



The Deaf Episcopalian

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Board Member Highlight



**Rev. Dr. Cathy Deats —
Chaplain**

Raised in Stamford, CT, Cathy was a child who loved school, church choir (at St. John's Episcopal Church), and later choral singing and dance. After high school, she attended the University of Connecticut, earning her Bachelor's degree and Master of Social Work (MSW). While working as a School Social Worker, she had several Deaf students and began the study of sign language. Cathy earned a Sign Language Interpreter Certificate in New Jersey, where she had moved after her marriage. She worked with the Deaf Ministry of the Episcopal Diocese of Newark as an interpreter before entering seminary. In her role as Rector of St. James' Episcopal Church in NJ, a Deaf Deacon, The Rev. Sheila Shuford, was welcomed into the parish to work with the congregation.

Cathy is currently working in Raleigh, NC as consultant to Dioceses who need her expertise in matters of clergy discipline. Cathy and her husband Ted have a grown son who lives in California. They are foster parents who have worked with sibling groups of children for the past six years. Cathy is an amateur boxer and her lifetime record is 1 – 0.

ECD Board Members

The ECD Board of Directors is elected from the membership of ECD Conventions.

Through your votes, we have a new 2021 ECD board! We have a mix of new and continuing faces. To contact any one of them, see their information below.

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80th General Convention

Baltimore, Maryland

July 8-12, 2022

Like the ECD Convention in 2021, the 80th General Convention was delayed until this year.

This year, the 80th General Convention met in Baltimore in very restrictive mode due to ongoing pandemic, Covid-19. This means no visitors, no exhibitors, limited staff, and few other restrictions. The ECD did not have an exhibition booth this year.

Instead of usual 10,000 attendees, approximately 4,000 people attended in person, including four amazing ASL interpreters. All the interpreters did amazing job as they figure out how to use the technology for the first time. The interpreters, carefully selected were Diane Lynch (Georgia), Linda Stauffer (Arkansas), Rayelenn Casey (Pennsylvania), and Elizabeth Holland (Washington State). Diane, Linda, and Rayelenn had previously interpreted at GC. This was first time for Elizabeth.

Those who did not attend followed the Convention through live streaming, however, only the House of Deputy were accessible with ASL interpreters, using Picture in Picture approach. They also added Closed Captioning! This makes it so accessible for first time to every Deaf and Hard of Hearing person (DHH). It was mentioned that in the next General Convention, they plan to add ASL interpreters in the House of Bishop.

This past 80th General Convention had a couple resolutions that are relevant to us:

Resolution A223. The Interpreters and Translators (House of Bishop) and **Resolution A174. Express Gratitude for Translators and Interpreters** (House of Deputy): both thanked the use of interpreters at the Convention for in-house and livestream participants and the months of work that went into preparing for it.

Resolution A171. Commend the Most Reverend Michael Bruce Curry. (Adopted by House of Deputy) (snippet from 2nd of 7 sections): “Resolved, That we delight in his preaching style that both inspires and teaches us and perhaps at times confounds the translators and sign language interpreters as they try to follow him as he moves throughout the space provided; ...”

This next resolution is very exciting. **Resolution A024. Create a Task Force on Translation and Interpretation** (Concurred by both Houses). This resolution is about creating a Task Force specifically for the Translation and Interpretation of the development of media releases, resources, reports, etc.) that are all involved in the church. They will work on ensuring quality of translations and interpretations, which means having standards when hiring interpreters. They will consult with non-speaking dioceses, jurisdictions, and area missions about their needs for translations and interpretations. Lastly, they will recommend funding necessary to implement the work to interpret and translate materials.

The next General Convention will be in 2024 in Louisville, KY. Hope to see you there!



From top left to bottom right, interpreters are: Rayelenn, Diane, Linda, and Elizabeth

Letter from the President



Please accept our apologies for not publishing the spring newsletter. Our Deaf ministry has been limited due to Covid -19. The 80th General Convention of the Episcopal Church was held in Baltimore, Maryland, in July. However, only bishops, deputies and essential staff members were allowed to attend the convention in person. The exhibits – including our ECD exhibit – were cancelled. The Covid-19 pandemic has had a tremendous impact on our Deaf ministry, and on *all* types of ministry in the Church.

I wanted to thank the **Executive Office of General Convention for providing interpreting services and cart services at the 80th General Convention.** We are very appreciative.

But there is good news! **The Board will finally have a *face-to-face meeting* at St. Margaret's in Sarasota, FL during the last week of October 2022.** I am really looking forward to seeing the board members *in person*, especially the new board members! We have not had a face-to-face meeting for over two years due to Covid-19. We will use our time together to discuss the future of our Deaf ministry. Deaf ministry has changed so much in recent decades. Fewer people are going to church; and if they do attend services, many of them prefer to attend on Facebook or on Zoom. In addition, our church is getting older. We estimate that approximately 85% of the members of ECD are 'senior citizens.' These are the real challenges we face. Deaf ministry is not the same as before – and it *cannot* be the same as before. We have to change with the times.

One of the ways we are trying to meet the challenges of the 2020's is by the use of technology. **The Board has approved the hiring of a Technology and Communication Coordinator** to help us to expand and improve our online ministries to the public. We are planning to post this job position to the dioceses in the Episcopal Church. It is important to have a Technology and Communication Coordinator to keep our ministries alive in this time everyone depends so much on technology!

We are planning to have **Episcopal Conference of the Deaf (ECD) convention in the state of Washington in the summer of 2023.** Lee Holland, our vice president, is the chair for the 2023 convention. More information about this convention will be posted on Facebook and in the

next newsletter. I sincerely hope that you will come to our convention because we need your ideas and help to grow our ministries!

Recently, St. Ann’s Church for the Deaf and St. Barnabas’ Episcopal Church of the Deaf worked together to plan and lead a Holy Eucharist Service to celebrate our Episcopal saints, The Rev. Thomas Gallaudet and the Rev. Henry Winter Syle. The service was held via Zoom on August 28th. The Rev. Erich Kregel presided at the service. It was a beautiful service! Many thanks to St. Ann’s and St. Barnabas!

Today, many people have worries and fears. We are all concerned about the climate crisis, the threat of nuclear war, the deep divisions in American politics, the future of the Church, the financial challenges we have now, and more.

The question is “How do we handle worry? What do we do when we are anxious or afraid?” People have different ways of coping with stress and worry:

- Some people talk with a friend or a therapist about their worries.
- Some people write about their fears in a journal.
- Some people think about things they can do that will take away their fears.
- Some people hide from their troubles and pretend things are alright.

Jesus wants us to trust in God when we are worried. He tells us that God cares for each one of us. When we accept and trust that God cares for us, he says, then we can be free from worry and anxiety.

God promises to care for us now, and in the future. God will always be with us. God will never abandon us. There will be times of difficulty and struggle, or times of sickness or financial uncertainty. We don’t know what will happen in the future. But we can know that God will be there with us, no matter what happens.

Please keep our Deaf ministry and churches in your prayers.

Faithfully in Christ,

Dick+

We want your articles!

Send all DE articles to **deaf.episcopalian@ecdeaf.org**

We are getting ready for Advent and Christmas. Send all articles **by Nov. 1, 2022**

Chaplains Corner - Easter

By Rev. Dr. Cathy Deats

When Disney World was completed in Orlando, Florida, someone remarked, "Isn't it too bad that Walt Disney didn't live to see this!" Mike Vance, then creative director of Disney Studios replied, "He did see it -- that's why it's here."

Everything in life that we use or hold, eat or wear, sit in or listen to -- in other words, everything that is a creation of human ingenuity -- started out as a dream. Before anything can become tangible, it must first become a reality in the mind of its dreamer. Only when the dream is real for one person can it become real for the rest of us.

Microchip technology, zippers, Christmas tree lights, quadruple bypass heart surgery, combustion engines, jellybeans, x-rays, hula hoops, flush toilets, matches, cell phones, -- all these things were once dreams in some person's mind. The dreams of others make our lives convenient or fun; they sometimes even make life possible.

So why is it that we live in a world filled with the dreams of others, yet there are so many nightmares disturbing our lives? How did we create the nightmare of nuclear weapons instead of dreaming up world peace? How did we succumb to fear of each other and invent high-tech security systems instead of dreaming up how to live in community, trusting each other? How did we get to the place where we have created innumerable choices of fast foods instead of dreaming up a way to feed every hungry child? How did the human race create apartheid instead of dreaming of equality and justice?

The resurrection makes it possible for these and other nightmares to be ended and dreams to be created. The worst nightmare in history, the crucifixion of Jesus, was transformed into the dream of Easter. The way has now been opened for ending all nightmares and incarnating all dreams. The Resurrection means that we can dream of plenty in the midst of poverty; dream of compassion in the midst of evil; dream of justice in the midst of inequity; and dream of love in the midst of hate.

I wonder if the women who went to Jesus' tomb were dreaming of the resurrection. It is a fairly popular view that the women who went with spices to anoint Jesus' body were fully expecting to find a corpse and were not wondering if they would find him there or not. In the story in Luke, however, there is some evidence that they may have been expecting an empty tomb. When they arrived at the tomb to find the stone rolled away, they were not dismayed or disturbed to find it so. Luke tells us that they simply went in. The verb structure in the Greek that says "they did not find" Jesus' body suggests an active and careful search. The women didn't just peek timidly in the doorway (as Peter did later) -- they entered fully into the tomb and searched high and low for Jesus. They were perplexed; they were still trying to grasp Jesus' death in human terms: where could the body be? The women are then terrified by the presence of two messengers. The men in white tell the women, "He is

not here, but has risen." No longer is there any doubt about why the women have been unable to locate Jesus' body in the tomb.

Then the messengers tell the women to "remember." They are told to "remember" the lessons Jesus gave them as they traveled together in Galilee. They are told to remember that Jesus had told them he would be crucified and would rise on the third day. This is the beginning of their lives as Easter dreamers – they would not only remember the Jesus they knew – but now would see him clearly with post-resurrection sight. Johanna and Mary, the mother of James, and Mary Magdalene immediately respond to the challenge. They do remember and are transformed and empowered by their memory. Their dreams, and the dreams of all the followers of Christ who heard because of their witness, are part of the reason we celebrate the resurrection. I think we all want to be dreamers. I know we all want to be full of joy.

I'm a dreamer. I'm not sure one can be a priest and not be a dreamer. My own dream has become more focused in recent years. I dream often of a place where no one is excluded because of physical ability, or emotional or spiritual ability for that matter. I dream of a place in which people respect one another despite differences of opinion or temperament or ways of doing things. I dream of a place where people communicate with each other face to face, with honesty and kindness. I dream of the resurrected body of Christ.

We sometimes despair of dreaming because we have not yet learned to distinguish between dreaming dreams of happiness and dreaming dreams of joy. We are under the mistaken impression that Christians are supposed to be "happy." We need to take a closer look at the difference between happiness and joy. The first-century world did not say, "See how happy these Christians are." It said, "See how these Christians love one another." Christians are not necessarily happier than non-Christians, at least as the world defines happiness. But we are more joyful. The truth is it is normal not to feel good all the time, not to go around happy all the time – especially if you are following Jesus Christ.

Easter dreaming isn't about "happiness." Christians have no "right to happiness." and Christians may or may not be more "happy" than non-Christians. Joy, on the other hand, is a condition of "delight," "exultation of spirit" and has been called "the beatitude of heaven." Joy is with us no matter what the circumstance. This is because joy resides in the goodness and love of God while happiness resides in circumstance. Joy is the stuff Easter dreams are made of. God did not put us on this earth to be happy. God put us here to glorify God and to enjoy God -- to experience a joy unspeakable and full of glory, the joy that is the result of the resurrection. It was with renewed dreams of Easter joy that the women raced back to tell the other disciples what they knew: He is risen!

The Easter dream that makes all other dreams possible lives on.

Alleluia! Christ is risen!

The Lord is risen indeed; alleluia!



Save the Date

**The
Episcopal Conference of the Deaf
is excited to announce the first In-Person
Convention since 2017.**

The ECD ByLaws state that the ECD holds its convention one year before The Episcopal Church's General Convention, which will take place in the summer of 2024.

**Accordingly, the ECD will have its
76th convention next summer.**

**July 22nd - 27th, 2023
Federal Way, Washington**

***** More information to come *****

“Labels” (Luke 7:36-50)

Written by: Rev. Dick Mahaffy

One day Jesus was invited to supper at the house of a Pharisee. When they were getting ready to sit down at the table, a woman “who was a sinner” entered the room. She was carrying an alabaster jar of ointment. She began to wash Jesus’ feet with her tears and dry them with her hair. Then she continued to kiss his feet as she poured the costly ointment over them. We are not told who the woman was, or why she had the reputation of “a sinner,” or how she knew Jesus, or why she was weeping and anointing his feet. The gospel writer records only her simple act of love and devotion.

The Pharisee objected to this woman’s presence in his house. He may have been annoyed that she was distracting his guest and ruining his party. But it’s more likely that he objected to her very presence. He said to himself, “If this man Jesus were a prophet, he would have known who and what kind of woman this is who is touching him – that she is a sinner.” For the Pharisee, that label had clear implications: a righteous person should know not to speak with a person who was a “sinner,” and certainly he should not allow her to touch him. This was against all the religious rules that all Jewish people should know.

Jesus turned to the Pharisee and asked him an important question. He said, “Simon, do you see this woman?” He was not asking if Simon had noticed her. Of course he saw her, from the moment she entered the room. What Jesus was really asking Simon was, “What do you see when you look at this woman? Can you really see her or are you seeing only the label you have put on her? Can you look past the label and see her as she is?”

Simon is focused on the label. But Jesus sees the person. He sees her compassion, her courage, her generosity, and her love.

Labels really do more harm than good. When we put people into categories - hard of hearing, deaf, Deaf, gay, straight, trans, conservative, liberal - we stop seeing them as persons and we only see the label we have put on them.

The church is called to practice radical hospitality - making EVERYONE feel accepted and loved, telling EVERYONE that they are needed and that they are valuable members of the church, affirming EVERYONE who is trying to do good. Labels often interfere with that.

People use labels to divide and to gain power over others. (People of color, gay and trans people, people who are poor, and other oppressed minorities know what it is like to be hated because of a label. It is a sin that the church needs constantly to address: both in the church itself and in society generally.

Try to value everyone, but also help them see and value other people, no matter who they are. When you hear them criticize others or make fun of them, encourage them to talk to the other and to listen to her/him and to try to be compassionate. Encourage them to be kind. Everyone we meet is suffering in some way (usually in ways that we can't see). It's important to be patient and kind and affirming. We all need to be loved and affirmed. If the church can't do that, who can?

If we can get past our labels, we might be able to see the beauty in others and in ourselves.

THE BLESSING OF ORDINARY TIME

Written by: Rev. Dr. Cathy Deats

When I hear the term “ordinary time,” I think of Thornton Wilder’s play, *Our Town*. Emily, the recently deceased young woman, has the opportunity to go back to her life one more time before entering the world of the dead. Others try to talk her out of it, but she is determined to go back to her life, even for one day. She says, “But it’s a thing I must know for myself. I’ll choose a happy day, anyway.” One of the group says, “No! At least, choose an unimportant day. Choose the least important day in your life. It will be important enough.”

An ordinary day.

Ordinary time in the church refers to the season which is not part of the two major feasts of the church: Christmas and Easter. In the Roman church, this includes the time after Christmastide through Ash Wednesday and time following the Feast of Pentecost until the first Sunday of Advent. In The Episcopal Church, we commonly recognize the season of Epiphany as having its own themes, and so when we say, “ordinary time,” we are usually referring to the time between Pentecost and Advent.

While I love the feasts of Christmas and Easter (as well as other lesser feasts celebrated in our tradition), sometimes it is wonderful to relax into that which is common, somewhat uneventful, and ordinary. But this long, green season which follows Pentecost, is not simply a time of relaxation! True, it does not have its own name; it is known as “ordinary time,” or even the “season after Pentecost.” But that does not mean it does not have a specific purpose.

Ordinary time is a time focused on growth and maturing in the life of the disciple. The prayer I use prior to preaching in this season is this: “Lord, teach us what we are to know; show us what we are to do to be your disciples.” If you examine the lectionary for this ordinary time, you will see themes and patterns.

In the season of ordinary time, the Revised Common Lectionary used in The Episcopal Church offers two sets of parallel readings. The first set of “semicontinuous” Hebrew Scripture (Old Testament) readings follows major stories and themes of the later prophets. The second set of “complementary” Hebrew Scripture readings follow the historical tradition of pairing the Hebrew Scripture reading with the Gospel reading.

This year, we hear the stories of the Good Samaritan, poor Lazarus, the banquet, the healing of women and lepers. Jesus’ parables feature prominently in our lessons which are focused on how we are to live as his disciples. We hear from the prophets like Amos and Jeremiah and learn about faithfulness and God’s unrelenting love. We hear the voice of Ruth, and stories of women who are unnamed in Scripture. Since we are in the Gospel of Luke this year, the evangelist’s stories of healing and women and other outcasts are front and center.

So, what are we to do with this “ordinary time”? Prepare for the next great feast, Christmas? No, that is what Advent is for. We are invited to listen to God in Scripture and prayer, and to hold some quiet time in our busy lives to hear the Holy Spirit. We are invited to meditate on the blessings of life in this moment, especially things uneventful and common: the flowers of our garden, family dinner, clean sheets, gentle rain, the greeting of a neighbor. We are invited to have grateful hearts as we thank God for all the time given to us.

Emily: *Do any human beings ever realize life while they live it? – every, every minute?*

Stage Manager: *No. The saints and poets, maybe they do some.*

Achieving Inclusivity Through an Interpreted-Church Model

Rev. María Isabel Santiviago and Rev. Dr. Gene Bourquin, deacon

Holyrood Church / Iglesia Santa Cruz in 2021-2022 continues to be ‘the people’s church’ at the northern reaches of Manhattan in the Diocese of New York. One of two churches providing Deaf Ministry, Holyrood operates on a theology of inclusion, in theory and more importantly, in practice. While other parishes struggle with multilingual congregations, Holyrood’s priest-in-charge, Fr. Luis Barrios, has fostered a culture where services, worship, the vestry, and church gatherings are trilingual: Spanish, ASL, and English. He is ably supported by Mo. Maria Santiviago who directs the Deaf Ministry and Deacon Gene Bourquin who assists.

How does Holyrood accomplish inclusiveness? There are many models which offer possibilities. Rev. Dr. Leo Yates, deacon in the United Methodist Church and CODA (Child of Deaf Adults) is the author of *Deaf Ministry: A comprehensive overview of ministry models* (2019). In his book, Rev. Yates advises, “Each and every church is unique, so there is no one path . . . start out by utilizing the individual and communal resources God has already provided” (p. 325).

At Holyrood we use the Interpreted-Church model, and for this we are very grateful for the sustained support from the Episcopal Conference of the Deaf. Through ECD’s generosity, we are able to interpret vestry meetings, trainings, all our Sunday English-language services, and all our Sunday Spanish-language services. For this we have two highly-skilled regular providers: Ms. Diely Martinez who is trilingual and a CODA, and Ms. Patrice Harrington who is bilingual. These interpreters, willing to be devoted professionals on Sundays, make it possible to reach out to the Diocese and beyond.

Just setting up the technology to access our interpreters, however, is not enough. Mo. Maria keeps the greater Deaf community in the loop with weekly emails and texts that send out worship links. Like many churches, our in-person attendance is down from pre-Covid times, but Holyrood broadcasts it’s Sunday masses widely on zoom, Facebook, and YouTube. As a result, we have Deaf people attending real-time or recorded streaming from all over the world. And with our Spanish language service, we attract Deaf people and their families from Lantinx communities in Spain, the Dominican Republic, and elsewhere.

The world continues to turn, and change is always with us. We at Holyrood are thankful that we are able to share through our interpreters the Word of the risen Christ through languages and cultures that include so many.



Left to right, top to bottom

Rev. Gene proclaims the Gospel as Patrice interprets. Mo. Maria and Fr. Luis stand with a poster of The Rev. Thomas Gallaudet. Fr. Luis signs ‘Amen’. Diely interprets ‘the Peace’ with an ILY. Mo. Maria with Deaf priest, Fr. Erich.



The Deaf Episcopalian

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

c/o Episcopal Church of the Advent
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