

## **Bulletin /Newsletter "Blurbs" on Disability Issues:**

### ***DID YOU KNOW THAT...***

**Did you know that...** a basic principle to use when referring to people with disabilities is: *use "people first" language*. While someone may have a disability or impairment, it is not the only defining aspect of their lives. By saying, "a man with Down Syndrome" rather than "a Down Syndrome man" we place the primary value on the person rather than the disability, which is a more accurate reflection of who the person is.

Genesis 1:27 "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him..."

**Did you know that...** over the years *our understanding of disabilities has changed, and so has the language we use when speaking or writing about people with disabilities*. Today we want to avoid the use of "victim" language that has negative connotations and evokes pity, e.g. crippled, invalid or confined to a wheelchair. "Victim" language is not an accurate portrayal of the way the majority of people with disabilities see themselves.

1 Thessalonians 5:11 "Therefore encourage one another and build each other up..."

**Did you know that...** *accessibility* involves more than making changes in the structure of buildings. It also involves having open and accepting attitudes towards people with disabilities and making sure they are included in the daily life of our congregations.

1 Corinthians 12:27 "...you are the body of Christ and each one of you is a part of it."

**Did you know that...** a 1998 Harris Poll conducted for the National Organization on Disabilities found that 54% of adults with disabilities worship at least once a month compared to 57% of adults without disabilities. Though these results may be disputed by some, they do reflect the *need to continue our witness and outreach efforts to all people* in our communities.

Matthew 28:18-20 "...make disciples of all nations..."

**Did you know that...** *many people with disabilities have gifts they would love to share with the body of Christ*, all they need is to be given the opportunity. The possibilities for serving in the church depends on the individual and their gifts, as well as the churches' willingness to provide the opportunities. For all members of the body of Christ, service is an expression of our love for our Savior.

Romans 12:6 "We have different gifts, according to the grace given to us..."

**Did you know that...** having a disability is *"a common experience that we often treat as uncommon"*. That is to say, at anytime, anyone of us could have an impairment or disability be it temporary or permanent. Keeping this in mind; perhaps we can begin to view disabilities as *"differing abilities"* rather than as *something that needs to be overcome*.

1 Corinthians 12:22 "...those parts of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable."