



*Trinity United Church  
Verona, Ontario*

# Trinity United Church - Verona Accessibility Standards for Customer Service Policy Statement January 2012

This policy contains statements that meet the requirements of the Customer Service Standard and other items that are good practices. This policy will be revised as other standards are introduced under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005.

## **1. Our Mission**

The Mission of Trinity United Church - Verona is:

*To be the ears, eyes, feet, hands and heart of Christ in the Harrowsmith-Verona area and in the world.*

## **2. Our Commitment**

In fulfilling our mission, Trinity United Church - Verona strives at all times to provide its programs, goods and services in a way that respects the dignity and independence of people with disabilities. We are also committed to giving people with disabilities the same opportunity to access our programs, goods and services and allowing them to benefit from the same services, in the same place, and in a similar way as other participants.

### **3. Providing Programs, Goods and Services to People with Disabilities**

Trinity United Church - Verona is committed to excellence in serving all participants, including people with disabilities and we will carry out our functions and responsibilities in the following areas: *worship, social events, pastoral support, weddings, funerals (rites)*

#### **3.1 Communication**

- We will communicate with people with disabilities in ways that take into account their disability.
- We will provide publications in formats that are accessible for people with disabilities.
- We will train staff and volunteers on how to interact and communicate with people with various types of disabilities.

#### **3.2 Telephone Services**

- We are committed to providing accessible telephone services to our participants.
- We will train office staff/volunteers to communicate with participants over the telephone in clear and plain language and to speak clearly and slowly.
- We will offer to communicate with participants by email, written correspondence, speech to print (TTY), relay services if telephone communication is not suitable to their communication needs, or is not available.

#### **3.3 Assistive Devices**

- We are committed to serving people with disabilities who use assistive devices to participate in and benefit from our programs, goods and services.
- We will ensure that people are permitted to use their own personal assistive devices to access the sanctuary for worship and other applicable programs, goods and services.
- We will familiarize the property committee, greeters and other staff/volunteers with the various assistive devices that may be used by participants with disabilities while accessing our programs, goods and services.
- Trinity United Church - Verona will provide assistive devices it deems necessary for accessing worship and other applicable programs, goods and services.
  - Greeters, ushers and other staff/volunteers will be trained on how to use the assistive devices available on our premises, including: headphones for use with service broadcast, stair climber, ramp, large print service materials
- Upon a participant's request, we will make every effort to provide the requested assistive device and/or service and to cover relevant financial expenses, upon approval from the Board/Council.

#### **3.4 Accessibility Officers**

- We are committed to designating a couple Accessibility Officers to oversee all issues relating to accessibility in consultation with the Session and Stewards (effective 2012).
- If establishing an Accessibility Committee, committee membership will be comprised of champions of accessibility for people with disabilities, including congregants with disabilities or family members, congregants professionally or personally interested in accessibility, members of the Session and Stewards, and members of the staff (including maintenance staff).
- The Accessibility Officers will have several roles:

- The officers will establish policies on providing accessible programs, goods and services to participants with disabilities that are in compliance with the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, Ontario Regulation 429/07.
- The officers will monitor our programs, goods and services to ensure that practices and procedures are consistent with our governing policies.
- The officers will coordinate accessibility training and training materials for all relevant staff and volunteers.
- The officers will ensure that assistive devices provided by our church are in good working order and that requests for assistive devices are met, as per approval from the Session/Stewards.
- The officers will be responsible for developing feedback procedures, reviewing feedback on accessibility and responding to any complaints or concerns.

#### **4. Use of Service Animals and Support Persons**

- We are committed to welcoming people who are accompanied by a service animal on parts of our premises that are open to the public and other third parties.
- We will ensure that all staff, volunteers and others dealing with participants are trained on how to interact with people who are accompanied by a service animal.
- We are committed to welcoming people who are accompanied by a support person.
- Any person with a disability who is accompanied by a support person will be allowed to enter Trinity United Church – Verona premises with his or her support person.
- Fees for admission will not be charged for support persons accompanying a participant to fund raising events e.g. Quilt Show, musical programs. Support persons will be expected to pay the usual fee for meals.
- Participants will be informed of these fees by a notice that will be posted in Trinity United Church- Verona premises and on the website.

#### **5. Notice of Temporary Disruption**

Trinity United Church - Verona will provide participants with notice in the event of a planned or unexpected disruption in the facilities or services usually used by people with disabilities. This notice will include information about the reason for the disruption, the anticipated duration, and a description of alternative facilities or services, if available. The notice will be delivered to participants by means of the website, the newsletter, the weekly bulletin and by phone when feasible.

#### **6. Training for Staff and Volunteers**

Trinity United Church - Verona's Accessibility Officers will be responsible for coordinating training for all employees, volunteers and others who deal with participants or other third parties on our behalf, and all those who are involved in the development and approvals of accessibility policies, practices and procedures. Individuals holding the following positions will be trained: the minister, administrative assistant, custodian, members of session and stewards and greeters.

## **7. Feedback Process**

The ultimate goal of Trinity United Church - Verona is to meet and surpass expectations while serving participants with disabilities.

Comments on our programs, goods and services regarding how well those expectations are being met are welcome and appreciated.

- Feedback regarding the way Trinity United Church - Verona provides programs, goods and services to people with disabilities can be made by: email, verbally, suggestion box, feedback card.
- All feedback will be directed to the Accessibility Officer/Committee.
- Participants can expect to hear back in approximately 30 days.
- Confidentiality will be respected.

Complaints will be addressed according to the procedures outlined by the Accessibility Officer/Committee. Complaint procedures will be documented by the Accessibility Officer/Committee and made available to the congregation. (Sample feedback forms available)

## **8. Modifications to this or Other Policies**

We are committed to developing accessibility policies that respect and promote the dignity and independence of people with disabilities.

- No changes, therefore, will be made to this policy before considering the impact on people with disabilities or their families.
- Any policy of Trinity United Church - Verona that does not respect and promote the dignity and independence of people with disabilities will be modified or removed.

## **9. Questions about This Policy**

This policy seeks to achieve service excellence to participants with disabilities. If anyone has a question about the policy, or its purpose, an explanation or reply will be provided by (Diane Buchanan until the Accessibility Officers are appointed at the annual General Meeting in February 2012).