

Christ is the future, and we follow Him together with our disabled brothers and sisters!

Statement on the inclusion of our brothers and sisters living with disabilities.

We **believe** that God has created every man in His own image (Genesis 1:2; Genesis 1:31). The Bible depicts man as a fragile, vulnerable and helpless creature, but also one that God deeply cares about. As creations of God, we are under His protection. In the eyes of God, our human state – despite all apparent differences – is the same inasmuch as we are all sinners (Romans 3:10-12). Our greatest failing and largest obstacle before God is the fact that we are sinners: we live with sins in our past and sins surrounding us threaten us daily; we are all deprived without God even if we happen to live in luxury. We all have our impairments, since our lips fail to speak to those suffering, our ears fail to hear the laments of our fellow human beings, and our eyes fail to see the misery of others. We also profess that “all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God” (Romans 3:23).

We have **recognized** that everyone – whether they are healthy, currently not disabled, or living with some sort of disability or impairment – is need of God’s grace. It is only through Jesus Christ that we become real human beings. This is our common denominator, and God continues to approach us, humans, with His redeeming love and gospel, because He *loves* each and every one of us – whether we live with a disability or not – *and has a plan with our lives in order to make us live for the glory of His holy name, in a way that His only begotten Son is reflected in our lives.*

We **profess** that “God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us” (Romans 5:8). *God carried out his plan of redemption for every human being – whether or not disabled – in Jesus Christ.*

We **recognized** that we can now become the sign of the Kingdom of God through accepting unconditionally those who are sick, suffering, and disabled. The Christian congregations have to reflect God’s Kingdom, already revealed in Christ and to be fully realized in the perfection of salvation, where there is not a distinction between a healthy or disabled person, but Christ is all, and is in all. Therefore the Church of Christ shall provide a space for disabled people, where the congregation members view and value them and their lives not by their capabilities, but according to the imitation of Christ, which is realised in the unconditional acceptance of the neighbour, the selfless commitment to the sick, disabled and suffering people.

We **profess**: *It is God’s will that our brothers and sisters living with disabilities should be integrated into the community of congregations (Matthew 25:35). And thus, every person, whether disabled or not, should form one body: the body of Christ (1 Corinthians 12:27). Every person, whether disabled or not, should be made disciples (Matthew 28:19). There are no separate ways on the narrow road for healthy and disabled people. We were given singleness of heart and action by our Heavenly Father (Jeremiah 32:39). Every person, whether or not disabled, has spiritual gifts and natural abilities that they can use to praise and serve the Lord: “For just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the*

same function, so in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. We have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us...” (Romans 12:4-6). “No congregation can do without disabled people; if people with disabilities are missing from a congregation, then the congregation itself is disabled” (Zsófia Juhász).

We have **recognized** that a congregation is able to show its inclusive love by using all available methods (teaching, informing, raising awareness, providing technical tools and creating the appropriate technical conditions) to break down any internal or external barriers that hinder the access to the Word of God. This way, the congregation draws attention to the divine dimension of equality of opportunity and accessibility.

We **believe and profess** that the love of Jesus Christ that elevates human beings is the basis and source of real relationships which make life meaningful for both abled and disabled people. As a result, this way of following Christ becomes a blessing in this world.

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