



# International Day of People with Disability

Wednesday  
December 3, 2025

## Faith Community Resource



Uniting Church in Australia  
SYNOD OF VICTORIA AND TASMANIA



The Uniting Church in Australia  
QUEENSLAND SYNOD



## International Day of People with Disability

International Day of People with Disability – IDPwD- is a United Nations (UN) day observed internationally on 3 December each year. It aims to promote community awareness, understanding and acceptance of people with disability.

The UN started the International Day of Disabled Persons in 1992. It is held every year to support the rights and well-being of people with disabilities. The day also helps raise awareness about the challenges they face in areas like politics, society, the economy, and culture.

The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) was adopted in 2006, building on many years of work by the UN to support people with disabilities. It sets out the rights of people with disabilities and encourages governments to take action to protect those rights. The Australian Government is a signatory to the Convention. Governments report to the UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities approximately every five years to review their progress in implementing the requirements of the Convention.

The following resource is for congregations and faith communities that wish to include material about this significant day in worship or other services for Sunday, November 30 or Sunday, December 7.



Communities across Australia come together to celebrate the International Day of People with Disability—a day dedicated to promoting inclusion, raising awareness, and honouring the contributions of people with disability. To support this important occasion, a wide range of resources are available to help schools, faith organisations, workplaces, and community groups plan meaningful events and conversations.

Visit the International Day of People with Disability Australia official website [www.idpwd.com.au](http://www.idpwd.com.au) and use the available promotional resources and the information kit for community groups to plan an activity or event for your congregation or faith community.

You are invited to register your event on the official IDPWD website and take a meaningful stand for equality, accessibility, and the rights of people with disabilities. By sharing your initiative, you join a global movement!



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# 1. Uniting Church resolutions on disability inclusion

The Uniting church in Australia has an ongoing commitment with disability inclusion and accessibility.

In 2024, the Assembly Standing Committee approved the adoption of the Overarching Principles developed by the Uniting Church of Australia Disability Royal Commission National Task Group (NTG). The NTG had developed the Overarching Principles to strengthen organisational safeguards to ensure people with disability feel safe and their rights are respected, across the Church and its agencies, based on the top three issues examined by the Disability Royal Commission:

- governance and decision-making
- accessible and adequate complaints resolution processes and institutional safety
- awareness and use of supported decision-making and choice and control.

The Working Group was comprised of representatives from across the Church and its agencies.

The shortened version of the Overarching Principles developed by the Working Group follow. The full version is in the Appendix.

## Principles for a disability inclusive Church 1. Governance and decision making

*We should actively include everyone within our institutions.*

- Organisations should focus on embedding the voice, safety, and wellbeing of people with disability.

- Organisations are encouraged to increase rates of employment of people with disability, including in senior leadership and decision-making roles.
- Governance bodies should have effective oversight of service delivery.
- Lived experience is encouraged to be valued as an important and crucial skill, including for appointment to governance bodies.

## 2. Access to adequate complaints resolution process and institutional safety

*Good complaint processes are essential.*

- Everyone should feel supported to raise complaints.
- Everyone should understand their responsibilities in receiving and hearing complaints.
- Complainants should be treated with respect and offered support.
- Complaining should be easy and the process should be easy to understand.
- Complaints should be received through multiple channels like email or over the phone.
- Organisations are encouraged to have person-centred, accessible, and trauma-informed processes.
- Organisations should view complaints as opportunities for feedback.
- Clear records of complaints should be made and stored securely.

*Institutions need to be focused on people's safety.*

- All people in all institutions should be safe from abuse, violence, neglect, and exploitation.
- Safety includes but is not limited to physical, cultural, and psychological safety.
- Organisations are encouraged to have accessible, trauma-informed, culturally appropriate, and easy to understand policies and procedures that safeguard people with disability, including a risk management framework.

- Organisations and individuals should promote a culture where people with disability are treated with respect and their safety is paramount.
- Responsibilities relating to institutional safety should be well understood and embedded.
- Everyone should receive appropriate induction and other training.
- Policies and procedures should have a focus on prevention.
- Policies and procedures should clearly outline the roles and responsibilities of everyone in the organisation.

### **3. Awareness and use of supported decision-making and choice and control**

*We should encourage supported decision making and choice and control at every level of our organisations.*

- Organisations are encouraged to include the use of supported decision making in policies and practices.
- Organisations should include providing choice and control in policies and practices.
- All policies and practice guides should be accessible.
- Policies and practice guides should cover conflicts of interest.
- Organisations are encouraged to provide their staff with training on dealing with conflicts of interest, the use of supported decision making, and providing choice and control.

The Synod of Victoria and Tasmania has made the Overarching Principles for disability inclusion accessible in a plain language format, now available as a downloadable poster. This resource is designed to help congregations and faith communities promote inclusion and spark meaningful conversations around safety, choice, and belonging. You can find the poster on the Disability Inclusion webpage of the Synod <https://victas.uca.org.au/disability-inclusion>, where it's offered in both A3 and A4 formats for easy printing and display.

In 2018 the 15th Assembly of the Uniting Church in Australia adopted the following Statement of Access and Welcome for further conversation and action regarding justice and equality for people with disability.

*In accordance with the Uniting Church Basis of Union, the Church is a fellowship of reconciliation, "a body within which the diverse gifts of its members are used for the building up of the whole, an instrument through which Christ may work, and bear witness to himself" (Paragraph 3).*

In light of this, the Uniting Church affirms that:

- a.** *Christ is most fully present when all people in the Body are unconditionally accepted as people of worth. All people are created in the image of God, including people with disability;*
- b.** *along with all members, the faith, gifts, hopes and dreams of people with disability are to be valued and honoured; and*
- c.** *God is a God of justice and peace, who seeks reconciliation amongst all people.*

*In seeking to be a community of reconciliation, the Uniting Church acknowledges that for many people with disability its life and faith has not always borne witness to this vision. The Uniting Church seeks:*

- a.** *to embody a community life that in its theology and practice is accessible to all people;*
- b.** *to ensure that within its own life people with disability are treated justly and have their hopes and rights realised; and*
- c.** *to advocate for justice and equality for people with disability in the wider community.*





## 2. Worship Resources

### 2.1 Liturgy

Liturgical Resources for a service of Disability Inclusion were created for the Assembly in 2020: “Called to be a Church for all.” Included in this resource are YouTube links for Auslan translations of an inclusive Call to Worship, Blessing, and for the Lord’s Prayer.

<https://victas.uca.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/FINAL-Called-to-be-a-Church-for-All.pdf>

In addition, the South Australian Synod have produced a service order, adapted and modified with the objective of making a celebration of the Eucharist more accessible to persons with an intellectual disability. <https://sa.uca.org.au/disability-ministry/liturgy>

### 2.2 Prayers

The ‘Interfaith Litany for Wholeness’ is a prayer that could be included in your worship service and can be downloaded from <https://sa.uca.org.au/disability-ministry/liturgy>

The Lord’s Prayer in Sign Language Auslan has been provided online by St Andrew’s Anglican Church Roseville and can be viewed here. [www.youtube.com/watch?v=ydASX8\\_OPzQ](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ydASX8_OPzQ)

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# Prayer from Rev Wendy Elson

“Just another way of being”: That is who we are as people with disabilities. Save us from prayers and religious views which say we are broken and need to be fixed, managed or hidden away.

Grant us a seat at the table where we are heard, safe and seen. Let us belong, be respected, valued and given the opportunity to contribute.

We long for meaningful, secure, financially viable employment.

We long for secure and safe housing where we are treated well, homes which are truly home, not facilities. We seek fair and just educational opportunities and a system of which allows us to be ourselves. May we have fair and just access to healthcare which acknowledges us first as humans and then tends to our needs. May our social networks be rich and vital and may we be given opportunity to support others too. May the differences of our bodies and minds be understood, embraced and accommodated as normal parts of the human condition with much to offer.

We long to share equitably, not stand in competition for scarce resources, for survival of the fittest. May we not have to explain again and again why we deserve to be included. More than inclusion, may we be given space to be who we are and contribute from that so that all may benefit from such richness. May our skills and abilities be appreciated and celebrated.

Grant us safety from violence, abuse, harassment, neglect and exploitation in any form, and we pray for societal changes in attitude that afford us full humanity and offer us dignity. May law makers and decision makers act in our best interests and provide us with the resources and support we need to flourish.

We pray for others around us and the painful stories of which we are aware, our networks and their loved ones. We pray for change, and we pray that our communities will stand, sit or roll with us in solidarity and advocacy. We pray for healing of our hearts and our souls, and for strength and courage in our daily living.

And we give thanks as we take our place in your Church who, at her best is the one institution tasked with loving us just as we are. You love us beyond measure, may we flourish in the knowledge of our privileged place in your Kingdom. Created in your image, bless others to receive the Christ through us.

AMEN

Adapting selections from *Final Report: Executive Summary, Our Vision for an Inclusive Australia and Recommendations* (Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect & Exploitation of People with Disability, 2023).

## **Prayer activity Bendy Prayers: An Intergenerational prayer idea to go with Mark 2:1-12**



You will need: bendy objects such as pipe cleaners, paper clips, rubber bands etc. Paper, pens and sticky tape.

Stories of Jesus healing people physically can be problematic for modern readers in all sorts of ways. Healing comes in many forms: it may be restoration of relationship, re-inclusion in community, relief from

pain or a variety of other healing responses. Not every healing response is what we expect.

This simple prayer activity can be used as a prayer station, or as a hands-on response during prayers of the people.

Give each participant something that they can bend and straighten with their hands. Invite them to pray for the places in their life, their communities and their world that are 'bent out of shape' and invite God's creative healing power in to work in the way that God knows best.

## 2.3 Bible Studies

Rev Dr Kylie Crabbe developed three Bible studies exploring the intersections of identity, disability, social exclusion and healing in the Bible. This resource is to help congregations and groups consider these issues together and can be downloaded from <https://uniting.church/disability-bible-studies/>

## 2.4 Biblical Engagement

**Bible Engagement activity Hand Dancing:**  
**“Lifted by Love and teamwork”**  
**based on Mark 2:1-12**



The story of the paralysed man can help us explore the power of communal faith and inclusion.

This story is not just about healing—it's about radical inclusion, friendship, teamwork, collaboration, and faith in action. The paralysed man couldn't reach Jesus on his own, but his friends/ neighbours broke through barriers—literally—to bring him into the presence of Jesus.

This activity invites participants to imagine what it feels like to be carried, supported, and restored. It's

designed to be done seated and can be adapted to be accessible to all.

You will need two pieces of music for this activity: one slow and reflective, one uplifting and energetic. You may also like to use scarves or ribbons for movement.

### Hand Dancing Instructions

Say: Today's story from Mark 2:1–12 shows us how powerful love and friendship can be; love from Jesus and the community. The paralysed man couldn't get to Jesus on his own—but his friends didn't give up. They lifted him, broke through the roof, and placed him before Jesus. And Jesus responded with forgiveness and connecting the man back with his community.

We're going to reflect on this story through movement—gentle, that helps us feel the story in our bodies.



### Do

#### 1. First Movement (slow music)

- As the music plays, imagine yourself as the paralysed man.
- Move your hands as if being carried—slow, deliberate, tender.

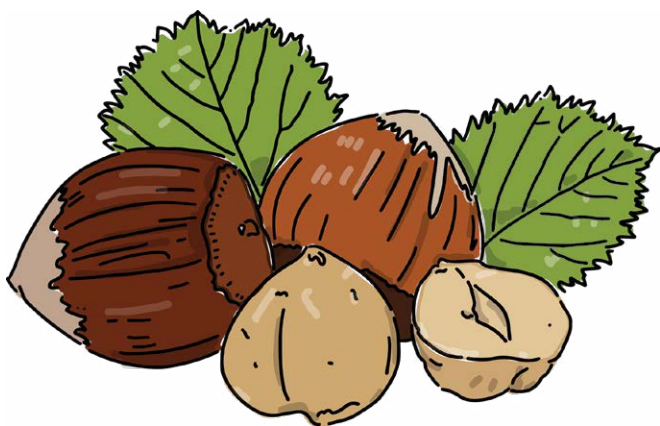
#### 2. Second Movement (happy/ uplifting music)

- Let your hands rise freely, joyfully.
- Move them in celebration— whatever works for each person, some may move just the fingers others open palms or wide gestures.
- If it is comfortable and safe, sway your shoulders or arms gentle.
- Let your body express freedom, inclusion, and joy.

*Continued*

## Embodied Wondering Questions

- I wonder what it felt like to be unable to reach Jesus?
- I wonder how it felt to be lifted by your friends?
- I wonder what it was like to be seen by Jesus?
- I wonder how the crowd reacted when the roof was broken open? and compare to current times?
- I wonder what it means to be part of a community that lifts others?
- And I wonder what you wonder about this story?



### **Contemplative Reflection: A Hazelnut Reflection.**

Contemplative prayer is something that can be enjoyed and engaged with by people of all ages. Children and young people particularly enjoy the opportunity to be quiet and still and to reflect.

You will need a Hazelnut kernel for each participant.

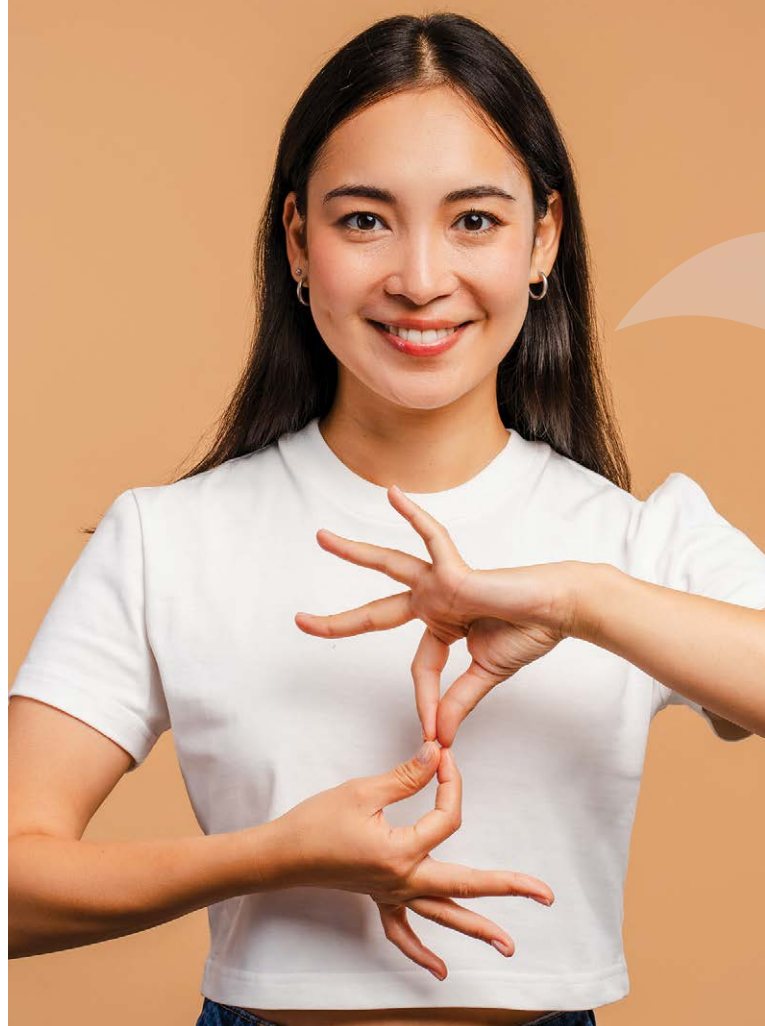
(If you want to introduce Julian of Norwich to your community, you'll find more about her in the UCA Calendar of Saints here: <https://pilgrimwr.unitingchurch.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/Compilation-Calendar-of-Commemorations.pdf>

### **Reading: John 1:1-14**

Taize Music All Will be Well (Julian of Norwich)  
[www.youtube.com/watch?v=QxKjI3T0rt4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QxKjI3T0rt4)

### **Meditation time**

Take a Hazelnut in your hands. Listen to these words of Julian of Norwich from her 'Book of Showings'.



Afterwards, spend some time in silence, and when you are ready, you may like to explore one of the prayer stations, or you could remain in meditation, holding your Hazelnut.

*In this vision, he showed me a little thing, the size of a hazelnut, and it was round as a ball. I looked at it with the eye of my understanding and thought, "What may this be?" And it was generally answered thus: "It is all that is made." I marvelled how it might last, for it seemed it might suddenly have sunk into nothing because of its littleness. And I was answered in my understanding: "It lasts and ever shall, because God loves it."*

### **Time of Silence –**

"Meditation on a Hazelnut: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=88fJaiS0qlg](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=88fJaiS0qlg)

### **Benediction:** (Julian of Norwich)

May God's love wrap and enfold you;

embrace you and guide you,

and bring you comfort. AMEN.



**“WE  
MATTER”**

### **3. Disability: What It Is and Why It Matters**

The term disability is often used to refer to individual functioning, including physical, sensory, cognitive, intellectual impairment, mental health conditions, and various types of chronic disease or health conditions. This usage has been described as the *medical model of disability*. However, the way people understand disability has changed. Instead of focusing only on a person's condition, we also look at how the world around them affects their daily life.

From this perspective, disability happens when someone faces challenges in their environment—like buildings that are hard to access, websites that aren't user-friendly, employment, education or community activities without adaptation for different processing styles or sensory access needs, communication that is not accessible, or people who treat them unfairly. These barriers make it harder for people with disability to take part in everyday life like everyone else.

This way of thinking is called the social model of disability, and it shows that disability isn't just about the person—it is about the world around them. The goal is to remove those barriers and make changes that help everyone have a fair chance.

In both of these models we all have a role to play in creating communities where respect, inclusion, and human dignity and rights are upheld for everyone. Too often, people with disability are left out of everyday life—from education and employment to worship, community life and leadership. The more we understand the barriers they face, the better equipped we are to break them down and build spaces where everyone truly belongs.

#### **3.1 UN Definition**

The UN defines disability through the lens of human rights and inclusion, rather than just medical or physical limitations. According to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), disability is understood as:

*Disability is an evolving concept and disability results from the interaction between persons with*

*Continued*

*impairments and attitudinal and environmental barriers that hinders their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.*

Key Points from the UN Definition:

- Disability is not just about the impairment—it's about how society responds to it.
- Barriers—whether physical, social, or attitudinal—are what create exclusion.
- Full participation and equality are central goals.
- The definition embraces diversity and recognises that people with disabilities have the same rights and dignity as everyone else.

### **3.2 Australian Disability Discrimination Act 1992**

Under the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992*, disability is defined in a broad and inclusive way. It covers a wide range of conditions, including physical, intellectual, psychiatric, sensory, neurological, and learning disabilities. Disabilities may be permanent or temporary, and they can be either visible or hidden. Some individuals are born with a disability, while others may acquire one later in life due to an accident, illness, injury, or medical condition.

The Australian Government is currently undertaking a comprehensive review of the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* to ensure it better protects the rights of people with disability in today's society.





## 4. Disability Statistics

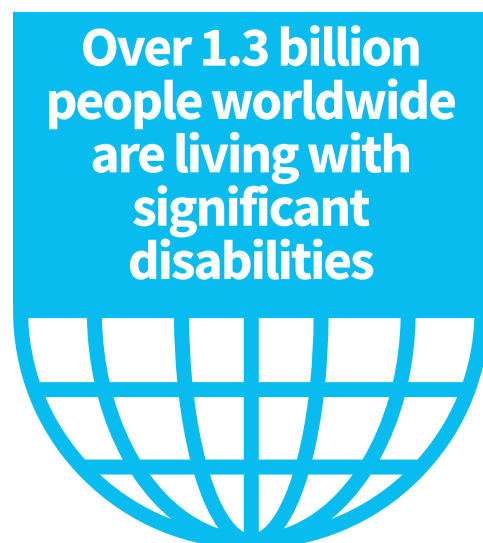
It is estimated that over 1.3 billion people worldwide—about 16% of the global population—are living with significant disabilities. That's roughly 1 in every 6 people. Trends impacting on disability include:<sup>1</sup>

- Aging populations and chronic health conditions are increasing disability rates
- Urbanisation, climate change, and migration are creating new barriers to inclusion.
- Underemployment of persons with disabilities may cost up to 7% of GDP in low- and middle-income countries.

In Australia about 1 in 5 Australians (21.4%) live with a disability.

According to the Australian Human Rights Commission (2025) Stats & Facts: Disability Rights:

- People with disability are twice as likely to be unemployed.
- 39% of families report inadequate school support.
- 1 in 6 adults with disability are living in poverty, compared with just over 1 in 10 Australians without disability.
- Over 50% of people with disability aged 18–64 have experienced physical or sexual violence.



<sup>1</sup>Global Disability Inclusion Report 2025





## 5. Take Action—Suitable Housing for People with a Disability and High Needs

There are more than 40,000 people with a disability in Australia that have high support needs and who have little control over where and with whom they live. The primary housing and support option for people with high support needs remains group homes where people with disability are at increased risk of harm.

Group homes, also known as supported independent living homes, are where a small group of people with a disability live together with live-in carers.

The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities includes the right to live independently in the community, rather than in segregated forms of housing.

The 2023 Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse and Exploitation of People with Disabilities revealed harrowing evidence of violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation in group homes. The Royal Commission recommended phasing out group homes within 15 years.

Group homes are often places where the rhythm of everyday life revolves around the needs of the support staff. Group homes are often 'mini institutions' where residents have little or no say over who they live with, their daily activities or how they receive their supports.

By contrast, individualised living arrangements have been in place for decades in Australia and internationally. The moves towards individualised living arrangements stalled with the introduction of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS). As of December 2024, there were only around 520 NDIS participants in individualised living arrangements. Australia lags behind the UK and

parts of the US and Canada that are providing more inclusive and contemporary housing and living options, despite Australia paying more per capita in equivalent disability support.

### Example of an individualised living arrangement – Meghan and Isabel

Meghan is 38 and has an intellectual disability. She was able to secure NDIS funding under the Individualised Living Options stream. She was able to find a rental property in Brunswick West in Melbourne. Meghan has lived with a housemate, Isabel, for two years.

"Isabel is my housemate. She cooks dinner, then calls me and I'll put the dishes away and wash up. Teamwork!" Meghan says.

Isabel and Meghan socialise together and plan out domestic and social tasks each week. Isabel has her rent paid by NDIS funding.

Since moving into the rental property from her parent's home, Meghan has picked up part-time work at an op shop, loves hunting for and customising fashion finds, and catches up with her sister for regular dinners.

The UK has about 10,000 people in host arrangements, where a person with a disability is matched with a carer who has a spare room in their house. The person with disability shares in the host's life, family and community. It's safer and cheaper compared to supported living in group homes and residential care.

Australia also has host living arrangements under the NDIS [https://waindividualisedservices.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/PB-Host-Handobook-DOCX\\_0-1.pdf](https://waindividualisedservices.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/PB-Host-Handobook-DOCX_0-1.pdf), but such arrangements are not well supported by the NDIS. NDIS funding for individualised living arrangements has not been indexed while the funding stream for group homes has increased by 28% since 2019.

*Continued*

With the roll out of the NDIS, the Victorian Government took the opportunity to privatise group homes for people with disabilities. The Synod opposed the privatisation of government-run group homes, but these calls were ignored. The privatised model has been failing. Almost 60 supported independent living homes have been closed in Victoria in the last 2.5 years.

The Victorian Government still owns most of the supported independent living homes, but progressively handed control of their running to five private not-for-profit providers from 2016.

On 1 January 2026, the Victorian Government will end its financial support of supported independent living homes, which currently house 1,985 people with a disability. The National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) that administers the NDIS currently does not provide enough funding for people living in Victorian supported independent living homes. Thus, the start of 2026 may see the closure of more supported independent living homes, leaving some residents homeless.

### **What you can do:**

Write polite and respectful letters to:

#### **Senator the Hon Jenny McAllister**

Minister for the National Disability Insurance Scheme  
PO Box 6100  
Senate  
Parliament House  
Canberra ACT 2600

Points to make in your letters:

- Remind the Minister that Australia is a signatory to the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and that the right to live independently in the community is an obligation under the Convention
- Express concern that the NDIS currently does not provide enough support for individualised living arrangements.
- Ask that the Commonwealth Government:
  - Commit to immediate indexations of the Individualised Living Options funding stream to support individualised living arrangements;

- Provide certainty in the amount of NDIS funding an individual receives for their housing and supports to enable a secure, continuous housing arrangement; and,
- Invest in capacity building for providers to facilitate high-quality individualised living arrangements.

- Seek assurance that the Commonwealth Government will ensure that people with disability currently living in supported independent living homes will not be made homeless when the Victorian Government ends its subsidies of these privatised homes at the end of the year.





## 6. Additional Resources

On the Disability Inclusion webpage of the Uniting Church Synod of Victoria and Tasmania <https://victas.uca.org.au/disability-inclusion>, you will find the resources listed below and many more.

You will also find links to external resources to help guide your actions and support meaningful change. All these tools are designed to spark connection, deepen understanding, and build a more inclusive community for all.

### 6.1 External Resources

Reset Room Design Guide (Sensory Rooms & Chill-Out Zones). This guide was developed by Amaze, Deakin University and Architecture and Access [www.amaze.org.au/reset-room-design-guide-sensory-rooms-chill-out-zones](http://www.amaze.org.au/reset-room-design-guide-sensory-rooms-chill-out-zones)

CBM Australia Accessible Meetings and Events: a Toolkit: [www.cbm.org.au/resource/accessible-meetings-and-events-a-toolkit#:~:text=This%20toolkit%20provides%20guidance%20on,delivery%20and%20follow%2Dup%20stages.](http://www.cbm.org.au/resource/accessible-meetings-and-events-a-toolkit#:~:text=This%20toolkit%20provides%20guidance%20on,delivery%20and%20follow%2Dup%20stages.)

CBM Global Accessibility Go: A Guide to Action: <https://cbm-global.org/resource/accessibilitygo-a-guide-to-action>

World Council of Churches Ecumenical Disability Advocates Network (EDAN), which advocates for the participation of persons with disabilities in the spiritual, social and development life of church and society: [www.oikoumene.org/what-we-do/edan](http://www.oikoumene.org/what-we-do/edan)

World Council of Churches. The Gift of Being. Called to Be a Church of All and for All: [www.oikoumene.org/resources/documents/the-gift-of-being](http://www.oikoumene.org/resources/documents/the-gift-of-being)

### Free Training

CBM Australia provides disability inclusion training for churches. You can find more information at [www.cbm.org.au/luke14/training](http://www.cbm.org.au/luke14/training)





## APPENDIX

# The Overarching Principles for a Disability Inclusive Church

The following are a full version of the Principles and a shortened version of the Principles, both of which have been approved by the Assembly Standing Committee for dissemination and use throughout the life of the Church.

The full version of the Overarching Principles developed by the Working Group are below.

### **1. The voice, safety and wellbeing of people with disability is embedded in culture, governance and organisational leadership.**

- 1.1. Lived experience as an important and crucial skill for appointment to governance bodies is encouraged within the organisation.
- 1.2. Governance bodies to have effective oversight of service delivery.
- 1.3. Increasing the employment of people with disability in senior leadership and decision-making roles is encouraged within the organisation.
- 1.4. Increasing employment of people with disability in open employment and improving pathways for people with disability from closed to open employment, is encouraged within the organisation.

### **2. Person-centred and accessible trauma-informed complaints processes.**

- 2.1. Each entity is encouraged to have an accessible, preferably trauma-informed, culturally appropriate and easy to understand complaint handling policy that clearly outlines the roles and responsibilities of leadership, staff, volunteers and the governance body; approaches to dealing with different types of complaints; breaches of relevant policies by staff and volunteers, including codes of conduct; and obligations to protect and report.
- 2.2. Complaints are viewed as opportunities for feedback and part of the continuous improvement framework.
- 2.3. The processes for making and resolving complaints are clear and easy to understand.
- 2.4. There are multiple avenues by which to make a complaint, for example over the telephone, in person and via letter, email or text.
- 2.5. Complainants are treated with respect and offered support, for example interpreting service, Auslan, referrals to independent advocacy services and to counselling services. People with disability need a safe space to give feedback without fearing adverse consequences.
- 2.6. The complaints process is culturally sensitive to and culturally safe for First Nations people and people with a CALD background.

2.7. The culture is one where complaints are considered part of the continuous improvement process; are taken seriously; acted upon promptly and thoroughly; and appropriate steps are immediately taken to assess and minimise any further risk of harm.

2.8. Leaders, staff and volunteers feel supported to raise concerns about safety.

2.9. People with disability feel empowered to raise concerns about themselves and their friends and they know who to talk to if they are feeling unsafe.

2.10. Leaders (including the governance body), staff and volunteers are well informed about their roles, responsibilities and obligations under the complaint handling policy and any relevant legislation.

2.11 Leaders, staff and volunteers are encouraged to have a good knowledge of the many different ways people with disability express concerns or distress and disclose harm.

2.12 Appropriate records of every complaint are kept and actively monitored by the senior management team and the governance body.

**3. People with disability are safe from abuse, violence, neglect and exploitation, including physically, culturally and psychologically, and institutional safety responsibilities and measures are well understood and embedded in all levels.**

3.1. Each entity is encouraged to have a suite of accessible, trauma-informed, culturally appropriate and easy to understand policies and procedures that safeguard people with disability. The policies and procedures clearly outline the roles and responsibility of leadership (including the governance body), staff and volunteers; have an emphasis on prevention; and include codes of conduct, indicators of harm and obligations to protect and report.

3.2. Each entity has a risk management framework where risks to the safety of people with disability have been identified and mitigated while facilitating

their right to privacy, access to information, social connections and learning and employment opportunities.

3.3. The governance body clearly understands its collective and individual obligations to ensure that people with disability are safe and the likely consequences if adequate steps are not taken to meet these obligations.

3.4. Leaders (including the governance body), staff and volunteers are well informed about their roles, responsibilities and obligations under the institutional safety policies and procedures and any relevant legislation.

3.5. The culture is one where people with disability are treated with respect and their safety is paramount; communication channels are clear; there is ongoing learning and improvement; and anyone who witnesses unsafe behaviour understands that it is not OK to ignore the behaviour and knows what to do about it.

3.6. Staff and volunteers receive appropriate induction and other training, for example, trauma-informed care; identification and mitigation of risks; indicators of harm; the many different ways people with disability express concerns or distress and disclose harm; and cultural sensitivities for First Nations and people with a CALD background.

**4. Supported decision making and choice and control are encouraged in all levels of an entity.**

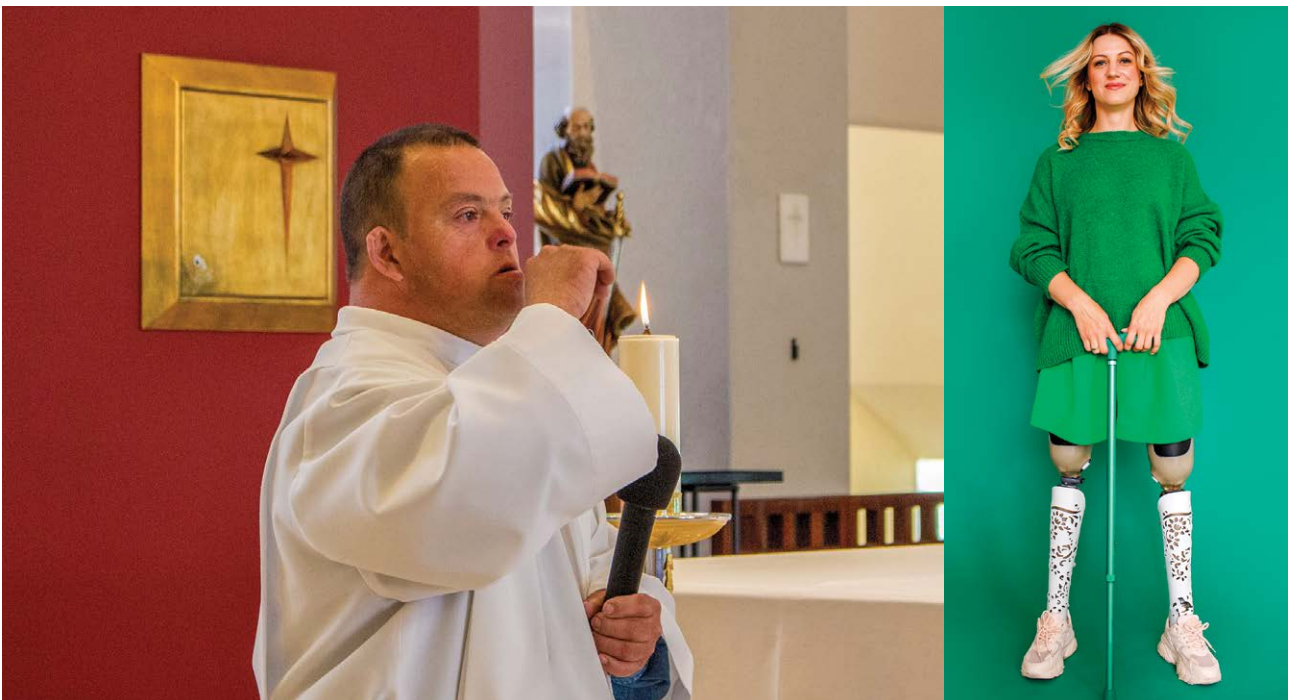
4.1 Supported decision making and choice and control are encouraged in policies and practices that are accessible and include information about conflicts of interest, when to use supported decision making and safe choice and control.

4.2 Organisations are encouraged to provide staff with guidance on best practice in supported decision making and choice and control and are made aware of the relevant policies and procedures.



# International Day of People with Disability

Wednesday  
December 3, 2025



## Contact us.

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