

# THE INTERPRETER CONNECTION

Issue 5

April 2016

## A Budding Deaf Ministry

**D**eaf ministry has long been established and effective for years, but continues to need help for more widely spread and better accepted growth in the United States and around the world.

Hearing church members, in large part, do not understand the importance of making the gospel accessible to the Deaf community in that they overlook the need for systematic closed captioning or English subtitles to be placed on media, such as online resources, media visually displayed through a projector at church, sermons and outreach materials on DVD, etc. Many first-day churches include captioning on their materials almost automatically. As a result, many Deaf people go where they can access information, but they miss the vital gospel they need and seek. If SDA churches invest in outreach to the Deaf community by making information accessible by providing interpreters, captioning and subtitling, then many more

Deaf people would be able to access not just information, but God's truth!

With additional resources, Deaf people would be empowered to reach not only the Deaf people in their social circles, but also other hearing people who don't hear the gospel from hearing people like they should. God is able to work in ways far greater than we have come to realize or could even imagine.



*Bob Plubell being ordained as an elder for the Fresno Central SDA Church. Retired Senior Pastor Strphen Bohr, Pastor Gary Jensen, Youth Pastor Maurice Graham, Head Elder Larry Pyburn and Elder David Giangrande encircle him as Razonda serves as interpreter for this special service.*

The same God who confounded the languages is the same God who will provide ways for His Word to

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# Operation Standardized SDA ASL Signs

**W**hen traveling, do you sometimes find that a different sign is used than the local sign you learned? Or if you are interpreting for visitors, what sign do you use for the Bible character David? Do you use the D+KING like you learned for your area or D+SING? Yes, you can set up a sign and explain the meaning, if you have time with the fast speaker. Or, you can try to change the world to use a standardized sign.

## Why have standard signs?

Clear communication should be the goal of any signer or speaker. You want your listener to be thinking about your message, not the signs or words you use. This is especially important for the message of the gospel of salvation, when the eternal life of your listener could be at stake.

Have you tried to interpret the change of worship from the 7th-day to the 1st day? How did you interpret between Saturday, Sunday, and Sabbath? To some people, Sabbath can mean Sunday. It is so much easier to have a separate sign for Sabbath, like a palm-forward-Saturday.

Other denominations have their own signs that fit their view of the Bible. We need signs to fit our interpretation or viewpoint as well as the other interpretations so we can explain the difference.

## An Example: Eternal Hell

There are two basic interpretations for the concept of hell. To describe both beliefs in teaching this subject it would be helpful to have a sign for both. Some churches teach that people will continue in hell being tormented indefinitely. The sign for that can be “Fire continues near the chest with a pained look describes the pain people will forever feel.”

The SDA church teaches that people will be consumed in hell, meaning they will not live forever, suffering. Forever means they will die forever, the wages of sin is death and sin will be no more. The sign for that can be “Fire moving out as dissolve.”

Now for this example we can easily and quickly be clear about both Bible interpretations and focus on why one is

based on a correct interpretation of the Bible.

## How it all began

It started in 2012 at the Deaf SDA church in Portland, Oregon. Jennifer Powell approached the campmeeting leaders, “See that empty slot on the schedule? Could we use that for creating standard religious signs for SDA? We could meet every day with a small committee.”

Few people were expected to attend the first meeting to discuss SDA signs few people were expected

but they kept coming until all the seats were filled. This was no small committee.

Jennifer lead the first discussion. We took suggestions of concepts to consider for a standard, then accepted possible signs, for example, what sign should we use for Egypt? The discussion was lively and at times intense. Then we voted and recorded the results.

## 2013 Impromptu meetings

The next year Jennifer did not attend the Milo campmeeting so the SDA signs meetings were not planned. As I meet people all I heard was, “Where’s Jennifer? Where’s the ASL class?”

And so another round of meetings began, with Francisca Trexler and Paul Kelly leading.

## Language and identity

The level of engagement and intensity in the meetings was a surprise. Why such enthusiasm? The language you use to communicate is a big part of your identity. It influences everything you do: your social and cultural life, even how you think. You tend to gravitate toward people that speak your language, defining the group you belong to, defining your values.

You come to associate words or gestures with objects, actions, and emotions. For an English speaker the word “tree” is connected with those tall green things that grow outside. For an ASL signer, instead of the spoken or written word “tree,” it is

The language you use to communicate is a big part of your identity.

the gestural symbol or sign for tree.

When the language changes, it changes you. It changes your culture. The term “Call of the Loon” in song and literature has been associated with a haunting bird call on misty lakes in the northern states of the U.S. In the United Kingdom the bird is not called a loon, it’s called a diver. There is a tendency to standardize bird names so we can communicate better internationally. The “Call of the Diver” just doesn’t have the same emotional impact because here in North America we haven’t come to associate diver with what we call the loon.

In many ways we have a big stake in the language we use and this drives the resistance to change. That’s why you hear pleas like, “But that’s the way we have always signed it.” Your identity, your emotions, are connected to your vocabulary. It was a bit surprising then, that the group at Milo was ready and eager to create a standard. They, especially those that travel or use media to communicate the gospel, realize the need for clarity or fresh expressiveness.

### **Proscriptive vs. descriptive**

Proscriptive means telling people what sign they have to use for a concept. On the other end, descriptive means describing the signs or how the signs are used by a



*At the 2015 SDA sign meetings, the group made an informal video to keep a signed record.*

group. For example, some people or organizations require that 10+7 be used for signing 17 and won’t allow signing it by twisting a 7 twice. That would be proscriptive or forcing your view on the sign used. A person who is descriptive would say, “Some people sign with 10+7 and others with twisting a 7 and that’s ok; I’ll adapt as needed.”

You can’t force people to use a specific sign, but you can make it possible and encourage them to use a common sign. A dictionary changes over time, adapting to the common usage. It provides a standard we can follow so we can speak to people in other areas and with different backgrounds.

In the same way, language is not strictly defined by a standards committee. Ultimately it is defined by the people that use the language. So why have a standards group? It can encourage and organize the adoption of standard signs. It can

encourage their use by creating and publishing the standards and reviewing and adapting their use.

### **2015 SDA signs meetings**

It was amazing to watch the group work as they stayed up into the late hours, reviewing the past signs and adding new ones. When all the work was done, even though it was already late, the group decided to make an informal video so we would have a signed record of the results so we could remember better.

### **Where do we go from here?**

Where can you get more information? A PDF document is available with this newsletter issue showing the signs that were accepted by the committee.

In the near future, online video discussion will be held so we can continue this throughout the year and not just at a single campmeeting once a year. A video is planned to publish this information so we can encourage the use of these signs and get feedback for additions and changes. Ideally we would have website where we could post sign videos for greater accessibility.

If you have resources or ideas for promoting standard signs we would be interested in hearing from you. Email [whitehousetim@yahoo.com](mailto:whitehousetim@yahoo.com)

*Tim Whitehouse is the Deaf Ministries leader and ASL interpreter from Edinburg, TX and is currently helping standardize religious signs for ASL. He works in his own business developing medical software.*

## UPCOMING INTERPRETER/ DEAF EVENTS

**May 13 - 16, 2016** – World Congress for the Deaf and Deaf-Blind Seventh-day Adventists in Seville, Spain. For more information and registration, please visit <http://adventistdeaf.eu/seville-2016/>

**July 10 - 17, 2016** – Western Deaf Camp Meeting in Days Creek, Oregon (Milo Adventist Academy)

**July 10 - 17, 2016** – 7th Day Interpreters' Conference in Days Creek, Oregon (Milo Adventist Academy). For more information, please email Nohe Jarnes at [7thdayterps@gmail.com](mailto:7thdayterps@gmail.com)

**August 10 - 14, 2016** – Southern Deaf Fellowship Camp Meeting in Crandall, GA (Cohutta Springs Convention Center)

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be interpreted and relayed so that all have an opportunity to choose to live for Him. We all have a part to play in this effort, just as the apostles of Acts spread the gospel to the world beyond the Jews.

All of this work is not to be assumed by interpreters to complete. They are already doing a major part of helping to relay the gospel directly to their “hearers.” Just as more Deaf laborers are needed in Deaf ministry, more SDA interpreters are needed. More hearing supporters are needed too. Many Deaf leaders have developed visual materials such as DVDs with sermons in ASL, but would also like to glean from the resources that are already there and that come in quick succession from hearing churches all over the U.S.

and the world without having to “reinvent the wheel.” Many of our SDA ministries will interpret the same resources, DVDs, sermons, presentations, books, etc. in Spanish or other spoken languages. We could also include the transcription, captioning, or English subtitles needed for Deaf Bible study members to share with others. Deaf people have given testimonies similar to hearing people saying they wish they had known or they are glad to come to know God and His Word in a deeper way.

As an interpreter, it has been a blessing to see Deaf ministry grow with elements of the types of support and alliance needed. Just when one knowledgeable Deaf leader was not able to continue serving in as significant a capacity, God sent another multi-talented Deaf leader whom God has used to teach ASL classes to hearing members, lead in Sabbath school class and prayermeetings, with the use of highly visual references as aids for context and relevance, exclusively for Deaf members in American Sign Language, and facilitate outreach and baptisms of Deaf members by inviting Deaf evangelists and Deaf pastors to preach Daniel, Revelation, Hope, and Health seminars. God has blessed so that hearing members have invested in Deaf ministry and provided a dedicated and recognized place for Deaf Sabbath School, Deaf church service, Deaf church communion and potluck, etc. There is an alliance that has been built

## From the Editor



I love Spring time. The winter is slowly fading away and the warmer weather brings out new life everywhere I look! The weather also reminds me that summer is right around the corner.

If you have not read *The Interpreter Connection* yet, there is lots of information about the upcoming 7th Day Interpreters' Conference at Milo Adventist Academy. It will be a great time to get together and hope you all can join us! I hope you enjoy this edition of *The Interpreter Connection*.

Do you want to contribute? Send all articles, pictures or points of interest for *The Interpreter Connection* to [7thdayterps@gmail.com](mailto:7thdayterps@gmail.com). Thank you for all of your services for God!

—Nohe

# Tips to Help the Deaf Ministry Grow

so that the hearing church informs the community online that Deaf services are available and the hearing board members of the SDA church has elected a Deaf leader to become an elder and serve in the hearing church as well as in the local Deaf church along with the Deaf church members in events such as monthly health seminars, church gatherings/ outings/meetings, the annual cantata with a Deaf choir and all!

Even with this growth where the Deaf church has already doubled in size to almost outgrow the space they are in in less than a year, it could grow even more with equal access to communication and information so what is readily available for hearing church and community members is also obtainable by Deaf church and Deaf community members. The hearing church could even save money on providing interpreters when an expense is involved by presenting material with captioning for the Deaf leaders to then expound upon in meetings for their members.

Can you help? Consider the part you can play in helping Deaf ministry grow. It does not matter if you are hearing or Deaf. It also does not matter if you know sign language or not. There are many ways you can support the spread of the gospel. You can still be an ambassador for God and an ally to the Deaf community. It is good to see ministries as well known as "It Is Written" provide resources such as a daily devotional in ASL. We still need to find people who are

willing to help type transcriptions, captioning and subtitles in a way that a Deaf person would understand. Yes, even the English on the captioning needs to be modified sometimes to be educational, but understandable. Please talk with the leaders in your church and conference community to do all you can to make captioning resources available on a more wide-spread scale for Deaf evangelism. Let's not keep

Deaf ministry in the budding stage, but ever growing!

*Raz Munyaradzi is a sign language interpreter with national certification with experience in community interpreting in settings including medical, educational, vocational, psychological and also video relay interpreting. She serves as an interpreter at a church with strong Deaf leadership and hearing membership alliance.*

- **In order for communication to remain between the hearing individual and the Deaf individual, the interpreter should remain transparent and neutral. This communication can also take place in other means such as a video phone, text messages, etc.**
- **To encourage a strong alliance between the hearing individual and the Deaf individual to accomplish the work, both parties should not be dependent upon the interpreter for anything except communication access and cultural mediation.**
- **Be positive, encouraging, supportive, humble and prayerful.**
- **Be sure the interpreter is interpreting SDA doctrines correctly.**
- **When inviting or hiring non-SDA interpreters to serve in Deaf ministry, it would be more beneficial when the speaker is Deaf so that what is voiced follows what the Deaf SDA leader is saying according to church doctrine and serves as a witness at the same time.**
- **Be sure a Deaf person teaches the church ASL classes – respect native speakers of the language.**
- **As the interpreter, respect Deaf leaders. Do not dominate. Remain in your role.**
- **Encourage hearing members to attend ASL classes that have Deaf instructors.**
- **Know your limits and depend on God to provide what is needed.**
- **Share with others the need for captioning and English subtitles on materials.**

# Register now for the 2016

## 7th Day Interpreters' Conference

**I**t does not seem that long ago that we were all in Georgia holding meetings at Cohutta Springs at Southern Deaf Fellowship Camp meeting!

It is now two years later and we are preparing for our conference coming up this year July 10-17 at Milo Adventist Academy in the beautiful Days Creek, Oregon area.

This year our conference presenters will be Margie English, Darrell Strait, Lorna Strait, Esther M. Doss, and Nohelani Jarnes.

The cost is \$60 per person to attend for the entire week, but this does not include your lodging and food costs. Contact Sandra Alejo at [volkswsla@gmail.com](mailto:volkswsla@gmail.com) for information about food and lodging. On Tuesday, July 12, we will be headed to Shady Cove, Oregon to Rapid Pleasure Rafting to go rafting on the Rogue River! The \$10 rafting cost is in addition to the registration cost. After rafting, we will head to Miguel's Guadalajara Restaurant in Shady Cove for a



*Attendees of the 2014 7th Day Interpreters' Conference. The 2016 7th Day Interpreters' Conference will be held July 10-17 at Western Deaf Campmeeting on the campus of Milo Adventist Academy in Days Creek, Oregon.*

delicious dinner. If you would like to know what they serve or the cost of a meal at the restaurant, please visit their website at [miguelsmexicanfood.com](http://miguelsmexicanfood.com) to find their PDF menu. There

will not be a workshop on Tuesday afternoon and evening due to the rafting trip.

I hope you can join us! More information about the conference can be found at [7thdayterps.shutterfly.com](http://7thdayterps.shutterfly.com). The conference flyer is located in this newsletter as well as a registration form.

If you are planning on attending, please fill out the registration form and send it in as soon as possible! I hope that you will be able to join us for an exciting time of bonding and learning how to improve skill level together. Looking forward to seeing you all at this year's 7th Day Interpreters' Conference!

## How Much Do You Know?

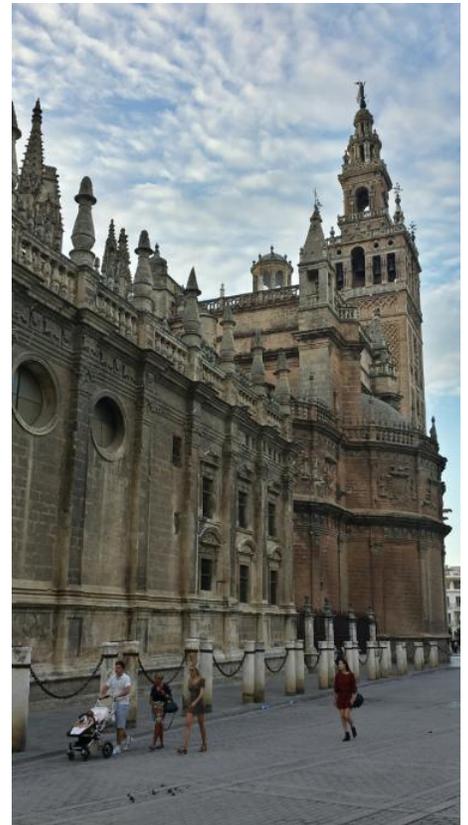
This past December, Adventist Review wrote an article highlighting a new emphasis on ministry for those who are often labeled "disabled."

This ministry is called Special Needs Ministry with Larry Evans as assistant to the General Conference president for Special Needs Ministries. I encourage you to read more about this new emphasis and ministry at <http://www.adventistreview.org/church-news/story3520-why-adventist-church-is-placing-new-emphasis-on-special-needs> as it includes Deaf Ministry along with other ministries.

# Tidbits: Happenings & Events



*Seattle Deaf, with our friends from Portland, enjoy meetings by Francisca Trexler this past October.*



*Esther Doss shot this picture of the cathedral in Seville, Spain while attending the International Sign Language Interpreters' meetings in September, 2015.*



*Deaf Ministries in Porterville. Picture credit: Central Valley Deaf Ministries.*



*Robert Fishbein, Rachel Reichtell and Bob Plubell at Shaver Lake. Picture credit: Central Valley Deaf Ministries.*

# Conference 2016



## 7<sup>th</sup> Day Interpreters

Conference 2016

Milo Adventist Academy

In conjunction with Western Deaf Camp Meeting

Days Creek, Oregon



# July 10-17, 2016

Conference Registration is \$60

Lodging and food is a separate charge. More info to come!

Transportation costs are not covered by the  
conference

For more information or to register to attend,  
please email [7thdayterps@gmail.com](mailto:7thdayterps@gmail.com)

## Mark your calendars now to attend!

Our speakers this year: Esther Doss, Margie English,  
Darrell Strait, Lorna Strait, and Nohelani Jarnes

# 7<sup>th</sup> Day Interpreters' Conference 2016 Registration Form

July 10-17, 2016

Milo Adventist Academy, Days Creek, Oregon

NAME:

ADDRESS:

CITY, STATE, ZIP:

PHONE: (TTY and/or Voice – Please indicate which one):

VIDEO PHONE:

E-MAIL:

\_\_\_ YES! I plan on attending the 7<sup>th</sup> Day Interpreters' Conference July 10-17, 2016 at Milo Adventist Academy

\_\_\_ YES! I am planning on attending the Rafting Trip on the Rogue River on Tuesday, July 12 for **\$10**

\_\_\_ NO, I am not attending the Rafting Trip. I plan to join in with the Deaf Recreation time at Milo instead.

\_\_\_ YES! I am planning on taking Advanced Interpreting Workshop (no additional fees)

\_\_\_ NO, I will NOT be taking the Advanced Interpreting Workshop

## CONFERENCE REGISTRATION INFORMATION:

**Early bird registration - \$60:** available to those who have their registration forms and payment mailed in either on or before June 1, 2016.

**Registration June 2, 2016 - \$75:** For individuals who send in their form after June 1st.

### **SDA Interpreter's Conference Shirt: \$15**

(Please Note: Shirt orders have to be to me no later than June 1<sup>st</sup> to allow me time to order them)

\_\_\_ YES! I would like a shirt and am including \$15 to pay for it.

\_\_\_ No, I am declining a shirt this year.

### **My shirt size is:**

**PLEASE NOTE:** Make checks payable to: **7<sup>th</sup> Day Interpreters' Conference**

**Do not include payment for lodging and food**, please coordinate this portion of the week with Sandra Alejo

**International Guests only:** Please pay at conference by cash or cashier's check in US Dollars. You will not receive the late registration price as long as you send in this form on or before June 1<sup>st</sup>, 2016

Please mail the registration form to:

**Nohelani Jarnes**

**1701 Bonney Ave #3**

**Sumner, WA 98390**