



The *Deaf Lutheran*



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

Winter 2024

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President Carol Seeger



Greetings from not-so-warm Pflugerville, Texas (now, we're having wintry chill with below average temperatures, no kidding! Brrr) in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ! By the way, Happy New Year 2024!

Now, it's hard to believe 2023 is already gone, with so many happenings, both unexpected and expected. As for me, God has blessed me in many ways, for example: spiritual growth at Jesus Sign workshop week, some wonderful Christian fellowships with both new and old friends, visiting family and friends on our trips, etc.

However, I had some unexpected occurrences, one of which was the loss of my best friend, Debbie (who was Deaf and blind) since we were 4 years old. On the bright side, she is now with Jesus because of her faith in Him and I will see her again when my time comes! In October, I was in Minneapolis, MN to attend a Celebration of Life for her at the beautiful Minnehaha Falls Park where I was one of five people to give a eulogy. There was a big attendance. I would say, at least 100 people, so obviously, Debbie was really well loved!

Now, let me share two combined sermons of our former pastor at our church, Bethany Lutheran and my

husband, Rev. Mark Seeger. The theme of the sermon was "A Whole New You!" The celebration of the New Year, both pastors used one of the Bible verses: "If anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come; the old has gone, the new is here!" (2 Cor. 5:17) Let us make this verse our number one New Year resolution! It is to cast out our old identity and create our new identity with Christ by being reconciled to God completely. In order to become a whole new person, we need to be reconciled to God and become righteous in Him. How can we do this? In Rev. Seeger's message: Every year on Dec. 31st at midnight, a new year begins. People all over the world celebrate the New Year. It happens every year. Some people like to make New Year's resolutions.

What's a resolution? It's a decision to do something to improve yourself. For example: 1) exercise more often, 2) eat healthier, 3) go out and help less fortunate people, 4) manage money better, etc. There is nothing wrong with trying to improve yourself. Actually it's good to try to get rid of bad habits and develop good habits. Trying to change from the way you were to the way you want to become is great. You might want to become a more caring person by stop arguing, become friendlier or more forgiving, or more helpful, etc.

What's the best way to become the new you? Let

God do it! He wants to change you! Read Ezekiel 11:19; Eph. 4:22-24; Col. 3:9-10 and 1 Peter 1:3.

P.S. Important Notes:

1. I'm encouraging you to check out the website for 2024 ILDA Convention in Dearborn, Michigan: <http://www.deafjesus.org/ilda.html> for more information or to register. Or if you subscribe to the Deaf Lutheran newsletter, there was a registration form inserted into the Fall 2023 issue. **Make sure to register by or before March 31st if you want to pay early bird combo prices.**

2. Good News! On behalf of the ILDA Executive Council, we are happy to inform you all that the Great Lakes Regional Conference (GLRC) will host the 2026 ILDA convention! More details on location, hotel, etc. will be given at a later date.

In this issue on Page 4 and Page 5 are forms for Mission Projects requests and the Right Hand Award nomination form in preparation for the 2024 ILDA convention in Dearborn, Michigan.

Deadline for Mission Projects request is April 13, 2024

Deadline for Right Hand Award nominations is June 5, 2024

Pastoral Advisor Rev. Daryl Gehlbach



It's rather interesting that Ash Wednesday, the beginning of Lent, falls on Valentine's Day this year. It's interesting

because the weeks leading up to Easter are a time to explore the theme of love – God's love. "God so loved the world," the Gospel of John declares, "that He gave His Only-Begotten Son." Anyone who doesn't understand why Jesus suffered, died, and rose again, doesn't understand love.



Sin is an offense against God. His holy, divine justice demands punishment for our law-breaking. We face death – eternal death. Yet God doesn't desire the death of anyone.

The solution to our sin is rooted in His love. The Apostle John writes "We know love. How? He laid down His life for us." Jesus took upon Himself our sin and guilt, and He willingly paid the blood-price required for our redemption.

Yet, our Lord's love is not something that He simply showed long ago. It continues even now. His love is present within all who believe in Him. His Spirit dwells within us, growing the fruit of love. He strengthens our hearts to hold fast to our first love – Jesus. He causes God's love to

overflow in works of love toward one another and our neighbor. In doing so, we fulfill the Law in a God-pleasing way.

As we approach another Valentine's Day, we must resist the world's temptations to define and express love apart from God. His love is not found in cards, candy, or romantic dinners. Instead, we should seek His love where He clearly reveals it – the cross of Jesus. There, in our Savior's suffering and death, we see love in action, a love that redeems us, a love that continually fills our hearts with joy and hope.

"Let your steadfast love, O LORD, be upon us, even as we hope in you."

Treasurer John Mason



PAH! PAH!
PAH!

I am happy to announce the 2021-2024 Mission Projects have met its goal!

However, I am still getting donations as of January 1, 2024, and that is \$683.00!

Don't stop your donations if we have already met the goal. The remainder will carry over to the next mission projects for the years of 2024-2026. Keep up your donations folks!

The 2024-2026 Mission Projects requests form have been sent to most of the deaf LCMS churches. Please check with your congregation officers for the letter.

Friendly reminder for those who have not renewed their ILDA membership. You will need your membership card

when you register for the 2024 ILDA convention in Dearborn, Michigan.

Thank you and God bless!

Nominations Chairman John Mason



I just want to remind you there will be elections at the ILDA convention in Dearborn, Michigan in July.

Nomination and/or re-nomination positions needed to fill are:

President-Elect
Secretary
Treasurer
Pastoral Advisor

Please contact me if you are interested to be President-Elect. At the same time, I will contact several ILDA members to fulfill the position.

So far what I have is a person interested in being nominated for one position. Also, an incumbent person is seeking re-nomination to be elected for second term.

Here's my email address:
ilda.treasurer2021@gmail.com

Thank you and God Bless!!!

Mark Your Calendars

2024 ILDA Convention
Dearborn, Michigan
July 11-14, 2024

Hope to see you there!

Lutheran Deaf Mission Society (LDMS) News

(adapted from the December 2023 LDMS newsletter)

DeafPah!

- Production is wrapping up of the 60-lesson video course on church history being done by Bob Lenderman in American Sign Language (ASL). When completed he will return to his first love, translating Scriptures into ASL so those whose heart language is ASL will have access to the Word of God.

DIT: Deaf Institute of Theology

- LDMS continues to support students studying to become pastors and deaconesses at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis. The seminary has a covenant with the students so that the seminary pays one third of the student's tuition, their district pays one third and the student and congregation pay one third. With LDMS' partnership with ILDA, financial assistance is offered up to the full amount that the student and congregation owe.
- Seminary level courses can be challenging for students whose first language is ASL and use English as a second language. The seminary has given access to the coursework so supplemental help can be created for the students. This is time consuming work. Much of the work has been done, but there are significant materials still to do. Many thanks to those who are producing the materials and to those who are supporting this effort.
- For more information: www.deafjesus.org

ILDA Officers

International Officers (2021-2024)

President — Carol Seeger
 President-Elect — Brian Byer
 Secretary — Denise Pulfer
 Treasurer — John Mason
 Pr. Advisor – Rev. Daryl Gehlbach

Central Region (2018-20)

President – Albert Moore
 V. President –
 Secretary – Rebecca Catchpole
 Treasurer – Tim Kearney

Pr. Advisor – Rev. Bud Palmer

Midwest Region (2018-20)

President – Sara Hale
 V. President – vacant
 Secretary – Nola Gray
 Treasurer – vacant

Pr. Advisor – Rev. Paul Tessaro

Northwest Region (current officers)

President – Richard Sharp
 President Elect – Patricia Jenkins
 Secretary – vacant
 Treasurer – vacant

Pr. Advisor – Rev. David Nielsen

Great Lakes Region (2023-2025)

President – Nancy Bergstresser
 President-Elect – Jeff Padon
 Secretary – Karen Beiter
 Treasurer – Larry Blout

Pr. Advisor – Rev. John Rushton
 Historian — Diane Francisco

World Lutheran Deaf Outreach (WLDO) News

(adapted from WLDO Fall and Winter newsletters)

- The 2023 Jesus Signs Immersion was an astounding success! Over 100 deaf and hearing people attended for a week of fun, learning and fellowship. The 2024 Jesus Signs Immersion will be held July 22-26, 2024. June training in West Africa saw over 50 deaf people attending for two weeks of intense training. The final Sunday the ELCG (Evangelical Lutheran Church of Ghana) ordained the first Deaf Ghanaian pastor! [Editor's note: see Page 6 of this issue for a photo.]
- Eight deaf students are studying to become Pastors and Deaconesses!
- Zoom and online training groups are being done in the USA and around the world.
- The Ghana Mission team (Rev. Dr. John Reinke, Deaconess Rebecca Catchpole and Seminarian Johnny Szupica) traveled to Accra, Ghana on 12/28/2023—1/12/2024 to train the deaf leaders there from Ghana and Liberia.
- Plans are being made for 2024 training in India, Papua New Guinea and Africa. Prayers are appreciated.
- For more information: www.DeafOutreach.org



Pictured above: Deaf church workers and evangelists of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Liberia (ELCL) at the training workshop with Rev. Dr. John Reinke at the Lutheran seminary in Ghana.



ILDA 2024 - 2026 Mission Projects Fund Request Form

Name of person applying for funds: _____

Name of organization: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip Code: _____

Phone # (VP/Text/Cell) _____ Email: _____

Fund request are you applying for? \$ _____ . _____

If the amount you get from ILDA is not enough to cover your entire project, how will you get the additional funds? (i.e. car washes, bake sales, other donors, family donations, etc.)
(use reverse side if more space is needed)

Please describe the mission project: (use reverse side if more space is needed)

How will the funds be used? (use reverse side if more space is needed)

(If your request accepted, you will be required to attend the next convention for presentation about your project with media and/or materials.)

DEADLINE: Postmarked by or before April 13, 2024

Please return this form to:

Carolyn K. Snyder-Mason
6721 Deep Run Parkway
Elkridge, Maryland 21075



“Right Hand Award” Nomination Form

Deadline is June 5, 2024
(Please Type or Print)

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Videophone/Text _____ Email _____

Congregational Offices:

Congregational Committees and Boards:

Regional Offices, Committees or Boards:

Other Christian Service:

Nomination form submitted by:

Print Name

Signature

Date

Mail this form to:

Janet Gehlbach
c/o Right Hand Award—ILDA 2024
305 Liberty St. NE
Fridley, MN 55432

News from the 2024 Dearborn, Michigan convention hosts

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ, 2024 is finally here!!

We wanted to share with you that the 2024 ILDA Convention will take place at the DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel in Detroit-Dearborn, Michigan. This is a very special occasion because it marks the first time in over 50 years that the convention will be held in Michigan. The convention committee and Our Savior Lutheran Church of the Deaf in Beverly Hills, MI, are working hard to ensure that everything is in place for a remarkable event.

We have already sent approximately 250 registration packages to Deaf Churches and Churches that offer interpreting services in their worship across the United States, and we have started receiving several registrations since November. We are looking forward to receiving more registrations after the holidays.

If you or your church has not received the registration packets, please don't worry. You can go to <https://deafjesus.org/ilda/ILDAconv.html> and print the registration forms and don't forget to fill in your membership card number on the registration form. If you have not renewed or signed up for your ILDA membership, please visit <https://deafjesus.org/ilda/memberinfo.html> to get one. Remember to bring your membership card to the convention for verification purposes.

Also, for more information, please go to this link: <https://www.facebook.com/dearborn.ilda.michigan>. There will be more information coming soon.

We encourage you to participate in this historic event that supports numerous projects worldwide that aim to teach God's word to Deaf people. If you are unable to attend the convention, we ask that you consider supporting ILDA by donating whatever you can to keep the organization strong. The date for the ILDA Convention is July 11 – 14, 2024, so save the date and mark it down on your calendar.

We look forward to seeing you all in Dearborn in July 2024. Let's stay positive and pray without ceasing, especially during these challenging times.

God bless you all, and please stay safe and healthy.

Brian Byer

Cynthia Smith-Byer



Rev. Kofi Akorful Anaman was ordained and installed as the first deaf Ghanaian pastor by the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Ghana in June 2023.

Becky Jungklaus was commissioned and installed as a deaconess for the deaf in the Texas District on November 26, 2023, at LifeBridge Community Church in Sealy, TX. She is pictured with a shepherd's staff that was given to her.



Church Interpreter Training Academy (CITA)

presented by Ephphatha Lutheran Mission Society (ELMS)

Jesus Deaf Lutheran Church along with her dual-parish, St. Paul Lutheran Church, Austin, TX is hosting a Church Interpreters Training Academy (CITA) in February. The dates are February 15-18, 2024. Both beginners and signs of all levels are welcome to join. A special ASL class for K-12 students is also being offered.

The training will be held at St. Paul Lutheran Church, 3501 Red River St., Austin, TX 78705. Deadline for registration is February 9, 2024.

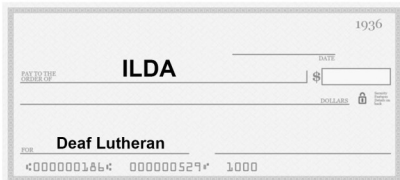
For more information go to the website: www.jesusdeafchurch.com/cita2024austin.html

The Deaf Lutheran Subscription (Print Edition)

- One-year subscription -- \$10.00
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Make your check or money order payable
to "ILDA" and
put **Deaf Lutheran** in the memo line.



All subscriptions should be sent to the
address below. Thanks!

Carolyn Snyder-Mason
6721 Deep Run Parkway
Elkridge, MD 21075

Attach mailing label or fill in:

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip Code _____

Email _____

Phone/VP/Fax _____

From the Deaf Lutheran Editor

If you have any photos or articles
of interest to print in the newsletter
please let me know! Deadlines for
the next issues are:

Spring issue.....April 15, 2024

Summer issue.....July 15, 2024

Fall issueOctober 15, 2024

Please send photos or news
articles to: JGehlbach@aol.com
or mail to:

Janet Gehlbach
 305 Liberty St. NE
 Fridley, MN 55432

Thanks so much!

In Memoriam



Karen Hale

B: 10/29/1942

D: 11/19/2023

Karen was an ILDA
interpreter for many years
and an interpreter for the
deaf community in the
Northern Illinois and
Southern Wisconsin area
while living in Crystal Lake,
Illinois. She was also at one
time a part of the Ghana
Deaf Mission team. She
resided in Cape Coral, FL at
the time of her death.



The Deaf Lutheran
Janet Gehlbach, Editor
305 Liberty St. NE
Fridley, MN 55432

Winter Issue 2024

RETURN ADDRESS REQUESTED

Mark Your Calendars
2024 Convention in Dearborn, Michigan
July 11-14, 2024



**ILDA Mission Projects for 2021-2024
as of January 1, 2024**

	Funds Requested	Donations up-to-date
1. Deaf Youth Ministry of Texas	\$7,000	\$7,000 (goal completed)
2. Lutheran Deaf Mission Society -- Kenya	\$1,000	\$1,000 (goal completed)
3. India Deaf Ministry -- IELC	\$6,000	\$6,000 (goal completed)
Accumulating Donations.		\$683
To be carried over to 2024-2026 Mission Projects		
TOTAL	\$14,000	\$14,683 (105%)

Donations for the ILDA 2021-2024 Mission Projects can be sent to: ILDA Treasurer, John Mason, 6721 Deep Run Parkway, Elkridge, MD 21075-6557. Make your check or money order payable to "ILDA" and put "Mission Projects 2021-2024" in the memo line. These mission projects will be paid out in the order listed above. Your prayers and donations help ILDA to continue our work in spreading the Gospel of Jesus Christ in the U.S. and foreign countries.