

Testimony to the 216th General Assembly

Jane Young

Minister Commissioner from the Presbytery of Eastern Virginia

I have a secret - I am disabled, but it is not because I have Multiple Sclerosis, or because I am in a wheelchair.

No. it is not the disease that has infected my body, it is not the wheelchair that makes me disabled.

What makes me disabled? Facilities that are not accessible, facilities that make it difficult for me to get in because the doors are impossible to open myself.

I am on the Church Orders committee, and before I came to GA I had decided that I would vote "NO" on the overtures for change, thinking that it is best to let the Task Force handle it.

But the Holy Spirit changed my mind, and it happened this way.

I listened to my brothers' and sisters' pain as they spoke to us in committee.

I heard the members of the Task force who were with us tell us that if we change the rules of the AI's it would not affect their work.

But what changed my heart more than anything else was the morning I left my hotel, rolled down a ramp that is not to code and therefore not safe, and crossed the street to go to my committee to do the work my church has called me to do -- and lo and behold I couldn't get in. I sat in front of the door, on the outside, waiting for someone to not only walk by, but to see me and open the door so that I could go in.

And that is when God spoke to me. I know what it is like to wait outside. I can't roll by any more, while my brothers & sisters are on the outside waiting for us to open the door.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jane Young', written in a cursive style.

Jane Young
Commissioner 216th General Assembly