



The

Deaf Lutheran



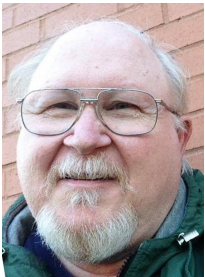
Official Publication of the International Lutheran Deaf Association & the Lutheran Deaf Mission Society

Spring 2020

St. Louis, MO

Vol. 109, No. 2

From the President John Mason



Isolation ordered by the government!

As of today
April 12, 2020
(Easter Sunday) I
have seen sever-

al Sunday Services and devotions via vlog. I watched Pastor Ron Friedrich, Pastor Daryl Gehlbach, Pastor Tim Eckert, Pastor Richard Moody and Pastor John Rushton. All because we're in confinement in isolation at home from coronavirus-19 (COVID-19) ordered by our local state government.

Why do we have to follow our local (and your) government? The government needs to control the spread our terrible disease. Our government officials, elected by us voters, suspend our normal daily routines and activities. Except for essential needs such as food, medicine and the rest of the list, which our government permitted us without any arrest/punishment. Also to allow first responders, military assistants and law enforcement officers transport easily and quickly.

What about our worship institutions? Nope, we're not allowed to attend due to social interaction among us. Did the government shut us down? No, Thank God for our technology

that we were able watch video our daily devotions and services. This is only temporary set back for the worship institutions. We are part of Christ's church, He is the head and we are the body and He will never shut us out! We welcome Him into our hearts so that He will welcome us into the Heaven!

Bible instructs followers to obey the government. Romans 13:1-2 says: "Obey the government, for God is the One who has put it there. There is no government anywhere that God has not placed in power. So those who refuse to obey the law of the land are refusing to obey God, and punishment will follow."

God bless you all!
John Mason (2019-2021)

*"I can do all things through
Him who strengthens me."
(Philippians 4:13)*

*"The Lord will keep you from
every kind of harm. He will
watch over your life. The Lord
will watch over your life no
matter where you go, both
now and forever."
(Psalm 121:7-8)*

Mark your calendars!!

2021 ILDA
Convention
July 22-25, 2021

Holiday Inn
1000 Busse Rd.
Elk Grove Village, Illinois
(Chicago area just
15 minutes west of O'Hare
airport)

Start saving your
dollars for this event! It is
ILDA's 50th anniversary
celebration!

Registration forms will be
printed in the Fall
(November) 2020 issue of
the *Deaf Lutheran*.

WANTED...

Host congregation for
the 2023 ILDA conven-
tion. Please send
your bid by June 2020
to President John
Mason and mail it to
the address on Page 6
of this issue. Thanks!

From the Pastoral Advisor Rev. Tyler Walworth



Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

I don't think anyone guessed what one short

month brought us. COVID-19 has shaken us both physically and spiritually. Yet, we know that Christ has come for just this reason, to rid us of fear in the face of sin, death and the devil.

While it may seem opposite to boast in our sufferings, this is exactly what Paul tells us to do in Romans 5, "We boast in our afflictions, knowing that afflictions produce endurance, and endurance produces character and character produces hope and hope does not shame us, for the love of God is being poured into our hearts by the gift of the Holy Spirit."

Are you afflicted? Of course, fear within and without plagues us as we face invisible enemies of germs and loneliness. Then boast that you have the Holy Spirit, who brings the love of God, namely Jesus Christ, who shines in you brightest when you are at your most dependent. Faith is confidence in things not seen. But it is not a foolish confidence. It is confidence in the death and resurrection of Jesus. Do not think that God is unaware of this suffering or that He is not the very one that allows it. He uses this to strengthen you in your hope.

Cling to God in the ways He gives. Cling to Him by His Word, which you will find through your church in the hands of your pastors. You will find it in your Bi-

bles that contain the life giving words of Christ. You will find it in your baptism through prayer, where Christ applies all of His indestructible life to your weak life of sickness and death and overcomes it. These are the ways Christ still comes to us when we cannot physically go to church.

What about the Lord's Supper? Remote communion has become an issue during this crisis. Remote communion is the practice of a pastor blessing bread and wine online or individuals blessing their own bread and wine in their home. This practice confuses the Office of the Ministry and the use of the Lord's Supper. We have many comforts in this time of separation, but remote communion is not one given to us by our Lord. Please refrain from this practice. Our Lutheran Church Missouri Synod and our Seminaries also agree that this practice is not a proper use of the Lord's Supper and should not be done. We will meet again soon, hopefully starting for many in May. If you truly desire the Lord's Supper for your comfort and strength, seek your pastor and ask him to bring it to you or encourage your congregation to start meeting in small groups that abide by health guidelines but allow you to receive this vital food from God.

Christ is still among us and will remain with us until we appear with Him in glory. May your hope grow strong in this time of affliction. Be patient, pray, meditate on God's Word and go to the Lord's Supper at your local church as soon as you can. Our Lord will work this too for our good.

From the 2021 ILDA convention chair....

As I am putting this newsletter together, as DL Editor and as the chair of the 2021 ILDA convention, the coronavirus spreading in the U.S. and in the world has been a concern for many people, deaf and hearing. Many events have been cancelled or postponed. Many people are in a "stay at home" order from their state governors. I want to encourage you to keep a positive attitude, and pray without ceasing, that this too shall pass.

I, as chair, and my committee, look forward to seeing you all in Chicago in July 2021. I know that there will be several other deaf events in 2021 (National Deaf Campers, Deaf Nation World Expo, ILDA and Deaf Seniors of America). **ILDA needs your support. Please plan to attend the ILDA convention in Chicago.**

ILDA needs a host church for 2023. Please pray about this and discuss it with your pastor, your church council, and your church members. My church is one of the first to host an ILDA convention outside of our home state (Minnesota). If my committee and I can do it then you can too!

God bless you all and stay safe and healthy!

Janet Gehlbach



LDMS News

by Rev. Ron Friedrich
Executive Director



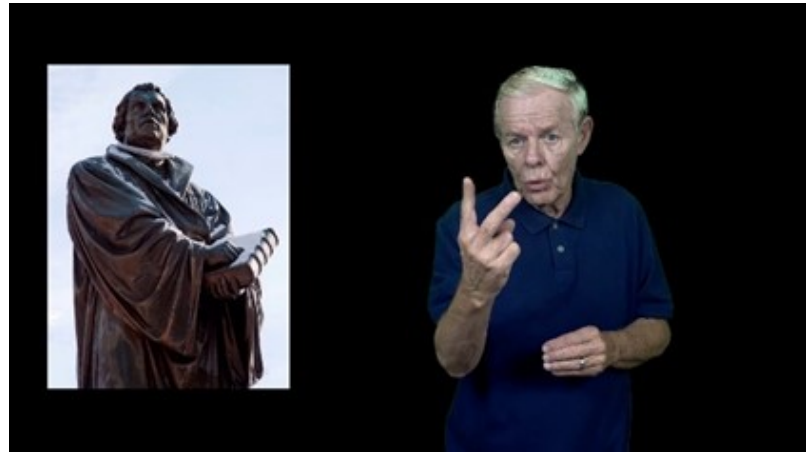
As the world has been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, so have Deaf ministries worldwide. The LDMS team has been hard at work

producing and sharing resources with these ministries. At times like this, we are most grateful for the tools available to us through the internet.

We have expanded our video resource directory to include several congregations which now offer worship and Bible study in Sign Language through the internet. These include both Deaf churches and hearing congregations with an on-camera ASL interpreter. You can find these listed on deafjesus.org/worship. (If your church should be added to the list, please let me know.)

Our overseas mission partners in Africa and India have been terribly impacted by COVID-19. Human and social conditions in some locations have gone from bad to worse. Government restrictions and lack of resources make it difficult for the church to serve. At this moment there is very little we can do here to directly help them. Please remember these ministries in your prayers.

Production for our new DeafPah course on **The Life of Martin Luther** is about half done. The response we have received on the video lessons we have released thus far has been overwhelming. You can view the work in progress on deafjesus.org/courses/luther. Please join us in praying for the successful completion of this important project.



The above two photos are screenshots from the Martin Luther courses. Bob Lenderman volunteers to sign the courses.

Online services and videos

Due to COVID-19, state and government restrictions, many churches, deaf and hearing, are live streaming their services. To find a list of those deaf churches and interpreted ministries please go to the following website:

www.deafjesus.org/worship

The International Lutheran Deaf Association (ILDA) Facebook page also has shared videos and devotions from different individuals and pastors. You can request to join the ILDA page, if you have not yet done so, so that you can access the videos.

Forgiving is Hard!

Every time we pray the Lord's Prayer, we say: "Forgive us our trespasses (sins) as we forgive those who trespass against us." Do we really want God to do that? Or do we say these words only because that is what Jesus taught us to pray?

We all want God to forgive wrong things we have done against Him, but are we so eager to forgive people who have done wrong against us? Or do we let those people live in our heads rent-free while we repeatedly replay our mental video of what they have done to us? Have we collected every one of the verbal rocks they have thrown at us and used those rocks to build a wall of protection?

Early in my ministry I made a monthly visit to a small town where a few Deaf people lived. One of those people was an elderly woman. Every time I visited, she would recite the same story of how the other Deaf in town have hurt her. Then she always ended her story with the same sentence: "But I just forget it." No, she hasn't forgotten. Forgiving is hard.

The message of forgiveness deeply touches the men we serve in prison. Many of them struggle to believe that God has really forgiven them. They struggle to forgive themselves. But many more struggle to release their anger and bitterness against people who have hurt them.

Two famous Christian heroes have shared important lessons about forgiveness which they learned through their painful prison experiences.

Rev. Richard Wurmbrand was a Lutheran pastor in Romania during World War II. Richard and his

wife took advantage of the Nazi occupation to witness to the German troops while they secretly rescued Jewish children. For their efforts, they were often arrested, beaten and nearly executed.

Then at the end of the war, Communists took over the government. The Wurmbrands shared the Gospel with their oppressors, while doing all they could to aid their own oppressed people. Richard was arrested, confined in an underground cell, and tortured for over 14 years.

Besides the routine beatings and torture, prison life was miserable. The cell was dark, cold, and rat infested. Meals consisted of one bowl of thin watery soup a day. Each inmate had one thin blanket — not enough to stay warm.

**Forgive others
as quickly as
you expect
God to forgive you.**

During his long ordeal, Wurmbrand sometimes saw his torturers become his cellmate. All it took was a rumor, a negative report, and a faithful Communist officer would be charged with the awful crime of being a secret capitalist.

Once when one of these former torturers lay on his cot in Richard's cell, shivering and crying, Richard felt gratified that his former torturer could experience some of the misery he had previously caused. Then the Holy Spirit spoke to Richard. "If he were Christ, would you give him your blanket?" Richard, ashamed of his own unwillingness to forgive, gave the man his blanket.

Corrie Ten Boom learned lessons about forgiveness in a Nazi

concentration camp. Those lessons continued after she was released.

One evening while speaking to a church group about her experiences and the need to forgive, she saw in the audience a man who had been a cruel guard from the prison camp. She just wanted to finish her talk and get away as fast as she could. But people rushed up to shake her hand or ask her questions, including the prison guard she still hated.

When he greeted her, he said, "Can you forgive me for all that I did to you and your sister?" (Corrie's sister Betsy died in the prison camp.) Corrie wanted to scream, "No!" But she knew she must say "Yes." Even though she could not bring herself to forgive him, she knew that Jesus already had forgiven, and she certainly was not holier than Christ!

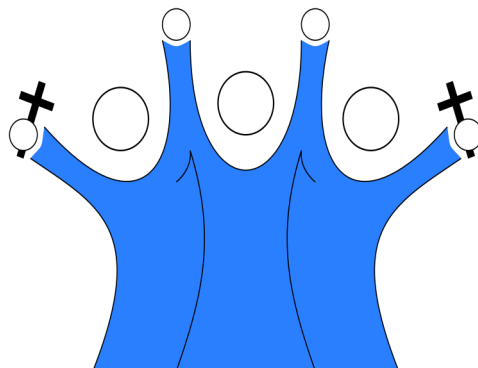
So in obedience, not because she felt it, she accepted the man's hand and said, "In the name of Jesus Christ, I forgive you." Immediately, all of her anger and hatred melted away, and she saw this man now as a dear brother in Christ.

Like Richard and Corrie, I dislike my own unwillingness to forgive. I pray for the eyes of Joseph, to see those who hurt me as agents of God: "You meant to harm me, but God meant it for good." (Genesis 50:20) I pray for the eyes of Christ to see my enemy's need with His love and compassion. I pray to forgive as God has forgiven me.

(reprinted from *The Mustard Seed*, January/February 2020, with permission from Rev. Ron Friedrich, author of this article)

International Lutheran Deaf Association 26th Biennial Convention **July 22-25, 2021**

Remember - Celebrate - Proclaim



Psalm 89:15

"Blessed are the people who know the
festival shout, who walk, O Lord, in the
light of Your face."

**Holiday Inn Chicago-Elk Grove
1000 Busse Road
Elk Grove Village, IL 60007**

ILDA Officers

International Officers (2019-21)

President – John Mason
 President-Elect – Gregory Werth
 Secretary pro tem – Janet Gehlbach
 Treasurer – David G. Brown
 Pr. Advisor – Rev. Tyler Walworth

Central Region (2018-20)

President – Albert Moore
 V. President – Mike Ford
 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. Daryl Gehlbach

Northwest Region (2016-18)

President – Richard Sharp
 President Elect – Patricia Jenkins
 Secretary – vacant
 Treasurer – vacant
 Pr. Advisor – Rev. David Nielsen

Great Lakes Region (2018-20)

President – Larry D. Ginter
 Pres. Elect – Nancy Bergstresser
 Secretary – JoAnna Rushton
 Treasurer – Karen Beiter
 Pr. Advisor – Rev. Edwin Bergstresser



On February 2, 2020, Rev. Ryan McDermott was installed as Missionary-At-Large for the South Wisconsin District, assigned to Our Savior Deaf Lutheran Church, Madison, WI. Pictured above are left to right: Rev. David Wurdeman (Good Shepherd, Tomah, WI), Rev. John Wille (South Wisconsin District President), Rev. Ryan McDermott, Rev. Christopher Amen (St. Peter, Arlington, WI), Rev. Jeffrey Ries (Zion, Tacoma, WA) and Rev. Bud Palmer (Emmanuel Deaf, West Allis, WI)

From the ILDA Treasurer

David G. Brown

Greetings in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. This coming August 2020 I will be sending all our ILDA members their membership dues renewal notices.



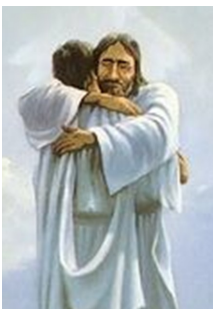
At the last convention in Topeka, KS, last summer, some people suggested that I send renewal notices by email. I pray that you watch for this email reminder from me and pay your dues. Not everyone has an email account. Those not on my email list

will receive paper renewal notices in the mail. I am trying to avoid spending money for 300 some postage stamps and the cost of my personal ink jet printer inks. September 30, 2020 is the due date for ILDA 2020-2022 memberships.

An ILDA membership is required to attend the ILDA 2021 convention in Chicago. Membership dues will NOT be collected in the convention registration form at this time. There will be a separate membership form for you to fill out and mail back to me. If you have not paid your dues when you arrive at the convention registration table, you will need to pay your dues before you can receive your convention bag or packet.

Blessings to you and stay safe from the COVID-19 virus.

In Memoriam



Rev. Eric Ziegler

B: 11/7/1948

D: 9/24/2019

Rev. Ziegler previously served the New Jersey deaf congregation in Newark.

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(Print Edition)**

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

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

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**From the Deaf Lutheran
Editor...**

I enjoy receiving feedback and articles or items of interest to print in the newsletter. If you have anything please let me know! Deadlines for the 2020 issues are:

Summer issue...July 15

Fall issue...October 15

Winter issue...January 15

Please send photos or news articles to:

JGehlbach@aol.com

or mail to:

Janet Gehlbach
305 Liberty ST NE
Fridley, MN 55432

***“May the God who
gives hope fill you with
great joy. May you
have perfect peace as
you trust in him. May
the power of the Holy
Spirit fill you with
hope.”***

Romans 15:13

From the ILDA Secretary...

For those of you who are members of the ILDA Facebook page, I would like to remind you that this page is for ILDA members or those who are *Deaf Lutheran* subscribers. If you have not paid your membership dues, there are quite a few of you on this ILDA page, please do so. Fill out the membership form online at the www.deafjesus.org/ilda/ILDAmembership.pdf and mail it to David G. Brown. His address is listed on the membership form. Thanks!

Janet Gehlbach

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

Spring Issue 2020

RETURN ADDRESS REQUESTED

ILDA Mission Projects for 2019-2021

1. Pittsburgh Lutheran Deaf Ministry	\$ 1,000
2. LCMS Int'l Missions ELCG Ghana	\$ 2,000
3. Deaf Youth Ministry of Texas	\$ 10,000
4. David and Barbara Bush—LCMS (Macau)	\$ 2,000
5. Ryan McDermott—LCMS (Togo)	\$ 2,000
6. John Reinke—World Lutheran Deaf Outreach	\$ 10,000
Total raised so far.....\$4,712.27	TOTAL \$ 27,000



Donations for the ILDA 2019-2021 Mission Projects can be sent to: ILDA Treasurer, David G. Brown, c/o Holy Cross Deaf Lutheran Church, 360 Morse Rd., Columbus, OH 43214. Make your check payable to “ILDA” and put “Mission Projects 2019-2021” 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.