



# The Deaf Episcopalian

Sept—Nov 2019



*Rev. Jay Croft's 50<sup>th</sup> Ordination*  
p. 10



*The attendees of Deacon Patrick Graybill's workshop*  
p. 5



*Rev. Olof Hanson*  
p. 7

## Puzzles & Trivia

4

## Updates from Task Forces

6

## Be the Samaritan

8

## The Tricky Triduum

9

My article

11



## Board Member Highlight

**Cass Martensen  
Secretary**



Hello! My name is Cass Martensen and I'm Secretary to the Board. I was born in Rochester, New York yet knew nothing of the Deaf community there. I was born Hearing. My previous profession was as an ICU/Trauma nurse at various hospitals from Miami, Florida to Escondido, California, my current home. I lost my hearing as an adult from an illness in the late 1980's. After years of resistance, my audiologist convinced me to take a sign language class at our local community college. It was a blessing to me. The Rev. Kate Chips introduced me to the ECD in the 1990's and it's been a love affair ever since. Over the years I've served the ECD in various positions on the Board. It's been my honor to do so. I am also currently on the national Task Force on Disability and Deaf Access. Feel free to contact me with questions about my current ECD work.



## ECD Board Members

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

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Thanks to James Lindsay of St. Barnabas Deaf Church. He brought to our attention an editorial correction from the last issue:

**Thomas Gallaudet was the oldest son of Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet, not the youngest.** Thank you James!

# Greetings from the President of ECD

Hello, beloved friends!

I hope you have had a great summer. Fall is approaching soon! Halloween and Thanksgiving, and then Advent and Christmas: they're all coming soon!

The Episcopal Conference of the Deaf hosted the triennial ECD retreat in St. Louis, Missouri, on July 15-19. We had two workshops: *The Bible Comes Alive: The Power of Storytelling*, led by Deacon Patrick Graybill, and a clergy workshop led by the Rev. Susan Masters. Both workshops were wonderful and informative.

In the first workshop, Deacon Patrick Graybill taught us how to translate Bible stories into ASL. He is a marvelous storyteller and we felt so privileged to have him as our leader in this workshop.

The clergy workshop offered us new ideas about how to make Episcopal Conference of the Deaf a stronger and more effective organization. The Rev. Susan Masters' words to us were very hopeful. She said, "As followers of Jesus, we are Resurrection People! We believe in life after death! Sometimes one thing has to die so that something else can be born!" In Isaiah 43:19, God tells us, "See I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not recognize it? I am making a way in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland."

The ECD Board is committed to looking for new ways of ministering with Deaf people. Recently the Board agreed that Gallaudet University should be a key part of ECD's vision for growing leaders. We are seeking a deeper partnership with Gallaudet University because our ECD has a rich history that goes back to Thomas Gallaudet. There are no other religious organizations like ours that have this connection to Gallaudet University!

A second example: we now have a Missioner for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing in the Diocese of Rochester, the Rev, Laurence Wainwright-Maks. ECD and the Diocese of Rochester are partners in this ministry.

I sincerely hope that you will be able to attend our ECD Convention at the Dumas Bay Retreat Centre in Federal Way, Washington, August 11-15, 2020. Your presence at the convention is so important because we are very eager to find out what Deaf people want or need from the Church! We need your ideas and contributions to help our organization fulfill its mission in new ways!

St. Ann's Church for the Deaf, our mother church, in New York City, is still searching a full-time priest for their congregation. Our liaison, Lee Holland, is still working with representatives from St. Ann's Church for the Deaf, and the Diocese of New York to help find a full-time priest. We are praying and hoping that we will be able to find a priest soon!

Please make sure to check on our Facebook page and the Episcopal Conference of the Deaf website for further information about upcoming events.

Ask God to help Deaf people to show God's truth and love to this world.

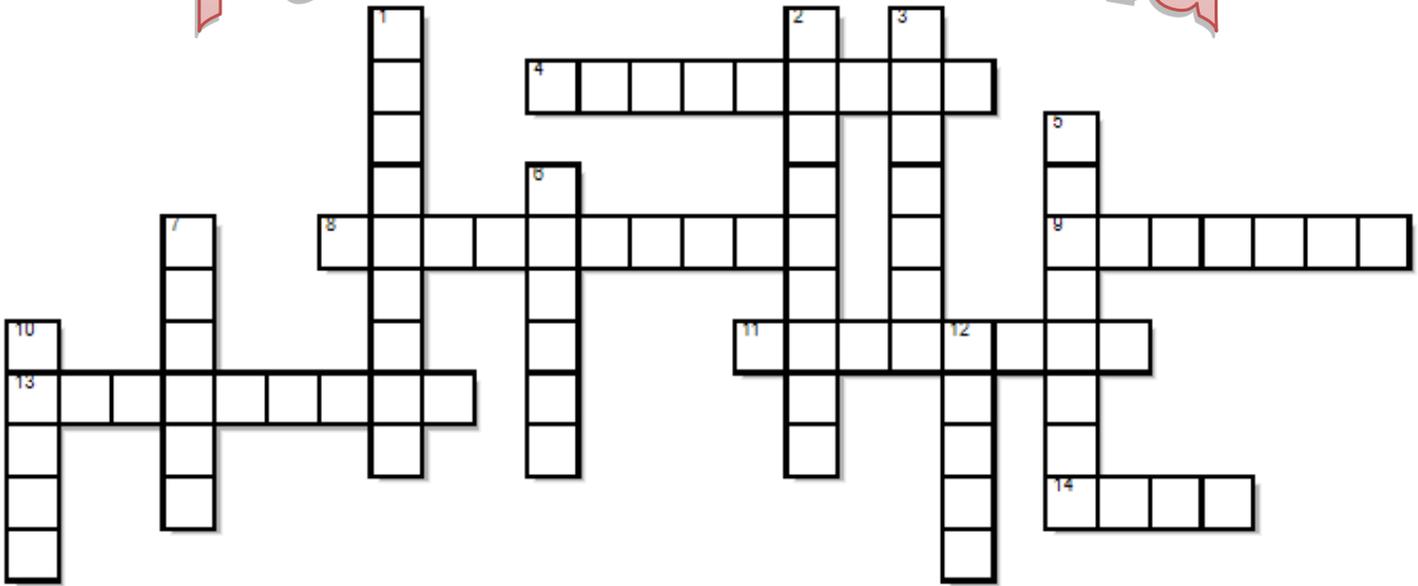
Faithfully yours,

The Rev Richard "Dick" Mahaffy

We are already planning the next issue. Please send in your news before **Nov. 1<sup>st</sup>, 2019**. Send it to the co-editors at: [deaf.episcopalian@ecdeaf.org](mailto:deaf.episcopalian@ecdeaf.org)



# Puzzle & Trivia



## ACROSS

- 4 Safe house and worship place
- 8 Horn of Plenty
- 9 Gollum says "\_\_\_\_\_ Hobbitses"
- 11 Where the recent ECD workshop was held
- 13 One of the Apostles to the Deaf
- 14 Another Apostle to the Deaf

## DOWN

- 1 Dress in fun costumes
- 2 Another word for Thanksgiving
- 3 St. of animals and environment
- 5 We honor these people on Nov. 11
- 6 Fall season
- 7 Get wet while bobbing for these
- 10 Greek word for Love, in the bible
- 12 I am the alpha and the \_\_\_\_\_

- \* All Hallows' Eve is another name for \_\_\_\_\_.
- \* The Last Sunday after Pentecost is know as \_\_\_\_\_ Sunday.
- \* In 1621, the pilgrims celebrated the first \_\_\_\_\_.
- \* Fall officially starts on the Autumnal Equinox, which is September \_\_\_\_\_.
- \* What is the original name for Veterans Day?
- \* St. Francis of Assisi is the patron saint of animals and the environment and on his feast day "The Blessing of the Animals" is held. When is his feast day?
- \* When was the first "Peanuts" comic strip (written by Charles Schulz) published?
- \* What famous parade happens on Thanksgiving Day in New York City?
- \* Which religion observes the fast of Ramadan?

## ANSWER KEY

**ACROSS** 4 Sanctuary 8 Cornucopia 9 Trickys 11 Missouri 13 Gallaudet 14 Syle **DOWN** 1 Halloween 2 Eu-  
charist 3 Francis 5 Veterans 6 Autumn 7 Apples 10 Agape 12 Omega. **TRIVIA:** Halloween, Christ the  
King, Thanksgiving, 23rd, Armistice Day, Oct. 4th, Oct. 2, 1950, the Macy's Day Parade, Islam.

# Our Summer 2019 Workshops

by Elizabeth Holland and Emily Hillquist Davis



*Deacon Patrick Graybill &  
Rev. Susan Masters*

In July, the ECD hosted workshops in St. Louis, Missouri. We found a warm welcome and peaceful accommodations at Pallottine Renewal Center, including a chapel, indoor swimming pool, outside walking paths, and a fire pit for roasting marshmallows. The ECD sponsored all overhead costs, so members only had to cover their own travel and a teeny portion of their accommodations.

In the first workshop, “The Bible Comes Alive!” open to the public, Deaf Roman Catholic Deacon Patrick Graybill taught how take Sacred Scriptures from English into ASL. Why? So these stories become our own stories that we can share naturally with Deaf congregations. The key to “owning” our scriptures is spending time reading, thinking, praying — coming back to them again and again before trying to sign them. It takes time and dedication.

## **Deacon Graybill recommends 4 steps BEFORE trying to sign holy scriptures in ASL:**

**Read** ~ Use your mind. Observe details—what the text actually says: characters, actions, words, ideas. Find out the meaning of unclear English words. Can you start to see it like a movie in your head?

**Reflect / Meditate** ~ Reflect on the meaning. Why are those details there? Why *that* word or image?

**Relate / Contemplate** ~ Ponder the Scripture in your heart, speaking with God. How does this passage move your soul? Thank the Lord; ask for insight; seek to know how it applies to our lives. Leave the text and come back again later for more intimate dialogue with God about God’s own inspired words.

**Resolve / Pray** ~ As you settle into a meaning of the text for you and your community now, ask the Lord what He wishes to teach. The clearer you become, the better you can sign. WE ARE NOT SIGNING ENGLISH WORDS. IT’S THE HEART AND SOUL OF THE SACRED SCRIPTURES COMING ALIVE IN YOUR HANDS FOR YOUR COMMUNITY.

Understanding a passage deeply in mind, heart, and soul, fluent ASL signers can tell the story naturally and clearly. Three websites that offer wonderful signing of Scriptures are Deaf Harbor, Deaf Bible Society, and Deaf Missions.

In the second, smaller workshop, the Rev. Susan Masters encouraged the ECD and Deaf ministry coordinators to clarify our mission, advocate for full access (interpreters, good lighting, projecting prayers and lessons, etc.), and make Deaf Culture and Deaf Space a priority (voices off!). She outlined a process for learning the truth about ourselves and clarifying ministry goals, and she shared examples of achievements struggling congregations made when they took time to reflect and focus. This process can grow Deaf leadership within the church.

Both workshops addressed deep needs in Deaf ministry. In closing, Susan and Patrick together led the group in practice and discussion. Several priests signed the Communion Prayer, and we asked: What do the Signs we’ve chosen actually mean? How can we SIGN MORE CLEARLY about the Last Supper, the Resurrection, and invitation to New Life in Christ, etc.? Better signing (the spirit of the text, not stuck in English words) can make our worship more interesting, inspiring, and life-giving.



## News from The Episcopal Church's Task Force on Disability and Deaf Access

by: Cass Martensen

The Task Force on Disability and Deaf Access met on Zoom chat earlier this month, which included ECD Secretary Cass Martensen and the Rev. Suzanne Johnston, Member-at-Large. Below are some of the highlights of this meeting.

- The old Episcopal Disability Network web site has been inactive for so long that this has been closed and re-opened under the name of this task force. The server has graciously agreed to let us use this site at no cost for the next 3 years.
- Our task force will be working with local resources in Baltimore, Maryland (the site of the 2021 General Convention). These resources will advise us about local ASL interpreters and CART (Communication Access Real-time) providers.
- The guide for General Convention attendees in 2021 will be generated out of the question, “What do you want/need” rather than the viewpoint of, “Here is what Baltimore might provide you with.
- The task force is also being careful to include resources for the Blind and Deaf/Blind visitors.
- The task force is looking for youth representation — Do you know any young Deaf Episcopalians who would like to help improve accessibility in the Episcopal Church?

## Diocese of New York Tanzania Task Force

By: Gene Bourquin



*Patrick Matonya,  
assistant coordinator of the  
Deaf Project, using  
Tanzanian Sign Language*

The Diocese of New York Tanzania Task Force is asking your help for The Diocese of Central Tanganyika and their Deaf Program! This program includes teaching Tanzanian Sign Language in the villages, interpreting liturgies and meetings, and planning for new non-denominational vocational and educational facilities that promote the wellbeing of Deaf and hard-of-hearing people in the world's largest Anglican diocese.

Our first goal is this: the program needs to replace their computers which were stolen last year and purchase a system to keep them safe. These are vital to continuing this good work. Please consider joining us in improving the lives of Deaf people in Tanzania.

A donation of any size will help make the educational and vocational achievement possible for Deaf people in Tanzania. Donations are accepted until Sept. 30, 2019.

For any and all questions, contact Deacon Gene Bourquin, The Pastoral Missioner to the Deaf in the Diocese of New York

To donate easily and quickly, go to: <https://www.diocesenyt.org/ctcomputers/>

# Hanson Grandson meets Hanson Successors

by Rev. Richard Jones - June 10, 2019



*The Rev. Olof Hanson with one of his many congregations. He traveled throughout the Pacific Northwest serving Seattle, Tacoma, Vancouver, Olympia, and Portland.*

I have just come from a lunch of surprises at the café of Washington Cathedral. I met with two members of the board of the Episcopal Conference of the Deaf who had come to town to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the ordination to the priesthood of a character named Jay Leslie Croft.

My first surprise was to be told by Richard Mahaffy, current president of the Episcopal Conference of the Deaf, that at present there are only three active deaf priests serving deaf congregations in the Episcopal Church in the United States. By comparison, old photos from the 1920s and 1930s that show deaf priests posing together, wearing cassocks and surplices – a band of twenty or more. The three active today are Erich Krengel, Richard Mahaffy, and Betsy Bagioni (a graduate of Virginia Seminary).

The second surprise was to be told by Lee Holland that Olof served as a full-time priest to the deaf for only the last four years of his life. I had not realized that labor was so brief. In earlier years, while he was still looking after buildings and grounds for the University of Washington, Olof had been ordained a deacon and was teaching a Bible class for the deaf at Trinity Episcopal Church on James Street, Seattle before he became a priest. Once he became a priest, he had congregations in Seattle, Tacoma, Olympia, Vancouver, and Portland. (Bishop Peter Rows of Alaska ordained him to the diaconate in 1924. He was ordained into priesthood by Bishop S. Arthur Huston of Olympia, in 1929)

That is quite a contrast --Olof's four years of service and Jay's fifty.

Regarding support for new endeavors, Mahaffy and Holland were happy to learn of my hope that Virginia Seminary will endow its faculty chair in Christian Mission and possibly name it for Olof and Agatha Tiegel Hanson. Holland and Mahaffy seemed excited about the possibility of Olof and Agatha's being honored at a seminary of the Episcopal Church.

## DEAF EPISCOPALIAN

The DE is a newsletter for you, from you. If you are uncertain if your article is good enough, don't be! It already is, because it came from you. Without your articles we cannot continue to make newsletters as amazing as they could be.

If you are unsure if something is newsworthy, send us an email! The DE wants to know your stories; news; events in your diocese, church, or community; the work you or your church is doing; any trips or journeys you went on; a poem you wrote; a favorite recipe you like to make; etc. The sky is the limit!

Send any and all inquires to: **[Deaf.episcopalian@ecdeaf.org](mailto:Deaf.episcopalian@ecdeaf.org)**



# Be the Samaritan by: Rev. Dick Mahaffy

At the July retreat, I gave a sermon about a story Jesus told in Luke 10: 25-37, where two religious leaders (a priest and a Levite) pass by a wounded man lying beside the road; they are on their way to religious services in Jerusalem and can't be bothered with this injured man. It is a foreigner, a Samaritan, who stops to help the man and take care of him. In today's politics, sadly, there is so much fear, hatred, division, and so many people who feel like strangers and outcasts. We must do a better job of helping our neighbors, including foreigners, just like Jesus taught us.

The ending of this story is surprising because Jesus' Jewish audience would EXPECT the two priests to show compassion (priests were respected in society) and they would NOT EXPECT the hero to be a Samaritan. Samaria was a country between Judea in the south and Galilee in the north. Jewish people looked down on and hated Samaritans; they were considered to be dirty and less righteous than Jews. Jesus shocks his audience by choosing the Samaritan to be the one who stops to help!

We human beings tend to LABEL other people. Sometimes labels can be helpful. They can show that we belong to a certain group. For example, we might call ourselves "Episcopalians", "African-Americans", "women", or "LGBT" people - and we use these labels with pride because we are proud of who we are. But labels can also be hurtful. You may recall a time when you were called a hurtful name. Labelling people, or calling them names, can be used to separate us from others, or to give the impression that we are good and they are bad. Sometimes, labels can be insulting and demeaning.

In Jesus' day, "Samaritan" was a derogatory term, suggesting that people from Samaria were less valuable or good than people from Judea. Some people were called "sinners" and others were called "righteous" in Jesus' time. Labels were used to divide people, just like today.

In this story and in other stories he told, Jesus shows that he wants to destroy the walls that people build to separate themselves from other people. He teaches us that God values EACH person. He wants to take away the labels that hurt people or make them feel like outcasts. He wants us to know that EVERY man, woman and child is precious in God's sight. St. Paul says that IN CHRIST we are all one. The walls that divide us are being torn down by the power of LOVE.

In our baptismal vows, we promise to "respect the dignity of EVERY human being." *This is the way of Jesus.* This is how he acted AND how he spoke. He touched "unclean" people, shared meals with "sinners and tax collectors," interacted with women, lepers, and mentally ill people, treating them all with respect and love.

God's purpose is to bring love, healing and wholeness into the world; saving us from the powers of evil and death.

In the Episcopal Church, there are five promises made at baptism, as outlined in The Book of Common Prayer (p. 304-305). We promise...

1. to continue in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of the bread, and in the prayers.
2. to persevere in resisting evil, and, whenever you fall into sin, repent and return to the Lord.
3. to proclaim by word and example the Good News of God in Christ.
4. to seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving your neighbor as yourself.
5. to strive for justice and peace among all people, and respect the dignity of every human being.

The love of God is our central message because it was the central message of Jesus, who showed God's love by welcoming the marginalized and the outcasts. Jesus was an excellent example of how to interact with individuals.

# The Tricky Triduum by: Elizabeth Holland

Among some Episcopal churches, not all, there is a celebration of sorts, a type of tricky (to quote Gollum) honorarium, which involves: Oct. 31, Nov. 1, & Nov. 2.

**Oct 31:** Halloween at church? Some churches do have activities, including: a haunted or open house, or a “trunk or treat” event. It is a time of fellowship and comradery and being present with the community. Check to see if your church is planning anything.

**Nov 1:** All Saints Day is a time to remember all the saints, living and deceased. These are saints that have been baptized and recognized.

**Nov 2:** Commemoration of All Faithful Departed (All Souls Day) is a time to remember our brothers and sisters (family and friends) who have gone before us and now reside with our heavenly Father.

All Saints Day and All Souls Day are often celebrated together. Though All Souls Day became recognized and put back in the BCP in 1979, we have been praying for our brothers and sisters for a very long time. This is one of many traditions we kept from Judaism. In the early years of Christianity, the names of the departed were written on waxen tablets, diptychs, and were presented to the altar.



So this year: Have fun on Halloween and also remember to honor and celebrate the people in your lives who are no longer with us. It can be a sad time, but it should also be full of memories of loved ones. Take some time to share stories of people who have died to children, grandchildren, friends, and neighbors. Laugh and cry. We are all here in this life together — your stories and prayers are powerful.

**Rest eternal grant unto them, O Lord;  
and let light perpetual shine upon them.**

## Preparing for Advent



Summer has finished, autumn is coming to a close, and we are still in our same routine, when... Bam!! Advent shows up!

Advent starts on Sunday, Dec. 1, 2019, and with it brings a new year cycle—good bye Year C, hello Year A. How do you prepare yourself for advent before it is here?

Take some time to get everything ready. Do you have: Advent candles? Advent calendar? Time scheduled to just be present? I know it sounds silly, but in our busy world, make sure to schedule times to pray or read scripture? Have you prepared a small budget (this can be monetary, a gift of talents, or a gift of your time) to donate? Remember to breathe and enjoy the season!!!

# Deaf Priest Celebrates Golden Jubilee

## 50th year of Ordination



*Rev. Jay Croft 1984*

It's not often that Episcopal clergy celebrate 50 years of ordination. Years ago, it was common, but not so much any more., as many are ordained later in life. The Rev. Jay Leslie Croft reached that milestone recently.

In 1969, after being awarded a Master of Divinity degree from Union Theological Seminary in New York, Jay was twice ordained by the Rt. Rev. Bishop Horace W.B. Donegan at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine in New York City; first to the diaconate on June 7<sup>th</sup>, then on December 20<sup>th</sup>, to the priesthood. Jay's first assignment was deacon-in-charge at St. Ann's Church for the Deaf in New York City on October 1, 1969, in which he was later installed as vicar on January 4, 1970.

Fast forward 50 years....

On a beautiful sunny afternoon of June 9<sup>th</sup>, 2019, approximately 100 guests came together to celebrate the Golden Jubilee at St. Barnabas Deaf Church, in the chapel of Church of the Ascension, Gaithersburg, MD. During the service, three deaf priests were present. The Rev. Elizabeth "Betsy" Bagioni officiated, the Rev. Dick Mahaffy preached the sermon, and Jay was the Celebrant. In addition, many people served in one capacity or another: Eucharist Ministers, Lectors, and Intercessors. Nine sign language interpreters were used to provide communication for non-signers and for deaf-blind and low vision individuals.. After the service, Jay's wife Frances and their daughter Jennifer hosted a reception in the undercroft of the main church. It was grand time to see old and new friends.



*Picture from left to right:  
Rev. Dick Mahaffy, Rev. Jay Croft, Rev. Betsy Bagioni.*

Representatives of the Episcopal Conference of the Deaf at the Golden Jubilee were The Rev. Dick Mahaffy, President and Mrs. Lee Holland, Vice-President. Other special guests included the Rev. Michael Depcik, one of 12 Deaf Roman Catholic priests in the world, and the Rev. Ōshin Jennings, first and only Deaf Zen Buddhist Monk.

Jay retired from active ministry in Alabama in 2012 and he and Frances moved to Frederick, MD in 2014. As St. Barnabas' Deaf Church was without a vicar, he became supply priest for that church until the Rev. Betsy Bagioni was called in July 2018. He continues to supply and "fill in" where needed at St. Barnabas' Deaf Church.



*Rev. Ōshin Jennings and others at reception*

For more photos of this beautiful event, please go to:

[www.stbarnabasdeaf.org/  
PhotoGallery](http://www.stbarnabasdeaf.org/PhotoGallery)  
Or  
The ECD Facebook page



*Cupcakes!!!!!!*

# Words of a Church Mouse

I hope you are having a safe and cool-ish summer. It seems to have been a hot one in some areas of the US. I have seen some of you in my travels, though you didn't see me, sigh. I try to wave, but I keep forgetting you can't see me. Oh well, it never hurts to keep smiling and greeting people anyways. We all need a bit of love in this world.

I was able to sneak away to Jay's 50th ordination party. He had cupcakes, yippee!! It was a wonderful celebration! There was plenty of access for all the people there: Deaf, hearing, and DeafBlind. There were even non-Episcopalians there!! My little heart was thrilled to witness such joy.

How about that workshop this past July?! My goodness! I was able to hop onto a plane headed for St. Louis. Whoo, was it hot there! Thankfully the meeting rooms had AC and there was a swimming pool in the basement! I loved that. Not all mice like the water, but this Mouscopalian loves the water; I just had to wait for some of the humans to leave before I could relax on a swimming noodle and just be still in the moment. Amazing.

There have been so many things to see and do this summer, I completely wore myself out. I hope you are all taking good care of yourselves. Summer can be fun, but we have to remember to still thank God every day for our health, life, friends, and neighbors. I am ready for fall, because it means the leaves are changing and I get to share hot apple cider with my family and friends, share stories, and enjoy the weather and events happening.

Oh, got to go! The human who's computer I'm borrowing just pulled in!

Till next time,

-The Church Mouse



## MEETING OF THE ECD BOARD



The ECD board met face-to-face while in St. Louis. They met prior to the workshops and also during the workshops. Busy, busy, ECD board members!!



The ECD board also had the opportunity to have dinner with presenter Patrick Graybill and see part of the town.

# ***Unity: Way of Love***

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

**August 11-15, 2020**



Dumas Bay Centre

on the edge of beautiful Puget Sound near Seattle.

Registration opens in January — Look for details in the December newsletter.



### **Episcopal Conference of the Deaf**

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