



# The DEAF LUTHERAN



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

January/February, 1998

St. Louis, MO

Volumes 90, No. 1

## DEAF LUTHERAN DEVOTION

From the desk  
of the I.L.D.A.  
Pastoral Advisor...



*Rev. Donald Leber,  
ILDA Pastoral Advisor*

*First an apology for the December/January article in which I forgot to credit much of the article to an introduction for a sermon I found by Scott Sailor in the October issue of Concordia Journal.*

For the past three years on Holy Thursday night members of Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran Church in Alta Loma, California, where my family attends church and I attend when I am in town, do a drama of the Lord's Supper with the twelve disciples and Jesus all in costume. It is a very spiritual experience for the people attending worship that evening. They enter the dark church to see a long table across the entire front of the altar area.

Before the service begins the twelve disciples in costume enter and find seats at different places around the church. Following the sermon and offering a voice begins to introduce each disciple explaining a little about the disciple's background. The disciple stands up and walks to the front and sits at the long table. After all twelve disciples are introduced and seated, the voice then explains that one person is still missing. That is our Lord Jesus. Jesus has not been seen until this moment. Jesus enters from a side door and greets the disciples. As soon as Jesus sits down in the middle of the table, Jesus begins the Lord's Supper. Jesus takes the bread from a plate on the table, raises the bread toward heaven, thanks God, breaks the bread and immediately passes the bread down the table on both sides. Then Jesus takes a cup of wine, raises it toward heaven, thanks God, and Jesus stands and from behind the disciples begins serving them

a sip of wine from the cup. Finally Jesus says the words "Now may this true body and true blood strengthen and keep you until the day of life eternal in heaven." Then as Jesus places the cup back down on the table Jesus and all the disciples begin a freeze position. That means that they do not move a muscle.

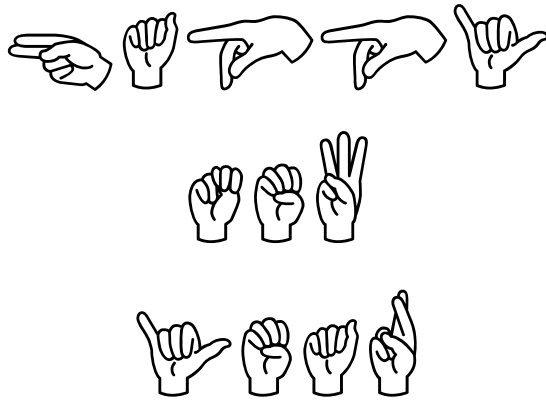
As the pastor of the church begins distributing the Lord's Supper to the members of the congregation, each member must walk past the long table. Sometimes tears are seen in faces and sometimes people walk past and stare. Of course some of the children try to make Jesus and the disciples laugh and break free from their freeze position. When the pastor gives the final blessing and the congregation begins the last hymn, Jesus and the twelve disciples stand up and leave the church.

Many comments are heard from members of the congregation following the service. One that really inspires me to want to go back and do it again every year is "I felt that I was right there with Jesus on the night before HE died."

For these past three years I have had the privilege to play the role of our Savior Jesus only because I have a beard, which I am required to color brown for that day, and because I am an ordained pastor and am able to give the Lord's Supper to the twelve disciples. I hope some day to be able to video tape it and add the captions for my deaf friends to be able to enjoy.

May the Lord's Supper that you experience in your church help you to feel that you are back 2000 years sitting at a table with the twelve disciples.

*Pastor Don (via e-mail)*



## Editorial...

Your *Deaf Lutheran Business Manager*, Larry Ginter and I wishes you readers a Happy New Year!

Out goes the year 1997... the shock of Heavenly Gates, Princess Di in a car wreck, Mother Teresa of old age, the situation in Iraq, cloning of Dolly (sheeps in England) ... Larry Ginter and I have become your new Business Manger and Editor, the ILDA Convention was held in St. Louis ... a new pastor (Mark Ruppert) for Trinity Lutheran Church in Pittsburgh, Pastor Reinke has gone to Ghana ... I have purchased a house in Parma for my family and a new job after a 11-month layoff, new friends I have met in St. Louis and Kansas City ... and the list goes on and on. God has plans and He knows why!

In comes the year of 1998 ... two more years before the year 2000. What will happen in 2000? Today I have read in the *Plain Dealer* (Cleveland)

about what might happen to the computers and the nation airports when the date rolls over to Jan. 1, 2000. The IBM computers were not designed to record the first two digits of the year and will assume the year is 19\_\_ instead of 20\_\_ . (Macintosh owners don't have to worry about their computers. Smile!)

During the first two weeks of 1998... an ice storm hits New England and Canada, Kennedy's and Bono's ski accidents, talk of cloning of a child (an insult to human rights), etc.

An article in January 12th issue of the *Plain Dealer* caught my eyes. Article titled: **New scam treats to watch for in the new year.** "...religious leaders who have traded on the trust they engender from parishioners. In July, the SEC filed a civil suit against three ministers who pedled a Ponzi scheme in Ohio and other states. Local ministers told their flocks that commissions generated by their investments would go to their churches, but a not-so-devine intervention sent the money on a detour to the reverends' pockets."

**Pray for a better World in 1998!**

Dave

e-mail address: [CreaBrowns@aol.com](mailto:CreaBrowns@aol.com)

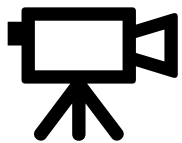
P.S. Please try out the Deaf Mission web pages that were developed in St. Louis. I have found it very interesting. **Even if you don't have a computer, you can always go to your public library that have computers and connections to the internet.** The web page address is: <http://members.aol.com/luthdeafmi/ghana.html>



## Grant Received: FREE Video Devotions continue

Holy Cross Deaf, St. Louis, Son†Sign Productions has received a grant to continue providing Daily Video Devotions to members of the Deaf Ministries of the LC-MS. We have provided these videos now for two years and many deaf really enjoy them. Each Deaf Ministry can receive the video tapes to serve 10 or more families. **This is a FREE service (except \$6 postage mails back 30 video tapes).**

Do you receive these Devotions free? Would you like to receive them for free? Talk with your Pastor or Interpreter about this special project. The Videos can also serve the Shut-in and Nursing Home shut-in deaf people. If they don't have a VCR, perhaps your or a friend Church's AAL branch or LB branch could help provide VCRs for them. Then they can watch God's Word everyday. Your Deaf Church can also offer them to Prospective Deaf Members. Perhaps you can help your Pastor set up these services for deaf people in your area.



If you need to contact us, write: **Son†Sign Productions, Deaf Video Lending Library, 101 North Beaumont, St. Louis, MO. 63103.** Our e-mail address is [RevRMoody@aol.com](mailto:RevRMoody@aol.com).

Please pray for us and all those involved in this project. Pastors Bill Knaack, Bud Palmer, Mark Anderson, Don Leber, Brian Smith, Eddie Bergstresser, Steve Schlund, Jerry Munz, Martin Hewitt and Richard Moody have helped to sign devotions. Other deaf devotion leaders have included: Brian Degner, Matt Lieberman, Debbie Pike and many members at Holy Cross Deaf have helped with Christmas Dramas, Easter Dramas and Choir Hymns.

Would you like to do a Bible Lesson Drama? Would you like to do a Devotion on Video? Would you like to sign a Bible Lesson in clear Sign Language? Do you have a Choir that could help with songs? Let us know at the address or e-mail above.

God Bless each one of you.

*Rev. Richard Moody (via e-mail)*

# Greetings from Ghana!

The past few weeks have been full and exciting.

On Christmas Day we attended worship in Kumasi. What an exciting day! Approximately 50 deaf people came to worship the Newborn King! Many of them were students that were home for the holidays from the deaf schools. After the service we had an interesting discussion on infant baptism and baptism in general. The deaf here have been told by another "pastor/priest" that because they were sprinkled as infants their baptisms weren't any good and that it had to be done again - and be fully immersed. The discussion also carried over into the Wednesday and Friday evening Bible/Confirmation classes.

The Evangelists and the people are struggling with input from other Osafu (pastors) on baptism, but also in many areas of their faith. Many are dealing with guilt from past "church" experiences. One young girl was even told that if she left this other church, she would face the fire! Many are feeling the weight of the law upon them and need to hear the Gospel. Pray for us that God will continue to help us share His Gospel.

We had gone to a Christmas Eve hymn service at the hearing church. But we ended up leaving early. The electricity went out for about an hour - and the deaf had a hard time seeing by candlelight and John had problems interpreting Twi!

John recently finished the TEE course on Preaching 1 with the Evangelists in Kumasi. It went well. Next there is a short course on Introduction to the Bible and then on to the Lutheran Confessions course.

We continue to meet for training the first and third weekends and then once during the following week. They are eager to meet and study God's Word. I will send a short bio and pictures for the web site soon, so you can know who these men are. Please keep praying for us.

The weekend of Dec. 27-28 was our weekend for going to Adomrobe. On Saturday John conducted another class and on Sunday we had five baptisms. Our prayers for Adomrobe are to continue bringing up the leaders to be confirmed and help in leading worship. And that God will lead us to a hearing person who is willing to go with us to teach the hearing children of the deaf adults. We are looking for someone who can speak their language to teach them. If we don't find this teacher, there is another hearing church (not Lutheran) who is very willing to teach the hearing children.

We then took a few days off and went and saw some of the sights along the coast. (This was our Christmas gift to ourselves.) We drove over to Elmina. It is to the west of Accra along the coast. There is a Portuguese (later became Dutch) Slave Castle there. It is one of the places where the slaves were shipped out of Africa. Very impressive - also somewhat disturbing to see that part of our history.

Where we stayed overnight was a real treat - it had air conditioning and hot water! The restaurant was built up on a lagoon - we had dinner & breakfast with the crocodiles (and lots and lots of birds).

The next day we went to Kakum National Rain Forrest. They have a canopy walk - you know those huge trees that you see in National Geographic - they have seven rope bridges strung between those huge trees - near the top. We got to look down on the other treetops. It is a great view of the rain forest - as long as we didn't look down too much! This is one of the few

areas of tropical rainforest that is left in Africa.

Then we drove back towards Accra and stayed overnight at a seaside resort. We got to play in the Atlantic Ocean for a while. Found out that sand gets everywhere! We are planning on going back there for a few days before we leave Ghana. Our hope is that we can stay there a few days before we get on the plane to come back to the States - you know, put our feet up, watch the ocean and relax for a while!

We just returned from our trip north - WOW! We spent a day driving up (it took us 2 days to drive back!). A couple of days there so that John could observe some TEE courses being taught to future evangelists. We even celebrated John's birthday with some of the Ghanaian pastors and other missionaries. He even had a cake! John never expected to spend his 35th birthday in a remote village (Gbintiri) in Ghana. We stayed with Carl and Deb Rockrohr. They have three children (Paul, James & Becky) and our boys enjoyed playing with them. Carl and John were in the same class at the seminary.

John was able to meet "John the Weaver", a deaf man who lives in the village of Nasuan. His wife speaks Konkumba as does his daughter, but he signs English. They are all baptized and we are working to help him become confirmed with his wife. There are many deaf scattered around the villages and hopefully we can use this process to help reach out to them.

Worship service on Sunday was interesting, to say the least. Instead of an organ, they use drums. Instead of "Lutheran" hymns they have adapted their own songs - in their language. We even danced around the worship area during one song. The offering isn't taken - it is given. A basket is placed at the front of the worship area and the people go forward to place their offering. Once again, accompanied with singing and dancing. We couldn't understand a word of it - but we loved it!

It took a while to get to Gbintiri. On one stretch of road it took us 2 hours to go approximately 30 miles. Once we got to the paved roads - it went a little faster.

The harmatan is bad this year. Up north it is really bad. We were told that this is the worst they have seen it in a long, long time. There is dust blowing all of the time and there is dust everywhere! They told us that they haven't seen the sun for 2 weeks. It almost looked like a snowstorm - only with sand. They were even talking that it is hazy and dusty in Accra - which is unusual.

But we are back in Kumasi now. It is somewhat amazing to us that this place is starting to feel like home - but I'm not sure we will ever get totally used to it.

We have not yet heard anything new on our visas. When we were in the ELCG office last week we asked about our passports. We were told they are with Immigration - have been for several months. So, we are still not sure when we will be back - either May 4 or June 12 (or close to that). As of now, we don't have any idea when we will know when we are leaving.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who has kept in touch with us - via email or airmail. We truly appreciate it! Don't forget to check out our web site: <http://members.aol.com/luthdeafmi/ghana.html>.

Blessings,

*Pastor John, Dacia, Joshua & Joseph (via e-mail)*  
[djnoack@africaonline.com.gh](mailto:djnoack@africaonline.com.gh)



*Rev. John and Dacia Reinke*

# Edward Pahl, Who?



*Alice Hagemeyer,  
Project Director of  
ILDA Publicity Video*

Recently the International Lutheran Deaf Association (ILDA) received an award of \$6,500 from the Mill Neck Foundation, Inc. With the help of this grant, the ILDA and the Board for Missions of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod will be able to complete their long-awaited project: the **ILDA Publicity Video**. This tape will briefly introduce diversity in the deaf community and the ILDA's accomplishments since its inception in 1971. Tape viewers will also learn about Edward Pahl, a deaf Lutheran who inspired the Rev. Augustus Reinke in 1894 to start a deaf ministry in the Chicago area.

In a little over 25 years, the ILDA has given more than \$100,000 to mission projects and in scholarship assistance to students with an interest in deaf ministry. They have also helped fund many schools and camps which promote literacy and religious instruction for deaf children and young adults in the U.S.A., Canada, Ghana, India, Brazil, Hong Kong and other countries.

"So many good things have been happening within the deaf community

and among Lutheran churches for many years, and yet the majority of deaf Lutherans are not aware of them," said Alice L. Hagemeyer, who is project director and secretary of the ILDA. She and her group of enthusiastic deaf Lutherans are currently working on the videotape which will run about 5 minutes but is informative enough to interest viewers in seeking additional resources. Ms. Hagemeyer believes it will also encourage an interest and tolerance of deaf diversity.

The Mill Neck Foundation, Inc., which is located in Mill Neck, New York, grants funds to institutions, programs, and projects proposing new resources for the deaf community. The Foundation envisions, encourages and enables efforts to assist persons who are deaf or have hearing loss through Christian ministry and service, both nationally and internationally.

*For more information about the ILDA Publicity Video project, please contact:  
**Alice L. Hagemeyer, Project Director,  
2930 Craiglawn Road, Silver Spring, MD  
20904-1816.***



*... baptized in the name  
of the Lord Jesus.  
-Acts 19:5*

## King James I **Best Known Name in Bibles**

...but he did not write the King James version.

He appointed 54 bible experts to make a new translation of the scriptures in the English language.

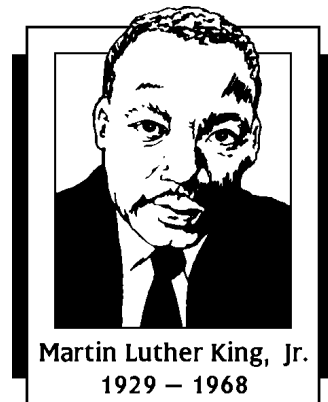
For 2 years these men worked faithfully, translating God's word from Greek and Hebrew manuscripts into English.

In 1611 the task was finished. The King was pleased with the new bible, and commanded all the churches of England to use it in their services. It is often called **The Authorized Version** and has been the favorite of protestant bible readers ever since.

*(James I was the king of England who sent the Mayflower to America. His famous bible is about nine years older than the first American colonies.)*

## Lutheran Deaf Camp Week - August 2-7, 1998

One fun filled packed week for deaf children and hearing children with deaf parents. To register or for information, contact Rev. Roy Dahmann (510-276-3860), Rev. Robert Rowland (916-391-3463), Rev. Don Leber (909-987-5484) or Rev. Brian Smith (213-389-9940).



**Martin Luther King, Jr.**  
1929 - 1968



Editor's Note: An article (second in a series) from one of the church newsletters sent to me was very interesting. This newsletter write articles for each of their future newsletters about other Lutheran Churches for the Deaf. I felt it would be interesting to reprint it for you *Deaf Lutherans* readers to read about it. For your information, there are 55 Deaf churches in the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod in the USA. The church reported in the Nov/Dec '97 issue of D/L was Emmanuel Lutheran Church in Wisconsin.

### Silent Lutheran Church, Madison, Wisconsin

Silent Lutheran Church celebrated the 25th Anniversary of the organization of the congregation on October 19th and 20th, 1974.

In 1896 Pastor August Rienke and Pastor Wangrin of Chicago began to hold services for the deaf in several Wisconsin cities.

The ground work for the organization of Madison Silent Lutheran Church was begun September 4, 1949, when Pastor Mueller announced his wishes to leave Madison as a Missionary in order to devote full time to his work with Emmanuel Lutheran Church for the Deaf in Milwaukee. After preliminary discussions, the congregation decided to organize on October 26, 1949. They voted to send a call to Rev. Robert Mackensen of Missoula, Montana. At that time the new congregation has 25 confirmed members.

Rev. Mackensen accepted the call and was installed on June 11, 1950. In 1951 the congregation voted to join the South Wisconsin District. The Lutheran Women's Missionary League of the congregation was organized in 1951. The Ladies Aid Society of the congregation came into being with the idea of the members working with hearts and hands to help furnish the need items for our church. The ladies also began to take turns leading the

hymns and liturgy at the regular worship services. This they continue to do today.

Wishing to have a church of our own prompted the purchase of St. Paul's Lutheran Church and parsonage at 1929 Huxley St. in 1955. Before this we worshipped in Immanuel Lutheran Church on Spaight St. in Madison.

In April 1995 the District extended a call to Rev. Jessie A. Forrest, a graduate of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis to fill the MAL position. Rev. Forrest was ordained and installed on July 20, 1995 at Silent Lutheran Church, Madison, WI. Rev. Forrest is presently serving as pastor of Silent Lutheran Church and working to revive the outlying groups in the South Wisconsin area. Lacrosse, WI deaf community has shown a desire to "begin again." At present, pastor Forrest is seeking to start Bible Study classes and Sunday Worship at this site. In the almost nine months pastor Forrest has been with us we have grown again in attendance to highs in the 60's and regular Sunday Worship in the 30's to 40's. visitors are regular in our Worship. We have reestablished a active Sunday School and Adult Bible Study program. We have organized a church choir (which has accompanied pastor Forrest to our sister churches for Mission emphasis Sundays. Our LWML, Women's Aid, and AAL groups have grown. We now have an active Drama group. An active outreach program is underway to reach the deaf (and hearing) in Madison and outlying areas.

It is our hope that in the years to come we shall continue to grow under God's guidance and blessing. We pray that through us the Good News of Jesus and his Love can reach those deaf (and hearing) who do not know Him, both here in Madison and through out the world.



Pray  
for one  
another...

*Silent Lutheran  
Church of the Deaf  
1929 Huxley Street  
Madison, WI 53704  
(608)249-8076*

*9:30 & 11:30am  
every Sunday*

## Barbara Lanman Visits the Mid-South District!

December 5 and 6 found Barbara Lanman traveling to Memphis, Tennessee. Barbara is the Coordinator of Deaf Ministry for the Mill Neck Foundation for Deaf Ministry. She met with the Deaf Ministry Team of the Mid-South District.

The Mid-South District has one full time deaf ministry at Eternal Mercy Lutheran Church for the Deaf in Memphis, Tennessee. The District also sees the need for ministry with the deaf to occur in many other locations throughout the District. Thus the District Deaf Ministry Team was formed to help answer the need for ministry in outlying areas. The Team sees its function as educating about the needs and unique opportunities of deaf ministry, as well as encouraging and equipping those interested in deaf ministry.

While in Memphis Ms. Lanman helped the Deaf Ministry Team to refine its goals. She offered valuable suggestions concerning human care needs and other areas the Deaf Ministry Team had not yet addressed. Barbara was able to explain some of the materials and resources that are available from the Mill Neck Foundation. The

Team found her ability to provide insight from a national perspective very helpful. The Deaf Ministry Team was quite interested in projects and techniques that have proven effective in other regions of the country. She also helped the team find ways to encourage hearing congregations to accept the challenge of ministry with the deaf in places where there may not be enough deaf people to form their own congregations.

The Mid-South District's Deaf Ministry Team is made up of the Rev. Terry Tieman, Assistant to the President of Missions and Outreach, Rev. Paul Tessaro, Pastor at Eternal Mercy Lutheran Church for the Deaf, Deacon Elwood bush and various lay people from Eternal Mercy, Barbara Walker from the Nashville area, Esther Mahnken from the Little Rock, Arkansas area and other individuals interested in Deaf Ministry. The Deaf Ministry Team is very grateful for Ms. Lanman's visit. *If you are interested in establishing a Deaf Ministry Team in your area contact **Barbara Lanman, Coordinator of Deaf Ministry for the Mill Neck Foundation for Deaf Ministry (1-800-264-0662).***

# News from around the Regions...



## Eastern Region...

**Chapel for the Deaf/Lutheran,** Charlotte, NC has celebrated Thanksgiving with a new sound system used for the first time. The sound system is loud. WOW!!! We all can feel the vibrations, but we have to keep it down so we don't bother the hearing folks next door as they worship.

## Great Lakes Region...

The Lord has called home **Carlene** (Rev. Gary-Cleveland) **Lawson's father.**

Just recently it was announced that **Christ Lutheran Church** (Cleveland) will soon have a new church building. More details will be announced in the next *Deaf Lutheran*.

On March 29th, **Trinity Lutheran Church** (Pittsburgh) will celebrate their 35th Anniversary of Church Building.

**Emogene Robinson** of Trinity went home to heaven on December 18, 1997. Now she is at peace after she straggled a long battle with cancer.

## Central Region...

Deaf Camp will be held on June 21-26, 1998 at Camp Lakeview, near Seymour, Indiana. This is our first year and limited to kids grades 3-8. For more information, contact camp director Tom Franke at 812-524-0885 (v). Tom's wife, Nancy's parents are **Lester and Betty Ahls.**

## Midwest Region...

We pray for **Fonda Neuschwanger** of Calvary Lutheran, Des Moines, Iowa. She has gone home from Calvary's Senior Citizens Group, felt a little tired and weak, went to the chair to sit. But she felled to the floor. She prayed day and night until 8 days later, her neighbor called the police to check on her because newspapers had piled up. She was rushed to the emergency room dehydrated, hungry, but in pretty good shape. Her mind was clear and she said she took a lot of time to pray. Doctor said no damage to the heart.

**Merwin Stubberud** and **Genevieve Schultz** has passed into God's heavenly Kingdom.

## Northwest Region...

The Northwest ILDA Conference will be held at Concordia Seminary, Edmonton, Alberta July 31-August 2, 1998.

Our sympathy to **Elmer Francisco** and his family grieving the death of his son-in-law **Lyle White** last November.

## Pacific Region...

God sent HIS holy angels to bring home to heaven the souls of **Vincent Abaravich** and **Marie Elwood.**

# The Mill Neck Foundation for Deaf Ministry offers Mini Grants to the Districts.

The Mill Neck Foundation for Deaf Ministry offered a \$200 Interpreter Grant to the LCMS Districts. This money was to help offset the cost of interpreter services for the District Conventions. The following Districts were funded:

- Eastern District
- Indiana District
- Michigan District
- Minnesota South District
- New Jersey District
- Nebraska District
- Northern Illinois District
- Northwest District
- Ohio District
- Pacific Southwest District
- South Dakota District
- South Wisconsin District
- Texas District

The Oklahoma District also had an interpreter but declined our grant support.

The Mill Neck Foundation wishes to support those congregations whose Deaf members take an active role in church life. The Foundation gives support at the congregational level as well as at the governing level of the Church.

*For more information about the Foundation's grant process call 1-800-264-0662 v/tty. Grant application deadline is March 1, 1998.*

## I Resolve...

## How to live the new year

### **Life is a journey; I will live it trustingly:**

*"Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil for you are with me..."*  
(Psalm 23:4)

### **Life is a task; I will live it obediently:**

*"...and receive from Him anything we ask, because we obey His commands and do what pleases Him."*  
(1 John 3:22)

### **Life is a mission; I will live it helpfully:**

*"Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you."*  
(Ephesians 4:32)

### **Life is a contest; I will live it earnestly:**

*"Be on your guard; stand firm in the faith; be men of courage; be strong."*  
(1 Corinthians 16:13)

### **Life is a battle; I will live it courageously:**

*"Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be terrified; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go."*  
(Joshua 1:9)



## More from Rev. Reinke

We were given the opportunity to witness the story of Lazarus and the Rich Man in Adomrobe this past week. There were two deaths in the village. One was a poor, deaf man. The other a hearing man who was an elder in the village. The poor man was given a quick burial. The rich man was given a funeral fit for a "chief". (We were allowed to observe portions of the hearing man's funeral.) The poor man worshipped with us on Sunday morning and knew Jesus Christ as his savior. The rich man worshipped idols. Who do you think we will meet again?

One good thing is that the rich man had five deaf children - all of who worship with us on Sunday morning. They are struggling with the knowledge that they will not see their father again. Please pray for them.

*John & Dacia (via e-mail)*

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## Worship Under Cover

Maybe it's too easy for us to be church members. What if we had to walk five miles to church every Sunday? And what if we had to answer questions about how often we read the Bible or say our prayers before we were permitted inside the church door? Such requirements might help us to realize how valuable our churches are to us.

There have been people in America who really had a hard time being members of a Lutheran church. On Manhattan Island 350 years ago there wasn't my Radio City or Empire State Building, and also there was no Lutheran Church. About 100 Lutheran families lived in the New York area (then called new Netherlands). They held a meeting in 1649 and decided they would establish a congregation.

That was a lot easier said than done. It wasn't legal to organize a Lutheran congregation. Only the Dutch Reformed Church was allowed to conduct services in the New Netherlands colony. No Lutheran churches existed anywhere in America in those days except several Swedish congregations along the Delaware River. There were no pastors nearer than Europe who could preach to the New York Lutherans in the Dutch language.

Lutherans decided to do something. They wanted their children baptized by their own Pastors, and taught the Lutheran catechism. They were eager to receive Holy Communion at their own altar. So they wrote a letter to Amsterdam in 1649 asking that a Lutheran pastor be sent to them. No pastor came. The Lutherans in Amsterdam knew it was against the law to send one. There was a layman in the New York congregation named Paul Schrick who decided to hold services for the Lutherans in one of the homes. The town council immediately announced that he would be fined \$240 every time he tried to do it, and that everyone who attended would be fined \$60.00.

Finally a pastor, John Gutwasser, came to New Netherlands in 1657. He was threatened with heavy fines if he attempted to conduct services. For nearly two years he tried to win permission, but in 1659 he was deported. The little congregation struggled along, endeavoring to keep in existence, but didn't get a pastor until 1669- after the Dutch had lost control of New York.

During those first 20 years the Lutherans had never given up hope. Finally things moved forward smoothly for them. They built a small church on Broadway in New York City and another in Albany. The New York Synod was celebrating in 1950 the 300th anniversary of the first Lutheran congregation in New York City—where today there are more than 200 Lutheran churches.

It's only a short trip to church now for most people in any American city. And there's no law against going. As we remember the situation 350 years ago we have much reason to be grateful that our church is strong and free in this land in 1998. Perhaps it may pay us to think for a moment about how seriously we would be afflicted if our church were taken away from us.

*Adapted by Henry Walls  
(Former member of Trinity, Pittsburgh)*

 Ash   
Wednesday



*ILDA '99 Committee on tour at Holiday Inn, Independence, Ohio on January 10th in preparation for the 1999 convention.*



## The International Lutheran Deaf Association Membership Dues...

*Active, Associate, or Sustaining Membership... \$5.00 year per person.  
Join God's 1000 Club... \$10.00 year per person.*

### Help support the International Lutheran Deaf Association!

Desiring to be faithful people of God, led by Him and our blessed Saviour, Jesus Christ, and inspired by His Word as it is brought to us in the doctrines, teachings and confessions of The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, the International Lutheran Deaf Association commenced its ministry during its first biennial convention in Chicago in 1971.

Send check or money order payable to: "**The I.L.D.A. Treasurer**" and mail to: **Karen Beiter, ILDA Treasurer, 7300 Briggs Road, Lima, NY 14485.**

SPREAD THE WORDS AROUND. Encourage your Christian friends to join! Write or e-mail to one of your Deaf Lutheran staff for more information.

*"Then looking up to heaven, He sighed and commanded, 'OPEN.' Instantly, the man could hear perfectly and speak plainly!" —Mark 7:34*



PERMIT NO. 1471  
CLEVELAND, OH.  
PAID  
U.S. POSTAGE  
BULK RATE

**January/February, 1998**  
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