

Resolution Title

Resolution For Ministry To And With Our Neurodivergent Members And Community

Whereas:

Whereas neurodivergence includes people living with autism, attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder and other disorders. The term describes those whose brain differences affect how their brain functions. They have different gifts and challenges than people without the difference.

Whereas it is estimated that 2.2 percent of the population of the United States of America has autism. According to the United States Census Bureau, Tennessee had a population of 6.975 million in 2021. Therefore, it can be estimated that at least 153,450 thousand of our neighbors are autistic, and the number is constantly growing.

Whereas in Paragraph 140 of the Book of Discipline states:
We recognize that God made all creation and saw that it was good. As a diverse people of God who bring special gifts and evidences of God's grace to the unity of the Church and to society, we are called to be faithful to the example of Jesus' ministry to all persons.

Inclusiveness means openness, acceptance, and support that enables all persons to participate in the life of the Church, the community, and the world. Therefore inclusiveness denies every semblance of discrimination. The services of worship of every local church of The United Methodist Church shall be open to all persons.

The mark of an inclusive society is one in which all persons are open, welcoming, fully accepting, and supporting of all other persons, enabling them to participate fully in the life of the church, the community, and the world. A further mark of inclusiveness is the setting of church activities in facilities accessible to persons with disabilities.

In the United Methodist Church inclusiveness means the freedom for the total involvement of all persons who meet the requirements of the United Methodist Book of Discipline in the membership and leadership of the Church at any level and in every place.

Therefore, be it resolved by the 2023 Tennessee-Western Kentucky Annual Conference that:

Therefore, Let It Be Resolved that the TWKUMC establish a committee within the conference comprised of laity and clergy to examine, develop, and recommend resources, training, curriculum, and assist local churches in ministering to those who are neurodivergent in their communities.

Let It Also Be Resolved that this committee will assist local churches in engaging in ministry with neurodivergent people and their families in their communities.

Let It Also Be Resolved that local church consider forming missional, leadership, and educational opportunities for neurodivergent people and their families.

Date of Submission

04/19/2023

Name of Person Submitting Resolution

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