approved grant applications will be awarded up to \$5,000.

The Ohio Disability and Ministry Collaborative team have been working hard this year towards creating a grant application, *"To encourage West Ohio Conference churches and related agencies to make programs and facilities fully accessible to, and inclusive of, people with disabilities by funding projects that address architectural and communication barriers."* This team would love to read and learn more about a project your church would like to create to make your space more accessible or inclusive for people with disabilities. You can complete the 2022 Project Pilot Grant Application now! Grants will be accepted, reviewed, and awarded on a rolling basis until November 1, 2022, or until all available funds have been distributed.

If your church is interested, please complete the grant application through the link here: https://www.westohioumc.org/sites/default/files/conference/documents/docx/page/west-ohio-disability-ministry-pilot-grant-application_0.docx

For more information, or questions, please email [Sam Rodriguez](#), Director of Faith Formation and Community Engagement.

May 1st is WOC Disability Awareness Sunday

It's not too early to plan now for your Disability Awareness Sunday. For a speaker's bureau list, resources and ideas, please visit [Disability Awareness Sunday | West Ohio Conference of The United Methodist Church \(westohioumc.org\)](https://westohioumc.org) We will gladly assist in the planning of your program and point you to great resources!



Meet Rev. Dr. Beverly Hall

On any given day, Beverly, aka Rev Bev, a retired pastor from East Ohio Conference now living in North Carolina, may be found enjoying her mini-farm life with author husband, Jerry. Bev's credentials are numerous and include MACE and MDiv, MTSO; DMin, Saint Paul School of Theology; and serving 31 years as a pastor in East Ohio. Stroke Awareness Oregon interviewed her for a chapter in a book on stroke survivors (Just Say Yes to Life) and Bev's story may be found in chapter four.

Beverly explains, *"I am an advocate for Disability Awareness because when you look at me, you don't see any disability, but I have many hidden ones. I ask people to keep an open mind when seeing someone use a handicapped placard and they do not appear disabled. You do not know what struggles they have had or are having."*

In the United States, 61 million adults live with a disability, many of which are invisible, and persons sitting in church pews on a Sunday morning may well have an invisible disability. [Disability Impacts All of Us Infographic | CDC](https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/infographic/2018/disability-impacts-all-of-us-infographic.html).

Bev believes a pastors' attitudes and actions are at the forefront of disability awareness and they can be sensitive to changes in person's behavior or demeanor. PTSD (Post Traumatic Stress Disorder) is increasing due to the COVID pandemic. A pastor can educate her/his congregation on how to address various disabilities and suggest adaptations to better welcome individuals with disabilities. A walk-through of the building itself, perhaps by a person unfamiliar with the church, may bring awareness to issues that may be addressed to make the building more accessible.

If you would like to communicate with Beverly, she may be reached at revbev4844@aol.com.

Scout Disabilities Awareness Badges

Scouts have the opportunity to earn a badge in disabilities awareness. We can help! Contact Rose at rdarling@flatrockhomes.org for information.