

PEW CUTS: Information Brief

September 2011

By Charlotte Hawkins Shepard, Ph.D.

The term “Pew Cuts” has been defined by the Committee on Disabilities, National Council of Churches in the USA, as follows:

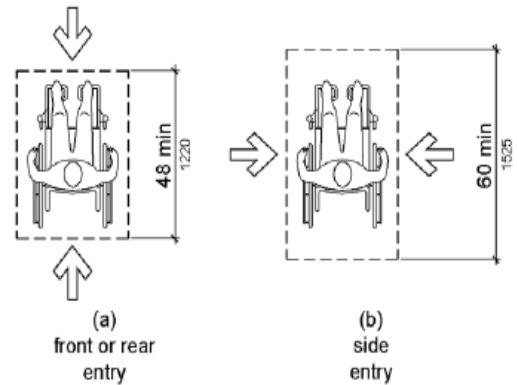
“Pew cuts are created by shortening the ends of several pews so that users of wheelchairs can sit within the main body of the congregation, not in a designated section, and not be forced to block the aisles.”

Pew cuts can be made by shortening the width of one or two pews by 36 inches, the space that one person would occupy. (Pew cuts should be at least 48 inches deep if entered from the very front of the pew section or the very rear, or at least 60 inches deep if entered from the side.)

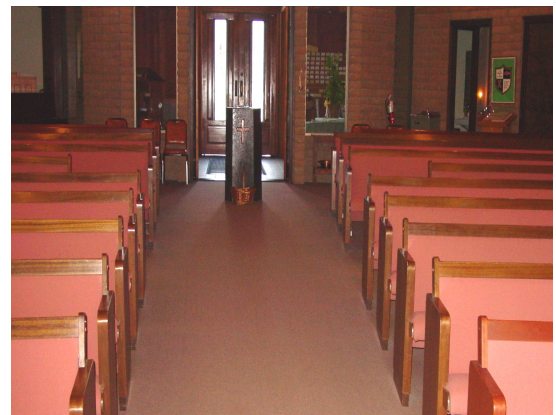
Here are three examples of pew cuts in Episcopal churches.



All Saints of the Desert, Sun City AZ



From national Episcopal Disability Network's *Accessibility Guidelines for Episcopal Churches*



St. Andrew's Church, Sedona AZ

An accepted and highly recommended practice before creating pew cuts or making additional pew cuts is to ask persons who use wheelchairs, and currently are attending services, where they prefer to sit. People with disabilities need and expect to have the same kind of choices about where they sit that people without disabilities have.