



MNA Special Needs Ministries: Who We Are, What We Do, and Why It Matters in the PCA

Who Are We?

MNA Special Needs Ministries is an Outreach Ministry of Mission to North America. Launched in May 2007, MNA SNM is led by Stephanie Hubach, Director who is assisted by an all-volunteer Startup Team of ten members from PCA churches around the country. Steph is the author of *Same Lake, Different Boat: Coming Alongside People Touched by Disability* (P&R, September 2006) and *All Things Possible: Calling Your Church Leadership to Embrace Disability Ministry* (Joni and Friends, August 2007), an adjunct instructor for Covenant Theological Seminary, and contributing writer for *ByFaith* magazine. Steph and her husband Fred (who is a ruling elder at Reformed Presbyterian Church of Ephrata) led the Special Needs Ministry at RPC for eight years. They have been married for 26 years and have two sons: Fred and Tim, the younger of whom has Down syndrome.

What Do We Do?

MNA Special Needs Ministries is here to serve the denomination through serving local congregations. Our vision is to see the Body of Christ made more complete by evangelizing and authentically integrating people with disabilities and their families into the life and mission of the PCA. We do this in practical ways through:

- providing training opportunities, seminars and conferences,
- entering into one-on-one consultative relationships with churches,
- identifying resources and making them accessible to congregations, and
- developing new and distinctively Reformed contributions to the Christian literature available on the subject of disability and the Church.

Why Does This Matter in the PCA?

MNA Special Needs Ministries matters *because it is not just another “fringe lobbying group” vying for the attention of congregations—instead—its vision and mission is at the heart of church health and growth.* Why? For the following five reasons:

- 1) **Number One: The Gospel** Special needs ministry—at its heart—is simply a three dimensional picture of the Gospel. Think about it: Without Christ’s active engagement on our behalf, we have no access to the Father—due to the profoundly disabled condition of our hearts. That said, developing church plants

and becoming healthy churches that embrace people with disability is a practical and very visible expression of our understanding of the Gospel—not just as it applies to others but as it applies to *us*.

- 2) **Number Two: Evangelism** Very simply put: People with disabilities are the world's most un-reached people group. They are largely outside of the influence of the Gospel at home and abroad. The PCA can help to change that—starting in North America.
- 3) **Number Three: Validity** *Nothing* speaks louder to our postmodern culture than actions that validate words. The power of the Gospel is demonstrated in our communities when individuals and families touched by disability are embraced by the local church—ministered *to* in love and ministered *alongside of* in respect.
- 4) **Number Four: A Voice** Authenticity in reaching out to those with special needs gives us a legitimate voice to speak to the surrounding culture on critical issues related to the sanctity of human life. When we do nothing, we forfeit our right to speak, because our words are empty. In order to be actively involved in redeeming culture we have to first be actively involved in people's lives. It's not enough to be against abortion. Being pro-life in the biblical sense is being *for* the lives of our neighbors—from conception to the grave—including our neighbors with disabilities.
- 5) **Number Five: Biblical Diversity** Not every community is racially or economically diverse—but *every* community has people with disabilities in it. Every community...in every city...in every state. Special needs ministry may well be the gateway to accomplishing greater ethnic and economic diversity in our local churches by helping people to understand and embrace grace-based inclusiveness and then translating that to other applications.

For further information:

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