



# The Deaf Episcopalian

Sept—Nov 2020

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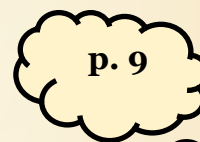
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# Board News

## Grants

Just a reminder for all churches, ministries, and projects out there. The last day to submit a grant request is September 30th. Make sure you visit the ECD website [www.ecdeaf.org](http://www.ecdeaf.org) to ensure you have all the required information and paperwork.

Submit your grant request to [grant@ecdeaf.org](mailto:grant@ecdeaf.org)



## Website

The ECD website is getting an upgrade. How exciting! It is in the process of being completely revamped.

Take the opportunity to check out the current website and if you feel like something should be added or expanded upon, email the ECD board your thoughts.

There are a couple new items on the website, including a very welcoming mouse! You should try and find him. Below is a picture of him at his front door, welcoming people in for communion... or is that dinner?



## ECD Board Members

The ECD Board of Directors is elected from the membership of ECD Conven-



**The Rev. Richard "Dick" Mahaffy**

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***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](mailto:deaf.episcopalian@ecdeaf.org)***

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# ECD 75<sup>th</sup> Convention Updates

## Pack your bags for August 2021!



View of Mt. Rainier  
Ferry on Puget Sound

### The ECD 75th convention is back on!

The committee is excited to announce that the convention will take place at Dumas Bay Centre, in Federal Way, Washington, on **August 10-14, 2021**, subject to the ongoing global coronavirus crisis.

**Breaking News!!** We have been talking about the possibility of livestreaming parts of the convention! Look for further news regarding the convention, and maybe a pre-convention sunset extravaganza.

Please contact convention chair, Lee Holland if you have any questions, [vice-president@ecdeaf.org](mailto:vice-president@ecdeaf.org)

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## Report from Law Committee



As previously written in last Deaf Episcopalian issue, we wrote that the ECD needs to amend our by-laws to match the requirement established by The Episcopal Church. The current by-laws need to be updated to ensure compliance with the non-profit status. This also allows us to update our governing documents more easily.

***On the advice of our Canon attorney, we merged the Constitution into the by-laws.***

***The ECD Board recommends that the amended bylaws are passed so that our organization can streamline our affiliation with The Episcopal Church.***

There will be a special online ballot for the ECD's by-laws amendment in October. Article VIII of the ECD by-laws states that any amendment to the by-laws must be passed by two-thirds of the members at the convention. However, due to the current crisis leading to the decision to postpone the convention, the board has agreed that in place of voting at convention, **the ECD will need passing votes from at least two-thirds of all current ECD members through an online voting platform**, which allows for anonymous votes. You will receive complete information around September 15th. There will be several Q&A sessions to give you an opportunity ask law committee members for clarity before you vote.

### Tentative Dates

September 15 – mail from ECD arrives (estimate date)

Sept 20 to Oct 3 – Q&A sessions (dates will be announced in mail)

October 4 – Emails with link to vote (this is one vote per email address)

October 15 – voting ends

### YOUR VOTES ARE NEEDED

Two-thirds of all current members **must** support the new By-Laws in order for the motion to pass.

**If your contact information has changed**, please email your current email and mailing address with your name to [membership@ECDeaf.org](mailto:membership@ECDeaf.org).

If you have any question: [bylaws@ecdeaf.org](mailto:bylaws@ecdeaf.org)

# Greetings from the President of ECD

Hello, beloved friends!

I hope you have had a good summer. Fall is approaching soon!

At our recent “All-ECD Sunday Deaf Worship Together from East to West”, I gave a sermon about a story in Matthew 14:13-21. In this story, it shows that Jesus – who reveals to us what God is like – is full of compassion for people. He sees that they are tired and hungry. He wants his disciples to feed them. He shows us that God cares. God cares about the hungry, just as God cares about those who are poor, or sick, or in prison. This is mission of God in the world: to bring good news to the poor, to offer healing and hope to people who are sick or sad, to lift up people who are oppressed, to care for all those who struggle in life. We, too – because we love God and follow Jesus – have a part to play in this mission of God in the world.

That seems very clear from Jesus’s response to his disciples: “YOU give them something to eat,” Jesus tells them after they suggest the crowd be sent away to go find food. It must have been a shock to the disciples. Why were they responsible? How could they possibly feed so many people? What Jesus was asking seemed impossible. We might think the same thing: Why is it our responsibility to feed the hungry people who live in poor neighborhoods or on the streets of our cities?

The need is great. Especially in this time with Covid-19. Many people have lost their jobs, and many people are unable to feed their families. There are long lines at Food Banks all over the country. People are waiting for hours to get food. “YOU give them something to eat” is one of those difficult sayings of Jesus that challenges us and makes us feel uncomfortable. WE have to be part of the solution; WE are supposed to act with God’s compassion to make sure that people have food and shelter and work to do.

It looks like an impossible task. “We have nothing here but five loaves and two fish,” the disciples explain – our resources are really not enough to meet the demand. “Bring them here to me,” Jesus says, and with our limited resources he works miracles. The problems that surround us will always be overwhelming, our resources will always be not enough, but God tells us to offer them anyway. Do what you can do; give what you can give – even if it seems like it’s not enough!

“You give them something to eat” is the heart of this miracle. Jesus is saying those words to US today, just as clearly as he said them to his disciples. There is a hungry world out there, and it is our responsibility, our duty, to feed them. This hunger is both spiritual and physical.

When we recognize that the task is so big that it seems impossible, then we know that we have to trust in God. That’s a good thing. Trusting God does not mean that we can sit by and do nothing. We know we can’t do everything – but we CAN do something! Maybe we can take an interest in one person or one family or one project. Maybe we can help one organization that is working to feed the poor. Maybe we can volunteer our time, and share our resources, and start to simplify our own lives. It’s important to do something even we can’t imagine how our small contribution can change such a huge and difficult problem.

Leave that to God. Give your small efforts, your gifts and your prayers to God and let God include them in the work that God is already doing. God is already in that situation, in that specific place of need, and you can trust God to use your small gift.

Do something to make a difference in the world today, this week, this year. There are many ways to help, even if you don't have much money or time. Show compassion to others, just like God has shown compassion to you. Love others in the same way that God loves you. Especially in this time of Covid-19 when so many people are suffering. We have to be generous with what we have been given, and not turn away from the suffering and the poor just because they make us uncomfortable or because their situation overwhelms us. Send a donation, or send some food to the Food Bank, or search the Internet to see how you might get involved in addressing the problem of hunger in the world, or any other concern that touches your heart. Don't let the size of the task discourage you. Do what you can. It feels good to help somebody.

And remember these words of Jesus: "YOU give them something to eat."

Please be well and stay safe.

Blessings,

The Rev Richard "Dick" Mahaffy



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## Celebration of Life



Kary Hattaway passed away Friday, May 30th, following a long illness. She was in peace when she passed at Georgetown University Hospital in Washington, DC. Her husband Tom was able to visit her and be with her, thanks to the wonderful ICU team who worked so hard to keep Kary at peace.

Kary had a passion for life and for her family. She was active within St. Barnabas in different ways, including as a Lay Reader. She will never be forgotten.

Kary is survived by her husband, Tom, Tom's daughter, Emily Ash, and her mother, Beverly Dyer, along with the Hattaway and Dyer families.



Norman Arthur Pierce of Darien passed away of natural causes on July 1, 2020. He was born January 1, 1935. Norman lived a full life with many adventures. Norman was a machine designer by trade, and one of his hobbies was genealogy, where he traced his roots back to colonial times and reconnecting with family across the Atlantic Ocean.

Norman was involved with the Deaf Episcopal Church, having been treasurer and a Lay Reader for the Ascension Mission of the Deaf for many years. He was also an active member of the Connecticut Deaf Senior Citizens and the Rhode Island School for the Deaf Alumni Association, where he served as Secretary."

Norman is survived by his wife, Cindy, his children, and his grandchildren, along with the extended Pierce families.

*O God, whose mercies cannot be numbered: Accept our prayers on behalf of your servants Kary and Norman, and grant them an entrance into the land of light and joy, in the fellowship of your saints; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, One God, now and for ever. AMEN*

# St. Ann's Going Strong in its 168<sup>th</sup> Year

## The life of an inner-city Church of the Deaf

by: Deacon Gene Bourquin



St. Ann's Church for the Deaf, founded by Thomas Gallaudet in 1852, is often thought of as "the mother church" for Deaf people. Its history includes pioneering evangelism, and a legacy of being a community center, advocate, and pastoral caregiver. Today, St. Ann's serves a particularly diverse population. While we are housed in a beautiful historical church building, we are nonetheless within a short walk to public and non-profit housing established for Deaf and Deafblind people who are poor, or ill, or have mental health challenges. From elegant events at the Presiding Bishop's residence to the hallways of housing projects, St. Ann's is a strong Episcopal presence in NYC.

Members of St. Ann's Church for the Deaf

### WORSHIP

Perhaps St. Ann's biggest challenge in the past years was to bring accessible worship to our congregation during the pandemic. There were many obstacles, so one-by-one, we began educating parishioners on how to use Zoom, as we ourselves mastered the software and hardware. In addition, we had a number of people with no Wi-Fi, cell phones, or laptops. Using a Deaf interpreter, we designed a system where we could connect with parishioners through VRS at home. It was a success and Sunday attendance remained as high or higher than before the Coronavirus.

### COMMUNITY

Fellowship has always been integral to St. Ann's. In the past year, gather we did! St. Ann's continued its relationship with the Calvary/St. George soup kitchen program. We hosted a well-received live performance of, "Listen...Can You Hear Me Now?" a one-woman show by playwright CODA, Gloria Rosen. And our weekly Thursday programs, now online, have had activities and guests who spoke on health, nutrition, the arts, culture, and more.

### ADVOCACY

Finally, St. Ann's continues to be involved in the well-being of the lives of its congregation. Co-leaders and congregants attended the local police precinct meetings and were involved in city-wide efforts to better 911 access and Police-Deaf relations. We've helped connect people with social services, reported housing problems, and encouraged voter registration. An overflowing crowd attended our forum, Census 2020. So far we have distributed nearly 1,000 face masks to Deaf households, helping to keep people healthy in these perilous times.

St. Ann's is proud of the work we do in the community, but most importantly, how we share the message of Jesus to create, love, and support fellowship. We are grateful for our alliance with the ECD which has helped us keep doing these things.

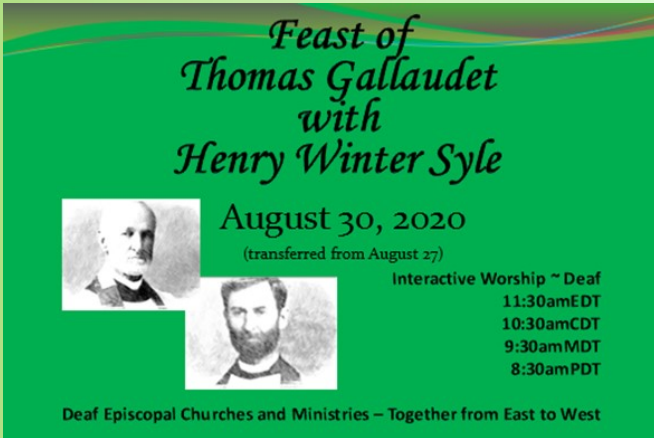
# ***Deaf People Worshiped as One (Historic Moment)***

by: Lee Holland

*“If God be our leader, the opposition and distrust of men will fade away.”*

-The Rev. Thomas Gallaudet, D.D. October 1883

Do you think The Rev. Thomas Gallaudet and The Rev. Henry Winter Syle ever envisioned that one day, the world could worship as one? It happened, through modern technology, not imagined in late 1800's. This was made possible using Zoom, a video conferencing platform though the internet. Because of the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, which aggressively affected all of us around the globe, many churches are closed, so this became a “new normal” for many churches everywhere to meet and worship on Zoom from their homes or other locations. Likewise, Deaf Churches are using Zoom, and other online platforms, every Sunday too!



*First page of PowerPoint slide during worship*

August 27th is a feast day set aside by The Episcopal Church. The Episcopal Conference of the Deaf (ECD) honored Thomas Gallaudet and Henry Winter Syle by celebrating their feast day on August 30, 2020. It is estimated that at least 80 individuals worshiped with us. It was wonderful to see so many people from across the country.

The Rev. Richard Mahaffy, president of the ECD, officiated, assisted by Lee Holland. A total of 14 Deaf members of The Episcopal Church from all over United States led various roles in this worship. To support worshippers who are non-signers, the ECD utilized two voice interpreters (for hearing people) and one Deaf interpreter (DI) for those who could not use Zoom (they used video phone and other means).

As The Rev. Thomas Gallaudet preached at Henry Winter Syle's ordination in 1883:



*“to preach the Gospel to our Deaf... Then, indeed, shall the ears of the deaf be unstopped, and the tongue of the dumb shall swell the Song of Moses and the Lamb. “*



**137 years later, our song still swells!**

We continue to worship together every Sunday in ASL with voice interpreting.

Join us!

**[zoom.us/j/229833585](https://zoom.us/j/229833585)**

Passcode: **JesusILY**

# News from New York!

## Vestry news!!

Holyrood Episcopal Church - Iglesia Santa Cruz in upper Manhattan, NYC, has voted in their first Deaf vestry member. Congratulations to Lidia Martinez! According to The Rev. Dr. Gene Bourquin, Lidia “is among the new members of the Vestry which will lead us into a future of ministry and activism in the ways of Jesus.”

Lidia Martinez sitting between her two grandchildren and in front of her daughter (from a documentary photoshoot earlier this year).



## Documentary at Holyrood/Santa Cruz

Earlier this year a documentary was filmed at Holyrood/Santa Clara. The documentary is about Mo. Maria Isabel Santiviago and the Deaf ministries within the church. One of the participants in the documentary is Lidia Martinez, the church’s first Deaf Vestry member. The documentary is still being developed within the film students grad program. When it’s finished, it will go to Cinema Festivals and later will be made available to the public. We will keep you posted!

## St. Ann’s Church for the Deaf has an mission-leadership appointment!

The Rt. Rev. Andrew ML Dietsche, Bishop of New York, has some news. The Bishop wrote: I am appointing the Rev. Deacon Gene Bourquin, DHA, as a third co-leader who will fill, on an interim basis, this position that has long been vacant... Deacon Gene will bring his experience, knowledge, and skills in Deaf ministry directly to the operation of St. Ann’s.”



Deacon Gene interpreting with the presiding bishop Michael Curry

Deacon Gene will work with Mrs. Evelyn Schafer and Dr. Melissa Innis, the other two co-leaders, with their ministries to all. The Bishop thanked Evelyn and Melissa for their hard work during the past eight years of “ministry with hard labors, steadfast commitment, and grace...”

This is a mission-leadership appointment, not an appointment of new clergy. Deacon Gene will still continue serving as Deacon at Holyrood/Santa Cruz church in Washington Heights, as well as serve as the diocesan Pastoral Missioner to the Deaf for New York.



## ASL Group is Forming

Education for Ministry (EfM) is a unique four-year distance learning certificate program in theological education based upon small-group study and practice.

If you are interested, contact Diane Lynch at [EfMinASL@gmail.com](mailto:EfMinASL@gmail.com)



# Preparing for Advent 2020

By: Elizabeth Holland

This past year has been intense. We were in the early part of Lent when the COVID-19 pandemic happened and everything began shutting down. People progressed through Lent in different ways. For some, this past Lent was eye-opening in the generosity and beauty of others. For others, Lent was hard and depressing and felt like there was a disconnect. Some people felt: whole, lost, satisfied, unfulfilled, and so much more, all at once. These are all normal feelings! You are not alone. But, it does mean that with the upcoming Advent season, we should prepare for the season ahead.

Advent starts on Sunday, Nov. 29, 2020, and we start a new lectionary cycle of scripture readings as well: year B, with an emphasis on the Gospel of Mark. With all the craziness happening, how can we prepare ourselves for Advent this year?

Breathe. You are not alone.

Take some time to get everything ready. Do you have: Advent candles—3 blue/purple and 1 pink (1 white for Christmas)? Advent calendar? Time scheduled to just be present and allow yourself to soak in God's love?

With thoughts of some schools and business' being closed, social distancing, wearing masks and having less communication access, job uncertainties, it is more crucial than ever that we take time to pause and allow God in. Take time to breathe, pray, read scripture, or even take a few minutes to yourself in the bathroom. The anticipation and waiting of Christ's coming is a joyous one! However, if we are not careful it can also become overwhelming. Laugh at the small things, talk to God about the hard things. Remember to breathe and enjoy the season!!!

## WORDS OF A CHURCH MOUSE

Hello to all of you! I hope you are all doing well. It has been awhile since we all gathered together in our various churches, but I have seen a few of you on those video calls! That has filled my little heart with such joy and peace.

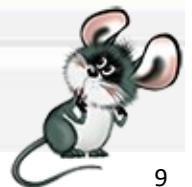
This past summer has been interesting. We church mice have become a bit thinner over the past months without coffee hour... but I also think some of us have grown a bit more around the waist too! I shall not say who... ok, you pulled my tail... it's me, but don't tell anyone.

This summer has also been hard. There is so much pain right now. We cannot always fix things immediately. But we can show support; listen; be present; educate ourselves; and show God's love, always.

I have been learning a lot! I've been reading the church cookbook and making so many goodies! So many of you have such wonderful recipes.

Oh! I have some interesting news. One of my cousins is a Mouscopalian priest. He made the front page of this newsletter! Well, he heard through the grapevine that the ECD website was going to be changing, so he decided to post an invite out there to all Mouscopalians, everywhere. Have you seen him? I think he's on one of the worship tabs. You should go look! Let me know if you find him.

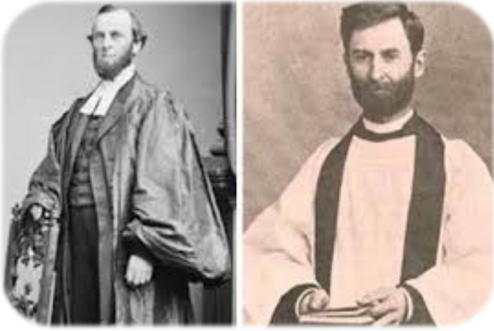
I hope you are all safe and well. Keep up the hard work! And always, remember God's love.





# Apostles to the Deaf—The call

By: Elizabeth Holland



The Rev.  
Thomas Gallaudet

The Rev.  
Henry Winter Syle

This past August, we celebrated Gallaudet Syle day. It is a day set aside within the Episcopal Church that recognizes The Rev. Thomas Gallaudet and The Rev. Henry Winter Syle for their work and fellowship to the Deaf community. Though they lived long ago, their impact is still resonating today.

The feast day set aside for Gallaudet and Syle is August 27th. We typically transpose that day to the closest Sunday for the worship. However, the 27th is still an amazing day for celebration. As the late Rev. Jay Croft mentioned in his article last fall, titled “August 27th—a day for us!”, the very first feast day of Gallaudet and Syle was August 27, 1989, and amazingly it was a Sunday!

An apostle is someone who spreads the message. They share the word of God to others and form relationships with the community. The Reverends Gallaudet and Syle acknowledged the Deaf community and shared that message. This message continues today within churches, people’s homes, over virtual platforms, and just by being present.

The Rev. Thomas Gallaudet felt the call and answered it. The Rev. Henry Winter Syle felt the call and answered it. Do you feel the call? The call can be going to church. The call can be bringing cookies to church for coffee hour. The call can be sitting with a good friend who is hurting. The call can be becoming a Lay Minister. The call can be interpreting services. The call can be becoming a clergy member and advocating for the Deaf. The call is continuous and the need is ever-present. What is your call? How will you follow in Gallaudet and Syle’s footprints?

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## “In her arms.”

By: The Rev. Laurence Wainwright-Maks



I remember sitting on my mother’s lap and crying after I was bullied by some kids at school. I remember sitting on her lap, my eyes filled with tears and wiping them off on her shirt. I remember burying my head into her shoulder and cried as her arms would enfold around me. Much like I’m sure the Mother Mary would interact with Jesus when he was a child and much like these images of the “*Theotokos*.” -Greek word. Lately, I have thought a lot about my mother and recently I am more aware of the physical distance between us, because of Covid-19, it feels much greater than it ever has been. In the past, Rochester, NY to Dallas, TX was only two plane rides and maybe 5-6 hours away. However, now that’s very different and because flying is considered, a “High Risk” I’m more aware of how far it actually is and how distant we are. With the virus that continues to threaten our daily lives and normal rituals, it’s made it difficult to travel, questionable to visit others, and very uncertain as we look forward to the future of The Church and what that looks like.

So, during this time I look back to Mary, the mother of Jesus, who has been that maternal face of the church for a long time. I look at the image of the *Theotokos* and imagine being a child in her lap; bringing all my fears and concerns about the world today and letting it out. I allow myself to cry in her arms and simply let those arms comfort me.

**For Reflection:** *When was the last time you were held in someone’s arms? What fears or concerns might you bring as you sit in Mary’s lap? What does Mary have to say?*



# The Deaf Episcopalian

## ECD Mission and Values statement

### Mission

Empower Deaf people with the Good News of Jesus Christ, encourage full participation in Church Life, and advocate for Deaf Ministries.

### Vision

Full inclusion in Church life.



## **Episcopal Conference of the Deaf**

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