



The DEAF LUTHERAN



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

Fall 2013

St. Louis, MO

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From the Pastoral Advisor

“Divine E-X-P-E-C-T-A-T-I-O-N-S at CHRISTMAS?”



We love Christmas because it is a real treat for everyone as we expect. Christmas is a special occasion for our expectations, and we usually expect the same things to take place during the Christmas season. We take care of that last-minute

shopping because we know Christmas would not be Christmas without giving and receiving gifts. Also, we make sure we have enough food everyone likes at this special occasion. We set up the real Christmas tree we purchased, or haul the artificial tree from the basement, setting it in the same place, decorating it with the same decorations and lights. We plan to go to church on Christmas Eve, anticipating peace after the frenzy of our Christmas preparations. We sell Christmas goodies in packages and creative Christmas objects to the public for annual fundraising project. At church we look forward to serving a potluck dinner along with real Christmas treats and singing our favorite Christmas carols so that you might get into that Christmas spirit. We are writing Christmas cards to faraway relatives, colleagues, and beloved friends as we expect to convey message to them in thought of them. It is our typical tradition as well as the same routine yearly.

As we know, our Christmas expectations may be set too high, but many times we expect too much from Christmas, or too little. We still have traditions our families look forward to each Christmas. Still, unfortunately, but we forget God often works in ways that are totally unexpected, acting beyond our expectations. God gave us a Savior to forgive our sins in human flesh. Jesus gives us much more

than we expect: the forgiveness of all our sins by His death on the cross. So each Christmas God works beyond our expectations. We may expect on earth: presents and happiness. But Jesus gives us much more: peace, joy and blessings forever with Him in heaven. Oftentimes, we see lovely statements on cards reading “Peace, Joy and Blessings” for years.

No matter what your expectations for Christmas, God gives us the faith to expect the unexpected. Please bear in mind that Jesus forgives our sins yesterday, today and tomorrow as of our Christmas gift. That means a very blessed Christmas for you!

Rev. Greg Desrosiers

From the President

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,



Greetings from Pflugerville, Texas in the name of Jesus Christ, Our Lord and Savior! First of all, I wish to thank you all for your prayers for my recovery from abscess pneumonia! It has been

quite a long, struggling recovery!

Now, it is time for the holidays, and I believe many of you are super-busy getting ready for holidays, filled with more to-dos than usual. There's planning, decorating, shopping, cooking, baking cookies, visiting families and friends, going to parties, etc.! (For me, I enjoy meeting friends at Starbucks and enjoying egg nog lattes and its Christmas decorations!) However, we really need to look forward to Advent, let us share the joy of our Lord's coming with families, friends and the others. The hope and purpose God has sent us is the gift of His only Son, Jesus Christ, also called Immanuel

which means, "God is with us"! That's the **best** Christmas gift for all of us! *"God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son so that whoever believes in Him would not perish but have everlasting life."* John 3:16

On the other hand, ILDA regional presidents/officers/chairpersons for regional conferences: Please let me know the dates and locations of your regional conferences during 2014, as I would like to attend your conference as a visiting participant. If you wish to have me present how important ILDA is to us, etc., I am very willing to do so. I can be contacted by email (see my email address below).

Now, on the behalf of the ILDA Executive Board, ILDA Regional board members and all ILDA members, I, as ILDA president, wholeheartedly thank you, the members of Our Savior Lutheran Church of the Deaf in Madison, Wisconsin (the "Cheese State") for being so willing to host the 2015 ILDA Convention. May God be with you all as you make all the plans and meet all the challenges.

As of right now, there is no location for the 2017 ILDA convention, but we really need to know soon if there will be any more conventions in the future.

Is your congregation willing to host a convention and keep ILDA going? It would be a shame to see ILDA die. If we really do cherish ILDA, let us hear from any congregation that is willing to host in order to keep it alive! Please pray about this and talk with your congregations about the possibility of hosting a convention.

Lastly, let us say, "Rejoice! Our Savior is born! Rejoice!"

In Christ,

Carol Seeger
cseeger@austin.utexas.edu

In Memoriam



Glenda Haefner, Blaine, KS
 d. October 2, 2013



Donald L. Kissel, Sr., Indianola, IA
 d. September 7, 2013

Important Note: To ILDA Regional Presidents, members, etc., if you have any news or announcements you wish to be printed in the newsletter, please send it to the *Deaf Lutheran* editors. Thank you.

Deadlines for the 2014 Deaf Lutheran issues:

February issueJanuary 15, 2014
 May issueApril 15, 2014
 August issueJuly 15, 2014
 November issueOctober 15, 2014

Please make sure your news, articles and photos are sent to *The Deaf Lutheran* editors, Janet and Daryl Gehlbach at JGehlbach@aol.com

Great Lakes Regional News By David G. Brown

GLRC (Great Lakes Regional Conference) was hosted by Trinity Lutheran Church of the Deaf in Pittsburgh PA. on the second weekend of October. The theme was "The Believers' Share" Acts 2:43-47, 4:32-37. Four workshops were held:

- Rev. Edwin Bergstresser (Columbus OH)
 Psalm 23:5
- Rev. Shirrel Petzoldt (Toledo OH)
 Acts 2:42-47
- Rev. Chip Lawson (Cleveland OH)
 "LifeTree Café"
- Deacon John Rushton (Rochester NY)

Approximately 30 people were in attendance. David Brown reported that "Don Mowl continues to stay in shape for a 92 year old man to host this gathering. Good job to Don and committee!"

The next GLRC will be in Columbus OH in 2014 at Holy Cross Deaf Lutheran Church.

Necrology report

If you know of any ILDA members who have passed away since the 2013 Austin, Texas convention please send pictures and obituaries to:

Diane Francisco
 10004 E. Mission Ave.
 Spokane Valley, WA 99206-3938

DIT Graduation and Installation

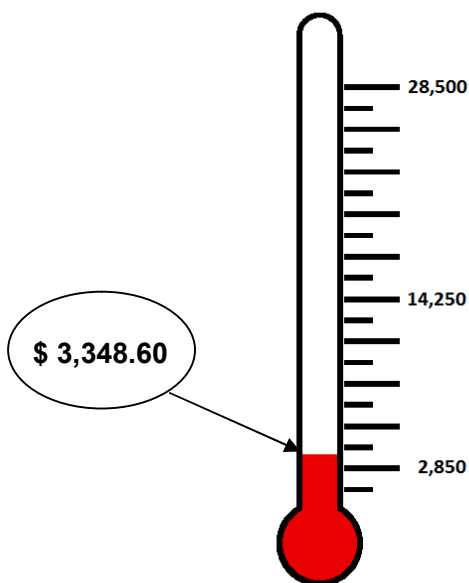


Deaf Institute of Theology (DIT) graduates Dawn Polzin (left) and Loreena Stennes received their calls to Our Savior Lutheran Church, Madison, WI, on Friday, October 25, 2013, at Concordia Seminary in St. Louis, MO. They were installed at Our Savior on Sunday, November 24.

Congratulations to Dawn and Loreena. We wish them God's blessings in their future service to Him and the church!

2013-2015 ILDA MISSION PROJECTS Goal: \$28,500

Each long line represents 10% of goal.



ILDA Treasurer Report by Patrick R. Sell

The money collected for ILDA mission projects 2013-2015 is \$ 3,348.60 or 12% so far.

2014 Regional Conferences

Central Region, March 19-23, in Cantrell, IL, near Springfield

Midwest Region, August 8-10, hosted by Cedar Rapids, IA

2013 ILDA Executive Board Meeting Minutes

International Lutheran Deaf Association Executive Board Meeting

July 17, 2013

Jesus Lutheran Church of the Deaf, Austin, TX

Present: Jeff Padon, President; Carol Seeger, President-Elect (afternoon); Patrick Sell, Treasurer; Jennifer Ceyanes, Secretary; Rev. Mark Seeger, Pastor Advisor; Rev. Dennis Konkel, LDMS Executive Director; Linda Desrosiers, Mission Projects Chairperson; Diane Francisco, Northwest Region Representative; David Hale, Midwest Region Representative (afternoon); Lee Ann Kotal, Pacific Region Representative (afternoon); Jennifer Bonura, Dixie Region Representative (afternoon); John Mason, Eastern Region Representative; Pam Kane, Great Lakes Region Representative

Absent: Dawn Polzin, Central Region Representative

Meeting called to order at 9:40 AM with an opening prayer by Rev. Greg Desrosiers.

The minutes from the September, 2012 meeting were read. Accepted with corrections.

Pam Kane will serve as parliamentarian.

President's Report (Jeff Padon)

Deaf Lutheran Newsletters: Rev. Daryl and Janet Gehlbach will be the editors for the Deaf Lutheran, while Jeff Padon will be the business manager and take care of the printing and mailing out. The first and second issues have been sent out with a third to be sent after the ILDA convention. There are currently 169 subscriptions but 200 or more are desired for the bulk rate. Using stamps is more expensive and time consuming. Subscriptions from Canada do not count

for the bulk rate, so 200 subscriptions are needed from the United States.

2015 ILDA: There are currently no bids, although there is a congregation considering hosting in 2015. Discussion- There has been very little or no profit from ILDA conventions. Profit isn't really needed but how would ILDA pay for its officers to attend meetings?

Trend – Concordia University or Seminary: With hotels being so expensive, there may be a new trend in using Concordia University or Seminary for a convention site. There are ten Concordia Universities in the United States.

Representatives from Regions: Some representatives arrived late and one missed the Executive Council meeting. It is important for all representatives to be on time and to be present for meetings or they will miss important information. ILDA used to pay for all representatives to attend the meetings but not anymore. Carol Seeger will visit the regions and encourage participation in the meetings.

ILDA officer positions: New officers are needed for the following positions: President-Elect, Secretary, and Treasurer. / Discussion – could the Treasurer be appointed instead of chosen by a vote? Could there be an Assistant Treasurer or Treasurer-Elect?

ILDA Exhibit Kit: If a church wants to use the ILDA exhibit kit, it needs to pay for shipping and the booth fee. Rev. Ron Friedrich will take the exhibit to Gallaudet University homecoming. His church paid for the booth. Having a booth is a good experience with collecting names and meeting people. / Discussion – Information such as brochures and where to go for church services is also needed. This exhibit should be used in an area where there is a church or place to worship.

President-Elect's Report: HOLD until afternoon

Treasurer's Report: HOLD until afternoon

11:20 AM - Break

11:40 AM - Meeting resumed

Pastor Advisor's Report (Rev. Mark Seeger:)

The representatives from each region were asked about churches in their regions and they shared what they know.

Northwest Region: (CANADA) Calgary – Vacant. Edmonton – Rev. Bauer has a Hearing/Deaf church. Regina – Closed and vacant. Vancouver and Surrey – Rev. David Neilson serves as pastor, while Rev. Greg Desrosiers serves as associate pastor. Both churches are every other Sunday. (U.S.A.) Montana – Rev. Schlund is serving part-time for Deaf Ministry. Portland – Closed. Seattle – There is still a Deaf Church and Rev. Ludwig still serves in some capacity. Spokane – There is no pastor and many people have died.

Pacific Region: (The following information is from the report submitted by Lee Ann Kotal later in the afternoon) Fremont - Active with Rev. Roy Dahmann serving. Los Angeles – Active with Lee Ann Kotal teaching and leading due to Deacon Charles Kotal passing away. Riverside – Small church with Rev. Gerald Gehrs serving and a small interpreted ministry. Sacramento – Bible studies.

Midwest Region: Cedar Rapids/Davenport – Active with Rev. Tim Eckert and Rev. Mark Anderson serving. Denver – There is an occasional Lutheran service. Des Moines – Active with Rev. Dennis Konkell and Deacon Patrick Sell serving. Duluth/St. Cloud – Active with Rev. William Knaack serving. Kansas City/Topka/Olathe/Emporia – Rev. Paul Tessaro is serving both hearing and deaf churches. There is a Deaf Ministry called KansaSEED (Spreading, Expanding, Educating, Deaf) throughout Kansas. Minneapolis – Rev. Daryl Gehlbach does volunteer Deaf Ministry. North Dakota – Rev. William Knaack serves in Minot and Fargo once a month. Omaha – Rev. Kois serves in Sioux Falls. Sioux Falls – Rev. Matthew Nix serves in the hearing church and the Deaf School has been closed. The Deaf Church is still there, but small.

Central Region: Chicago North/South – Prentice Marsh used to serve two congregations before. Delavan – Rev. John Reinke is only leading Bible Study there. Fort Wayne – Rev. Alan Rork and Rev. David Bush serve there once in a while. Rev. Schumacher leads CITI at the Seminary. Indianapolis – Active with Rev. Alan Rork serving. Jacksonville – Rev. Tom Philips serves two active congregations and there is a youth ministry in Central Illinois that had 40 kids last year. Madison – Rev. Bud Palmer goes once a month. Milwaukee – Active Deaf Church with Rev. Bud Palmer serving with partial support from the district. Peoria/St. Louis- Active with Rev. Richard Moody serving with partial support from the district. Wausau – Active with Rev. William Knaack serving. **Dixie Region:** Austin – Active with no pastor serving but two Elders leading. There is an interpreted ministry at a local hearing church. Clearwater – Closed. Dallas – Interpreted ministry for a small group. Rev. Bob Case goes there once in a while. Houston – Active with Rev. Larry Leider and Rev. Mark Seeger serving. Jackson – No information. Memphis – No information. Oklahoma City – No information. St. Augustine – Formerly a Deaf Church, but became a hearing church with interpreted service.

Great Lakes Region: Cleveland – The church is still trying to sell their building. Columbus – Active. Detroit – Active with Rev. Thomas Dunseth serving several congregations in the area. Pittsburgh – Active with Deacon Don Mowl serving. Rev. Ed Berstreser goes there once in a while. Rochester – The church is not selling their building. Toledo – There is a small deaf church with hearing people joining and there is a Bible study. Subsidy is being cut.

Eastern Region: Baltimore – Closed. Charlotte – Still being served by Rev. MacDonald. Newark –

Formerly a Deaf Church, but became a hearing church with interpreted service. New York City – After Rev. Wrede left, the churches in the area are getting smaller. Philadelphia – No information. Washington DC – Active with Rev. Ron Friedrich serving. Subsidy has been cut. W. Hartford – No information.

There are three churches that are still 100% supported by districts, while the others are either partially supported, not supported, or closed. There used to be 65 full-time ministries and all the places listed in the ILDA handbook used to have pastors serving them. Now there are less ministries and fewer pastors. When current pastors leave a church, many will not be able to support or call a new pastor. There might be more interpreted services from now on.

Rev. Mark Seeger has always been pushing for youth ministry. In his youth ministry, there have been 305 kids and 2 ½ are Lutheran with one being a ELCA member, one being a LCMS member, and one being baptized and not yet confirmed. When he first arrived at Jesus Lutheran Church of the Deaf, the relationship with Texas School of the Deaf needed to be built and there is a good relationship now. There should be a focus on youth ministry.

12:40 PM – Break for lunch

1:48 PM - Meeting resumed

LDMS representative's Report (Rev. Dennis Konkel):

See attached report. There is a new logo for Lutheran Deaf Mission Society. LDMS wants to work with all the deaf churches and ministries, but around half do not want to work with LDMS. The other half do want to work with LDMS. Rev. Tim Eckert is now the co-executive director for LDMS. Rev. Jerry Munz does Deaf PAH. Rev. Dennis Konkel and Rev. Alan Rork were planning on a mission trip to India, but it was cancelled due to a political situation there. LDMS is responsible for the Ephphatha Conference and wants everyone to work together. There are no more branches, but instead the focus is on training and helping districts with deaf ministry. Rev. Dennis Konkel humbly asked for prayers for LDMS.

President Elect's Report (Carol Seeger):

ILDA Exhibit Booth – Carol Seeger helped Pam Kane with the design and colors.

Youth of Christ – She attended the conference in Kansas City and learned how to draw more youth and got new ideas for ILDA.

Midwest Regional Conference – She and Patrick Sell encouraged people to go to the ILDA conference in Austin.

Videophone calls with Jeff Padon– Many VP calls were made about issues related to the Deaf Lutheran.

Videophone calls about 2015 and 2017 bids – Many VP calls with Jeff Padon and Pam Kane were made about what to do about the 2015 and 2017 bids.

Videophone calls with Diane Francisco – Many VP calls were made about the ILDA history book to correct the pictures, dates, and years

Plans - Carol Seeger wants to know when each regional conference is so she can attend. She will continue to work on the Deaf Lutheran. She will keep contact with the Executive Board and the ILDA convention planning committee. She will work with the ILDA treasurer on the budget.

Treasurer's Report (Patrick Sell):

See attached report. Income has been small this year and there has been a loss. \$6,000 for DIT training materials in 2011-2012 Mission Projects was sent to LDMS. 2011-2012 Mission Projects is now completed. The goals in Mission Projects for 2012-2013 were not all met. An audit of the treasurer books has not happened yet. / Discussion – How do we advertise the Mission Projects and get more support? We could put pictures and information on a website and keep updating it. How do we get more ILDA members? The treasurer sends the membership dues out to 300 people only once every two years. Maybe this should happen every year.

Mission Projects Report (Linda Desrosiers):

See attached report. There was one new proposal from Deaf Institute of Theology for Mission Projects 2013-2015 which is \$16,000 for new students. Each course costs \$2,000 and grant money from the Seminary has been cut. All new students will have to pay for themselves. For four years of DIT, each student would have to pay \$32,000. There is only one new item for Mission Projects 2013-2015. The items from 2011-2013 could also be added.

The Executive Council proposes the following items and amounts in random order and will bring to the floor during the business meeting for a vote:

Zacharius Fund - \$16,000

Pahl Training Fund- \$6,000

Deaf Teen Service Projects- \$4,000

VBS Fund for Local Deaf Churches - \$1,000

ILDA Exhibit Booth Fund - \$1,500

Total: \$28,500

Regional Representative Reports:

Central Region (Dawn Polzin): Report was shown on TV screen since was absent for meeting. There is currently no host for the regional conference so maybe the board will have to take over the planning.

Midwest Region (David Hale): Cedar Rapids, Iowa will host the regional conference in 2014.

Dixie Region (Jennifer Bonura, representative): See attached report.

Eastern Region (John Mason): There are three churches in the region. There have been no conventions so far. The numbers of members are going down. There is the possibility of joining other regions for conventions.

Northwest Region (Diane Francisco): There was a 100 year celebration at the Deaf Church in Seattle. Rev. Ludwig is still there. The Deaf Church in Montana is doing well. Camp will be in Montana every two years. Rev. Greg and Linda Desrosiers were installed on June 15.

Pacific Region (Lee Ann Kotal): A report on churches in the area was submitted. Selling the church building is being discussed. The money would go to the district for Deaf ministry.

Great Lakes Region (Pam Kane): The 60th anniversary was celebrated last year with 59 people attending. On April 7th, the Deaf Church in Pittsburgh celebrated its 50th anniversary.

Old Business

Carol Seeger took over the floor as acting President.

Motion #1 – Jeff Padon – Merge the old and new Deaf Lutheran funds to become one fund in the General Fund. Vote - none opposed. **Passed.**

Lee Ann Kotal moved to close Old Business. Carol Seeger seconded.

New Business

Motion #1 – Pam Kane – ILDA Executive Council takes over the planning of ILDA convention when there is no host. Diane Francisco seconded. / Discussion – What about financial responsibility? If churches will not accept this responsibility then it will be put on the ILDA executive council and they could be stuck with the costs. It would be best to cancel if there is no bid.

Pam Kane withdrew the motion. Diane Francisco seconded.

Motion #2 – John Mason- Law committee will change the ILDA By-Laws to create the position of treasurer-elect. Carol Seeger seconded. / Discussion – This motion needs to be moved to the convention floor during the business meeting.

Rev. Dennis Konkel moved to close the discussion. Pam Kane seconded.

Meeting adjourned at 6:15 PM, July 17, 2013.

Respectfully Submitted,
Jennifer Ceyanes
ILDA Secretary, 2009 - 2013



Our kids put together more than 600 packets that would given out to donors, asking them to provide backpacks and school supplies for children who couldn't afford to purchase their own back-to-school items.

In June, seven deaf students from Texas School for the Deaf went to Florida for their annual Deaf Teen Service Trip. We have been going on service trips since 2002, but this was the first trip to Florida. We had seven projects this year, all of them focusing on helping others, from very young children to homeless families and senior citizens. The deaf teens who went faced all the projects with enthusiasm and determination to do the projects properly and quickly. When asked if they wanted to take a break for lunch, they answered, "No, let's finish the projects and then we can go to the beach!"

The ILDA Convention often votes to include the Deaf Teen Service Trip as a mission project, but



One of our projects was washing the bus and the trailer used for the Senior Citizen ministry

because of lack of donations to ILDA, the service trips have not received ILDA support for the past two years. The service trips are open to deaf teens from all of our ILDA congregations, but often it is only Texas that participates. You are encouraged to invite your deaf teens to participate in the next service trip, TBA.



The church where we were staying was only a few miles from the beach so everyday after we finished our service projects, we would go enjoy the sand and surf.

Ordination and Consecration in Canada



June 15, 2013, was a blessed day for Trinity Lutheran Church of the Deaf, Vancouver, British Columbia. On that day a husband and wife, both graduates of the DIT program, were ordained and consecrated into the Lord's service to the Deaf. They are Rev. Gregory and Dcs. Linda Desrosiers. They will work with Rev. David Nielsen in the Vancouver area.

The Rev. Don Schiemann, President of the

Alberta-British Columbia District was preacher and the performed the rites of ordination and consecration. The Rev. Fred Rink, Circuit Counselor, was the liturgist.

In an email to the editors, the Desrosiers wrote: "[We] want to thank you all for supporting and praying for us all through four year of studying and training."

God bless them in their service to the Lord in reaching the Deaf with the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

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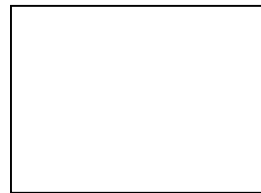
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The DEAF LUTHERAN

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ILDA Executive Board
Minutes Inside



A blessed Christmas and
New Year from
The Deaf Lutheran Staff

Mark Friedrich
Rev. Ron Friedrich
Rev. Daryl Gehlbach
Janet Gehlbach
Jeff Padon