
The Accessible to All (A2A) Transformation

— The Radical Welcome
Of Becoming A2A —

Who we are

Dr. Kevin Pettit is a pastor and director of [Faith4All](#), an interfaith not-for-profit which helps faith institutions learn to better invite, embrace, include and empower people living with disabilities into active lives of faith in their chosen community. He is a Commissioned Minister in RMC and also served a six-year term as a member of the UCCDM Board of Directors. He currently leads the Rocky Mountain Conference Inclusion Team. He lives with disabilities consequent to his surviving a *severe* TBI. His contact: kevin@Faith4All.org.

Rev. Kelli Parrish Lucas is the Pastor of First Congregational Church of Rock Springs in Wyoming (RMC). She served six years in UCCDM Board of Directors including four years as Secretary and two years as Chair. She is one of the authors of the 2016 revision of [AnyBody, Everybody, Christ's Body](#). She is also the North American Coordinator of the Ecumenical Disability Advocacy Network, a program of WCC. Her contact: rev@kelliparrishlucas.com.

A word about language

The language that people with disabilities use in conversation is ever changing. UCC messaging about disability inclusion has long advocated person-first language. This approach should not be taken as offensive by anyone. However many “people with disabilities” (person first) are now speaking of themselves as disabled people (identity first). You may both of these today, they may be used interchangeably neither is wrong we are in a time of language shift.

Today's Agenda

- Discuss Disabilities
- Learn About Being Accessible to All
(**A2A**)
- Ask & Answer Questions
- Then, as a small panel, we'll share our experiences

Disability

First we must define the words “impairment” and “disability”.

Impairment: Lacking all or part of a limb, or having a defective limb, organ, or mechanism of the body.

Disability: The disadvantage or restriction of activity caused by contemporary social organization which takes no or little account of people who have physical impairments and thus excludes them from participation in the mainstream of social activities.

Hallmarks of Accessibility

- Acceptance and welcome to all human beings in search of God, independent of their (dis)ability status.
- Rearranging spaces so that people with mobility issues can enter and get around.
- Having or creating options for people with impairments.
- Above all. . . **being open to doing things in a new way and thinking in a new way!**

For congregations, becoming [A2A](#)
can be accomplished in three steps!

- Study
- Building and Program Audits
- Checklist

Study

Being **Accessible to All** means having some basic understanding of the wide variety of different disabilities, so that you may welcome whoever comes your way. This can be done by:

- Anti-Ableism training for the congregation and/or clergy.
- Reading “[Any Body, Every Body, Christ’s Body](#)”.
- [Access Sunday](#) Celebrations!
- Read About Disability Theology!
(See UCCDM.org/resources.)
- [Widening the Welcome Videos](#).

Building and Program Audit

- Available at [UCCDM.org/a2a](https://uccdm.org/a2a) in a variety of formats, e.g. [PDF](#).
- This helps your congregation objectively look at how attitudinally accessible it is, how communication inside and outside the congregation contributes to accessibility, how leadership is aware of accessibility, and finally how accessible the building is.
- The audit helps you find areas to improve your accessibility. A minimum score of 35 of 56 is required to become [A2A](#).

Story Break

- We have here today some people who have helped congregations formally become **A2A**.
- Let us hear their wisdom.

Checklist 1/6

To formally become A2A you need to complete a checklist. that can be found at: <https://uccdm.org/a2a/>.

- ☐ Our governing body and pastor has endorsed becoming **A2A**.
- ☐ We have an Inclusion Committee/Team at our church.
- ☐ We have notified our Association and/or Conference that we are working toward designation as **A2A**.
- ☐ We have studied the UCCDM disability curriculum.

Checklist 2/6

- ☐ Our church has accessible parking reserved by the sign showing the accessible symbol.



- ☐ Our church building is accessible to all including at least **one** accessible restroom.

- ☐ We include information about disabilities, including the brochure

["A2A Etiquette: What You Should Know"](#).

Checklist 3/6

- ❑ Our church celebrates [Access Sunday](#).
- ❑ We know who we can call on (special ed teacher or therapist who works in the field) for help in designing church school programs and modifying resources if necessary.
- ❑ We know where to find [American Sign Language \(ASL\) Interpreters](#) and their fee schedule.

Checklist 4/6

- ❑ We use or modify worship resources to reflect our commitment to becoming **A2A**.
- ❑ We advertise our church as being accessible/inclusive.
- ❑ Our website is accessible (is programmed so people with visual challenges are able to use screen readers and other technology to navigate the website). (See www.w3.org/WAI/test-evaluate/preliminary/ for help.)

Checklist 5/6

- ❑ Our church publicity describes our congregation as “**Accessible to All**”.
- ❑ We commit to making an annual donation to the **UCC Disabilities Ministries** and/or the **Virginia Kreyer Endowed Scholarship for Theological Education**.
- ❑ We have completed the recommended **building and program audit**. (They ask for the score.)

Checklist 6/6

- ❑ We have identified _____ changes to complete this year.
- ❑ We have identified _____ changes to complete in the next 3 years.
- ❑ We have identified _____ changes to complete in the next 5 years.

SEND IT IN!!!

Questions?

? What else do you want to know?

For information, contact us!

- **Dr. Kevin Pettit, Chair of the Rocky Mountain Conference Inclusion Team (CIT), at 303-882-1871 or kevin@faith4all.org.**
- **Rev. Kelli Parrish Lucas at 307-209-0905 or rev@kelliparrishlucas.com.**