

**Accessibility-related Excerpts for Local Churches from
The Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church, 2008**

¶ **2518.** There shall be in each district of an annual conference a **district board of church location and building**. The board shall consist of the district superintendent and a minimum of six and maximum of nine additional persons. ... It is recommended that the membership include one-third clergy, one-third laymen, and one-third laywomen, and where possible, should be inclusive of gender, race, age, and persons with disabilities.

¶ **2520.** *Standards for the Approval of Building Proposals*

1. The board shall review the plans of any church in the district which proposes to construct or purchase a new church or educational building or parsonage, or remodeling of such a building if the cost will exceed 25 percent of the value of the building. ... Where readily achievable and financially feasible, renovation plans shall provide for equal access to persons with disabilities.

¶ **2532.** *(Local Church) Board of Trustees' Powers and Limitations-*

6. The board of trustees, in cooperation with the health and welfare ministries representative, shall conduct or cause to be conducted an annual accessibility audit of their buildings, grounds, and facilities to discover and identify what physical, architectural, and communication barriers exist that impede the full participation of persons with disabilities and shall make plans and determine priorities of the elimination of all such barriers. The Accessibility Audit for churches shall be used in filling out the annual church and/or charge conference reports.

¶ **2543.** *Planning and Financing Requirements for Local Church Buildings-* If any local church desires to

a) build a new church, a new educational building, or a new parsonage;
b) purchase a church, educational building, or parsonage; or
c) remodel an existing church, an existing educational building or an existing parsonage, where the cost of the remodeling will exceed 25% of the value of the existing structure or require mortgage financing, then the local church shall first establish a study committee to:
(1).analyze the needs of the church and community; ... (4) develop an accessibility plan including chancel areas.

3.b)...In the case of the purchase of a parsonage, the board of trustees shall either:

- (1) purchase a parsonage that has on the ground-floor level:
 - (a) one room that can be used as a bedroom by a person with a disability;
 - (b) one fully accessible bathroom; and
 - (c) fully accessible laundry facilities; or
- (2) purchase a parsonage without the accessible features for persons with disabilities specified above and remodel it within one year's time, so that it does have those features.

4. The building committee shall:

- c) develop preliminary architectural plans that:
 - (1) comply with local building, fire, and accessibility codes;
 - (3) provide adequate facilities for parking, entrance, seating, rest rooms, and accessibility for persons with disabilities, but providing for such adequate facilities shall not apply in the case of a minor remodeling project;
- (d) provide on the ground-floor level of a newly constructed parsonage:
 - (1) one room that can be used as a bedroom by a persons with a disability;
 - (2) a fully accessible bathroom; and, (3) fully accessible laundry facilities.