

TALKING POINTS: How Welcoming is Your Church?

Use the prompts on this sheet to get your JMA group talking about ways you could be more inclusive.

A 'safe space' is a place where anyone feeling stressed, overwhelmed, sad or in need of some peace and quiet can go to relax. It usually has softer lights, ear defenders and fiddle toys to play with.

- Could your church benefit from having a **safe space**?
- How could you make this room **special**? What could you include in it? What **colours** could you paint it, how would you **decorate** it and what would you put in it so that it's extra **relaxing**?

Think about how you could be **more welcoming** to everyone? Could you:

- Add a **ramp** at the entrance to your church and in other places where there are stairs.
- Widen any **narrow doorways** so wheelchairs can get through.
- Add spaces for **wheelchairs** in your main worship space so that wheelchair users can sit next to their friends and family.
- Improve the **lighting** for people with poor eyesight.
- Have hymns and other service materials available in **large print** and **braille** (a system of raised dots that can be 'read' with the fingertips by people who are visually impaired). You could also **add captions** to any videos you screen.
- Have some **water bowls** available for **guide dogs**.
- Have someone who knows **British Sign Language (BSL)** to stand at the front of the church and interpret what people are saying.
- Spend some time **learning** sign language together as a group to help people who are deaf feel welcome at your church (please see our BSL alphabet and greeting charts at www.methodist.org.uk/jmacs).
- Have an accessible **bathroom**, or make improvements to your existing one.



Do you have any **other ideas** on how you can make sure your JMA group and church is as **welcoming as possible** for people with additional needs?

Can you think of **other ways** you could include children and young people with additional needs into your **games and activities**?

Download a large print version of the Service Sheet at www.methodist.org.uk/jmacs

You can also order the braille version at www.methodistpublishing.org.uk



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