

# DAMI News

VOLUME 2, ISSUE 3

DECEMBER 13, 2005

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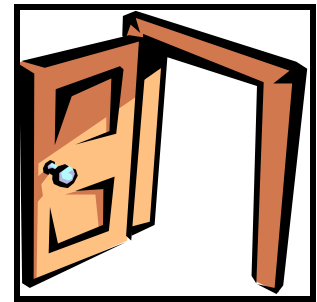
This issue of DAMI News is distributed with the generous help of the Minnesota Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church.

## *Fall Review*

### **New Inclusion Team**

Rosemount United Methodist Church commissioned a group of 12 member volunteers to form a task force and study ways their church can

November, when its work was completed. One approved recommendation it made was a request to become a permanent committee. It now has permanent status as the RUMC Inclusion Team.



IN WHAT SYMBOLIC WAYS IS YOUR CONGREGATION HOSPITABLE & WELCOMING TO PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES?

### *Activities at DAMI*

1. *Inclusion Team*
  2. *Board Changes*
  3. *Consulting*
- Info: 612-230-3264

### **Board Changes**

The Board has decided to revise its monthly schedule of board meetings. Beginning in January, 2006, the DAMI board will meet four times a year: Jan, May, Aug,

Nov.

### **Consulting**

This fall, DAMI has consulted on issues that include starting a mental health program, planning inclusive con-

address accessibility and inclusion issues. The task force met monthly, April through

## *It's Easier to Be on the Board !!!*

DAMI is growing and needs more skills on its board. To make serving on the Board easier and more appealing, the Board has adopted a new schedule of

meeting four times a year. Meetings will focus on three needs: learning, skills and fellowship. Directors will stop listening to reports and learn about disabilities, ap-

ply their skills to strategic thinking and enjoy good food and fellowship. We need you to sign up and serve on the DAMI Board. Call 612-230-3264 now !!!

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## Elevator & Lift Projects

Older churches were usually built with many staircases but no elevator. As members of these older churches age, they find the stairs increasingly difficult to climb. Often they stop coming to church.

To respond to the problem, churches form an elevator committee to find an answer. It is a daunting task. *The number one cause of poor performance by these committees is failure to study the problem thoroughly.* Here are some rules that can save time and money.

1. **Include** people on the committee who live with disabilities, have electrical & mechanical knowledge, have experience of project management, have knowledge of accounting. Create a plan for communicating each project step to the congregation.
2. In worship, **ble**ss the committee and **cove**nant to support their service.
3. Do a thorough **ne**eds

**assessment.** Identify who will use the elevator, how often, for what purposes and how much weight it must bear. How will traffic patterns be effected? How many levels must be serviced? What new opportunities for ministry will an elevator create? Visit other churches with elevators. Ask them about the needs they met.

4. **Create design criteria.** Based on assessed needs, determine and document the criteria the elevator design must meet. These criteria will help you decide whether to choose an elevator or lift. Create a **budget** and **fund raising plan.**

5. With your design document in hand, **visit** several architects with experience designing ADA compliant sanctuaries. Ask for referrals to former clients. Ask if the architect works with an elevator company. In addition, take your design to your city inspector.

Ask your inspector about codes that apply to your project.

6. With information you learned from step 5, **re-view** your needs assessment and design criteria. Make necessary changes. Don't be in a rush. It's easier to change a document than an elevator.

7. **Choose** an architect who works with an elevator company or an elevator company that works with an architect. **Identify** one person in the firm to deal with. **Designate** one committee person to do all the communication with the firm.

8. **Start construction.** Stay in constant touch with the firm and the city inspector. Don't assume the firm knows the code. Keep the inspector informed and be respectful.

9. **Dedicate and celebrate** the installation.

### TIPS for an Elevator Project

1. Create a team.
2. Commission team.
3. Assess needs.
4. Create design, budget, funding plan.
5. Visit others
6. Review design
7. Choose builder
8. Start construction
9. Dedicate elevator
10. Communicate constantly to the congregation.

## Work in Local Congregations

This fall DAMI has been very active working with local congregations to help them increase their level of inclusion in worship and programming. At Rosemount United Methodist Church, we helped birth an Inclusion Task Force, which studied the building and membership to identify special needs. Their work was

affirmed as they were given permanent status as the Inclusion Team.

At Prospect Park UMC we met with the Accessibility Task Force to give them guidance on their project to install an elevator. They are also planning other changes to make their building more physically accessible.

At the Basilica of St.

Mary in Minneapolis, we have been meeting regularly since late July to help establish a mental health initiative. DAMI is providing the Basilica consulting services to create a long-term program that serves families needing support for mental health issues or developmental disabilities. How can we help your congregation?

### DAMI NEWS

Disability Awareness Ministries, Inc.  
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DAMI News is published by Disability Awareness Ministries, Inc.

612-230-DAMI (3264)

DAMI is an independent 501(c)3 non-profit, founded in 1991, whose mission is to remove barriers in faith-based communities that prevent full participation of people with disabilities in community life.

## Religious Disability Resources

### American Baptists

Rev Rosalie Norman-  
McNaney: Email to:  
rmcnahey@abc-usa.org

### Episcopal

ecdeaf.com  
ahealingministry.com

### Jewish Community

uscj.org/accessibility/  
  
jfcsmpls.org/Services/  
services.html#Inclusion

### Lutheran

elca.org/disability

### Mennonite

adnetonline.org

### Presbyterian

pcusa.org/phewa/  
pdc.htm

### Unitarian

uaa.org/programs/justice  
/accessibility/

### United Methodist

gbgm-umc.org/DISC/

### National Organizations

aamr.org  
joniandfriends.org  
nami.org  
nod.org

## Assistive Listening Devices (ALD)

What can be done in a house of worship to enhance the listening experience? People who are hard of hearing often miss much of what is said during worship, even when a good public address system is used. Many persons with hearing loss resign themselves to worship that is muffled, garbled, full of competing noises or missing certain frequencies altogether. But not wanting to complain, they live with their frustration.

Audio technology has come a long way in the last 50 years. There are many options available to a congregation that is willing to enhance its

audio system. These options range in cost depending on what equipment is needed from less than \$100 up to \$2000 or more.

For houses of worship, consider two ALD systems: Loop and FM. A **large area loop system** can serve a seating space of about 300 people. It consists of a 325' loop wire strung around the seating area. Amplified speech signals are sent through the loop wire. People wearing telecoil-equipped hearing aids can detect the electromagnetic energy field coming from the loop wire. The energy is amplified by their own telecoil hearing aid. Listeners who do

not have telecoil hearing aids can use induction receivers with earphones to pick up the magnetic signals.  
Cost: under \$1000.

A **large area FM system** has a range of 1000 to 3000 feet. It uses an FM transmitter hooked electronically to the public address system. The FM signals it transmits are picked up by individual battery powered receivers. The listener uses an earphone attached to the receiver to hear the speaker.

Cost: around \$1500  
Contact: Bill Williams at Harris Communications. 800-582-8569  
Email: [bwilliams@harriscomm.com](mailto:bwilliams@harriscomm.com)

## Adult Forum Presentation

DAMI received an invitation from Rev. Chuck Nelson, former DAMI Board Chair, to participate as the first presenter in a special series on topics of interest to the Adult Forum at Portland Avenue United Methodist Church, Bloomington, MN. On Nov. 6 Rev. Jim Gaughan, PAUMC senior pastor, gave us a warm welcome

and even helped set up the video tape player.

There were 15 to 20 adults who attended. We began with an introduction about DAMI's work and history. We talked about the many gifts people with disabilities share with their faith communities. Then we saw a video depicting people with disabilities serving their churches in a

variety of roles. The video, *Surprising Grace: People, Disabilities, Churches*, is produced by Presbyterians for Disability Concerns.

After the video, we had a lively Q & A period. Several group members said they liked the forum. Contact DAMI about a presentation at your church. 612-230-3264

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MINNEAPOLIS, MN

Minnesota Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church

Disability Awareness Ministries, Inc.  
122 West Franklin Avenue, Room # 7  
Minneapolis, MN 55404-2435

## DAMI NEWS

### DONATIONS

The new year is just around the corner, and the work facing DAMI is both exciting and challenging. The focus of most of our programs is on congregations at the local level. A donation to DAMI means influencing congregations to remove barriers that block participation of people with disabilities. Please consider a gift to support this important ministry.

## DAMI Yearly Memberships

DAMI is a membership non-profit organization. The bylaws grant voting privileges at the Annual Meeting to persons who join DAMI and whose total gifts equal or exceed \$25 or 10 hours of volunteer service in a calendar year. (Gifts of less than \$25 are still welcome!)

### Contribution Structure

- \$25 Friend
- \$50 Supporter
- \$100 Advocate
- \$500 Partner
- \$1000 Sustainer
- \$5000 Benefactor

### JOIN DAMI TODAY !!!

**Yes ! Sign me up for a one-year membership in DAMI !!!**

New Member     Renewing     Upgrade

My check is enclosed for \$\_\_\_\_\_ payable to DAMI

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone/Email \_\_\_\_\_