



The DEAF LUTHERAN



Official Publication of the International Lutheran Deaf Association & the Board for Missions of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod

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The Glorious News of Easter . . .

A LIVING SAVIOR!



"I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live."
-John 11:25

JESUS CHRIST HAS ARISEN FROM THE GRAVE!! What wondrous news for all people! On that Easter morning, the angels ask the women, "Why are you looking for the living among the dead? A grave is the wrong place to look for a living person! Jesus is not there. Jesus is alive!"

The resurrection of Jesus Christ is the very cornerstone of the Christian faith. It is a victory of such immense proportions that it staggers the imagination. Not only did He Himself arise, but His victory over death has made it possible for all Christians who place their faith in Him to rise also. Were this not true that Jesus has defeated death, hell and Satan by His miraculous resurrection, we would still be in our sins; our faith would be futile and useless and we would be completely without hope.

It is very important that we recognize that our belief in the resurrection of Christ is not based on some unfounded rumors, but is based on no less than the Word of God. It is a historical fact with solid evidence to support it.

Down through the ages, there have been many other false Gods and false saviors. All of them are still dead and still lying in their graves. None of them have arisen. We have Confucius, we have Buddha and Mohammed. Every

year, thousands of Muslims travel to Mecca, where Mohammed is enshrined. Yet these men, who may have been great in their day, were just mortals. And they are still dead and cannot help anyone.

There are people who believe that there are many ways to God. They believe that Jesus Christ is not the only way. These people are very, very wrong . . . and eternally wrong, as well. We read, "I am the way, the Truth and the Life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by Me." John 14:6. Very clearly, there is no other way to eternal life, in fact, JESUS is life itself.

Another idea that has gained some popularity is the myth of reincarnation. It is an idea that many people have many lives in different bodies at different times. For example, when a person dies as one person, they might be reborn as someone else. While it may be remotely possible that some believers in reincarnation have confused it with incarnation (God comes to us in human form as Jesus Christ has done) the two are entirely different things.

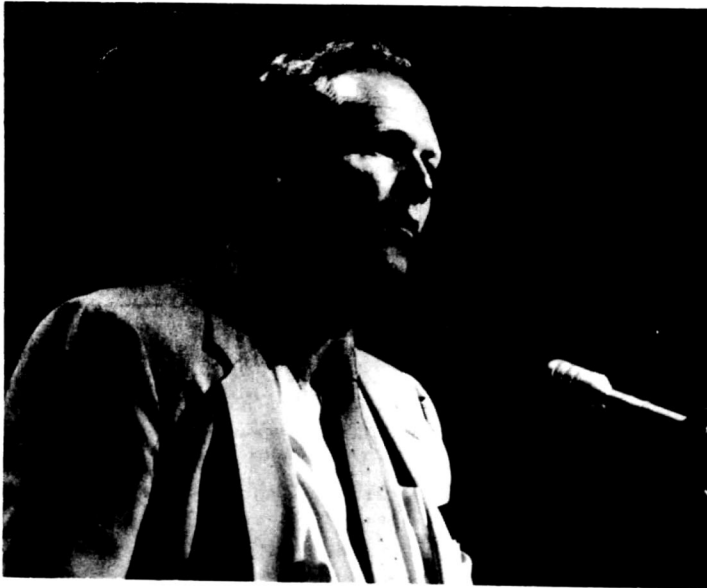
Was the Man the women saw on that first Easter morning and supposed to be the gardener, the reincarnation of someone else? Heaven forbid! No, it was truly the Lord Himself, in the same body that was nailed to the cross on Calvary three days earlier. Jesus has but one life and He gave that life for us on Good Friday so that we could have life and have it more abundantly and eternally for all time to come.

V. I. Lenin, the Russian revolutionary who is regarded as the founder of world communism, is known to have said that "God's Word is an opiate of the people." But to us who

Continued: A LIVING SAVIOR!/Page 2

LUTHERAN SCHOOL FOR DEAF, DETROIT CAMPUS SOLD AT SPECIAL MEETING IN AUGUST

Lutheran Special Education Ministries' Detroit Campus at 6861 E. Nevada ave., better known to many of our deaf Lutherans as the Lutheran School for the Deaf, was sold at a special meeting Aug. 26 to the Cornerstone Schools Association of Detroit for 1.4 million dollars to be paid for over five years. In addition to the purchase agreement, Cornerstone has invited Lutheran Special Education Ministries to maintain its corporate and regional offices on campus and the offer was accepted in September.



Executive Director, DeMeyere, Addresses Delegates at Synodical Convention

Roger DeMeyere, executive Director of LSEM, says that for many years, the Board of Directors struggled with selling the campus. He notes that in 1975, LSEM served 40 deaf children on campus. This year nationwide, more than 2,000 children with various special learning needs will be served where they live. "The campus sale will help us be better stewards of the resources entrusted to our care. It will help us move ahead with our national vision to open doors of schools and congregations even wider to handicapped children. The need to expand services is incredible.

MIXED FEELINGS

Although DeMeyere is focused on the future, he acknowledges some mixed feelings. "Even though I understand why it is appropriate to sell, I'm sad that ownership of this cam-

pus will change. This building and these grounds hold so many memories. My parents were members of the deaf congregation on this campus. I was baptized here. My brothers and sisters, too. We were raised here. Such special times. And not just for me, but for so many others. You know, we have been here at 6861 E. Nevada in Detroit for 123 years. Imagine that! It's hard to let go. But it gives me comfort to know that we will keep our corporate offices here and children will again play on our grounds. God continues to bless. We are so thankful and we celebrate the blessings of the past and the blessings of the future!"

CORNERSTONE SCHOOLS ASSOCIATION

Founded in 1991, Cornerstone Schools Association is a Christ-centered organization that has established three ecumenical schools in the city of Detroit. In the 1995-96 academic year, Cornerstone served more than 419 students from diverse backgrounds within the Detroit metropolitan area.

LUTHERAN SPECIAL EDUCATION MINISTRIES

LSEM is a 123 year old organization that provides teachers, on-site consultants and resources to help parents, Christian schools, and congregations across the nations instruct children who have special learning needs. Today this Christian organization serves special needs children through its main offices, center for Michigan programs and national outreach center, Ephphatha, all in Detroit, Mich. and through its two other regional centers in River Forest, IL and Bronxville, NY.

A LIVING SAVIOR!

Continued from Page 1

believe and trust in Jesus, it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. Read these words in Romans 1:16.

So that our joy in the risen Lord may be full and complete, these words from the Book of Romans 8:38 will inspire us:

"For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers nor things present, nor things to come . . . nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Jesus Christ our Lord."

HAPPY EASTER!

PASTORAL DEVOTION

Rev. Donald E. Leber
6950 Center Ave.

Alta Loma, Calif. 91701

Proverbs 4:1, "Son, listen to your father's teachings, pay attention so you will understand."

One of the biggest problems we have in our world today is that everyone wants to talk and no one wants to listen. On TV we have all kinds of talk shows from Oprah Winfrey to David Letterman. Talking is fine and we need to express the things we feel inside of us. I remember when I first learned sign language. My teacher told me that if I asked all the questions to deaf people, then I could understand their answers, because I knew about the things we were talking. But if deaf people came up to me and started signing to me, I would have no idea about the things they were saying, because their hands would be signing so fast. But communication is always a two-way street. You can sit at home and talk to yourself or look in a mirror and talk to yourself, but no one is listening. Good open communication allows for both people to speak and both people to listen, that way both people can understand each other better.

Communication with God also requires listening as Samuel found out in the Old Testament. (Read 1 Samuel 3:1-18). God speaks to us in many different ways, and we must stop and listen to Him and recognize HIS voice. Many different voices in the world try to teach us, but only God's voice will lead us to true understanding. The same as Samuel, we learn to know God through HIS Word. When you sit and read the Holy Bible and study it, then you begin a relationship with God as your Father and you as His children.

Very often people in prayers start with God's name and then immediately jump to asking for everything they want. They use the "I" word a lot. "I need"; "I want"; "I thank"; or "I praise." We should change to using the "YOU" word: "YOU are great"; "YOU hold the world in YOUR hands"; "YOU gave YOUR Son to die for us"; or some other words to recognize our wonderful God and Saviour. Prayer is one way that we use to communicate with God, but always remember that God uses HIS Word to communicate with you. Become involved in a Bible study group, or start one yourself at home and invite friends. Ask your pastor and God for help.

1995 CONVENTION HONORS RIDDLEBAUGH

They say it is better late than never. If that axiom is true, then we will announce belatedly the 1995 ILDA Right Hand Award recipient was John W. Riddlebaugh, 85, of Westerville, Ohio who was not able to attend the

convention in Schaumburg, Ill. John joins nine others who have been so honored since the first award was presented in 1977 at the Spokane convention.

John's service to the Lord and His church would fill a small volume in the library. At the risk of understanding his many accomplishments and service over more than 42 years at which he has held every office in his congregation from the presidency on down and taught Bible classes and Sunday School, he has been active in the Great Lakes Regional Conference of the ILDA as well. He was the first liturgist at the 1971 ILDA convention in Chicago.

A 1934 graduate of the Ohio School for the Deaf, John is retired from Rockwell International as a commercial artist. He and his wife, Sarah have one daughter, Roberta. Con-

gratulatory messages may be sent to him at 9001 South Sunbury Rd., Westerville, Ohio 43081.



1995 RIGHT HAND AWARD--In lieu of a convention presentation, Rev. Ed Bergstresser delivers the plaque to John Riddlebaugh (right), after church services last November.

Tolerance: The most impressive evidence of tolerance is a golden wedding anniversary.

ROAMING THE

Lay Minister Richard French, who has been serving the Western Washington Field since 1974, retired Dec. 31 after 22 years in the ministry. Dick is well known in the ILDA and has attended many conventions. A surprise retirement party in his honor was given him following the Christmas program Dec. 15. Dick is not sure where he will spend his retirement years, perhaps in Idaho, Montana or Nebraska. Come and see us at our conventions in the future anyway!

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The weather has been on our minds a lot this winter, especially in northern California and the Pacific Northwest. A spot check by the editor to Spokane, Seattle, Portland and Sacramento had none of our deaf churches or members in any serious difficulty, for which we give thanks. However, an ice storm in Spokane left many home owners without power and having to huddle to keep warm.

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Following a \$5,000 grant from the **Eastern District of the LWML** and \$2,000 from **Alpha Lutheran Church's own LWML Chapter**, the church was finally able to purchase a 1995 Dodge 15-passenger van. Alpha is located in Rochester, N.Y.

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Two couples in Wisconsin who have belonged to the ILDA for many years celebrated Golden Wedding Anniversaries recently. In Madison, we have **Bill and Annette Binn**; in Waukesha, **Bill and Verona Mueller**.

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Two of our pastors in deaf ministry have major health problems for which we earnestly seek prayers: **Pastor Don Zuhn** of Houston, Texas who has suffered a stroke and continues to be paralyzed on his left side, and is undergoing therapy. **Rev. Larry Lieders**, who served the deaf in Fort Wayne, Ind. a few years ago before moving to Texas, is serving as vacancy pastor until Pastor Zuhn can return . . . on the Northern Illinois District, we have **Rev. Mark Anderson** who had major surgery on his right shoulder to reroute a nerve that was causing total loss of sensation in his right arm. At the present time it looks like Pastor Mark will be out of the ministry for most of 1997 while he recuperates.

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Dear me, we have another **DEER** story to tell you. Two years ago, **ILDA President Larry Gorton** and his wife met a deer on the way home

from the ILDA convention in Chicago and had a bad accident. This time it is our friend, **Omar Schmidt** of Milwaukee, whose van was rammed by a deer on their way home from church. All of our people were unhurt.

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A new Sanctuary Lamp in the chapel of **Christ Lutheran Church** in Silver Spring, Md. is the gift of Mrs. Joan Mass and her son, Robert in memory of her late husband, Rev. Lavern Mass. The Sanctuary Lamp, which is sometimes called the Eternal Flame, represents the presence of the Lord in His sanctuary, the place where He abides with His people.

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A new ministry outreach began with the move from Omaha to York, Neb. when **Pastor Cory Eckstrom** moved in October. Pastor Eckstrom will contact the areas of Hastings, Lincoln and Grand Island. In far western Nebraska, the areas of Scottsbluff and Gering might wish to have services also. He can be reached at 639 E. 10th Ave., C103, York, Neb 68467. Phone (402) 362-3973 V/TTY.

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Former ILDA Historian **Don Mowl** and his wife, Mary, traveled with their daughter and family to the Marine Corps Base at Parris Island, S.C. to attend the graduation of grandson, Chris Britt. The 1,500 mile round trip from Washington, Penn. required two cars traveling together.

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In Burbank, Calif., ILDA members **Diane and Fred Lessing** have started a monthly **Deaf Christian Fellowship Group** in their home. Hopefully, the group will provide the opportunity for the deaf in the San Fernando Valley to have some fun, share concerns and prayers and learn about the interpreted ministry at the First Lutheran Church in Burbank, where they meet for worship.

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Plans are being made to celebrate the 50th anniversary of **Christ Lutheran Church** in Silver Spring, Md. in September 1997.

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The Midwest Regional Conference of the ILDA will have its annual meeting in Omaha, Neb. June 20-22 under a theme of "Because of God's eternal love we offer ourselves as living gifts." The site of the conference will be at the Best Western Central on 72nd Street. Hosting the event will be Bethlehem Lutheran Church, Omaha. Plans are being made for the

REGIONS . . .

1998 conference in Minneapolis/St. Paul (Minnesota) too.

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Holy Cross Lutheran Church, Delavan, Wis., has just welcome back Russel and Medora James who were members way back in the 1950's before moving to Indianapolis. The Indianapolis airport acquired their property there for expansion needs and the couple decided to return home to Wisconsin. Both have been active in their church for many years.

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After failing to get a proposal for a \$10,000 grant put on the ballot at the LWML Canada, some good news followed: a local business man was moved to donate a 1989 Dodge Caravan to Cross of Christ Lutheran Church in Edmonton, Alta.! Praise the Lord!

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Trinity Lutheran Church for the Deaf in Pittsburgh, Penn. is in the process of raising \$24,000 over the next three years to obtain a full time pastor for the deaf. The money is not only needed for the church itself, but also to carry the ministry to the deaf all over western Pennsylvania. This amount figures out to about \$8,000 for each

of the years 1997, 1998 and 1999.

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A German exchange student, Jutta Spremberg, who spent the summer of 1996 at Cross of Christ Lutheran Church in Edmonton, Alta. to study deaf ministry, wrote to Pastor and Mrs. Robert Bauer at Christmas. She sent greetings to all she met and also ILDA members. She is expected to get her degree this year. A paper on her Canadian experiences will be sent to the church for its library.

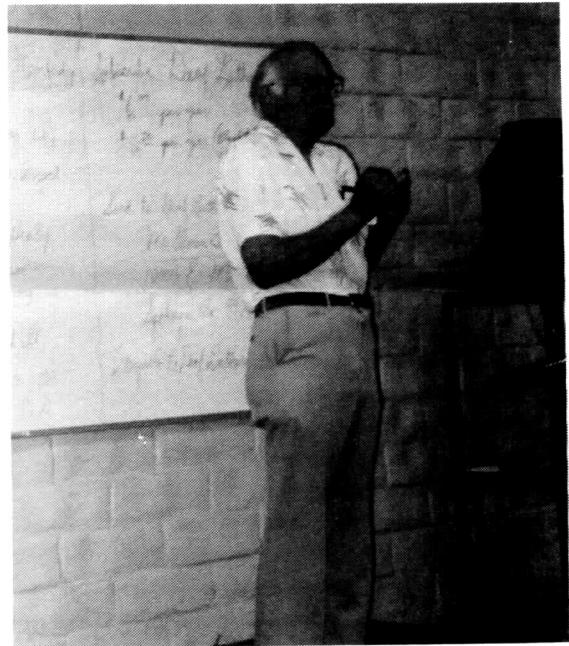
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How many of our members and friends remember the late Rev. John L. Salvner? Pastor Salvner passed away a good number of years ago. His booklets on Luther's Small Catechism in which he used notes and explanations for instructing the deaf was widely used in our churches in the 30's and 40's and beyond. (The editor still has his copy that was printed in 1937, over 60 years ago). We have learned that his son-in-law, Ray Schweigert died last Oct. 19. Mr. Schweigert is remembered by many of our members in Minneapolis where he donated a variety of meats that were prepared for many of the dinners held at Prince of Peace Lutheran Church.

AAL GRANT WILL FUND PRODUCTION OF BIBLE VIDEOS FOR DEAF CHILDREN

Bethel Deaf TV Ministries, based in Littleton, Colo., has received a \$45,000 grant from Aid Association for Lutherans (AAL). The funds will enable the Lutheran organization to create 200 video Bible classes in sign language for deaf children. Bethel TV Ministries will produce the videos and accompanying teacher guides over a two-year period. It will provide the videos to churches of families free of charges, except for postage and handling.

Churches and others interested in this program may contact Rev. Darrel Matthews, 4563 South Hoyt St., Littleton, Colo. 80123-1012, Phone (303) 973-7031.



REPORTING TO THE CONFERENCE--Clarence Schulz, representing northern California churches at Fremont and Sacramento, makes his report. Schulz was the first chairman of the ILDA steering committee more than 25 years ago during formation hearings in Chicago.

**The harvest is
plentiful, but the
laborers are few.**
Matthew 9:37

CANDIDATES NOMINATED FOR 1997-1999 ILDA OFFICES

In an order to conform to the ILDA Constitution and By-Laws, the Nominating Committee is submitting herewith the list of candidates for ILDA Offices to be voted on at the 1997 convention in St. Louis.

PRESIDENT-ELECT:

Richard Norton, Dripping Springs, Texas, by the Northwest Region. Former ILDA Board member from the Dixie Region. Presently serving on the Steering Committee for the Convocation on Deaf Ministry.

Larry M. Gorton, Spokane, Wash. by the Pacific Region. Presently serving as ILDA president and not eligible for a second term.

SECRETARY:

Alice L. Hagemeyer, Silver Spring, Md. Ms. Hagemeyer is currently concluding her

first term. Nominated by all four regions submitting nominations; unopposed. Retired from the D.C. Public Library after 34 years years of service, the last 15 years to serve the deaf community. Has been active in her congregation of Christ

Lutheran Church and has served both as secretary of the church as well as the Eastern Region of the ILDA.

TREASURER:

Ken Norton, Houston, Texas, nominated by the Northwest Region.

Karen Bieter, Lima, N.Y., by the Great Lakes Region.

David Brown, Seven Hills, Ohio; by the Great Lakes secretary. Not nominated by the GLRC.

PASTORAL ADVISER:

Rev. Donald E. Leber, Alta Loma, Calif. by the Pacific Region. Presently concluding his first term.

Rev. George Natonick, Silver Spring, Md. Now serving Christ Lutheran church in Silver Spring as pastor. Nominated by Northwest Region.

Rev. John Reinke, Omaha, Neb., also by the

Northwest Region. Currently serving Bethlehem Lutheran Church, Omaha, as pastor.

Dennis Konkell, will assume the presidency of the ILDA at the conclusion of the convention in St. Louis. A long time member of Christ Lutheran Church in Silver Spring, Md. He and his wife, Susan, reside in Gaithersburg, Md.

Because only four regions responded to the call for nominations, it may be necessary to take additional nominations from the floor during the voting part of the convention.

AROUND THE SYNOD

The 1997 synodical Great Commission Convocation will take place at the America's Center in St. Louis on the dates of Aug.

7-10 with a goal of 10,000 participants expected. In addition to the usual plenary celebration experiences and insight sessions, a birthday party extravaganza will celebrate 150 years of God's blessings to the Synod.



The Board for Communication services is planning to float two hot air balloons with the church's cross logo printed on its side . . . something all visitors are sure to remember. One of the balloons will have a horizontal span of 90 feet and tower 130 feet in the air, about twice the size of a standard balloon and possibly qualify for the Guinness Book of Records as the largest movable cross in the world.

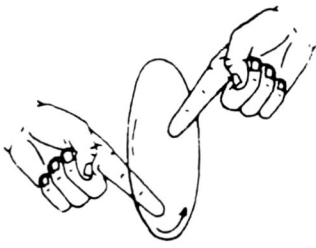
The balloon's purpose is 'Lifting High the Cross' and plans are to fly the balloons over major cities as a way of advertising the Synod.

The project is expected to cost \$142,000 and donations are being sought.

Abraham Lincoln said it: "Followers only get what is left behind by leaders."

"AND A CHILD SHALL LEAD THEM . . ."

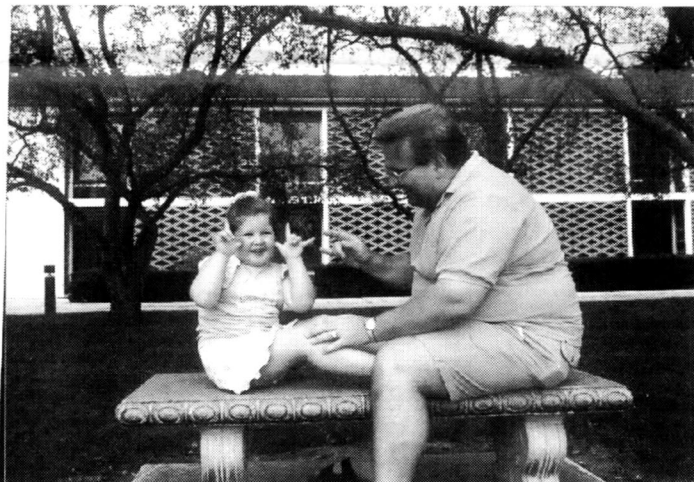
This verse is found in Isaiah 11:6, and it can be true in many different and profound ways as the following true story will show, which begins on Jan. 4, 1991.



On that day, Jim Drummond's life changed forever. God brought into his life a small child that many would see as a burden, but which Drummond found to be

the instrument by which the course of his life was permanently changed. The child is his granddaughter who was born deaf. Feeling unable to raise a deaf child, the mother gave custody of the child to her parents. As Kristina grew older, the Drummonds became increasingly frustrated with the inability to communicate and were at that time introduced to the Church Interpreter Training Institute in Fort Wayne, Ind. (CITI). The purpose of institute was to create a national network of interpreters so all deaf are able to attend a Christian Church and see the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Since the summer of 1993 when Drummond came to CITI with only a self taught book knowledge of sign language, he has completed all three levels of courses that CITI makes available in its interpreter training. It also brought to him a new desire to bring the Gospel of Christ to the deaf community. He also plans to continue involvement with CITI by teaching or tutoring beginning level courses. He also works at St. John's Church



SUNSHINE ON A COLD WINTER DAY--This photo of Kristin, 5, granddaughter of Jim and Shelly Drummond shows the youngster making the universal "I love you" sign as Grandpa looks on.

for the Deaf in Fort Wayne and teaches sign language classes and does some interpreting.

Jim Drummond is now attending Concordia Theological Seminary with plans to continue his involvement in deaf ministry in the Lutheran Church.

And Kristina? She started school last fall, a happy little girl with more friends than her grandparents ever dreamed.

(Editor's note: Jim Drummond is a brother to Rev. Henry (Hank) Drummond who is serving the deaf in Great Falls, Mont.)

MISSION PROJECTS UPDATE

As reported on Jan. 10, 1997, the amount raised to date for Mission Projects stood at \$22,359.62, or slightly over 72.1% of the goal of \$31,000 by convention time. With only \$8,640.38 more to go over about six months, we are drawing closer and closer to making it.

Project Chair Pam Kane is asking for suggestions to be submitted to the Board of Directors at their meeting in St. Louis as possible projects for the 1997-'99 biennium. Please have your project suggestions sent to her by April 30, 1997. The address is: 21831 Maydale Ave., Euclid, Ohio 44123. Ph. (216)-731-0386.

I Know That My Redeemer Lives

I know that my Redeemer lives;
What comfort that sweet sentence gives!
He live, He lives, who once was dead,
He lives, my ever living Head.

He lives triumphant from the grave,
He lives eternally to save,
He lives all glorious in the sky,
He lives exalted there on high.

He lives to bless me with His love,
He lives to plead for me above,
He lives my hungry soul to feed,
He lives to help in time of need.

He lives to grant me rich supply,
He lives to guide me with His eye,
He lives to comfort me when faint,
He lives to hear my soul's complaint. Amen.

PACIFIC REGIONAL CONFERENCE MEETS

By Charles J. Kotal, President
13100 Melanie Lane No. 26
Westminster, Calif.

The Pacific Regional Conference of the ILDA convened at the Arrowhead Springs Christian Center, San Bernardino, Calif., Sept. 20-22 under a theme of, "A CENTURY OF BLESSING AND A FUTURE OF HOPE" from the Holy Scripture of Jeremiah 29: 10-13.

On Friday night, in connection with the theme, we had our story telling about the many good things that happened in the past at the PRILDA conferences and ILDA conventions. After that, we set up goals and priorities for our Pacific region in the future and how to implement them to success.

On Saturday, we had our community workshop which was presented by Ron Madding, former ILDA president. Later on, we had a business meeting. New officers chosen for the coming biennium are Charles Kotal, president; Lee Ann Kotal, president-elect; Diane

Lessing, secretary; Fred Lessing, treasurer, and the Rev. Brian Smith, pastoral adviser.

Later in the evening we had interesting entertainment with lots of laughs listening to funny stories and jokes along with skits, "Annie the Christian Clown" which was a performance given by Lee Ann Kotal with help from her husband, Charles, and several volunteers from the audience.

On Sunday morning, Bible Class and worship with Lord's Supper was led by all of the pastors from the Pacific region, including Reverends Smith, Leber, Dahmann and Rowland. The offering was divided between both the PRILD and ILDA Mission projects.

Northern California region comprising Fremont and Sacramento will host the 1998 meeting.



1996-1998 PRILDA OFFICERS--Left to right, Fred Lessing, treasurer; Diane Lessing, secretary; Lee Ann Kotal, president-elect; Charles Kotal, president. Pastor at the far right is Brian Smith, adviser.



1996 PRILDA CONFERENCE ATTENDEES--This group from both northern and southern California met at Arrowhead Springs, San Bernardino, Calif. Former ILDA Presidents Madding and Kotal are both in the picture as are four pastors. All should be easy to spot . . . except Rev. Leber! Where are you, Don?

The DEAF LUTHERAN

March-April, 1997

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