Universal Design

Leveling the playing field ….

Universal Design - Definition

- Universal design is an approach to the design of all products and environments to be as usable as possible by as many people as possible regardless of age, ability, or situation.

- Universal design benefits everyone by accommodating limitations

Universal Design – Educational Products
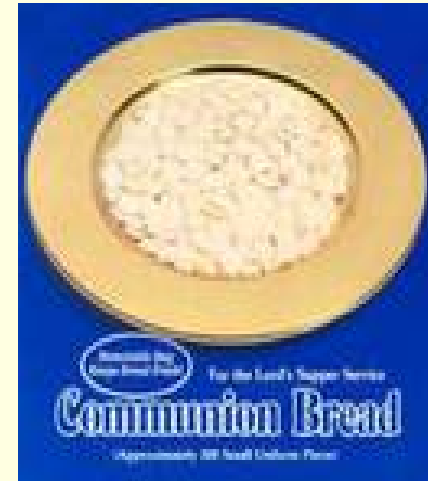
As useable as possible;

- Age

- Ability

- Situation

Universal Design – Church Products

As useable as possible;

- Age

- Ability

- Situation

Universal Design – Educational Environments

As useable as possible;

- Age

- Ability

- Situation

Universal Design – Church Environments

As useable as possible;

- Age

- Ability

- Situation

Universal Design Principles in Products and Environments

- Equitable Use
- Flexibility in Use
- Simple and Intuitive Use
- Perceptible Information
- Tolerance for Error
- Low Physical Effort
- Size and Space for Approach and Use

Equitable Use

- How can we move towards "equitable use" in church? How about in schools?
  - Washable curtains and chairs
  - ADA requirements clearly defined
  - Easy access to everything
  - Anticipating needs rather than reacting to them

Flexibility in Use

- How can we work toward "flexibility in use" in churches? In classrooms?
  - Moveable furniture for variety of needs
  - Tables can be chairs, floors can be taped to "be" _____, gyms can be chapels
  - Moveable walls

Simple and Intuitive Use

- How can uses of products and the environment be simplified and more intuitive in churches? In classrooms?
    - Text books arranged together
    - Curriculum can be easily adapted
    - No need for more than 2-3 step directions for any products or equipment

Perceptible Information

- Perceptible = noticeable, visible, observable
- How can information be more visible in classrooms and churches?
  - Organized format for worship folders
  - Easy to negotiate websites
  - Information posted large enough to see and in prominent places
  - Welcome areas/secretaries placed in high traffic areas

Tolerance for Error

- We live in an society that doesn't look fondly on "errors." How can we move products and environment towards a tolerance and acceptance of error in both churches and classrooms?
    - Emphasis on "freedom" in worship
    - Realization that each of bears the image of Christ
    - Moving away from focus on "excellence"

Low Physical Effort

- What would be some ways we could incorporate the necessity for low physical effort in our products and environments?
  - Holders for communion cups
  - Furniture at height of users
  - Places to store stuff
  - Organized storage
  - Computer equipment that has touch screens

Size and Space for Approach and Use

- ADA is focused on this aspect of universal design …. Ramps, bars in bathrooms, curb cuts, wide aisles, etc. How can we go beyond what is expected or legislated to really embrace this?
  - Areas for unloading children
  - Adaptive equipment
  - Location of toys (on tables instead of just on the floor
  - Seating flexibility

Biblical Mandate – Micah 6:8

- "He has shown you, oh man, what is good and what God requires of you. But to do justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God"
  - Universal design principles from a Christian perspective are:
    - Doing justly
    - Loving mercy
    - Walking humbly

Website References

- http://www.udeducation.org/index.asp
- http://www.cast.org/
- http://trace.wisc.edu/world/gen_ud.html
- http://www.adaptiveenvironments.org/index.php?option=Content&Itemid=3

Questions? Comments?

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