



Lutheran Friends of the Deaf; Mill Neck, N.Y.

## RECOGNIZED SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS

Serving in the Name of Christ

Volume 1, Issue 2 • April 2016



THE  
LUTHERAN CHURCH  
Missouri Synod

Recognized Service Organizations

*To extend its mission outreach, education and social ministry, The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod works with independent Recognized Service Organizations (RSOs) that agree to ensure their programs are in harmony with the doctrine and practice of the LCMS.*

### UPCOMING EVENTS:

**May 12, 2016**

LCMS Rural and Small Town Mission Webinar • “The Value of Strategic Planning”

[calendar.lcms.org/event/webinar-the-value-of-strategic-planning](http://calendar.lcms.org/event/webinar-the-value-of-strategic-planning)

**June 16, 2016**

LCMS Rural and Small Town Mission Webinar • “Keeping the Ball Rolling with Strategic Planning”

[calendar.lcms.org/event/webinar-keeping-the-ball-rolling-with-strategic-planning](http://calendar.lcms.org/event/webinar-keeping-the-ball-rolling-with-strategic-planning)

**July 9-14, 2016**

66th Regular LCMS Convention - Milwaukee, WI

[lcms.org/convention](http://lcms.org/convention)

**July 16-20, 2016**

LCMS National Youth Gathering - New Orleans, LA

[lcmsgathering.org](http://lcmsgathering.org)

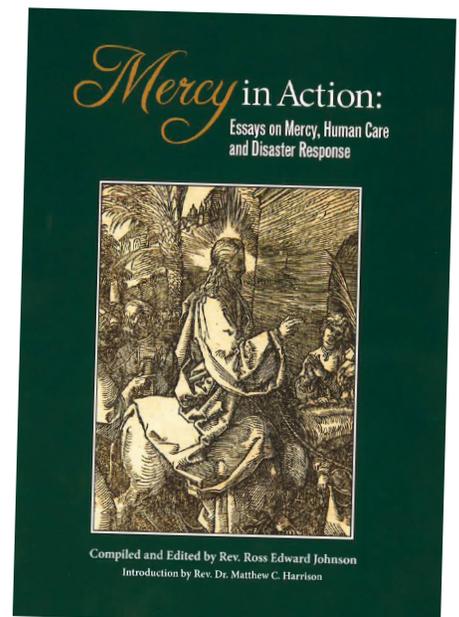


## MERCY IN ACTION: *Essays on Mercy, Human Care and Disaster Response*

LCMS Disaster Response has published a collection of 25 essays focused on mercy and human care in disaster response and social ministry. *Mercy in Action: Essays on Mercy, Human Care and Disaster Response* brings together booklets originally published by LCMS World Relief and Human Care focusing on Lutheran identity in social ministry and the theology of mercy, and essays from recent LCMS Disaster Response conferences. LCMS President Rev. Dr. Matthew Harrison reiterates the centrality of mercy in the life of all Christians, especially those involved in social ministry and disaster response, in his introduction to the book:

“The Church and her redeemed show mercy and compassion to each other and to their neighbor. Christians show mercy to others because Christ has first loved them. The ancient pagans remarked of Christians, ‘See how they love one another.’ The acts of mercy Christians show to their neighbor are a powerful witness to the world about the love of Jesus. Those are the two messages you’ll find within these pages and throughout these mercy-focused essays: that Christ loves us and that we, in turn, love one another, coming alongside those who are suffering and showing them mercy.”

**To request a copy of *Mercy in Action: Essays on Mercy, Human Care and Disaster Response* for your organization, please contact Deaconess Dorothy Krans at [dorothy.krans@lcms.org](mailto:dorothy.krans@lcms.org) or Deaconess Cara Patton at [cara.patton@lcms.org](mailto:cara.patton@lcms.org).**



## LUTHERAN FRIENDS OF THE DEAF: *Serving the Deaf through Christ Worldwide*

On a beautiful Sunday morning, we gather together in church with family and friends to receive the Word of God. We converse with each other, offering handshakes of comfort and peace and filling our souls with faith and hope. We lean on one another as a community, enjoying the feeling of togetherness. To put it simply, we belong.

At such times, we sometimes forget to think of those whose experience is different due to having been born or become Deaf or hard of hearing. Since 1947, Lutheran Friends of the Deaf (LFD), based in Mill Neck, N.Y., has made it their mission not to forget and to dedicate their lives to serving individuals nationally and around the world who are Deaf or have other special needs.

LFD, an LCMS Recognized Service Organization and the founding member of the Mill Neck Family of Organizations, is made up of many integral members. "I have been blessed to be on this campus; it has been equally amazing to witness firsthand such a wonderful group of talented and fully committed staff," says Michael Killian, President and CEO of the Mill Neck Family of Organizations. "They do marvelous things each day in marvelous ways."

The ministry staff is led by Director of Deaf Ministry Rev. Thomas Dunseth, who also spreads the Lord's Word in China, where, as the president of a Deaf school, he speaks and signs Cantonese. Deaf Missions Facilitator Pastor Tyler Walworth and Deaconess Tiffany Manor aid in developing resources for Deaf ministry at congregations; training religious interpreters; assisting with current national and international projects; helping to identify new projects that will expand the mission of LFD; and representing Mill Neck at conventions, convocations, panels and pulpits. Deaconess-Elect Heidi Sias, who is currently working on a special project translating the Lutheran hymnal into sign language, and Deaconess-Elect Phyllis Yee also play important roles in the organization.

"We are continuing to develop our partnerships worldwide. We are firmly focused on our mission and our ministry," notes Killian. Because of this, the Mill Neck Family of Organizations has recently welcomed Dr. Amy Wilson from Gallaudet University as its new Director of International Programs. In this role, she coordinates efforts between Mill Neck Manor School for the Deaf and education professionals from other countries in order to facilitate training and development with Deaf schools in these countries.

It's these faithful individuals who carry out LFD's core mission wherever they go: from their backyard on Long Island all the way to the Horn of Africa in Ethiopia.

Serving those closest to home, LFD has recently been awarded funds to support and assist local LCMS congregations to develop worship opportunities and educational programs for Deaf individuals who live on Long Island. LFD will now have the opportunity to provide interpreters and interpreter training in Lutheran vocabulary; to provide educational materials such as American Sign Language (ASL) Bible stories and vacation Bible school curricula; to provide ASL translations of the Lutheran liturgy and hymns; to offer sign language classes for congregation staff members, volunteer leaders and members; and to assist the congregation with outreach efforts and fellowship events.

Additionally, to help spread the Lord's message to the Long Island Deaf community, a ceremony was held on November 10, 2015 to rededicate the John of Beverley Chapel, located on the Mill Neck Manor School for the Deaf campus. The chapel will



once again open its doors, as it did in the 1950s, for worship with sign language interpreters, providing spiritual support for faculty, students, families and friends in the local Deaf community.

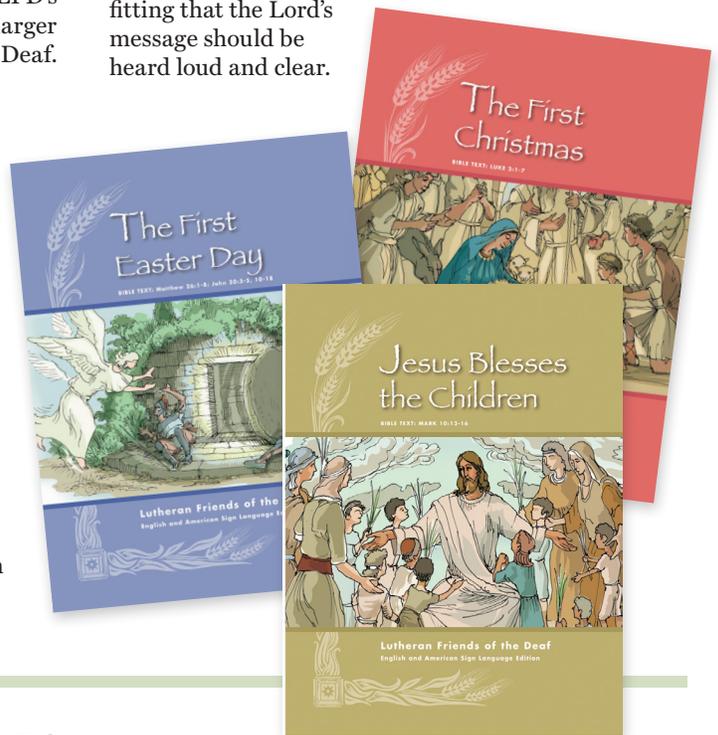
The ceremony was marked as a special occasion for many attendees, including LCMS Atlantic District President Rev. Derek Lecakes, who acted as the presiding minister. Rev. Dr. David Benke, Emeritus LCMS Atlantic District President and current member of the Mill Neck Manor Board of Trustees, was also in attendance and remarked, “This is the realization of a long-time dream, to fill this temple with joy and to express the depth of what this means to Mill Neck.” For Rev. Timothy Yeadon, LCMS New England District President, the rededication was also poignant, as he recalled his visits to the Mill Neck campus during his youth.

Serving Deaf individuals in the local community, while extremely important, only fulfills part of LFD’s mission. The organization dreamed on a much larger scale: reaching on a global level people who are Deaf. So LFD did just that.

Rev. Dunseth, Deaconess Manor and Mill Neck Manor School for the Deaf’s Deaf Education Center Principal Kathleen Kerzner traveled to Ethiopia to explore the potential for establishment of ministry and education projects in the region. Deaconess Manor said, “The most exciting moment was when we realized the Ethiopian Deaf people understood our signing and vice versa! An interpreter at one Deaf congregation told us that 80 percent of Ethiopian sign language is the same as ASL.” During their stay they met with the Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus leaders; learned about general mercy work and specific programs for people who are Deaf; and also had an opportunity to attend a screening for children who are Deaf and would like to attend school.

Strongly tied to its Lutheran roots, LFD makes it a priority to partner with many Lutheran organizations all across the world. More specifically, LFD teamed up with the Lutheran Women’s Missionary League (LWML) in St. Louis, Mo., which awarded a grant that funded the development of Bible Story Books—a unique series of 12 written and ASL Bible stories for children—that bring the Gospel into the lives of the Deaf community by combining American Sign Language, expressive artwork, the written word and video. This amazing collection of works allows children who are Deaf and hard of hearing to not only learn the Word of God, but to spread the divine message. The series will also be translated into Chinese, Spanish and Russian.

LFD will continue in its mission to give a voice to those who seemingly don’t have one, not just locally, but all over the world. Producing such a profound impact, it’s only fitting that the Lord’s message should be heard loud and clear.



## BETHESDA LUTHERAN COMMUNITIES

### *Best Practices in Disability Ministry Monthly Twitter Chat*

Bethesda Lutheran Communities has launched a new monthly disability ministry Twitter chat that seeks to foster a space for those engaged in ministry to individuals with developmental and intellectual disabilities to build community, share best practices, and explore new resources. The monthly event, Best Practices in Disability Ministry, is held on the first Thursday of every month from 5-6 p.m. PST and utilizes the Twitter handle *#BPDMchat*. More information about the chats can be found at [bethesdalutherancommunities.org/news/introducing-best-practices-in-disability-ministry-twitter-chat-bpdmchat](http://bethesdalutherancommunities.org/news/introducing-best-practices-in-disability-ministry-twitter-chat-bpdmchat) and you can sign up for e-alerts for the chats at [bethesdalutherancommunities.us3.list-manage.com/subscribe?u=3f7a2176b02185974e1014c51&id=e96e963f35](http://bethesdalutherancommunities.us3.list-manage.com/subscribe?u=3f7a2176b02185974e1014c51&id=e96e963f35).

For more information about Bethesda Lutheran Communities, please visit [bethesdalutherancommunities.org](http://bethesdalutherancommunities.org).

## RSO BENEFIT HIGHLIGHT: *LCMS Group Purchasing Agreement (GPA)*

Through the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod’s Group Purchasing Agreement (GPA), national vendors agree to provide discounted products and services for congregations, schools and other Recognized Service Organizations affiliated with the LCMS. The buying power of the Synod’s more than 8,000 organizations is substantial. It translates into more options for you to save on the purchase of products and services you need to carry out your mission. The LCMS has negotiated substantial discounts with its GPA vendors so that through this stewardship measure you have more for your ministry.

GPA focuses on products and services you use the most, including office supplies, moving companies, printers, copiers, projectors, and other office equipment, office furniture, and signage. The GPA vendor list and specials are updated regularly. You can find a complete list at [lcms.org/gpa](http://lcms.org/gpa).

One of the vendors participating in the LCMS GPA program is featured below.

### Wheaton/Bekins Exclusive Household Goods Moving Program

Wheaton World Wide Moving and Bekins Van Lines are the official moving partners for the LCMS. As a Recognized Service Organization, you are invited to choose the friendly and professional moving experts for your household move. We offer the following exclusive specials as part of your membership:

- Competitive discount for household goods moving services
- Up to \$100,000 of full replacement valuation protection
- Guaranteed on-time delivery, or we pay up to \$250 per day each day we are late (applies to moves 3,500 pounds or larger)
- On the rare occurrence of a claim, we will settle within 30 days or pay \$25 per day up to \$250

To learn more, please visit [LCMSmove.com](http://LCMSmove.com) or contact Angela at (888) 587-0968.

## CONTACT INFORMATION:

### Deaconess Dorothy Krans

DIRECTOR,  
*Recognized Service Organizations*

314-996-1636 (office)  
800-248-1930 Ext. 1636 (toll free)  
314-660-9406 (cell)  
[dorothy.krans@lcms.org](mailto:dorothy.krans@lcms.org)

### Deaconess Cara Patton

COORDINATOR,  
*Recognized Service Organizations*

314-996-1635 (office)  
800-248-1930 Ext. 1635 (toll free)  
[cara.patton@lcms.org](mailto:cara.patton@lcms.org)

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For more information about the LCMS RSO ministry, visit [lcms.org/rso](http://lcms.org/rso).

If you no longer wish to receive this newsletter, contact Deaconess Cara Patton at 314-996-1635 or [cara.patton@lcms.org](mailto:cara.patton@lcms.org).

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By this we know love, that he laid down his life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for the brothers. But if anyone has the world's goods and sees his brother in need, yet closes his heart against him, how does God's love abide in him? Little children, let us not love in word or talk but in deed and truth.

**1 John 3: 16-18 ESV**

## WANT MORE RSO NEWS?

Check out our webpage: [lcms.org/rso](http://lcms.org/rso).

Looking for an RSO? Visit our online searchable directory or download the RSO State Directory at [lcms.org/rso/directory](http://lcms.org/rso/directory). Please send contact information updates for your organization to Deaconess Cara Patton at [cara.patton@lcms.org](mailto:cara.patton@lcms.org).

