

# WHY HAVE A DISABILITY ADVOCATE?

It's simple, really.

Disabilities have a way of keeping people from participating fully in the life of the church—and sometimes from even participating at all.

By identifying a disability champion in your congregation (that's how we think of our advocates, as champions), you're taking the first step to welcome people into the body of Christ—people with disabilities and their families. Considering one in five people has a disability, that's a lot of people you'll be better prepared to welcome, to disciple, to learn from, and to watch lead.

People like the longtime member with recent hearing loss. People like the teenager whose baptism you remember, who now struggles with depression. People like your neighbors down the street who haven't been to church in four years because it's too hard for their son, who has autism, to sit quietly.

Welcome begins with one.

A disability advocate develops eyes to see the needs of people with disabilities and helps your church do the same. Usually that starts with the needs of the people in your congregation. But it also means anticipating future needs so you're ready to welcome people with disabilities who are looking for a church home and support people in your congregation when they acquire disabilities down the road.

Once you see those needs, you can begin to meet them. And together, you can create a church where everybody belongs and everybody serves.

**Being a disability advocate is a volunteer job—an important one.**



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