



The DEAF LUTHERAN



Official Publication of the International Lutheran Deaf Association & the Lutheran Deaf Mission Society

Spring 2016

St. Louis, MO

Vol. 105, No. 2

From the President



Greetings in the name of Jesus Christ. We had a guest speaker at our church recently. His name is Rev. Ryan McDermott, who is preparing to go to Ghana, Africa, as a full-time missionary to help train deaf pastors. He told us there are about 200 churches but only 25 pastors. That's about 13% to cover the service and/or lead the worship!

Rev. Ryan McDermott is making preparations to move his family to Ghana in August of this year. The McDermott's will be staying in Ghana for a very long time. He will be there to train and teach young deaf men to become pastors. It will not be easy but it will be hard. Our Lord will protect, help and guide him and the others. Let's pray for Rev. Ryan and his family. Don't forget the others in India, Macau and the rest. Bless them for spreading the good news about our Savior Jesus Christ.

Please read Matthew 28:18-20. These verses lead me to think how blessed we are to be member of the International Lutheran Deaf Association (ILDA). Let me emphasize the word "International" in our ILDA. We are not limited to the United States and Canada but are also open to the many other nations outside our borders. Each country has a designated border for political reasons and identification. We do have deaf ministries in Ghana, India, Macau and other locations that ILDA recognizes and supports. I am going to bring this up at our board meeting in June about Rev. McDermott's upcoming mission and what can we do to help him. Then again I will share with you all at the ILDA convention at Fort Wayne, Indiana in 2017.

On a personal note: I looked at the globe and I see many different countries separated by color with borders. I see there are many different governments, cultures, languages, races and so forth. When I was a young boy of 12 turning 13, I remember in 1968 when Frank Borman, James Lovell and Bill Anders,

the crew of Apollo 8, orbited our moon and saw the earth arise from the horizon. They were looking at the planet earth as one fragile world. How fitting they quoted from Genesis when they televised our planet. "In the beginning, God created the heaven and the earth...." The astronauts in space looking down and they only see one planet, one world and one creation BUT no borderlines. Unfortunately, it was the sins that separate the people, languages, cultures, religions and politics. There's good news! Our Heavenly Father, God sent his own Son, Jesus, to save us sinners but also save the world too. Jesus does not see any borders or boundaries but He loves everyone on this world, our planet earth. That's why we have missionaries all over the world for the people to learn about Him and what He does for us. After all, we are His people.

Thank you Rev. Ron Friedrich to help me out with the verses. Reminder: Don't forget to submit your request to host the 2021 ILDA convention by June 1, 2016.

God Bless!!!
John Mason

From the Pastoral Advisor



As pastoral advisor, I have been asked to write a devotion for this newsletter, but truthfully, I do not have a better idea for jotting down for that moment. Today as associate pastor I have been asked to present a sermon on John 13:31-35 featuring a new commandment. This verse enlightened me by reading and thinking about glory that makes everyone wonder with emotions. It is often used when we experience that we are signing with a "WOW" sign.

The reason for selecting this verse is that Jesus uses the word "glory" five times in our Gospel message. As we reflect on the Gospel, we need to ask: Why do we use a "WOW" sign that Jesus is speaking about? Jesus gives a new commandment

that is based on the disciples' relation-ship to Him and to one another. He said, "I give you a new commandment: that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one other." END. WOW! If Christians love each other the way Jesus showed his love to the world, then it will be perfect! It will be a love that the world will stand in amazement to see. The world cannot comprehend the love. The message of Christ is sacrificial love. The love He commanded us to give is sacrificing ourselves. Beloved, sacrificial love should look like: joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. We are called to not only have this love but to share this love with one another and to those that God places into our lives.

We must become as little children and be open to the wonderment, to the "WOW" sign that God continually places in our lives. Experience His glory. Experience His love and let the anticipation and joy of each moment fill you to overflowing. Amen in the name of Holy Father, Holy Son, and the Holy Spirit. Keep the faith. Love in Christ.

Rev. Gregory Desrosiers



India Mission Trip

Rev. Dennis Konkkel, Rev. Alan Rork, Susan Whitt (retired teacher of the deaf) and Nancy St. Clair (interpreter) traveled to India in January to work with deaf students there. The goal of the trip was to help the students become enthusiastic and witnesses of Jesus Christ. They learned Bible stories that were recorded on video and saved on flash drives. Each student was given a flash drive with a collection of these videos which they will share with their friends at school and gather again later to share their experiences. They were given experience witnessing with practice sessions.

Rev. David Christudoss, is the only Lutheran pastor working with the deaf in the India Evangelical Lutheran Church (IELC) in India. He works with 400 students at different schools. There are 400 deaf schools in India and over 25 million deaf in India and very few are Christian. India is a tremendous mission field for deaf ministry.

Here is their report of the trip written by Nancy St. Clair and edited by Rev. Dennis Konkkel:

The India Deaf Mission Training Workshop-IELC **Day 1, Monday, January 18**

What a welcome! Huge banners greeted us as we drove into the driveway at the IELC (India Evangelical Lutheran Church) Secondary School for the Deaf in Ambur, India. A worship service was held. Lutheran Church leaders were gathered together by director, Pastor David Christudoss. The message came from the Bible emphasizing that Jesus' real calling is to "feed my LAMBS". The Lutheran Deaf Mission Society with the LCMS were thanked for answering the call by sending three Deaf trainers: Pastor Dennis Konkkel, Pastor Alan Rork, and a retired teacher for the Deaf, Susan Whitt.

The training began shortly afterward with 24 deaf students, 10 girls and 14 boys, all from grades 11 through 2 years of post-high school training and a few teachers. The plan was to use the instruction of Jesus teachings, especially the parables. The first day involved the introduction of a couple of stories and the doctrine of "By Grace alone, through Faith alone, and in Bible alone" and Rounds 1 of Bible Trivia, mainly centering on the life of Jesus. Groups were formed, each group having cards a,b,c,d, for selection of the multiple choice answers. The students had to make guesses as a team and one person stand up with a card. Champions were recorded. The day closed out with devotion.

Day 2, Tuesday, January 19

The 10 Virgins was acted out and recorded today. The ten girls had fun showing their lamps on fire, and then just five refilling their lamps, so they could go on to celebrate at the feast with the groom in his gold paper crown. The story of **Jesus Healing the Sick Women** was taught and filmed. The boy who played Jesus enjoyed stepping into the garment, and putting on the wig and beard. The girl placed a part of her Indian "saree" over her head, looking so ill, before her touch of Jesus robe and her joyful spin at total healing. As Bible Trivia Rounds 2 & 3 were played, some students became brave enough to volunteer to stand up and show the team's choice. The day closed out with devotion.

Day 3, Wednesday, January 20

Watching the recording of the drama from yesterday, sparked enthusiasm for the new day of storytelling and recordings. They learned to drop their coins with pride for the story of **The Talents**. **The Big Dinner** gave an opportunity to work at contrasting the pride and humility of the two sons. **The Unforgiving Servant** gave opportunities to show forgiveness and punishment. Bible

Trivia for Rounds 4 & 5 were played with more students being eager to be involved and having a more competitive edge. That morning closed out with devotion.

That afternoon we were able to travel about an hour away to visit the Deaf students at the Lutheran school in the city of Vellore. The students watched wide-eyed, enjoying watching the Deaf students portray their stories on video. They were able to see the Bible stories in a different way, and to enjoy the sharing for God's message of forgiveness and love.

Day 4, Thursday, January 21

The Pharisee and the Tax Collector was the story of the day. The girls used their skills take parts of their "saree" to wrap the crown to be the head covering of the priest and to make him a robe. All could play a part by worshipping in the temple, and could experience the importance of the heart in giving, instead of the amount.

The students had worked really hard to complete the videos, so that they would have time to share some of their videos with some younger children from the Ambur Deaf School. It was so moving to see the trainees re-tell the stories, act little parts out, and question the little children to make sure that they too could "understand" the stories and applications.

Day 5, Friday, January 22

The plan was to finish the last two stories and movie making. **The Sower** and **Workers in the Vineyard** gave opportunities to act out farm work as they would envision farm workers in India.

The day ended with a 2 and ½ hour trip to the Lutheran school for the Deaf in Hosur. There the children way out in the countryside could experience our "home movies", seeing the message of God's love portrayed by Deaf peers. With the help of staff there, they could relate the message to their own lives, providing once again an outreach beyond the Deaf in Ambur city.

Day 6, Saturday, January 23

Today paper charts were used to demonstrate what had been learned. Students were empowered to summarize applications of each story and have them written in the regional language, Tamil, and in English for those from two other language groups who did not know the Tamil language. The goal was to have it become a part of them, explain it, see it written, and to later write it for themselves for ongoing teaching and mission outreach by the students.

This was followed by a huge closing ceremony. Worship was done through song and God's word. The students proudly came forward for their certificates. Each was given a flash drive with the recorded stories to share with friends and family. They expressed true appreciation, and gave evidence to be ready to go forward as we watched them interact with pastors, teachers, staff, and the younger children. It was great to see how those younger children were in awe of the trainees who had been touched by the

love of Jesus. Some of the children expressed to their teachers their desire to some day be a part of the training.

Day 7, Sunday, January 24

We had one more opportunity to see some of the trainees in leadership roles for the Deaf student chapel in the morning. And as Pastor Dennis Konkkel, mission team leader, and Pastor Alan Rork shared their messages; it was easy to see how there was no restriction by language, but that with Deaf to Deaf, and heart language to heart language, the love of Jesus was shared.

The Overall Mission and Ministry Process in Action:

It was so amazing to watch. As the workshop began, the Bible story or parable would be beautifully expressed in American Sign Language (ASL) by one of the mission trainers. All of the elements were portrayed with facial expression and a flow that drew the students into the story. Then the English interpretation was given a voice by Nancy St. Clair. Afterwards, each story was meaningfully expressed, in the Indian Sign Language (ISL), by Pastor David Christudoss. Little by little, the trainers learned and used some ISL signs. Along the way the students learned some ASL signs, such as the sign for "understand" to indicate at what point they caught on to the meaning of the story. Then when the students began retelling the stories, it was clear that they had internalized the story and had found a way to make it their own.

At this point it was time to act out the stories, the idea was to portray the story without sign language, so that it could span all language groups. The students watched intently, volunteered to take roles, and followed the direction of the leaders to realistically portray the stories. They were so willing to do takes and retakes, in order to portray it well. As time went on, the students themselves would critique or make suggestions. They all took ownership, and were energized by this deeper way of exploring the story.

The next step was to understand the meaning of the stories. At the beginning it seemed to go so slow, using questions, reenacting roles, and prompting in ASL or ISL for responses. Suddenly, more and more students were responding by signing "understand". The earthly stories were being associated with heavenly meanings. Soon they realized that by going over each one, they could make sense and sign what was meant.

However, the training team wanted to go farther, for the students to apply the meaning beyond. This had two parts: to apply it to their own lives and to be able to spread the grace and gospel to others. Other opportunities allowed them and the leaders to meet with the younger students to share their videos and lead them to connect to the message. It was touching to watch the trainees, the lambs that had been fed, offer that same food to other lambs. The Lord truly used the training by Dennis, Alan, and Susan to bless the Deaf children with the joy to retell, reenact, reteach, and respond to the love of Jesus.

CORRECTION

In the previous issue of *The Deaf Lutheran* it was erroneously reported that Susan Whitt, Council Bluffs, IA was an interpreter who accompanied Rev. Dennis Konkel and Rev. Alan Rork on their trip to India in January. Susan Whitt is a retired teacher.

Eckert family to travel to Kenya

What is Kenya known for?

- They are known for their wildlife – lions, leopards, buffalo, elephants, rhinos, giraffes, zebras, crocodiles, hippopotamus, gazelles, cheetahs, hyenas, wildebeest, flamingos, and others.
- Kenya lies on the equator, but their highest mountain, Mount Kenya, is tall enough (17,057 ft.) that it has snow on top all year.
- In sports, Kenyan long-distance runners are some of the best in the world.

But up until now, Kenya has not been known for Lutheran Deaf mission work. Thankfully that can change!

In 2015, Rev. Joseph Omolo, bishop of the Lake Diocese in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Kenya (ELCK) visited the U.S. and made several stops in Iowa. Rev. Tim Eckert, executive director of LDMS, met with him and discussed starting Deaf Ministry in Kenya. When Rev. Omolo returned home, he identified a pastor there who was eager to work with the Deaf.

At the same time, two of Pastor Eckert's children were busy collecting robotics kits to send to schools in Kenya. An opportunity came up for their high school robotics team to go to Kenya this summer and visit several schools to teach them how to use the kits. God put a great opportunity together! Pastor Eckert's whole family decided to go to Kenya. While Pastor Eckert's family teaches robotics, he will meet with the church and some Deaf to learn about the Deaf and their life and culture and talk with the church about how they can teach the Deaf about Jesus and train Deaf leaders.

It is estimated there are about 600,000 Deaf in Kenya and about 340,000 of them use Kenyan Sign Language (KSL), which is very much like ASL. KSL varies a lot, though, depending on where you are in Kenya. The educational system is similar in some ways to the U.S. with many Deaf schools but also a lot of mainstreaming. Not many children are able to go to school, though. The lack of education, lack of services, and discrimination means that most of the

Deaf in Kenya are very poor and face many difficulties.

Our plan is to be in Kenya the last two weeks of June. Because I am still planning for the trip and learning more about Kenya, I am still finding out what our needs will be and what I will be able to take. If you are interested in donating to support this mission to Kenya, please contact me at LDMS@DeafJesus.org and soon I should know more about what we will need.

We are excited and eager to go and visit Kenya and the ELCK! Our prayer is that we can help the church understand the needs of the Deaf and learn how to bring the good news of Jesus to them. We want to see the Deaf in Kenya learn and grow and serve Jesus the same as we want for the Deaf here in the U.S. Please join us in praying for that to happen!

Rev. Tim Eckert

Family Ministry at Our Savior Deaf Lutheran Church in Madison, WI

God has been working overtime at our church!! Six months ago we started a once a week Family Ministry for those with a deaf/hoh member of the family. Our goal was for families to learn together through activities and experiencing God's Word. Since starting we have grown from one family to seven families that regularly attend.

Some of the highlights of God's work-

1. One family gave thanks for the family worship nights during prayer time. They had been looking for a church home for years for their unique family.
2. The mom of one family didn't know that Jesus is God and never read the bible. She recently did the resurrection eggs with her children and learned more than they did.
3. Our Seder dinner was the largest that we have ever had. It was a joy to have the children involved in the worship.
4. Our confirmation class has grown over double the size and now includes many dads in the class.

Our biggest challenge now is for more volunteers. We are starting sign classes on April 7 to be held before the Family Worship on Thursdays. This has the possibility of increasing our worship by 50%! God is good!

(continued on the next page)



We need prayers for:
 -More workers for the harvest!
 -Continued blessings for all of the families.
 -Wisdom and energy for the leaders.

We are now starting to work on Old Testament stories this spring. Our

first three weeks we will be talking about dinosaurs, brownies, and zombies.... Stay tuned!!

If you would like more information or have questions about this awesome ministry you can contact Denise Pulfer. mand_95687@yahoo.com

Visit to the Creation Museum

How old is the earth? 1 million years, 6 thousand years, 100 billion years? The Pulfer and Catchpole families went to the Creation Museum over spring break to find out the answer to this question. If you answered 6,000 years you would be right. Many evolution people want us to believe differently but

God already gave us the answer. Other things we learned while at the museum:

-Dinosaurs are in the Bible (Job 40 and 41).
 -Only 1 in 3 teens will continue to go to church after graduation

-God planted the Garden of Eden after he made Adam. Later He put Adam in it.

If you are interested in visiting and learning more you can go visit the Creation Museum in Kentucky or visit it on the web. <http://creationmuseum.org/>

General News

Bids for the 2021 ILDA Convention should be sent by June 1, 2016. Potential host(s) must have a letter written on official congregational stationery proving that their congregation has officially voted to invite the convention to their city. Please send your letter to President John Mason.

Many thanks to Pastor William Ludwig, Seattle, WA for donating copies of *The Deaf Lutheran* from 1915 – 1953. Waving hands!!

ILDA Officers

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 Pastor Advisor – Rev. Ron Friedrich



Denise Pulfer was installed and commissioned as Director of Christian Education (DCE) at Our Savior Deaf in Madison, WI on April 12, 2015. Congratulations and God's blessings Denise!

In Memoriam



Katherine Thies (b. 11-22-1924) passed away on January 26, 2016. Her husband was Rev. Delbert Thies who served the deaf in Omaha, NE.



Donald Mowl (b. 8-19-1921) passed away on January 30, 2016. He was a long-time active member of his church in Pittsburgh, PA and long-time member and Historian for ILDA.



Curtis Ketelsen (b. 1-7-1936) passed away on February 9, 2016. He was an active member of the Cedar Rapids and Davenport, IA churches.

LC-MS Missionaries

Rev. Ryan and Emily McDermott will be serving the deaf in Accra, Ghana and hopefully leaving in August. Donations can be sent to: The LC-MS, PO Box 66861, St. Louis, MO 63166-6861. Put "McDermott-Ghana" in the memo line of your check. Make the check payable to "The LC-MS."

Rev. David and Barbara Bush will be serving the deaf in Macau, China. They need more donations before they can get the green light to move to Macau. Rev. Bush will also be the Director of the Concordia English Center. Donations can be sent to: The LC-MS, PO Box 66861, St. Louis, MO 63166-6861. Put "Bush-Macau" in the memo line of your check. Make the check payable to "The LC-MS."

Rev. Steven and Cynthia Schumacher are serving the deaf in Accra, Ghana and training Ghanaian pastors on how to do deaf ministry in their congregations. Donations can be sent to: The LC-MS, PO Box 66861, St. Louis, MO 63166-6861. Put "Bush-Macau" in the memo line of your check. Make the check payable to "The LC-MS."



Pictured are the members of Christ Lutheran Church of the Deaf, Cleveland, OH now worshipping at St. John Church, Garfield Heights, OH. Rev. Chip Lawson, far right, is the pastor.

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| <p align="center">The Deaf Lutheran Subscription (Print Edition)</p> <p align="center">One-Year Subscription – \$10.00</p> <p>Please Select: <input type="checkbox"/> Renew <input type="checkbox"/> New</p> <p>=====</p> <p>Jeff Padon is the Business Manager for <i>The Deaf Lutheran</i>. All subscriptions should be sent to him at the address below. Make your check or money order payable to “<i>The Deaf Lutheran</i>.” Thanks!</p> | <p>Attach mailing label or fill in:</p> <p>Name _____</p> <p>Address _____</p> <p>City _____</p> <p>State _____ Zip Code _____</p> <p>Email _____</p> <p>Phone/VP/Fax _____</p> |
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Can you help?

--Does anyone have copies of ILDA minutes from the 1970's to the early 1990's? Please contact Janet Gehlbach, ILDA Secretary, and let her know! Thanks! jgehlbach@aol.com

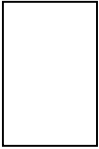
--Does anyone have any extra copies of the ILDA Handbook that were printed: red, orange or buff colored front cover? Please contact Janet Gehlbach, ILDA Secretary, and let her know! Thanks! jgehlbach@aol.com

--Does anyone have any extra copies of the ILDA Convention Program book from 1977, 1979 and 1981? Please contact Janet Gehlbach, ILDA Secretary, and let her know! Thanks! jgehlbach@aol.com

Deadline for the next issue
Summer issue – August 15, 2016
Fall issue – October 15, 2016
Please send photos, articles and items of interest for future issues of The Deaf Lutheran to:
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The DEAF LUTHERAN



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Mission Projects for 2015-2017

Deaf Youth Service Project.....\$ 5,000
Fiji Special Education Center.....\$ 5,000
DIT students\$ 7,000

Amended for each new DIT student...\$ 16,000

Donations for the ILDA 2015-2017 Mission Projects can be sent to ILDA Treasurer Karen Beiter, PO Box 218, West Henrietta, NY 14586. Put "Mission Projects" in the memo line. Your prayers and donations help ILDA to continue our work in spreading the Gospel of Jesus Christ in the U.S. and foreign countries.
