



The

Deaf Lutheran



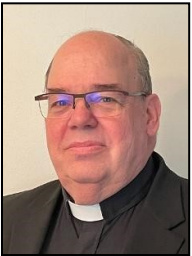
Official Publication of the International Lutheran Deaf Association & the Lutheran Deaf Mission Society

Spring 2025

St. Louis, MO

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Pastoral Advisor Rev. Daryl Gehlbach



Easter Sunday has passed. The world is already planning for the next holiday. Yet for the Christian the Easter season continues past Ascension, arriving at Pentecost fifty days later. It's easy to get caught up in the world's ways and move on. Summer is coming with its holidays, vacations, and time away from school.

However, Easter is not simply a day on a calendar. It's not a moment frozen in time that we visit every year. Easter is all about our faith, our daily life with Jesus.

Our Lord's resurrection, together with His death, is the life changing event for the world. Sin has been paid-for. God's anger has been appeased. Guilt has been removed. Death has been defeated. Eternal life has been procured. Heaven has been opened. This is the Good News that we must hear and believe.

In Holy Baptism, we are united to Jesus' death and resurrection. Our Baptism joins us to Good Friday and Easter. These two events shape our life as God's children. Through daily contrition (sorrow for sin) and repentance (faith), we die and rise with our Savior spiritually. The Old Adam is drowned, and the New Man arises in us to do the works which Christ has prepared.

Thus, we can live confidently and joyfully. We can face the world – we can even face death – and not be afraid. We look forward to our future Easter when Christ will call us from the grave. The same as Jesus arose, we too shall arise with glorified bodies. And we shall dwell with Him in heaven forever.

The cross and the empty tomb. The death and resurrection of Jesus. May the blessings of Good Friday and Easter be with us all!

President Brian Byer



Finding Hope This Easter—And Celebrating Small Victories. A season of New Beginnings

As the days get a little brighter and spring blossoms around us, many of us are thinking about Easter. For Christians, it's the most important time of the year—a chance to remember a story that truly changes everything. It's about remembering Jesus' sacrifice on the cross, a tough and heartbreaking moment. But it doesn't end there. It's about the incredible, unbelievable joy of Easter Sunday, when He rose again!

It's easy to get caught up in the details, but at its heart, Easter is a message of hope. It says that even when things feel impossible, even when we've made mistakes, there's always a chance for a fresh start. The Bible puts it beautifully: Isaiah 53:5 (NIV) tells us He took on our burdens, and Matthew 28:6 (NIV) shouts the good news—"He is not here; He has risen!"

That feeling of rising above...it's powerful. It reminds us that God's love is stronger than anything, even death. John 11:25 (NIV) says, "I am the resurrection and the life," and that's a promise we can all hold onto. It's a reminder that even when life feels hard, there's a hope that lasts beyond this world. And 1 Peter 1:3 (NIV) reminds us that through Jesus, we're given a brand-new beginning, a living hope. It's okay to admit we're not perfect. We all stumble and fall. But Easter reminds us that God knows that, and He loves us anyway. He's patient with us, and He's always there to offer forgiveness and a helping hand.

Speaking of new beginnings, I wanted to share about myself in our community. I have recently finished my Supply Chain Logistics

Certification from Macomb Community College! I have been working towards this goal since January and it's a huge accomplishment.

We should all be thinking about Easter, how this helped us through the challenges. This reminded me that we all do make mistakes, but God's love and patience are endless. I'm so thankful I was able to stick with it and finally achieve this!

It's stories like these that really make you smile. It shows what can happen when you set a goal, work hard, and trust in something bigger than yourself. It's a reminder that even small victories deserve to be celebrated.

Wishing you and your family a peaceful and joyful Easter filled with hope, love, and maybe a little bit of celebration!

Call for hosts—2028 ILDA Convention

The ILDA Board is currently looking for interested hosts for the 2028 International Lutheran Deaf Association (ILDA) Convention. If you, your church, or your organization is interested in hosting this important bi-annual event, please submit a letter of intent to the ILDA President.

Your letter should include:

1. Your name or group name
2. The proposed location
3. Brief reasons why you would like to host the 2028 ILDA convention

We encourage all who are interested to prayerfully consider this opportunity to serve and connect with the Deaf Lutheran community. Please send your letter to the ILDA President by June 30, 2025:

Brian Byer
19192 Cheyenne St.
Clinton Township, MI 48036

If you have any questions call VP 586-239-0022 or 586-580-4725.

Treasurer John Mason



Good News! Mission Project donations have met the \$3,000 goal for LDMS—Kenya. During the ILDA's Executive Council meeting this coming May it will be discussed what to do with the carry over of \$444.00 if it should be added to the Kenya mission or carried over to the 2026-2028 Mission Projects, presuming if we will have a 2028 ILDA convention.

I want to remind you that your old membership card expires on May 31, 2025. I hope you still have your form to renew your membership which I mailed back in the Fall or Winter 2024 issue of the Deaf Lutheran newsletter. If not, you can use the past issue of the Deaf Lutheran to make yourself a copy or see Page 6 in this issue. If you prefer, you can email me to request a copy and I will send it to you. Let me know which you prefer, mail or send an attachment via email. You will need a new membership card for June 1, 2025 to May 31, 2027 before you attend the 2026 ILDA Convention in Florence, Kentucky. As of now, we have 28 ILDA members.

John Mason, ILDA Treasurer
2024-2026

Great Lakes Region Conference July 11-13, 2025 Rochester, NY

Member of the GLRC?
Mark your calendar to attend this conference.

Call Day assignments—Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, Missouri



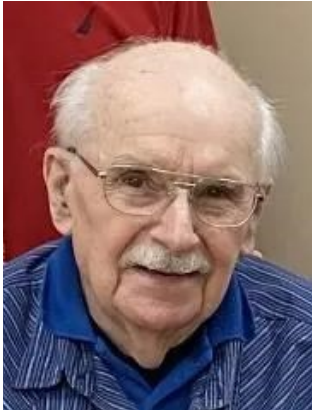
Vincent Mroz called as a
Missionary—Deaf
Ministry in the Eastern
District



Daniel Wallis called to
Holy Cross Lutheran Deaf
Church, St. Louis, MO



In Memoriam



Rev. Dr. Louis Jasper

B: 5/19/1934

D: 2/3/2025

Rev. Jasper served the deaf in the New York city area and founded four deaf schools in Hong Kong and Macau.



Rev. Phillip (Mike) MacDonald

B: 11/29/1949

D: 3/11/2025

Rev. MacDonald served congregations in Cedar Rapids, Iowa and Charlotte, North Carolina.

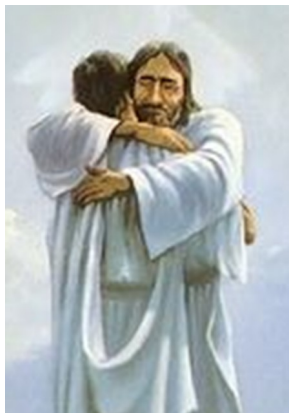


Lynn Ginter

B: 8/11/1951

D: 3/17/2025

Lynn was a member of Christ Lutheran Deaf Church and Holy Cross Deaf Lutheran Church. She was also active in ILDA and LWML.



Blessed be
their memory

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 — vacant

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

Dr. Jenny Asher installed as Director of Deaconess Studies at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, MO



Dr. Asher previously served as a deaconess in Deaf Ministry in the New England District and also Concordia-River Forest, River Forest, IL, as the Director of Deaconess Studies before accepting the call to Concordia Seminary.

She is fluent in sign language and will be a great asset to the deaf women who currently are studying at the Concordia Seminary deaconess program as well as those in the program in the future.

Lutheran Deaf Mission Society sponsors mission trip to Kenya

(written by Pastor Tim Eckert, Word of God Deaf Church, Cedar Rapids, Iowa)

Pastor Tim Eckert traveled to Kisumu, Kenya, for a mission trip January 22-31, 2025. The Lutheran Deaf Mission Society (LDMS) is partnering with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Kenya (ELCK) to help them with Deaf ministry. LDMS is supporting a hearing pastor in Kisumu to gain the skills necessary to lead Deaf ministry for the whole church.

ILDA and other donors have supported Deaf children in Kenya by paying for their school fees. The same has happened in many places in Africa, there are many deaf children who are kept at home and never go to school. The parents don't understand the needs of a deaf child and often don't have the money to send them to school. (School, especially boarding school, is not free in Kenya). If the children don't go to school, they can't learn a language. If they don't know sign language, how can you teach them about Jesus? One of the greatest needs in the rural areas of Kenya is teaching the communities about the needs of the Deaf and helping deaf children go to school.

The ELCK has given LDMS a proposal to start a Lutheran school for the Deaf. That way more children can get a good education and especially learn about Jesus, their Savior. LDMS will be considering this proposal.

One of the most exciting things from this trip was working with Titus, a young Deaf man who graduated from school several years ago. He knows the Bible well, is smart, and wants to be pastor! We will be working with the church to train him and prepare him to become a Lutheran pastor for the Deaf in Kenya.

Some of the money ILDA has given for Kenya has been used to pay school fees. Some of the money was used to buy goats for the family. When the goats have babies ("kids"), the family can sell them and have money to help pay for school or things the children need in school. Titus wrote a thank-you for this support.

"I want to thank you for the goat project that you gave me and also the conference that I attended (in) Kisumu. The goat is going well and has 3 children, which one is pregnant. And I wanted to tell you that in the future I wish to be a pastor and may you help me to do that? Thank you for reading this."

Thank God for this blessing and thank you to ILDA for your support of this work!



Pictured l. to r.: Archbishop Omolo, Rev. Luvisha, Pastor Eckert, and Deaconess Rosemary



Titus on the left in the green shirt



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Make your check or money order payable
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All subscriptions should be sent to the
address below. Thanks!

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:

Summer issue.....July 15, 2025

Fall issue.....October 15, 2025

Winter issue.....January 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
Janet Gehlbach, Editor
305 Liberty St. NE
Fridley, MN 55432

Spring Issue 2025

RETURN ADDRESS REQUESTED



**ILDA Mission Projects for 2024-2026
as of April 1, 2025**

	Funds Requested	Donations up-to-date
Lutheran Deaf Mission Society -- Kenya	\$3,000	\$3,444 (114.5%)*

* \$444 to be determined by the ILDA's board of officers. If we have 2028 ILDA Convention host, it will be carried over to ILDA Mission Projects 2026-2028.

Donations for the ILDA 2024-2026 Mission Projects can be sent to: John Mason, ILDA Treasurer, 6721 Deep Run Parkway, Elkridge, Maryland 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 United States and foreign countries.