

December 2018—February 2019



The Deaf Episcopalian



*Look inside
to find the
Church Mouse!*

- ⇒ **New Deaf Congregation
in New York!**
- ⇒ **Meet the new Editors!**
- ⇒ **On the first Day of Christmas...**

**Read more about this and other
exciting news inside!**

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ADVENT IS HERE!

The season of Advent has begun. It is an interesting time of year, because the days get shorter and shorter (especially in the north). In some places it is dark outside by 4:30 pm! Experiencing so much darkness can be difficult for some people. They might find it depressing. At the same time that the darkness is growing stronger, we are lighting each of the candles on our Advent wreaths, one by one, another candle each week. The light of the candles grows stronger and stronger as more candles are lit. This light symbolizes the coming Light of Christ. Christ is the Light of the World, and we believe that when he came into the world as a baby in Bethlehem, he revealed

the Light of God and the Glory of God to all humankind.

In Advent we wait with hope and expectation for the birth of the baby Jesus in Bethlehem. God takes on a human body and becomes one with us in the person of Jesus. But in Advent we are also awaiting Jesus' Second Coming, when he will come at the end of time to judge the world and to save us from all sin and sorrow and suffering. Then he will create a new heaven and a new earth, and there will be no more sickness or hunger or pain. He will wipe away every tear from our eyes. What a glorious promise we have in Him!

- The Rev. Dick Mahaffy

“In antiquity, purple dye was very expensive, so purple came to signify wealth, power and royalty. Therefore, purple is the color for the season of Advent, which celebrates the coming of the King.” -Episcopal Diocese of Texas website

WHAT DO THE CANDLES MEAN?



Hope: The remembrance of the prophets, especially Isaiah, who foretold the birth of Christ. It represents the anticipation of the coming of the Messiah.

Peace: A reminder of Mary and Joseph's journey to Bethlehem.

Joy: Gaudete Sunday reminds us of the joy the world experienced at the birth of Christ.

Love: Reminds us of the message of the angels "Peace on earth and good will toward men."

The **white** candle, which is lit on Christmas Day, represents the life of Christ and reminds us that Jesus is the light of the world.

Greetings from St. Thomas Deaf Church in St. Louis



St. Thomas members Linford & Sharon Dilks with Deaf Circle facilitator Deborah Mayer.

Submitted by: Rev. Emily Hillquist Davis

St. Thomas worships in Sign Language with Deaf-Culture flexibility every Sunday at 10am. Our weekly attendance averages 11 this year. Our Vicar, Rev. Emily Hillquist Davis (now in her 11th year) tries to make the scriptures and worship more and more Deaf-friendly and clear.

Five years ago we started a monthly evening program called **Deaf Circle** to offer opportunities to explore in ASL a wide range of practices for spiritual, emotional, and physical wellness. Rev. Emily partners with Deborah Mayer, a life coach of Jewish heritage who is Deaf herself and leads wellness retreats nationally. The diverse leadership attracts people from a variety of faith traditions. Program attendance

numbers are about the same as our church attendance, though few St. Thomas members come to Deaf Circle.

Our programs alternate between Deborah or Emily teaching on soul topics and other people leading and teaching experiences. Deaf presenters tell us they've never had an opportunity to teach before — things like Tai Chi, chair yoga, essential oils, and Hip-Hop dance.



St. Thomas Sr. & Jr. Wardens Ron Selinger and Mary Lee Graner helped set the tables.

Sometimes we invite hearing presenters and provide interpreting to offer instruction rarely accessible to Deaf people, such as drum circle, international folk dance, and various healing and health practices.

In November, Deaf Circle and St. Thomas members together prepared a meal and games, which we enjoyed with Deaf clients of local social workers in November.

Visit deafchurchSTL.org to learn more about St. Thomas Deaf Church.



ASL Soup Café: the event

Winter Collect

Almighty God, give us grace to cast away the works of darkness, and put on the armor of light, now in the time of this mortal life in which your son, Jesus Christ, came to visit us in great humility; that in the last day, when he shall come again in his glorious majesty to judge both the living and the dead, we may rise to the life immortal; through him who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

BOARD MEMBER

HIGHLIGHT

Hello! My name is the Rev. Richard Mahaffy. I am an ordained Deaf priest of the Episcopal Church. I communicate with people orally (i.e. through speech and lip-reading) and with Sign Language. I was educated at the Clarke School for the Deaf in Northampton, Massachusetts, and the Williston-Northampton School in Easthampton, Massachusetts. I went on to earn a Bachelor's Degree in Religion from Trinity College in Hartford, Connecticut. I worked in the insurance, investment, and financial service industry for over fifteen years. In 2011, I began attending the Episcopal Divinity School in Cambridge, Massachusetts and earned a Master of Divinity degree in 2016. I was ordained as a deacon in May 2016 and as a priest in January 2017 through the Diocese of Western Massachusetts. In June 2017, I was elected President of the Episcopal Conference of the Deaf (ECD) at their convention in Birmingham, Alabama. My hobbies are reading books, collecting antiques, and walking. My husband, Doug and I were married in the Episcopal Church in 2015. We moved to Florida last year. We have two beautiful pugs.

ECD BOARD MEMBERS

THE ECD BOARD OF DIRECTORS IS ELECTED FROM THE MEMBERSHIP OF ECD CONVENTIONS.



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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear E.C.D. Members and Friends,

Many people in our country and throughout the world are discouraged and depressed about the things they see happening in our world. We are concerned about gun violence, about global warming, about political unrest, about natural disasters like wildfires and earthquakes, about the difficulty of getting jobs with good wages and health benefits. We worry about the division in our country between Republicans and Democrats, between White people and People of Color, between the wealthy and the poor, between people from different nations or cultures. There is so much that seems “dark” and discouraging in the world today.

But we Christians are a people of HOPE! We do not give up, because we believe God is with us in all these difficulties and in all our struggles. We believe we have a Savior who can save us and heal us and reconcile us to God and to one another. This means that we can be people of JOY and CONFIDENCE, even when things seem so broken and troubled.

We often speak of the many challenges that face the E.C.D. and all Deaf ministries right now. But we do not give up hope! Even in trouble, God's grace is at work! Emmanuel, God with us, today and every day. We are never alone.

Support and encourage one another in love. Look for the signs of God's grace in your lives and in your church. Give thanks and bless the Lord for all things. Wait with hope and expectation, even in troubled times. God will not forsake us.

May God bless you in the seasons of Advent and Christmas. May God's Light shine upon you. May you show God's Light to other people and to the whole world, which needs HOPE and JOY and LOVE so desperately.

In Christ,

The Rev. Dick Mahaffy



Church Is Open....Or Is It?

Submitted by: Beth Klein



When you enter most towns, you can find a church with the familiar Episcopal shield and often times a small black sign that says “Church is Open”. But is the church really open to all? If you are Deaf or Hard of Hearing, whether you use ASL, or spoken English, or a mixture of the two, accessing the Word of God in the average Episcopal Church is challenging or even impossible. What can be done to break down these barriers? How can partnering with Deaf community members and parents of Deaf children provide a less paternalistic approach to providing these services and reaching out to the Deaf community?

Typically, a church’s first interaction with a Deaf person is when they are approached by a Deaf person or a family member requesting interpreters. This can be challenging for churches as many do not realize that truly including a Deaf person in our community is more than simply placing an interpreter in the front of the church and shyly smiling at them. Truly including Deaf in community means offering access to services, encouraging church members to learn sign language, and having clergy or designated lay persons work with the Deaf person interested in joining. Taking advantage of the rich means of communicating such as video phone, texting, and social media, can help create friendships and nurture relationships.

St. George’s Episcopal Church in Fredericksburg, Virginia has been offering ASL interpreters at Easter and Christmas for several years. In January of 2018, St. George’s started offering interpreted services every Sunday at their 9 am Jazz Service. They have also been able to provide an internship site for a recent Liberty University graduate. This provides additional training in Episcopal specific terminology in a parish that embraces both the liturgical tradition and modern, inclusive language.

In addition to ASL interpreters at Sunday Services, St. George’s also provides interpreters for a monthly Plant-Based Cooking Class and monthly Grace in Action (outreach) meetings for Deaf community members that are active participants in these events.

Lastly, by utilizing funding from the Episcopal Conference of the Deaf, St. George’s was able to offer low cost ASL classes for the community, open to anyone interested in learning about ASL or the Deaf community. Michael Byrd taught two classes which were both very well received. Michael is Deaf and has more than 30 years of experience teaching ASL at a variety of levels – from high school to university.

Perhaps the most inspiring aspect of these community ASL classes is the number of parents and other family members of Deaf children that have attended. Thanks to the teacher and other Deaf visitors, these classes gave an opportunity for meeting positive Deaf role models and making connections with the community.

Opening our churches to those who communicate through ASL - whether they are Deaf or a family member of a Deaf person - allows all of us to “Love your neighbor as yourself” (Matthew 22:39) and truly welcome all into the Kingdom of God.

CATHEDRAL CHURCH OF SAINT JOHN THE DIVINE CELEBRATES 125TH CORNERSTONE ANNIVERSARY



Old picture of Saint John Cathedral, Image obtained from <http://www.stjohndivine.org/about/history>

In 1828, the concept of a Episcopal Cathedral in New York was brought up to the Mayor at the time, Philip Horne, by Bishop John Henry Hobart. Over 60 years and three Bishops later, on St. John's Day, 1892, the first cornerstone was laid by Bishop Henry Potter. On November 18, 2018, The Cathedral

Church of Saint John the Divine honored the 125th anniversary of this day in a Festive Evensong celebration. The event was attended by many parishioners from St. Ann's Church for the Deaf.



Top right: Presiding Bishop, Michael Curry (left)
Rev. Dr. Gene Bourquin, Pastoral Missioner to the Deaf, Diocese of NY (interpreting)

Top left: Evilyn Schafer and members of
Saint Ann's Episcopal Church
for the Deaf

Bottom left: Mother Maria Santiviago
with Fr. Erich Anderson-Krengel

To view the bulletin and captioned YouTube video of this event, visit the calendar page of <https://www.stjohndivine.org>



“THE TABLE”

Lutheran Episcopal Campus Ministry at RIT/NTID

Submitted by: The Rev. Laurence Wainwright-Maks

As we have entered into the season of Advent, I am grateful for the chance to slow down and reflect upon this past year and Fall 2018 semester. Over the summer, I accepted a call to the Episcopal Diocese of Rochester to be the Missioner to the Deaf and Episcopal Chaplain at Rochester Institute of Technology and the National Technical Institute for the Deaf. The ministry that I work with on the campus of RIT/NTID is called, “The Table,” and is a joint campus ministry between the Episcopal Diocese of Rochester and the Lutheran, Genesee Finger Lakes Conference of the Upstate New York Synod.



AdventWord and RIT/NTID Instructor, Camille Oullette

The Fall 2018 semester has been a rollercoaster of good and bad events. All of which has made me grateful for my position and to be here in Rochester, NY. Our semester began with several orientation events and just getting the word out there about our ministries and what we were wanting to do. The most memorable event was at NTID for what they call, “Apple Fest” and The Fall Fair. Both were a great opportunity to meet students and talk with them about our ministry and other faith-based communities on campus.

Then, in October, one of the NTID staff died unexpectedly. Being the only Chaplain who was ASL fluent and pastorally trained, I went and

stayed with students, faculty, and staff all day. The whole day I was there to be present and available. Later, in October, the Diocese of Rochester, commissioned me as the Missioner to the Deaf and I was involved in the planning of our Diocesan Convention. I began a small group to collectively put together our AdventWord videos. We started with 4 (hearing and Deaf) and one professor (Deaf). All proficient signers. After filming the videos, our group shrunk a little due to busy schedules, but we continue to meet for Bible Study each Friday to look at the Gospel of Matthew. At the end of October tragic event took place when a student on campus took his own life. Again, the importance for someone to be able to communicate with students who are Deaf and trained to respond in that situation is surprisingly rare and needed on this campus.

Since, my arrival, I have tried to improve upon the current ministry at The Table and make it more accessible to our students at NTID. We have a Power Point of our liturgy, so that both hands are free to worship. We are working on our digital platform. Also, I am regularly there on campus and looking to move more of our ministry and events to that side of campus. I love my new job and this call! It’s been tough, but has also been equally challenging and fulfilling.



Rev Laurence, Cami, and RIT/NTID Interpreting student, Eliza McDaniel

STOP. THIS IS THE WAY!

THE START OF A NEW DEAF CONGREGATION AT HOLYROOD EPISCOPAL CHURCH - IGLESIA SANTA CRUZ IN UPPER MANHATTAN, NYC

Submitted by: The Rev. María Isabel Santiviago, Associate Priest



Julio opening service, August 26

I rushed to get ready for Church on another beautiful, sunny, warm day in mid-August. We had just become a sanctuary church and were still in the planning stages, getting spaces ready to accommodate future guests, when we were notified that our first guests were coming. Once in church, with so much to do, we lost track of time. It was already 1:00 pm when we stopped to get lunch for everybody!

We are very lucky in Santa Cruz because there are many restaurants only a block away. Father Luis was walking ahead with a helper while I was trailing half a block behind with another. Suddenly, I saw a vaguely familiar face walking in the opposite direction. I told the others to wait as I hurried to catch up to the man who just passed us. When I reached him, I began to wave my hands in his face to make him stop. At first he was startled and then, when he recognized me, we hugged and cried. It was Zenón, a student of mine from the School for the Deaf in the Dominican Republic from back in the 70s. He was such a wonderful child!!! Zenón pointed at my collar. I explained that some years ago I felt the calling and had become a priest, and told him that my church, Holyrood/Santa Cruz, was just one block up. I invited him to stop by church the next Sunday to reconnect and we went our separate ways.

That night, at home, I went over the experience of finding Zenón. Remembering the invitation I extend-

ed to him, I suddenly panicked! What was I going to do if he came! Since I retired from St Ann's, in 2012, I did not use signs since I spent most of the time in Paraguay, my country. Frantically, I began to practice signing the Eucharist. I was terrible!

Sunday came. At 10:00 am, Fr. Luis and I began the Service. Zenón was not in church. I had mixed feelings. I was relieved because I did not have to sign, but also disappointed, I wanted to see him again. We were doing the readings when Zenón walked in and sat in the front pew. I immediately began signing, even though the congregation had not been told why and had no idea of what was happening, and Zenón, since that day, never missed a Sunday in more than a year.

The next Sunday, Julio, another student from the deaf school in the Dominican Republic walked in, then Lidia, Carlos and their family. Others also have been coming but less regularly.

This is how we started our Ministry. We did not have long planning discussions, we did not write a proposal to the Vestry, we were not even thinking about it, but that "coincidental" crossing of our paths in a very busy and crowded street showed us the way.

Little by little, together, hearing and deaf, are learning so many wonderful things about God and ourselves. Love of God and neighbor is a way of being in our trilingual-bimodal services and respectful, welcoming and inclusive environment. Thanks be to God for showing us the way!



Julio, Fr. Luis, and Zenón

Your Annual Membership is Due Soon

Membership is open to any person interested in supporting the Episcopal Church's ministry with Deaf and Hard of Hearing people. Membership includes a subscription to our printed publication The Deaf Episcopalian.

Membership in the Episcopal Conference of the Deaf is \$10.00 per calendar year. If membership fee is mailed after February 28, 2019, please add \$5 late fee.

Please contact our ECD Membership Secretary, Ron Selinger at member-at-large2@ecdeaf.org if you have any questions.



New member Renewal

Name: _____

Street: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Email address: _____

Phone number: _____ Voice/VP Text

Parish: _____ City/State: _____

Your role in the church? (rector, lay minister, etc.) _____

Please send your check payable to the **Episcopal Conference of the Deaf** to:

Ron Selinger, Membership Secretary
St. Thomas Deaf Church
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514 E. Argonne Drive
St. Louis, MO 63122



Donate Today

ECD is a non-profit organization that is supported by membership fees and donations.

Donations and bequests are greatly appreciated.

Yes, I would like to donate \$ _____



Across:

- 7. Decorative fir in the house
- 9. A fund raising Sale
- 11. Frigid falling flurries
- 12. Marks the end of the 12 Days of Christmas
- 13. The chief disciples of Jesus Christ

Down:

- 1. Communion worship
- 2. Founded first Episcopal church for the Deaf
- 3. Hand socks
- 4. The representation of Jesus Christ's Birth
- 6. Neck warming accessory
- 8. Baked treats in varieties that include sugar, chocolate chip, and gingerbread

TRIVIA AND FUN FACTS

Why is the third Sunday of Advent called "Rose Sunday"?

Who played George Bailey in the Christmas classic *It's A Wonderful Life*

All snowflakes have 6 sides

TRUE

FALSE

What day is Epiphany?

Though January 1st is considered the New Year, the Church still considers the first day of Advent to be the start of a new year.

LETTER FROM THE EDITORS

Winter is here, and so are the new editors of The Deaf Episcopalian! We are so thrilled to have the opportunity to take your article submissions and share them with the Deaf Episcopalian community.

Elizabeth and Jannie Holland are sisters who are as different as night and day, but work best together. Jannie is the artistic sister, enjoying painting, writing, technology, and photography. Elizabeth is the community and communication focused sister, driven to build and maintain relationships within her community and beyond!

Elizabeth is an ASL interpreter for a local school system, as well as an active member at her church. Jannie recently got a new job working as a call center representative at Mutual of Enumclaw Insurance, and hopes to move up in the company in the future.

Both girls are CODA's, and have indirectly lived most of their lives within the Deaf community. Growing up with a Deaf mom has planted not an obligation but a desire to advocate for the Deaf and HOH community. They felt that The Deaf Episcopalian was an

opportunity to assist the ECD in bridging the gap between the Deaf community and the Episcopal Church.

We check our e-mail and the ECD Facebook page regularly, so feel free to contact us any time about something you may want to see in the newsletter!

We look forward to working for you!

Your editors,

Jannie and Elizabeth Holland



If you have anything you wish to see in the newsletter, let us know! It can be a picture (with description), a story, an update, or even identifying certain people for their hard work in the Deaf Episcopalian community.

Contact us at deaf.episcopalian@ecdeaf.org

TRIVIA AND PUZZLE ANSWERS

Across:

7-Christmas tree; 9-
Bazaar;
11-snow;
12-Epiphany;
13-Apostles

Down:

1- Eucharist
2- Gallaudet;
3- mittens;
4-Nativity;
6-scarf;
8-cookies

-The third Sunday of
Advent (Gaudete
Sunday) is called
Rose Sunday be-
cause of the pink
colors used to sym-
bolize hope and joy.

-James Stewart
played George Bailey
and was nominate
for a Best Actor
Golden Globe Award
for his performance

-True

-January Sixth is the
first day of Epiphany
and is the manifesta-
tion of Christ. It is
also the day after
Twelfth Night, the
12th day of Christ-
mas.

WORDS OF A CHURCH MOUSE

Another newsletter, another church mouse
message, directly from the mouse's mouth...
so to speak.

First of all, I truly hope everybody reading
this, and all of your families and friends,
have a wonderful holiday season! I am invit-
ing my whole family to Christmas dinner—
all 360 of them!!

I get so excited for the Christmas holiday to
arrive, but the season wouldn't be the same
without the anticipation that leads up to it.

Advent reminds us to pause and be intentional in our lives. The season can
seem dark and never-ending, but good news is on its way and that is so thrill-
ing! What is the good news, you ask? Why, Christmas is here, of course! And
we celebrate the birth of Jesus with 12 whole days of partying! Then comes
the wonderful Twelfth Night. I am so excited, I am going to stay up all night
long!

I only see the people who are in the church while I am stopping to say hello. I
travel from church to church, coast to coast, and even beyond the shore to
visit fellow Mouscopalians in other countries.

I would love to hear what you are doing for this holiday season; let me know
the next time you see me in your church!

(Whispering in background)

"What's that? I'm invisible?"

Sorry folks! Just learned us church mice can't be seen. Just assume I'm al-
ways around.

Enjoy the season and stay safe and warm. Until next time!

-The Church Mouse



THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS



**Your donations help support the ECD in its mission to advocate
and support deaf ministries around the country.**

If you would like to donate, see the membership form on page 11.

The Twelve Days of Christmas

Ever wondered if the song “The Twelve Days of Christmas” had anything to do with Christmas, other than the twelve days between Christmas Day and Epiphany? There is a *theory* circulating that this song has a lot more to do with Christmas and the Bible than you may think.

- 1—God or Jesus Christ**
- 2—New and Old Testaments**
- 3—Faith, hope, and charity**
- 4—The Four Gospels**
- 5—The first five books of the Old Testament**
- 6—Six days of creation**
- 7—Seven Sacraments**
- 8—The 8 Beatitudes (Matthew 5:13 - 12)**
- 9—The 9 fruits of the Holy Spirit**
- 10—The Ten Commandments**
- 11—The 11 faithful apostles**
- 12—The 12 points of belief in the Apostles Creed**



This theory is not verified and we do not have any factual basis to back it up; however, what a fun way to look at the classic song!

BIG News!

The Presiding Bishop, the Rt. Rev. Michael Curry, and the President of the House of Deputies, the Rev. Gay Clark Jennings, announced this month the appointment of ECD Board members, Cass Martensen and the Rev. Suzanne Johnston, to the new Advisory Council on Disability and Deaf Access.

Also appointed was the Rev. Gene Bourquin, Pastoral Missioner to the Deaf for the Diocese of New York. These three will join a few other people from around the country to advise the national church on disability and deaf access within its diocese across the country. The positions are for a 3 year term.

They will be communicating with you through The Deaf Episcopalian. Look for future updates!



The Deaf Episcopalian



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