



Hearing Accessibility

In this category, it is important to distinguish between three descriptive terms.

- **Hard of hearing** – persons who have a hearing loss, but hear with a hearing aid or Assistive Listening Device, and/or sign language.

- **deaf** (with a small “d”) – persons who have very little or no hearing and rely on printed or visual language materials and/or speech reading (“lip reading”), as their primary means of communication.

- **Deaf** (with a capital “D”) – persons who use a distinct language, American Sign Language and identify themselves with a cultural group (North American Deaf Culture). They may have some hearing.

Assistive Listening Devices

Assistive Listening Devices (ALD) address the issues for persons who are hard of hearing.

Churches that display this symbol will meet criteria 1-3. Criteria 4-8 are highly recommended. In addition, most persons who are hard of hearing or deaf can read, so the visual aids under Vision Accessibility are also recommended.

1. ____ **Sound System.** A regularly used, clear audible sound system with at least one microphone.
2. ____ **ALD.** The sound system includes individual Assistive Listening Devices (ALD) for people who have a hearing loss. Ushers are educated on the location of Assistive Listening Devices and how to assist persons wishing to use them.

Either 3 or 4 is acceptable for Hearing Accessibility

3. ____ **Roving microphone.** A roving microphone is available for sharing time, joys/concerns, etc, or when a roving microphone is not available, the pastor/worship leader summarizes over his/her microphone so that all can understand.

The following are highly recommended.

4. ____ At least one hearing aid compatible **telephone with a volume control**
5. ____ **Taped or paper copy of sermons/services.** Worship services are made available on audio and/or videotape
6. ____ **Face lighting of speakers**
7. ____ **Closed captioning** may be helpful as well as other visual language options.
8. ____ **Eliminate background noise.**