



agility

In the body of Christ there are no “special” needs. Everyone has needs.

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Reformed Church in America
Christian Reformed Church

**Disability
Concerns**





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In my efforts to do life everyday—working, driving, shopping, socializing, participating in church, etc.—the physical disabilities I’ve had since birth require that I figure out stuff all the time. I must anticipate, plan, be vulnerable, and negotiate. That’s why I may say things like: “Can you help me with this? . . . Are there any other options? . . . That’s why I requested this accommodation in advance. . . . No, I’ve got this, but thanks for offering to help.” I don’t delight in coming across as a high-maintenance person who needs to have things my way. Agility calls for my respectful negotiation with others in order to function in a world that wasn’t designed with me in mind.

—Terry DeYoung

Coordinator for Disability Concerns, Reformed Church in America

The body of Christ differs in age, ability, gender, ethnicity, race, socioeconomic status, perspectives—and yet we are one body (1 Cor. 12:12). United in Christ, we must develop agility to listen, be curious, learn, and grow in relationship with each other. Agile people move with ease and grace by adapting resourcefully to situations and relationships. Contrary to assumptions, people with disabilities tend to be highly agile, because they must navigate physical and social structures that are created by and for people who do not have disabilities. In this way, we can and often do “dis-able” people from participating in and joining our churches.

Healthy church communities learn from people who have disabilities and provide opportunities for them to lead. Although our differences can challenge us, those differences bless and enrich the way we worship, grow in faith, reach out, and serve each other and our communities. People with disabilities are referred to as having “special needs,” but in the body of Christ there are no “special” needs—just needs. And we all have needs: to be saved from sin, to belong, to love and be loved, to serve, to be held accountable, to use our gifts and receive the gifts of others, to be involved and valued in a church community. When agile, the body of Christ engages each member.

How are the leadership gifts of people with disabilities utilized in your church?

everybody belongs | everybody serves

disability@crcna.org
1-888-463-0272
disability@rca.org
facebook.com/DisabilityConcerns
810525



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