



Deaf Everywhere Are Family

2019 Year in Review

2019 was a year of ups and downs, God's blessings and life's challenges. Through it all, God stays with us and promises to be with us always. Even to the end of time (see Matthew 28:20).



January

Our January monthly DEAF meeting was postponed and then canceled due to the death of Bill Brown, who died on **January 3rd**. Bill was Linda's husband aged 92 and was a member of our DEAF group. He had been battling terminal disease for three years. When Bill was healthy and out of the hospital, he came to many DEAF meetings. Although he was late-deafened, he began to use sign language to understand what was being said to him, which was very useful at the end of his life. He began to rely more and more on interpreting and sign language (especially when he did not have his hearing aids). He said sign language helped him to understand what was said

(especially at church and then later in the hospital). Bill's life changed when at 89 years old he decided to be baptized. It took Bill a long time to make his decision to give his life to Jesus, but when he did, Bill followed Jesus all the way. Bill held onto the blessed hope that he will one day see Jesus come again and there will be no more death, sickness, tears or pain because these things will be finished forever. We miss Bill terribly, but we know that we will see him again when Jesus comes and wakes up all who sleep in Jesus.

On **January 9th – 19th** DEAF members joined the Worldwide 10 Days of Prayer. We made easy reading English versions of the Bible study prayer guides for Deaf people. Although we were not able to meet together this year, DEAF members were encouraged to watch Pastor David Trexler's livestream of the final study on January 19th.



February

On **February 11th** we held our monthly meeting at the Village SDA Church (South Lancaster, MA) the home church of Marye McKenney. Our Bible study was on 1 Corinthians 13 and Christian love. We learned that without love anything that we do and any spiritual gifts and talents we have are meaningless. In this Bible study Paul defines what love is and what love is not. Paul tells us how to put love into action. Finally, we learned about how love is permanent. Love endures (continues) when all else fails and ends.



March

March 2nd to March 9th Francisca Trexler led Bible studies twice a day each day at the Soundview Spanish SDA Church (Bronx, NY) for the Deaf group in New York. On Friday night we were concerned that we may have to cancel the meeting on Saturday because of the snowstorms. But God is faithful and held off the snow so that Pastor David and Francisca Trexler of Three Angels Deaf Ministries could drive up from Maryland to give

these special meetings. DEAF members from Massachusetts and Connecticut also drove down to meet this group. Pastor Trexler gave a presentation on King Nebuchadnezzar's dream from Daniel chapter 2 and how only God knows the future. We had a delicious potluck lunch and then a short prayer meeting. Francisca stayed all week to give Bible studies to Deaf people living in the Bronx and Greater New York Conference. Gilbert Sanborn also drove down during the week to join these special Bible studies. Our prayer is that this is more of a beginning to a Deaf group/church in New York City. Please pray that God blesses the Deaf people living in New York City.

We had a great time on **March 16th** at our Monthly DEAF Meeting at the Connecticut Valley SDA Church (South Windsor, CT) home church of the Colgan family and June Freeman. Amanda Colgan led the Bible Study on John 3:16 and 1 John 3:1 to follow all the Southern New England Conference churches that we focusing on John 3:16 on 3/16. She led a discussion about we are God's children and He loves us. During this meeting Amy and Thomas Colgan also joined their mom in signing a song. It is amazing to think about how much God loves us.



April

In April (**April 26th – April 28th**) we celebrated our Annual DEAF Weekend at the Johnston SDA Church (Johnston, RI). Our theme was "God Gives Us Grace to Have Courage," and Francisca Trexler was presenter. Francisca's presentations discussed Faith, Courage and Salvation in the context of God's grace and were voiced into English for the hearing people in attendance by Jessica McGowan Smith and Dona

Lombardi. We had DEAF members come from all across Atlantic Union for three days in Rhode Island. Because of the diversity of faiths represented by the group, there were lively discussions after each presentation. All the Deaf were eager to stand up and express their reaction to the message presented. For many this is the only time they have an opportunity to talk about God to other Deaf people. Having Francisca there to answer questions while presenting the gospel was a benefit to all. Deaf, Deaf-Blind, Hard-of-Hearing and hearing people came from Southern New England Conference, Northeastern Conference and Greater New York Conference, as well as throughout Northeastern United States to join this DEAF weekend. Local DEAF members opened their homes to welcome people traveling from far away. Healthy Vegetarian meals were enjoyed by all at the church throughout the weekend. Weekend highlights included a Bible Study on Heaven given by Amanda Colgan on Saturday morning, a joint worship service (in ASL and voice interpreted into English) with the Johnston SDA Church members, an interactive Bible Questions and Answers session on Saturday afternoon. This DEAF Weekend gave Deaf from different areas time to get together and form new friendships while renewing old ones. It gave us the chance to catch up, to pray for each other, to exchange contact information with new friends so that this connection can continue after the weekend. Saturday evening we enjoyed Deaf games and Christian fellowship late into the night. Another highlight were the prizes raffled off during the weekend including mugs, water bottles, Easy English Christian books, Christian DVDs in ASL. The grand prize was a free scholarship to our 2019 DEAF Camp.

May

May 11th was our Monthly DEAF meeting at the Stoneham Memorial Church in Stoneham, MA. This is Ernest Mitchell's church. We are still struggling to find someone to give Ernest a ride to church when the DEAF group is not meeting there. We were happy to pick Ernest up at the New England Home for the Deaf and bring him to church where we gave him belated birthday gifts (for his 89th birthday) and our DEAF group enjoyed a delicious lunch and Bible study after the mornings interpreted worship service.



On **May 18th** we had our 3ADM booth at the Massachusetts Deaf EXPO in Springfield, Massachusetts. It was an ideal location for Deaf people from several states in the Northeast to attend the event. Approximately 1,000 Deaf people attended. Paul Kelly, Jessica McGowan Smith, Amanda and Kevin Colgan with their two kids enjoyed giving out religious materials and meeting with Deaf, Deaf-Blind and Hard-of-Hearing people. At the 3ADM booth, we met a Deaf couple that live close to the Colgan's church. They are looking for a church, and hope that they find a place where the husband who is Deaf-Blind can feel comfortable worshipping. We also met a young man who is part of a Deaf group of people from Africa who live in

Worcester who are looking for someone to study the Bible with them. In other exciting news, a Deaf young man stopped at our booth, asking what religion we belong to. When Paul Kelly signed to him, "Seventh-Day Adventist," you could see his real big smile and they shook hands vigorously. He said that he is also a Seventh-Day Adventist. He did not know of any other Deaf Adventists until he met us for the first time at the booth!

June

Our Southern New England Conference had its annual camp meeting on **June 21-29th** in South Lancaster, MA. Dona Lombardi stayed both weekends to help with interpreting, and Jessica was there all 10 days. We were excited to see



Marye and Wayne McKenney pictured on the big screen during a highlight of the mission trips they have been on. On **June 22nd** DEAF members took part in the free Health clinic that was given as part of camp meeting. They had their blood pressure, cholesterol and blood sugar and vision checked, learned a lot about staying healthy and enjoyed getting free massages. On **June 29th** in the afternoon we had a picnic and Bible study on Hebrews 10:23-25. In this world of troubles, we must hold on to Jesus and encourage others to do the same, especially as we see that Jesus is coming soon. We also had a special prayer time for our sick and missing DEAF members that we have missed at our meetings.



July

On **July 12th** we had our monthly meeting at the Hudson SDA Church in Hudson, MA. There was a wonderful sermon titled "Be Prepared" (for Jesus is coming soon). We had a delicious potluck lunch. Amanda Colgan led a beautiful Bible study on Peter's denial of Jesus and how we can apply it to our lives to avoid making the same mistakes. We held a special prayer time for our missing DEAF members (some sick, some not coming to meetings) who we have not seen in a long time. As a way to reach out to them we all signed special cards made by Amy Colgan to remind them that we are praying for them and miss them.

For the first time on **July 21st-28th** an ASL interpreter was offered at the annual Blind camp at Camp Laurelweld in Laurelweld. Dona Lombardi was able to attend and interpret for Marye McKenney and Janice Musco. This was a wonderful addition to their camp that helped make the meetings accessible to our Deaf-Blind members. Discussions are being held about holding a future Deaf-Blind camp to focus specifically on people who are Deaf-Blind. Please pray for these plans and for more outreach opportunities for our Deaf-Blind community.

August

DEAF Camp 2019 was filled with faith, friendship and fun **August 21st-25th** at Timothy Hill Christian Camp in Huntington, MA. DEAF members came from four of the 6 conferences in the Atlantic Union (Southern New England, Northeastern, New York and Greater New York), as well as from Washington DC, Maryland and Florida. Daily presentations from Pastor Paul Kelly and Margie English were given on the theme: "Salt and Light: Every Christian a Witness." Paul Kelly also taught afternoon workshops on Bible Questions and Answers and How to Mark Your Bible. In free time, campers enjoyed activities such as crafts, volleyball, boating, swimming, water trampoline, hiking and visiting the horses. Friday evening brought a happy surprise visit by Southern New England Conference President David Dennis to show his support. On Saturday, we had a full day. We had a baby dedication. Sydney Leith made a beautiful box to collect our offering in for our DEAF meetings. This year we collected \$580 to go to support Gospel Outreach Deaf Ministries in honor of Alberta Blake. Margie English gave a report on Three Angels Deaf Ministries. The highlight of camp was a special baptism held Sabbath afternoon for Juliette Brookes. She had been studying with Paul Kelly for years and she looked like an angel in her white robe as she was baptized. June Freeman, Amanda Colgan and Song Hoa Choi made a beautiful choir led by Margie English. This year's DEAF camp was a challenge, with Jessica McGowan Smith's time divided from caring for her two-week old and coordinating. The camp could not have been a success without help from Scott Kahler who led out, Charmaine Logan who managed the registrations, and Dona Lombardi who led the voice interpreting. Also, a big thank you to all the DEAF members and teams who helped with worship and in the kitchen preparing our meals. We had a wonderful DEAF Camp full of God's blessings, and we already look forward to DEAF Camp 2020 at Camp Cherokee in Saranac Lake, NY.



September

September's meeting was canceled because Jessica was on maternity leave and DEAF members decided not to hold their own meeting.

October

On **October 19th** we had a very special monthly meeting where we drove to the William Miller Home and Farm to celebrate the 175th Anniversary Weekend of October 22, 1844. Members of our DEAF group enjoyed a blessed weekend as we drove 3+ hours to the William Miller Home and Farm for the 175th Anniversary Celebrations of Oct. 22, 1844. This important date of our Church History shows how eagerly early church members waited for the 2nd coming of Jesus. Although Jesus did not come in 1844 we should always be ready. Jesus is coming again soon!



November

On **November 2nd** we met at the Lowell All Nations SDA Church in Lowell, MA. We were happy to have Sharon Eisenhart join us. After worship, enjoyed a delicious potluck lunch and fellowship with this friendly church. We always love visiting this church. Our Bible study was on Luke 17:11-19 and the 10 Lepers. We were reminded to be thankful in all things, and that thankfulness is an attitude and an action.

On **November 6th** we launched a GoFundMe page for Charmaine Logan (a dear friend and DEAF member) to raise funds to help her save her apartment from eviction and to pay for her stage 4 cancer treatments. So far we have raised almost \$5,000, but Charmaine still needs help and prayers to beat her cancer pay for her needs.

December

Our final Monthly DEAF Bible Study and meeting of 2019 was held on Saturday, **December 7th** at the Johnston, RI Seventh Day Adventist Church in Johnston, RI. This is Janice Musco and Gilbert Sanborn's church. The church had a special Christmas program and then a beautiful baptism service, where many people publicly gave their hearts to Jesus. We were happy that Dona Lombardi came to help interpret. After a delicious potluck lunch, we celebrated God's blessings for the year. Everyone received Christmas cards and gifts. Our final Bible study of 2019 was a lesson on studying Psalm 86.



Thank you to each and every one of you for being a part of our DEAF group. Without you we would not be the group that we are. Without you, we would miss part of our DEAF family. I pray for all of you daily. Please keep praying for our group that we continue to grow and for our worldwide DEAF ministries. All Deaf people should have the opportunity to know Jesus.

Happy New Year from DEAF (Deaf Everywhere Are Family)! May God continue to be with us and bless us in 2020. We look forward to seeing you at our 2020 DEAF meetings and events.