



The

# Deaf Lutheran



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

Fall 2024

St. Louis, MO

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## Pastoral Advisor Rev. Daryl Gehlbach



As I write this, the presidential election is coming up soon. One thing this election is showing us is that our nation is very strongly divided on a

number of issues. People are anxious and fearful about what may or may not happen; their hopes and happiness depend on which candidate wins.

As Christians living in America, we may choose to participate in the election process, support candidates, and promote issues that concern us. Yet, we must not let the political process distract us from an important spiritual and political truth. King David writes, *"Kingship belongs to the LORD, and he rules over the nations"* (Ps. 22:28). Although the outcome of the election may concern us, we must never lose sight of the fact that God remains in charge.

This God who rules the nations has redeemed us by the blood of His Son Jesus. He has sanctified us by the Word of the Spirit. He has made us *"a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession,"* (1 Pet. 2:9). We live in the world, but we are not of the world. Our ultimate and true allegiance is not to earthly kingdoms and rulers but to the King of kings and Lord of Lords.

Regardless of the outcome of this or any elections, we need not be anxious or fearful. We do not trust in princes. Instead, we follow Him who holds the keys of death and hell. As King Jehoshaphat prayed, *"In Your hand are power and might, so that none is able to withstand You,"* (2 Chr. 20:6).

So what if an election doesn't go our way, our task in this world doesn't change. We must still proclaim the Good News, the Word of Life. We must still let our lights shine before people. Christ has promised to be with us, strengthen us, and protect us. The world may outvote us, but with Christ His Church shall prevail.

I will give thanks to You, O Lord, among the peoples; I will sing praises to You among the nations, (Ps. 57:9).

## President Brian Byer

I am not the kind of person who knows more about politics, however, I wanted to put in my thoughts as a voter, who wants to look at each candidate, who is going to represent our country.



We are nearing the end of 2024, and the Election cycle is coming up in November. I was looking at several Bible verses related to elections and how we should treat this as a major event, which happens

every four years.

Psalms 103:19-20 says "The LORD has established his throne in heaven, and his kingdom rules over all. Praise the LORD, you his angels, you mighty ones who do his bidding, who obey his word."

As we approach every four years of elections for a new President of the United States of America, we have an opportunity to listen and put a lot of consideration into what each candidate represents for our country and to the world.

Think of what the candidate can do for us. After endless months of campaigning, scandals, soul-searching, and spiritual debates American Christians will go to the polling place and vote for the next president of the United States. If you're like me, you're probably ready for this whole thing to be over. The negativity of this election has been exhausting, and the anxiety it has produced has reached truly historic levels. Still, even as the nation waits for the ballots to be tallied, Christians everywhere are reminded that God is in control knowing that every election season has been hard on everyone and it has created division and discord, and no amount of tension within the Church and our Government. Yet, in all things Christ is good. As believers, we can rest assured that God will stand with us no matter who will reside in the White House. So, remember to cast your vote, and do so without fear. May these Scriptures for election day calm

your anxieties and help you rest in God's peace.

All Bible verses related to the elections to help guide you can be found under this link.

[https://](https://www.biblestudytools.com/topical-verses/election-day-bible-verses)

[www.biblestudytools.com/topical-verses/election-day-bible-verses](https://www.biblestudytools.com/topical-verses/election-day-bible-verses).

In Christ's Blessings,

Brian Byer

ILDA President (2024-2026)

VP: 586-580-4725

Text: 586-850-7080

## Treasurer

### John Mason



ILDA Mission Projects reached 61.4% to the goal of \$3,000 for Lutheran Deaf Mission Society's Kenya Mission. So far we have collected,

including carryover from the previous 2021-2024 Mission Projects, \$1,842.00. Please

consider donating as much as you can and let's reach or exceed the goal of \$3,000.00.

Zacharias Fund has distributed funds to four DIT students for their fall semester.

Let's pray for Dan Wallis (St. Louis, MO), Peggy Gott (Olathe, KS), Nola Gray (Olathe, KS) and John Szupica (Milwaukee, WI) to continue their studies. God bless them!

For the next Deaf Lutheran issue (Winter 2025), the revised membership form will be included. For those who already are a member for 2021-2024, I will be sending out a revised membership form by mail so you can renew your membership.

Thank you and God bless!

John Mason  
2024-2026

## ILDA Officers

### International Officers (2024-2026)

President — Brian Byer

President-Elect — Tim Kearney

Secretary — Becky Catchpole

Treasurer — John Mason

Pr. Advisor — Rev. Daryl Gehlbach

### Central Region (2018-20)

President — Albert Moore

V. President — vacant

Secretary — vacant

Treasurer — Tim Kearney

Pr. Advisor — Rev. Bud Palmer

### Midwest Region (2018-20)

President — Sara Hale

V. President — vacant

Secretary — vacant

Treasurer — vacant

Pr. Advisor — Rev. Paul Tessaro

### 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



## In Memoriam



### Robert Oettel

B: 6/27/1937

D: 8/30/2024

Robert was a lay minister serving deaf congregations in New Jersey, Illinois, Ohio, Nebraska, and South Dakota.



### Rev. Alan Rork

B: 9/22/1941

D: 9/5/2024

Rev. Rork served Peace Lutheran Church, Indianapolis, IN, and was the first DIT graduate.



### Mary Mowl

B: 4/22/1931

D: 8/30/2024

Mary was the wife of Don Mowl and a lifelong member of Trinity Lutheran Church for the Deaf, Pittsburgh, PA,



### Ronald Aspnes

B: 10/18/1933

D: 10/10/2024

Ronald was a former ILDA member and attended Prince of Peace Lutheran Deaf Church in Spring Lake Park, MN.





Children from St. Martin's Lutheran School of the Deaf signing ASL poetry, with the assistance of their teacher.



Pictured to the left are photos from the Saturday night banquet. The photo above is the Thursday night reception with a variety of food and drinks.



Ephphatha Conference attendees, July 14-15, 2024

## ILDA 27th Biennial Business Meeting minutes July 11-12, 2024

### Friday, July 11, 2024

- **Meeting opened at 9:12am**
- **Opening prayer led by Rev. Daryl Gehlbach**
- **Necrology**

Since 2021— Song was shared with the members who have passed away since 2021 ILDA Convention. Rev. Daryl Gehlbach ended by saying a prayer.

- **Call to order**

The business meeting was called to order at 9:15am by President Carol Seeger.

- **Introduction of Interpreters**

Linda Nix and Rev. Tim Eckert

- **Nominating Committee Report (John Mason and Cynthia Snyder Mason)**

Report begin with an explanation of rules for nominating and voting for candidates. Also explained the job for each of the different candidate roles.

- **Introduction and nomination of candidates. Passed**

Following officers for 2024-2025 elected

President—Brian Byer  
President Elect—Tim Kearney  
Secretary—Becky Catchpole  
Treasurer—John Mason  
Pastoral Advisor—Daryl Gehlbach

- **Minutes of previous convention**

Prince of Peace Lutheran Church for the Deaf from Minneapolis, MN hosted the 2021 International Lutheran

Church Association 25th convention in Chicago, IL. Attendance was around 75-80 people.

Lutheran Deaf Mission Society set up a new Award “The Rev. William Ludwig Award”. The award recognizes professional workers as selfless servants of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Financial report and Convention report given.

Sara Hale (Diane Fransisco) moved to accept the minutes of the 2021 ILDA Chicago convention written. Passed

- **Treasurer’s Report—(John Mason)**

July 21, 2021, to June 20, 2024

One page report from John Mason is attached to the minutes.

Current membership 102 from 2023-2025. Two of the members have deceased. There are 26 of God’s 1000 Club with \$520 donations.

All Missions Projects were met by July 1, 2023.

Checking account balance is currently \$1,167.58

Saving account balance is currently \$123,307.06

Zachariah Fund transferred \$5,000 from Savings to Checking. Three D.I.T. students received \$1,000 each in Fall 2023 and Spring 2024. This is a change from previous \$1,000 a year to \$1,000 a semester.

Rev. Tim Eckert brought up the question about which part of the general fund is the Zachariah fund. After discussion it was noted that there is no known information.

- **Presidents Report (Carol Seeger)**

Welcomed everyone to the 27th Biennial convention.

President gave thanks to Our

**DISCLAIMER:** These Business meeting minutes from the 2024 Dearborn, Michigan convention are bring printed as received by Denise Pulfer, Secretary 2021-2024. Any references to “see attached or full report is attached to the minutes” can be seen in full in the minutes section of the ILDA website: [deafjesus.org](http://deafjesus.org).

Savior Lutheran Church of the Deaf and Brian Byer, chair and the community for Hosting the ILDA convention in Detroit, Michigan. She expressed the pleasure of serving as president for the past 3 years, since 2021.

She informed the members of ILDA that GLRC and Eastern Regions have merged into one region of ILDA in 2022. In order to keep ILDA organization from dissolution, I hope the remainder of other regions such as Midwest and Central would also merge in near future.

As for the upcoming ILDA workshops, Carol encouraged all to attend workshop presentations and devotions.

- **Pastoral Advisory’s Report (Rev. Daryl Gehlbach)**

Rev. Daryl Gehlbach discussed the current list of Deaf Ministry according to the LCMS locator.

Deaf congregations 24 US  
2 Canada

Interpreted Ministries 18 US  
Active Workers:

Pastors 16 US 2 Canada  
Deaconesses 5 US 1 Canada  
DCE 1 US  
Vicars 1 US

Rev. Daryl encourages people to inform LCMS of active deaf ministry.

Full report by Rev. Gehlbach is attached to the minutes.

- **Synodical Representative Report (Rev. Ed Bergstresser Executive Director of LDMS)**

**DeafPah.com**—Rev. Ron Friedrich completed an educational production in Dec. 2023. The course is 61 lessons on Church History covering the Apostolic period through the Reformation Era.

- **Deaf Institute of Theology/ Ethical Institute on Theology**

—Rev. Tim Eckert leads D.I.T. the program to involve deaf Lutherans into deaf ministries. Currently has 5 students studying under D.I.T. Both ILDA and Zachariah Fund donate for scholarships.

- **World Deaf Missions-**

India renovated the school and housing for deaf

Ethiopia asked for interpreter training and provided mattresses for girls' dorm. Work has been on hold due to war situation.

Kenya requests ILDA money for school children to attend. LDMS supports Pastor Adonis Luvisha to study and better serve deaf ministry. Rev. Eckert hopes to visit Kenya this year or next year.

- **Ephphatha Conference/ Archivist**

EC conference was held Sunday and Monday after the ILDA conference.

Rev. Daryl Gelbach has been involved with Concordia Historical Institute to write the history of Deaf Missions.

- **Technology-**

Deafjesus.org website has doubled visitors in the past year. YouTube has 2.4k subscribers with 1,650 videos.

The Facebook page has less followers than the previous page with many users from different countries.

Full report by Rev. Ed Bergstresser is attached to the

minutes.

- **Deaf Lutheran Report—Janet Gehlbach**

There are 36 copies to subscribers and 3 complimentary for (seminary in St. Louis and Canada). It is also free to each church. Deaf Lutheran Newsletter is mailed 4 times a year. Online copies are in color are available and can be downloaded at [deaf Lutheran.org](http://deaf Lutheran.org).

Thank you to all of volunteers that help get the Deaf Lutheran Newsletter out.

Carolyn Snyder-Mason will be leaving as business manager with John Mason taking over. **Business meeting closed at 11:15am and resumed the next day.**

- **Saturday July 12, 2024 Meeting opened at 9:02am and resumed**

**Rev. Daryl Gelbach opened the meeting with prayer**

- **Deaf Lutheran Finance (Carolyn Snyder Mason)**

Report July 1, 2023 to June 30, 2024

As of June 30, 2024, funds of the Deaf Lutheran balances are \$397.00 checking account and \$1540.48 in savings account. Total of \$1937.48 There are some changes to the Deaf Lutheran budget because the newsletters is now being printed in black and white.

- **Proposed Budget for July 1, 2024, to June 30, 2026**

John Mason proposed changes to the budget for 2024-2026. No financial committee was involved and will send a report later.

Full report by John Mason is attached to the minutes.

- **Law Committee—President Elect Brian Bryer**

No report. Plans to be ready

2026. Some word changes and adaptations but nothing big. Currently, no vote is needed.

- **Mission Project—Carolyn Snyder Mason**

Mission project for Rev. Tim Eckert to Kenya for \$3,000 motioned by Pat Sell (David Hale) - passed.

Explained hat mission project deadline of April 13, 2024.

- **Approval of 2021 minutes—Janet Gehlbach**

Full report have been given at registration. Prince of Peace in Minnesota hosted in Chicago in 2021. The Great Lake Region Circuit (GLEC) will host the 2026 ILDA convention.

LDMS has set up a new award. William Ludwig Award. Given on Saturday "Do it" to go and do the work.

- **2026 Convention Hosts** Nancy Bergstresser (GLRC) and John Rushton (Eastern) announced that the next ILDA convention will be held in Kentucky June 11-15, 2026.

- **Pastors and Church Workers were introduced and photo taken.**

- **Old Business:**

**Develop a task group to research and contact deaf churches all over the world.**

John Mason and Jeff Padon brought Rev. John Reinke to discuss deaf people from Africa coming to ILDA conference. It was explained that this was complicated project with churches in Africa. They plan to continue with projects. Ongoing. Pat Sell (Barry Dischinger) motioned to close. Passed.

- **New Business**

#1 Pam Kane proposed to have donation envelopes in future convention bags. Seconded by



Barry Dischinger. 25 in favor, 2 oppose. Passed.  
 #2 Cynthia Smith Byers proposed for a mission project for St Martin's Lutheran Deaf School to be given 5 iPads and keyboard for the fall school year. Seconded by Melissa Kearney. Passed.

**Jeff Padon motioned to close New Business. Seconded by Rev. John Rushton. Passed.**

**Honor of Rev. Ludwig, Founder of International Lutheran Deaf Association.**

**John Rushton (Carol Seeger) motioned meeting to close. Seconded by Carol Seeger.**

**The meeting was adjourned at 10:05am with a closing prayer led by Rev. Gehlbach.**



Brian Byer is pictured with the ILDA banner from outgoing ILDA President, Carol Seeger



Rev. John Rushton, Nancy Bergstresser and Jeff Padon are holding the ILDA banner and the Great Lakes Region (GLRC) banner. GLRC will host the 2026 ILDA convention.



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FAITH”**

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**John Mason  
6721 Deep Run Parkway  
Elkridge, MD 21075**

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**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:

- Winter issue.....January 15, 2025
- Spring issue.....April 15, 2025
- Summer issue.....July 15, 2025

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!

**Mark your  
calendars!  
Plan to attend  
the next ILDA  
convention  
scheduled for  
June 11-14,  
2026  
in the Florence,  
KY, area**

*The Deaf Lutheran*  
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Fall Issue 2024

**RETURN ADDRESS REQUESTED**



## **ILDA Mission Projects for 2024-2026 as of October 1, 2024**

	<b>Funds Requested</b>	<b>Donations up-to-date</b>
<b>Lutheran Deaf Mission Society -- Kenya</b>	<b>\$3,000</b>	<b>\$1,842 (61.4%)</b>

Donations for the ILDA 2024-20246 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 2024-2026" 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.