

December 2019—February 2020



The Deaf Episcopalian

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BOARD MEMBER HIGHLIGHT

Rev. Suzanne Johnston
Member-at-Large



Rev. Suzanne recently celebrated her 10th year of ministry as a deacon in the Diocese of Rochester, NY. Her diaconal ministry has always focused on ensuring access to the Gospel for people who are Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing. In her secular life, Suzanne is a speech-language pathologist in private practice. Much of her work over the course of her career has been with Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing folks. Rev. Suzanne is unilaterally deaf. She is the current President of the Hearing Loss Assoc. of America - Rochester Chapter, and serves on the Task Force on Disability and Deaf Access for the National Episcopal Church. Suzanne and her husband, Bill, have three adult children, a cat and a Corgi, and are proud to live in Rochester, NY.

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear E.C.D. Members and Friends,

The name of this season of the Church year, "Advent," comes from a Latin word that means "coming." It points to the coming, and the coming *again* of Christ. This season is a time of preparation and expectation, as we wait for the birth of the baby Jesus in Bethlehem and as we wait for the coming of Jesus at the end of time.

Waiting can be a challenge, especially in our culture. It can produce feelings of agony, impatience, or annoyance. But life requires all of us to wait at some times. We wait for a technician to come to our home at an appointed time. We wait for a spouse, lover, or friend to arrive, to depart, or to change. We wait for traffic lights to turn. We wait for the results from a medical test. We wait for someone to heal. We wait for justice in our world.

In the Gospel stories, we see God's people waiting for the Messiah, the Christ. Mary and Joseph are waiting. Shepherds are waiting in the fields. Wise men from the East are waiting. The only persons who are not waiting are in Bethlehem: the keepers of an inn in which there is no room for the Holy Family. We are not the only ones who have to wait!

Waiting is an important theme in Advent. In this season, we wait with hope and expectation for the birth of the baby Jesus in Bethlehem. We are also awaiting Jesus' Second Coming, which will bring an end to suffering and sorrow, and save us from all sin.

Waiting patiently can be a sign of HOPE, a way of replacing worry and fear. We Christians are a people of HOPE! Saint Paul writes, "For in hope we are saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what is seen? But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience." Ask God for the gift of hope, and for the faith to wait with patience.

Two months ago, we began holding a Eucharist service for Deaf people at St. Boniface's Church in Sarasota, Florida. At the first service there were only three Deaf people. But last month we had 28 people! At first, I felt uncertain about how it would come out; however, we had faith and hope. While we waited, we asked God for guidance. There will be times in our lives when we have to wait for God's help with faith and hope. But eventually, we will see the God of life coming to us, as God has promised.

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,
Dick+



ST. PAUL'S CHURCH CELEBRATES THEIR DEAF MINISTRY'S ONE YEAR ANNIVERSARY

Mary Stephenson Su

In August of 2018, Shelley Christy walked into the office of St. Paul's Episcopal Church. She had requested interpreter services at other churches in town and been turned down, but St. Paul's said they would look into it. Parishioner Mary Stephenson Su is an ASL interpreter in the community and worked with Shelley to start interpreting one service a month. Mary was joined by another community interpreter, Mark Medina, who volunteered his time. The bishop's committee at the church accepted the donation of pro-bono services while they put money in the budget for interpreters for the next year.

The Modesto Deaf community is small, but the new interpreted services have attracted fifteen new people to our church community. There are other churches in town that provide interpreters, but many Deaf people came from a Roman Catholic background and were hungry for a liturgical service. Over the past year, the Deaf ministry at St. Paul's has provided interpreters for church services and for other church events.

Shelley and other Deaf members have provided basic ASL lessons for interested members of the parish. When a new interpreter was needed in the spring, the church contracted with Deaf member Marlee Brambila. Marlee grew up studying scripture, so she has strong skills in translating the Bible into ASL.

St. Paul's head priest, Fr. Nick Lorenzetti, has been thrilled with the response to the Deaf outreach. He is open to the deeper inclusion of Deaf people into new roles and leadership in our church. Archdeacon George Cano was especially moved to see the inclusion of ASL and Deaf people into St. Paul's church. Because his family has several Deaf members, it has always been a dream of his to serve the Deaf community. When he mentioned his family member to the Deaf folks in church one Sunday, he was touched to discover they knew his cousin from their time together at California School for the Deaf, Berkeley. The Deaf community truly is a small world.



The members of St. Paul's Deaf Ministry in Ventura, California

75th Convention of the Episcopal Conference of the Deaf

Unity: *Love, the Way*

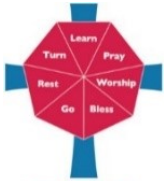
Dumas Bay Retreat Centre - Federal Way, Washington
August 11-15, 2020

As members of the ECD, you are the voice!

ECD cannot function without its members.

This is your opportunity to have your voice heard and elect your board members.

Sneak preview of the next convention!



Unity: Love, the Way – Learn what The Episcopal Church’s Presiding Bishop, Michael Curry had been teaching! Throughout the ECD convention, we will learn seven ways to improve ourselves for Jesus-Centered Life.

Workshop! Every morning, you will have an opportunity to attend an optional 1 to 1.5 hour workshop: learn about Advocacy, ASL and the Liturgy, History of ECD, and more.

Choice of field trips (choose one, not both)

“Adventure in Seattle” – visit St. Mark’s Cathedral and the Office of the Bishop; Kerry Park, where you will see awesome view of Seattle; Puget Sound; Mt. Rainer; and much more. Trip ends with “do your own thing” at Seattle Center, site of 1962 World's Fair

Northwest Trek Wildlife Park – If you are a naturalist, this is a must go. See animals, trees, and plants in their natural habitat, no cage. More info – www.nwtrek.org

Each night, you will have an opportunity to enjoy the beach at Dash Point State Park, watch the sunset from Dumas Bay Retreat Centre, or enjoy your time at some local establishments.

Online Registration opens March 1, 2020

Convention Committee

Diocese of Connecticut – Melissa Render

Diocese of Missouri – Sharon Dilks

Diocese of Olympia – Lee Holland, Chairperson

Diocese of Virginia – Beth Klein

Diocese of Washington – Frances Ralston Croft



ADVENT (noun), or Latin *Advenire*, literally translated as *to come*, is described by the dictionary as “the coming or the second coming of Christ.” This definition is simplistic and says nothing of the meaning of advent and what it means to those who recognize it as an important path to Christmas.

Advent is a season that many people have questions about. What is it? What does it mean? Why is it called the waiting? What’s with the pink candle?

The season of Advent spans from December first to Christmas Eve. It is a time of preparation—preparing for the arrival of Christ’s birthday: Christmas. We’re also waiting, with hope, for his second coming. The advent wreath and candles each have important roles in the Advent season:

- * EVERLASTING LIFE: The wreath that advent candles sit upon is a hoop adorned with pine, cedar, holly, pinecones, and many other varieties and symbolizes God’s promise of everlasting life to us through Christ.
- * HOPE: the first candle of Advent is purple/blue and represents hope and is lit in the remembrance of the prophets who foretold the birth of Christ.
- * FAITH: The second candle of Advent, also purple/blue, is lit in remembrance of Mary and Joseph as they journeyed nearly 100 miles from Nazareth to Bethlehem. Nowadays, it’s an inconvenience to drive to the store for food—imagine traveling that distance on foot driven by nothing but faith!
- * JOY: The third candle of Advent is rose colored and represents the joy of the anticipation for the birth of Jesus Christ, Love, the Virgin Mary, as well as the middle of the Advent season and the joy it brings to the faithful.
- * PEACE: The last purple/blue candle is lit on the last Sunday of Advent and reminds us of the message of the Angels: **PEACE ON EARTH, GOOD WILL TOWARDS MEN**
- * PURE: Though not on every Advent wreath, many include the white candle, which is lit on Christmas Eve, and represents our sinless, pure Savior.

The Nativity

It's the most iconic depiction of Christmas. The Star or Bethlehem, Mary, Joseph, Shepherds, Wise Men, and, of course, baby Jesus. And this night was all foretold by the prophet Isaiah.

In Ancient Judah, around 700 B.C.E., times were dark. It was a time of war and depression. Isaiah, a prophet and advisor to the King of Judah, foretold of a Savior who would suffer trials and be resurrected after his death and burial. This prophecy brought hope to the people and they waited in anticipation for the coming of Emmanuel.

700 years later, upon pregnant Mary and Joseph arriving in Bethlehem, hope seemed brighter. Mary and Joseph, unable to find room at the inn, found shelter in a barn. Mary gave birth in that barn and wrapped her son in cloth, laying him in a manger. At this time, an angel appeared to nearby shepherds to let them know the Messiah had been born. Leaving their flocks, the shepherds raced to see the Son of God.

Many miles away, in the East, the Star of Bethlehem shone bright over the land, telling the Wise Men the prophecy has been fulfilled. They followed the Star and asked King Herod of Judea about the child. King Herod sent the Wise Men on a journey to find the baby of the prophecy. The Wise Men followed the Star of Bethlehem to the manger where Jesus lay; upon arriving, they warned Mary and Joseph that King Herod sent them. They laid down their gifts and honored the Messiah.

Readings:

Isaiah 9:2-7; Psalm 96; Titus 2:11-14; Luke 2:1-14 (15-20)



2020

NEW YEAR

Liturgical—December 1, 2019 (the first Sunday of Advent)

Actual New year—January 1, 2020

EPIPHANY January 6, 2020

Epiphany celebrates when the wise men, also called Magi, followed the Star of Bethlehem and finished their journey. They proclaim on this night that Jesus is the son of God.

Mathew 2:11

“And going into the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother, and they fell down and worshipped him. Then, opening their treasures, they offered him gifts, gold and frankincense and myrrh.”

ASH WEDNESDAY February 26, 2020

Wednesday, February 26, 2020 is Ash Wednesday, which is immediately preceded by Shrove Tuesday. This day reminds us of God's words “You are dust, and to dust you shall return.” We honor these words by marking our faces with ash in the shape of a cross. By doing so, we are reminded of death and repentance, the ash and cross carries the symbol of the sorrow for our sins and our turning toward Faith.

Ezekiel 9:3-4

Now the glory of the God of Israel had gone up from the Cherub on which it rested to the threshold of the house. And he called to the man clothed in linen, who had the writing case at his waist. And the Lord said to him, “Pass through the city, through Jerusalem, and put a mark on the foreheads of the men who sigh and groan over all the abominations that are committed in it.”

LENT Feb 26 - April 9

Even as we grow in our faith, we must also be thinking about the season of Lent. Lent is a time of repentance and forgiveness. We are asked to consciously give up something. We typically give up things that we do or use every day: coffee, fast food, chocolate, pressing the snooze button, etc. We can also give up some of our time. This could be by taking on daily readings of scripture; volunteering at a non-profit organization; donating time to your work, church, or community; reading some books related to forgiveness, faith, even mending relationships.

Feast of St. Francis of Assisi:

“Blessing of the Animals”

At Rochester Institute of Technology & The National Technical Institute for the Deaf

Would it work on a college campus? It's weird. Passersby always stare, because they are trying to figure out what is really happening. The dogs bark, run around, and chase each other. The cats hide and claw at anything that comes by. The fish swim in little circles and stare with intense uncertainty... looking just like the people who pass by. And I love it!

The Blessing of the Animals is a service typically done throughout churches across the country; mostly Episcopal and Lutherans, some Catholics and Methodist, and occasional other denominations will join in the craziness. Saint Francis was a Deacon and monk in the Catholic Church in Assisi. God gave him a unique gift that allowed him to bond with animals of all kinds. As a way to remember St. Francis, we like to offer a unique service that recognizes our pet companions and our thanks for the relationships and bond we have with them. That's right, we get to bring our pets to church!

As I have now been at RIT/NTID for just over a year I began to recognize that there were service animals on campus. I made a plan to meet with the Assistant Director of the Schmitt Interfaith Center and the Senior Associate Director for the Center for Campus Life to see how crazy this idea really seemed. To my surprise they were just as crazy! They loved the idea and we even discussed some ideas on what to do for next year to make it a bigger event. For this year though, we decided to keep it simple and do it at NTID in

the “Frisina Quad,” in between the Lyndon B. Johnson building and the dorms. That way the dogs and other animals could run around if they needed and plenty of trash cans for owners to pick up any messes.

Overall, we had about six(6) persons who came and brought their animals. A few were Deaf students, just bringing out their pets to run and play, but noticed what we were doing. She saw what we were doing and said, “I want my dog to get blessed! She needs it.”

And that's what I love about this service; when someone just walking by thinks, “I would like to be part of what's happening.” That is when the ordinary can become something holy.

Blessings,
Laurence+



WORDS FROM A CHURCH MOUSE



Here it is again, that wonderful time of year us church mice love. Seeing people embracing the true meaning of the holiday season warms my little mouse heart. Not to mention all the food that comes with this season—you know, people splurge on the most delicious cheeses for their company to enjoy.

Every year I watch as November arrives and people start thinking about plans for Thanksgiving and then the one day of the year that can cause emotions ranging from joy to panic—Christmas. But when did Christmas become so hectic? Or celebrated solely for decorations and gifts? Its true that gift giving and decorations go back centuries, but they were not the focus—more like a way to celebrate the holiday and show love to one another.

The way Christmas has evolved has even created a feeling of shame in people who can't afford gifts for their families or friends. I cannot lie, I enjoy circling the Christmas tree to see what I received just as much as the next mouse. But I find at the end of the night, it's not the gifts I am focused on, its my friends and family that surround me that brings me true joy. And that is what Christmas is all about. The joy that the birth of Jesus brought to the world—and the gift of His sacrifice.

I implore you to enjoy your holidays, give and receive your gifts, shop till you drop, even! But remember that at the end of the day, we are not celebrating the tree, the wrappings, or the food—we are celebrating something much more spiritual—our salvation. So the next time you are gathered with your loved ones around the table, take a moment to soak in everything you have been blessed with. And if you feel down or alone this season, I will not tell you to look on the bright side because that is easier said than done. But I will tell you that, even though you may not think so, there will always be someone thinking of you, and He will never abandon you.

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.

If you would like to submit an article, please do so by February 1, 2020

Contact us at deaf.episcopalian@ecdeaf.org

PUZZLES & GAMES

Answer key on Page 12

Word Scramble: Unscramble the words using the hints on the right.

HARTSIMICS	_____	(birth of Him)
DECALNS	_____	(wax and wick)
RPOISHW	_____	(communal prayer)
DTVANE	_____	(the waiting)
INSTLE ITGHN	_____	(a Christmas song)
YPENHPAI	_____	(the arrival)
TLEWTHF TNHGI	_____	(the night after 11)
SIEDECO	_____	(a church's district)
SAVRIO	_____	(Jesus)
NWOS	_____	(frozen falling flakes)
GNMTDIIH SMAS	_____	(Christmas Eve)

Maze: Help the Magi find the Star of Bethlehem



The Yule Log



The Yule Log is being brought into the house by entire family.

For those of you who like to light up the Yule Log on Christmas Eve, you may have wondered what it is or where this tradition started. To start, the term “Yule” was the name of the Winter Solstice Festival in Scandinavia. The log was originally an entire tree that would be burned a little at a time through the twelve days of Christmas. If any of the tree was left over on Twelfth Night, the tree would be saved for the following year and used to light the next Yule Log. Over the years, the tradition has evolved depending on what part of the world you are in; for example, some countries use different types of wood like Birch, Ash, Oak, etc. And, of course, there is the Yule Log desert! Many people gather round to enjoy the chocolate sponge cake desert that has become quite a tradition in many households around the world.

#AdventWord

The ECD has teamed with Virginia Theological Seminary to provide daily Advent words in ASL.

Starting December 1st, look to the ECD Facebook site for the daily reflections in ASL, signed by people in your community!

Answer Key:

Christmas, Candles, Worship, Advent, Silent Night, Epiphany, Twelfth Night, Diocese, Savior, Snow, Midnight Mass

DID YOU KNOW?

- The season of Epiphany is a green season because we take the time to grow our faith.
- Twelfth Night is an old English tradition still celebrated in some Anglican churches around the world.
- Though not a biblical observance, Shrove Tuesday was originally a day in which people would confess their sins prior to the start of Lent. The old English custom of using up all the fattening ingredients in the house has evolved to “Pancake Day” in many Churches.

“The Easiest Cookie Recipe Ever”

By Jannie Holland

There I was, standing in the kitchen, looking into my cabinet in terror. I had volunteered to bring cookies to the party at work. But what do I need to make them, am I brave enough to try? Mom showed me more than once, I can ask her. No. I can do this on my own—I’m nearly 35 after all!

I head to the store, recipe in hand. So many ingredients for something so seemingly simple. How was I going to find everything? My mind was reeling with questions like, “What is fine salt?” and “how do they get powdered sugar so powdery?”

After what seemed like an eternity of wandering around the store, I stood triumphantly at the checkout line with my box of cookies.

COMMUNITY HIGHLIGHTS

- St. Thomas Deaf Episcopal Church has live ASL worship services. Go to DeafChurchSTL.org to find out more!
- Holyrood Episcopal Church has free Sign Language classes Thursday evenings 6—7:30 PM beginning November 14th. All are welcome! 715 West 179, New York, NY 10033.
- November 8th & 9th, the Diocese of Olympia held the 109th Diocesan Convention, providing both live interpreters and CART.

Contact the editors of The Deaf Episcopalian to have your events highlighted!

E-mail: Deaf.episcopalian@ecdeaf.org



Letter from the Editors

We love being the editors of The Deaf Episcopalian! We also love hearing from you, our readers and fellow members! It's hard to believe that a year has gone by already. We're starting to feel like seasoned pros. But we thrive on your feedback, and your participation. Don't be shy. If you have news to share, feel free to drop us a line.

Farewell Friends

St. Barnabas in Washington, DC recently said farewell to two long-time members. It's an honor for a church to be able to bless her people, but it's always with a deep sadness for those we love and see no longer. Please remember with us the lives of Rudy Hines, and of Agness Padden.

A memorial service for Rudolph "Rudy" C. Hines was held on Sunday, October 27, 2019 at St. Barnabas, where Rudy had been a long time member, serving in several lay leadership roles throughout his life, including the role of treasurer. Mr. Hines was a faculty member at Gallaudet University for 40 years. He also served as the first Deaf Board member of the Board of Visitors at the Maryland School for the Deaf, where he served for 36. He was a 1941 graduate of that school. His service was attended by his family, his close friends from St. Barnabas, and several colleagues from Gallaudet. He was also remembered at a large memorial service the day before at Gallaudet University during homecoming celebrations. We are thankful that his colleagues could come and share stories. He will be missed.

Earlier that month, on October 8, 2019, a memorial service was held for Agnes Padden in the Church of the Transfiguration in Braddock Hills, Maryland. Agnes, 94, had been among the oldest members of our community. She died peacefully following a long illness. Agnes was born in Washington, DC May 3, 1925. She enrolled in Kendall School as a child, and then entered Gallaudet College (now University) and graduated from there in June 1947. In June, she and Don celebrated their 72nd wedding anniversary. Agnes taught at Gallaudet University as a faculty member of the English Department until her retirement. She is survived by her husband, Donald Padden, her two children, Robert and Carol Padden, their spouses Melinda Padden and Tom Humphries, and by 3 grandchildren, Kami Padden (and spouse Dina Raevsky Padden), Jacy Humphries (and spouse Leo Baumgart) and Keziah Padden.

We were grateful to the Church of the Transfiguration for offering the space for the large crowd, which included her extended family, many friends, and colleagues past and present from Gallaudet. Several speakers mentioned her graciousness and ability to connect people.

May the souls of Agnes and Rudy rest in peace, and rise in glory.

-The Rev. Betsy Bagioni+



EPISCOPAL CONFERENCE OF THE DEAF

A National Organization Serving Deaf Ministries

2020 ECD Membership

Membership to 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, 2020, please add \$5 late fee.

Please contact our ECD Membership Secretary, Ron Selinger at membership@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? (member, lay reader, rector, etc.) _____

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

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514 E. Argonne Drive
St. Louis, MO 63122



Thank you for your contribution

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

Yes, I would like to donate \$ _____



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