



NEWS UPDATE, September 11, 2017

“Uneven ground will become level, and rough terrain a valley plain. The Lord’s glory will appear, and all humanity will see it together; the Lord’s mouth has commanded it.” Isaiah 40:4-5

On August 11, 2017, the **DisAbility Ministries Committee of The United Methodist Church** was informed that the Global Health Division of the General Board of Global Ministries will stop funding us as of May 31, 2018. After many years of being our home, they no longer have a mandate in the Book of Discipline to include us in their budget. In fact, our committee was quietly erased from the Discipline altogether. Global Health now has responsibility only for “Encouraging awareness of the gifts, graces, assets, and needs of persons with special physical, mental, and other developmental needs, fostering a culture of inclusivity within The United Methodist Church as a place where people with special needs will be embraced in all aspects of worship, leadership, and ministry.”

The DisAbility Ministries Committee does not approve of the changes nor of the way that they were made. Providing the advocacy, education, and empowerment that are needed so that everyone will find a place to belong in the United Methodist Church requires much more than encouraging awareness and fostering inclusivity. It requires listening to the voices of people with disabilities and not making changes about us without us.

We will continue to provide resources, grants, and education to people engaged in DisAbility Ministries. We will move forward to expand our relationships with others in ministry. We will keep on expanding our capabilities by adding new resource people. We will not stop until all United Methodists everywhere have been reached and we have, through them, “made disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world,” disciples who include people with disabilities.

We are asking for your help in two ways:

1. Please consider **writing a letter** to the General Board of Global Ministries, Global Health Division, recounting your personal experiences,

If you have been impacted by a workshop or training that we have provided,
if you have been motivated by hearing one of us preach or speak,
if you have found our website or printed-out resources helpful,
if you have received a grant to help improve accessibility or programming.

Letters can be sent to Thomas Kemper (tkemper@umcmmission.org), Dr. Olusimbo Ige (oige@umcmmission.org), and Sabrina Rodgers (srodgers@umcmmission.org).

2. Please also consider **donating to our Advance, #3021054** through the General Board of Global Ministries at <http://www.umcmmission.org/Give-to-Mission/Search-for-Projects/Projects/3021054>

Above all, remember that **we are still here to serve you**. Thank you for your support!

Yours in service to Christ,

Sharon McCart
Chair, DisAbility Ministries Committee of The United Methodist Church