

# **EPAC DISABILITY AWARD**

The EPAC-UMC Disability Committee has established the “**Bishop Peggy Johnson 4A’s Award for Disability Ministry**” as well a certificate of recognition for excellence in disability ministry. The **Bishop Peggy Johnson 4A’s Award for Disability Ministry** gives recognition to one congregation “of the year” and one district “of the year” that has made great strides toward being in inclusive ministry with persons, and families, who experience disability. Additionally, ALL EPAC churches are eligible to receive a certificate of excellence in outstanding disability ministry after meeting certain criteria.

## **Congregation Criteria for Certificate of Excellence in Disability Ministry**

To receive a certificate of excellence in outstanding disability ministry, a congregation needs to meet the following criteria:

1. Have a lay member designated as chairperson or director of Disability Ministries for the local church.
2. Submit proof that the local church has had an annual Disability Awareness Sunday.
3. Show that the local church has completed an annual Accessibility Audit.
4. Submit proof of having an active disability ministry, which includes:
  - Listing at least three things the church has done during the year to be in intentional ministry with people with disabilities in the community (ex: a church small group that volunteers with Special Olympics, has Bible study or other ministries with people with disabilities living in community group homes, provides ministries with veterans, etc.)
  - Having at least one \*accessible parking spot marked with appropriate sign.
5. Submit a letter of affirmation from your pastor to the Conference Disabilities Committee chairperson explaining the impact your disability ministry has had on the church and community.

*\*Actions such as having an accessible parking space can only be counted once — a church cannot submit the same exact list of such activities each year.*

Churches meeting the above criteria will receive a certificate of excellence for outstanding disability ministry. Churches will receive a certificate every year that the above criteria are met. The Disability Committee will present the certificate at Annual Conference each year to the chairperson and/or pastor in appreciation of his/her leadership in the area of Disability Ministries.

## **Criteria for “Bishop Peggy Johnson 4A’s Award for Disability Ministry”**

Additionally, churches may receive the, “Bishop Peggy Johnson 4A’s Award for Disability Ministry” is given to only one church per year. To be considered for the **award**, churches must have been awarded a certificate of excellence and must meet the following “4A’s” Criteria:

### **4A’s**

**Accessibility**- How has your church improved the accessible of your church building? (ex: Installed hand rails in hallways, and accessible restroom, automatic doors, etc.

**Adaptation**- What specific adaptations has your church made so that people with disabilities are able to fully participate? (ex: Offer Large print bulletins, audio headsets Sunday school lessons for people with cognitive disabilities,

**Awareness**- How has your church sought to educate the congregation and or the community about varied disabilities and how to include individuals with disabilities within the life of the church/community?

**Assimilate**- To what extent do people who experience disabilities actively participate in the church's mission of sharing the Gospel and making disciples?

Additionally, your church must include a letter of affirmation from your pastor explaining the impact your ministry to and with individuals with disabilities had had on the church/community AND a letter of affirmation from one of the recipients of your disability ministry (may also be a caregiver if more appropriate) which explains how the ministry has impacted their life.

### **District Award Criteria for District of the Year**

For a District to be considered the “district of the year” and be awarded the Bishop Peggy Johnson 4A’s Award for Disability Ministry the District must meet the following criteria:

Criteria:

1. The District with the highest percentage of churches receiving certificates of excellence (a minimum of 10% of all churches in all the district).
2. District must have a workshop about a disability topic at yearly Tools for Ministry

The award will be presented to the District Superintendent in appreciation of his/her leadership in the area of Disability Ministries.

**To be considered for certificate of excellence and/or award,  
information should be sent to the Conference Disability Ministries  
Chairperson no later than March 31<sup>st</sup> each year. Please watch the  
EPAC Website/Disability for application.**