



us and all mankind. *“God loved the world so much that He gave His only-begotten Son.”* God didn’t wait for us to change and improve. While we still were sinners Christ died for us. We did nothing to earn God’s mercy and love.

In Baptism God put His love into our hearts. Every believer possesses God’s perfect, holy love. The Holy Spirit – the Spirit of love – is working in us. With His precious Word and the Lord’s Supper, the Spirit nourishes our faith and strengthens His love within us. As we daily trust in Jesus Christ we will find our love for other becoming more natural. The same-as the sheep on Judgment Day, we may not realize we are showing love.

Yes, the love we don’t deserve – God’s love in Christ – He wants us to show others. He shall give us the strength we need to love those difficult people in our lives. Instead of waiting for them to change, God will guide us to seek them the same as His Son sought us. As God reveals His undeserved love through us, He will inform the world that we are His disciples, that among us God’s love is truly living and active.



Andrew Petajan was ordained and installed as pastor of Christ Lutheran Church of the Deaf, Silver Spring, MD, on Sunday, September 26. Congratulations and God’s blessings as you begin your ministry. Pictured above are l. to r.: Rev. David Seeger, Rev. Tim Eckert, Rev. Bob Mordhorst, Rev. Andrew Petajan, Rev. Ron Friedrich and Rev. Dr. John Denninger (Southeast District President).

## From the ILDA Treasurer John Mason



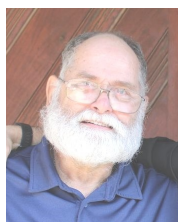
Hello, my name is John Mason and I am your recently elected ILDA treasurer. I worked with David G. Brown, the previous ILDA treasurer, for the transition of ILDA’s checking and savings accounts. The transfer was made in the middle of October. Now I (and future treasurers) have permanent checking and savings accounts at Lutheran Federal Credit Union. It was my goal while I was ILDA president to have no more fund transfers between banks and/or financial institutions and just do the paperwork every time with the newly elected treasurer.

Thank you, David, for your dedication and hard work as our ILDA treasurer in the past. Good news! David and I agreed the ILDA membership year 2020-2022 is extended to 2023 due to recent approval at the 26th ILDA convention to defer the biennial by one year. The next membership form will cover 2023-2025.

Thank you and God Bless!



Vincent Mroz (Pittsburgh, PA) is beginning his studies in the EIIT program at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, MO. He will serve Trinity Lutheran Church in Pittsburgh, PA.



Daniel Wallis (Holy Cross Lutheran Deaf Church, St. Louis, MO) was installed as vicar on September 12. He begins four years of seminary training in the EIIT program at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, MO.



**International Lutheran Deaf Association  
26th Biennial Business Meeting Minutes Summary  
Holiday Inn, Elk Grove Village, Illinois  
Friday, July 23, 2021**

### 1. Welcome

President John Mason welcomed everyone to the 26th Biennial Convention of the International Lutheran Deaf Association (ILDA). President Mason thanked Janet Gehlbach for hosting this convention in Chicago. He also welcomed a new pastor from Austin, TX, Rev. Bryan Wolfmueller.

### 2. Necrology (Diane Francisco)

Diane signed a poem that she had written. A power point presentation, created by Rev. Daryl and Janet Gehlbach, was shown with photos of those ILDA members who passed away since the 2019 ILDA convention. Rev. Tyler Walworth said a prayer for those members.

### 3. Invocation

Rev. Tyler Walworth gave the opening prayer.

### 4. Call to Order

The business meeting was called to order at 9:13 a.m. by President John Mason.

### 5. Introductions

Parliamentarian—Carol Seeger  
Assistant to the Secretary—Carolyn Snyder-Mason  
Tellers—volunteers from those in attendance

### 6. Introduction of Interpreters

Rev. Ron Friedrich and Rev. Tim Eckert

### 7. Resolutions Committee—none

### 8. Nominating Committee's Report (Carol Seeger)

a. Introduction of candidates for offices: President -Elect (Brian Byer), Secretary (Denise Pulfer), Treasurer (John Mason), Pastoral Advisor (Rev. Daryl Gehlbach)

b. Election of officers:

The following slate of officers for 2021-2024 were elected by acclamation. Passed.

President—Carol Seeger

President-Elect—Brian Byer

Secretary—Denise Pulfer

Treasurer—John Mason

Pastoral Advisor—Rev. Daryl Gehlbach

### 9. Minutes of the previous convention

Carol Seeger (David Brown) moved to accept the minutes of the 2019 ILDA Topeka, Kansas, convention (July 19, 2019) as written. Passed.

### 10. Treasurer's Report (David G. Brown)

A one page report is inserted into the registration folder. Membership dues letters were mailed out for 2020-2022 last year. Current membership is 116. \$3,460.71 were collected from the dues. Checking account balance on 7/1/2019 is \$16,878.81. Ending balance on 6/30/2021 is \$24,754.88. Deposits: \$41,952.74 and expenses: \$34,076.67. Savings account balance on 7/1/2019 is \$150,009.21. Ending balance on 6/30/2021 is \$142,800.99. Mission projects donations is \$12,223.83. As of July 1, 2021 there is \$3,223.83 left to pay out to WLDO. Pittsburgh Lutheran Deaf Ministry forfeited their \$1,000 due to COVID reasons. ELCG Deaf Mission Ghana was paid \$1,000. Deaf Youth Ministry of Texas was paid \$5,000 but the balance of \$5,000 was forfeited. David Bush was paid \$2,000. Ryan McDermott (Togo) forfeited \$2,000 because he is no longer serving Togo. WLDO (Reinke) has not been paid prior to the 2021 Chicago convention. The ILDA Board voted to give \$5,000 to WLDO during its Board meeting on July 22, 2021. Auditors of the treasurer's report are Ron Grapatin and Rev. Edwin Bergstresser. The auditors will audit after the convention.

Joy Rader (Cynthia Smith-Byer) moved to accept the Treasurer's report. Passed.

### 11. President's Report (John Mason)

- President Mason welcomed everyone to the 26th Biennial convention.
- He thanked Prince of Peace Lutheran Church for the Deaf, Spring Lake Park, MN, and the chair, Janet Gehlbach, for hosting the convention in Chicago.
- He encouraged everyone to show up for the workshop presentations.
- He also wanted everyone to go home safely after the convention.

### 12. Pastoral Advisor's Report (Rev. Tyler Walworth)

Now that the year of COVID fear has gone by, we look back with much important reflection. Many

abandoned church. Many stayed home in fear. Many did not fill their vocations of mother, father, son, daughter, friend or worker. As we look back, we have a great reason for repentance. We should have run to the Lord of life located in the office of the ministry and offered to us in His church, instead of run away from him. We should only fear the Lord. We should always go about our vocations as the very commands and desires of God. Therefore, let us bring our petitions of sorrow over our sins to the Lord. Then, we should cling to the good news that Christ never abandoned us. He pursued and pursues us still when we ignore him and he perfectly pays attention to the word of His Father. Jesus only fears His Father and trusts Him completely. Jesus always fills His vocation of Savior, even when He must die on the cross. This is the great and shining light in the midst of the gloom of the last year. We have Christ among us still who forgives our sins by taking them upon himself and receiving their full punishment. Then He gives us His righteous life instead of our sin. Now let us go back to church where this same Christ pours out these gifts to us continually by the Office of the Ministry in Word and Sacrament. Let us throw away, by the power of the Spirit of God, all fear of any other thing or person. Let us look to our heavenly Father alone with the fear that He alone is God and makes and does all things well. Let us go to our fathers, mothers, brothers, sisters, friends and work with the joy and confidence of those who have all things in Christ. May the Lord grant you this continual repentance and faith so that you may be ready for the day when Christ returns and we will no longer walk by faith alone, but will also see with our eyes in the great resurrection the glory of our greatest treasure, Jesus Christ, the Father and the Holy Spirit. It has been a joy to be your pastoral advisor at ILDA and I will continue to bring you before our Father in heaven in prayer and thanksgiving.

### **13. Synodical Representative Report (Rev. Ron Friedrich, Lutheran Deaf Mission Society Executive Director)**

- COVID has forced us to learn new technologies.
- Several pastors have retired (Rev. Steve Schlund, Rev. Richard Moody, and Rev. Gary Lawson).
- Concordia Seminary in St. Louis has DIT and EIIT (Ethnic Immigrant Institute of Theology) training

and SMP (Specific Ministry Pastor) training program. The EIIT program is used by other countries and perfect for the deaf because it works and has online studies.

- World missions has been hit hard all over the world due to COVID, especially Kenya and India.
- Technology—the website [deafjesus.org](http://deafjesus.org) has a directory printed there of congregation worship sites and online worship sites and a resource list.

### **14. The Deaf Lutheran publication report**

- A. Editor (Janet Gehlbach): Janet explained that when she was researching printing costs related to the 2021 convention she was given a discount card from Office Depot. This greatly reduced the cost of printing the convention book and will do the same for the history book. Also, she compared prices for printing the Deaf Lutheran newsletter and found it is way cheaper to use the discount card. She discussed this with Carolyn Snyder-Mason, Deaf Lutheran Business Manager, and we both agreed to switch printing companies.
- B. Business Manager (Carolyn Snyder-Mason): Carolyn explained she takes care of the money related to printing and postage costs of the Deaf Lutheran newsletter. There are about 50 paid subscribers.

### **15. Finance Committee Report (none)**

### **16. Adoption of new budget (none)**

### **17. Law Committee**

Three (3) people were appointed for the Law Committee (John Mason, Rev. Ron Friedrich and Gregory Werth) to discuss future ILDA conventions. It was proposed to do a one time delay of one year to 2024. ILDA conventions conflict with Deaf Seniors of America and Lutheran Women's Missionary League conventions during the same odd-numbered year. People would tend to go to those conventions rather than coming to the ILDA convention. This proposed change hopefully will improve attendance at ILDA conventions. The proposed change to the Constitution was published twice in the Deaf Lutheran newsletter. The Constitution requires a two-thirds vote to approve. If approved the next ILDA convention will be in 2024.

### **18. Voting on proposed changes**

Carolyn Snyder-Mason (Tim Kearney) moved to accept the proposed Constitution change that "ILDA



shall hold conventions every two (2) years in even-numbered years. Regional branches are encouraged to meet in odd-numbered years. The conduct as well as all plans, conditions and provisions shall be set forth in this Constitution and its Handbook. All of the ILDA conventions shall be self-supporting. And be it finally RESOLVED that this change in the ILDA convention schedule begin three (3) years following the ratification of this amendment.” Passed.

### **19. Introduction of Mission Projects (Carolyn Snyder-Mason)**

A. Carolyn received the following requests and they are listed in order received:

- Youth Ministry of Texas \$7,000
- Kenya \$1,000
- India \$ 4,931 The ILDA Board approved increasing this amount to \$ 6,000

TOTAL amount requested: \$14,000

B. Voting on mission projects: Carolyn Snyder-Mason (Pam Kane) moved to accept the above mission projects for 2021-2024. Passed.

### **20. Other Committee’s Report**

Previous convention committee chairperson: 2019 Topeka, KS, convention report by Sara Hale

- KansaSEED hosted the convention at the Capital Plaza Hotel. It was a joint conference with the Interpreted Ministry Conferene (IMC).
- There were 53 registered ILDA attendees and 18 registered IMC attendees.
- Fundraising was done by doing butterbraid sales, dinners, silent auction, garage sale. Letters were mailed to various churches asking for donations.
- ILDA/IMC was a lot of fun and received positive feedback. Service events were well received and ten tied warm blankets were donated to Silverback KS and the food harvester benefited from our making mesh fruit bags.
- Convention opened on Thursday evening with ice breaker, banner display, song contest and refreshments. Friday was ILDA Business Meeting and IMC workshops and some free time. Saturday was joint workshops, service project and banquet with keynote speaker, Rev. Bill Wrede giving a presentation on his experience with the World Trade Center collapse. Sunday concluded with communion/worship.
- KansaSEED provided 100% free childcare program.

It was well received.

- Lynda Nix and Paula Willig were contacted about interpreter suggestions and were able to save some money in paying for interpreters.
- Childcare workers and volunteer interpreters were paid an honorarium as thank you for their service. Michelle Tessaro was photographer at the photo booth and making copies. David Hale also took pictures and prepared a slide show that was shared at the banquet.

### **21. ILDA convention bids presented by future host congregations**

A bid was received by Our Savior Lutheran Church of the Deaf, Beverly Hills, Michigan. Brian Byer said the dates for the 2024 convention will be announced in the Deaf Lutheran newsletter. He discussed what the Detroit area offers to convention goers. Theme is “Defending the Faith.”

### **22. Introduction of pastors and church workers in attendance**

Pastors: Rev. Edwin Bergstresser, Rev. Tim Eckert, Rev. Ron Friedrich, Rev. Daryl Gehlbach, Rev. Ryan McDermott, Rev. Matthew Nix, Rev. Dr. John Reinke, Rev. Mark Seeger, Rev. Tyler Walworth, Rev. Mark Willig, and Rev. Bryan Wolfmueller

Church workers: Becky Catchpole, Becky Jungklaus, Denise Pulfer, Ted Pulfer, and Diana Rice

### **23. Resolution Committee’s Report—none**

### **24. Unfinished business—none**

### **25. New Business**

Motion #1: Jeff Padon (Jennifer Bonura) moved to develop a task group to research and contact with deaf churches all over the world. Passed. President Mason will put this task to an ad hoc committee.

### **26. Voting on Resolutions—none**

### **27. Announcements—none**

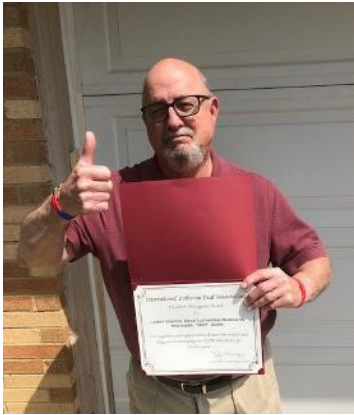
### **28. Adjournment**

The Business Meeting adjourned at 11:42 a.m. with a closing prayer by Rev. Tyler Walworth.

Respectfully submitted,

Janet Gehlbach, ILDA Secretary Pro Tem 2019-2021

The complete minutes and reports can be found on the ILDA website: [www.deafjesus.org/ilda](http://www.deafjesus.org/ilda)



Larry Ginter (left) and Patrick Sell (right) received “President’s Prerogative Awards” that were handed out by ILDA President John Mason at the banquet during the ILDA convention in Chicago. Ginter received his award as past ILDA Business Manager. Sell received his award as past ILDA Treasurer. Congratulations to both of you!



On September 19, 2021, friends and members of the Chapel for the Deaf in Charlotte, NC, celebrated Pastor Mike MacDonald’s 27 years of ministry to the Deaf in North Carolina. A few months earlier, Pastor MacDonald announced his retirement. He also announced that due to the year-long impact of the COVID pandemic, the Deaf church has closed. Even though the Chapel is now closed, Ascension Lutheran Church, the hearing church that has hosted the Deaf congregation, will provide an interpreted ministry supported by other LCMS congregations in the Charlotte area.

Rev. MacDonald and his wife, Lauri, are pictured above at a reception honoring his retirement. The painting of the Chapel for the Deaf where the MacDonald’s served was done by Rev. Tim Fangmeier on behalf of the LCMS congregations in the Charlotte Circuit. Celebrating with the MacDonald’s is Rev. Ron Friedrich for the Lutheran Deaf Mission Society.

Congratulations on your retirement!

**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 – 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. Paul Tessaro

**Northwest Region (current officers)**

- President – Richard Sharp
- President Elect – Patricia Jenkins
- Secretary – Linda Desrosiers (now vacant)
- Treasurer – Gary Wilson (now 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

The Deaf Lutheran staff wishes everyone a Blessed Thanksgiving, a Blessed Christmas and a Happy New Year!



*Merry Christmas*



*Jesus is The Reason for The Season*



### The Deaf Lutheran Subscription (Print Edition)

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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**

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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, 2022  
 Spring issue...April 15, 2022  
 Summer issue...July 15, 2022

Please send photos or news articles to: [JGehlbach@aol.com](mailto:JGehlbach@aol.com) or mail to:

Janet Gehlbach  
 305 Liberty St. NE  
 Fridley, MN 55432

Thanks so much!

### CORRECTION

On Page 9, of the Summer 2021 issue of the Deaf Lutheran, the top photo of Pastors and Church Workers had a misspelling of Rev. WolfmueLLer's first name. It should be Bryan, not Brian. The editor apologizes for this error.

### 2021 ILDA convention tote bags and stemless wine glasses for sale

I have several convention tote bags and glasses available from the Chicago convention if anyone is interested in purchasing them. The price has been reduced for both.



Please go to the ILDA website, [www.deafjesus.org/ilda](http://www.deafjesus.org/ilda) and click on "conventions" and scroll down to the 2021 convention information. You will see an order form. Print it up and send it with your payment to the address on the bottom of the form.



Janet Gehlbach, 2021 ILDA Convention Chair

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

Fall Issue 2021

**RETURN ADDRESS REQUESTED**

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

	<b>Funds Requested</b>	<b>Donations up-to-date</b>
<b>1. Deaf Youth Ministry of Texas</b>	<b>\$7,000</b>	<b>\$3,017</b>
<b>2. Lutheran Deaf Mission Society -- Kenya</b>	<b>\$1,000</b>	<b>\$1,000 (goal completed)</b>
<b>3. India Deaf Ministry -- IELC</b>	<b>\$6,000</b>	<b>\$2,000</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$14,000</b>	<b>\$6,017 (43%)</b>

Donations for the ILDA 2021-2024 Mission Projects can be sent to: ILDA Treasurer, John Mason, 6721 Deep Run Parkway, Elridge, Maryland 21075-6557. Make your check 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.