

# HELPING HANDS

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## “Deafness is a Blessing” ~by Will Dickmann

As a deaf person, I would not hesitate to say that I have received countless blessings from God. Deafness is one of those blessings. I fear that if I were not deaf, I would not be the same person I am today! If you asked me if I wish I were a hearing person, I would say no. Why? Read a bit further. I will never forget what my former high school basketball coach (also deaf) once told me in **American Sign Language (ASL)**. He said, “The life on earth is short, but the life after death is eternal.” In short, being deaf is temporary on earth. My journey after high school began with much anticipation but unexpectedly led to continuous disappointments and difficulties. I asked myself, “How did this happen?” My confidence was shattered, and I had no hope.

How did I become a follower of Jesus Christ while being this troubled deaf guy at 21-22? I clearly remember the conversation through instant messaging with a hearing girl who knew very little sign language. We first met at my brother’s wedding. True story! She saw me the first time and immediately felt called by God to go meet that guy in the groomsmen suit who keeps looking at the interpreter. Obviously, I knew nothing about what was happening behind the scenes. My deaf friend, Danny, joined me for the wedding reception. As we chatted, we noticed that same girl staring at us. My friend is more assertive than I and asked her to dance. She said yes. They danced for few minutes and then she asked me to dance. I finally gave in, and we danced for a bit. She fingerspelled her name which was all she knew how to sign. Eventually, we exchanged our contact information right before she had to leave the party.

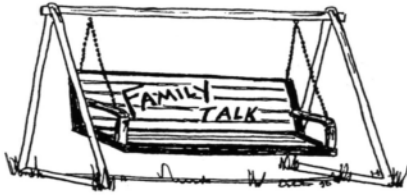
A few days later, we connected on instant messenger. One of the first things she told me was that she was a Christian. I did not hold back how I felt about God. He screwed up my life and I could not figure out why I was deaf. I did not ask to be deaf. I have nothing. I had been suspended from the university I attended. Now, I was working at Pizza Hut and had started going to a local community college. That was not the plan I had in mind. Her simple message was, “God loves you. Don’t you see it? You have wonderful parents, many friends, a vehicle to drive, a place to live in, a job to work, you have a dog, etc. What are the cons you have life? Being deaf... What else? Working at Pizza Hut?” When I thought of the cons, the list became much shorter. I started to see the loving God who enjoys sending/providing many good things in life. It was the first time seeing my life from that perspective. I was busy feeling sorry for myself.

I got a Bible but still did not understand what I was reading without much assistance. So, I asked my friends where a Deaf Church was. I visited the church by myself not expecting to know anyone there. My faith in Christ blossomed mainly because I really understood the gospel in American Sign Language. If I had not visited the Deaf Church, I would not be here today. If that girl had not obeyed God’s calling to speak to me at my brother’s wedding, I would not be where I am today. So, whether you are fluent in American Sign Language (ASL) or know very little ASL, you never know if the “small talk” you make with a deaf person could awaken in their soul a response to God’s love. Deaf people like myself appreciate it when hearing people learn to use ASL to communicate.

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DEAF STREETLIGHT



by Pam Blair

## Our Eyes Are On The Prize!: The Work, the Reward and the Joy of Serving Deaf Families

By time you read this, **Chris** and I will have traveled across the United States, up into Alaska and onto a cruise ship, into Canada, and back home. We hope to see bears, whale, moose, walruses, otters, eagles AND beautiful glaciers. (I will have pictures in the next newsletter!)

You see, a few years ago, before the world went crazy with Covid, our wonderful kids gave us an amazing Christmas/30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary gift. An Alaskan Cruise! Of course, like everything else in 2020, that cruise was postponed. God surprised us with the adoption of our daughter, **Laney**, and life instantly became a whirlwind. Finally, two years, one daughter, one son-in-law and one grandson later, we are packing and preparing for this long-awaited, trip!

Of course, along with this trip comes a LOT of work. Our kids worked hard to pay for this dream vacation for us. We had to work hard to find childcare, arrange schedules, clean the house, prepare our medical papers, and so on. No doubt, there has been a huge amount of sacrifice for everyone. Our kids must give of their time and work together to keep things running during our absence. We have a whole spreadsheet with details spelled out. Figuring out our **Families F.I.R.S.T.** event on Sunday, June 5 at **Glenwood Garden**, in Evandale was no exception. I was eagerly anticipating this fun day with our deaf friends!



We had people register, then cancel. We had emails, texts and phone calls. By time for the event, I really had no idea who was coming and who was not. But in the end, it was all up to God. And no matter who showed up - we would have a fantastic time!

We never thought twice about the work we would have to do to prepare to go. We decided the cost of our time and energy to prepare for this much anticipated trip was not too great. Why? Because our eyes are on the prize. Our eyes are focused on the beautiful sights we will see, God's handiwork in creation, the animals and the scenery. The relaxation, gourmet food, uninterrupted reading of books, and the conversations that will not be centered around schedules, kids, or to-do lists will be wonderful. These all add up to a dream come true!

In the same way, this process applies to **our Families F.I.R.S.T. events**. We make our plans. We pray. We prepare. We try to think of everything we need. We pull things together, make lists, text people, send out emails. It is a LOT of work. Sometimes those plans can be tedious. There are cancelations. We make new



plans. ***“But no matter what, it is all up to God to work out the details!”*** With each event I experience a mixture of anticipation, hope, nervousness, questions, and, most importantly, constant prayer for God to show up in great ways and to use **Deaf Streetlight** to minister to the families who come to these events.  
***(Continued on Page 3, column1)***



(Continued from page 1 **Deafness is a Blessing**)

**Philippians 4:12-13 NLT, "I know how to live on almost nothing or with everything. I have learned the secret of living in every situation, whether it is with a full stomach or empty, with plenty or little. For I can do everything through Christ who gives me strength."**

Like Paul, I have learned: 1. Every day is a gift from God, thanks to the informal quote from my basketball coach. and 2. It doesn't matter who you are, deaf or hearing, God is able to use you more than you ever imagined! Allow him to use you and you will be surprised!



**Bryan Eubanks** once told me that it starts with a mustard seed – a tiny seed, then Bam! it becomes 5 to

6.5 feet tall. It never crossed my mind that I would be the first Deaf Director for Deaf Institute/Deaf Streetlight. God has a bigger plan for us, even if we can't see it in the beginning. Yes, the mustard seed is **THAT** small.

(Continued from page 2 **Family Talk**)

Well. God did indeed show up. Our storyteller and interpreter were great! Our guide was fabulous. The class was remarkably simple and fun! We put our hands in dirt, investigated it, found worms and held snails. ***But most importantly - meaningful connections were made! God did that! God showed up.***

We had a little boy who decided to leave his processor at home, because he was going to be with deaf people, so he did not need it. He was able to just play and was free to be himself for that little bit of time. He enjoyed his time without the societal pressure of having to "hear" everything said because it was all signed for him. A few of the girls were hesitant to get their hands dirty, but eventually they were down on the floor with us giggling and having a fun time. I do not know that either touched a worm, and that is okay!

We had a single mom with her two sons join us. The boys were very intimidated at first. But, as we



got going, they slowly joined in and by the end, they were running around, playing, having fun and making

new friends. By the time to leave they were begging to stay. New connections were made!

Our **Families F.I.R.S.T.** events are not Alaskan Cruises. However, the joy of seeing lives enriched, connections made, and relationships strengthened is still incredibly rewarding! The investment made and the time spent preparing the events were well worth every minute! Why? We get to see God at work. We get to see God bringing people together, building and strengthening relationships and making magic happen. We have first row seats to God in action! There is truly nothing better! ***I feel blessed beyond measure to have the opportunity to see God work at these events. More than being happy, I feel honored to do it!*** I eagerly put forth the effort, and I am never disappointed! The rewards are GREAT, and our loving Father is so good to us!

### **REMEMBERING DEBBIE WINES**



We mourn the passing of Debbie Wines on Thursday, June 9, 2022. She and her husband, James Wines, a current Trustee, have been long-time supporters of the Deaf Streetlight / Deaf Institute family. She will be sorely missed.

#### **Memorial Gifts**

**In Memory of Paula Crouch**  
Bryan & Pam Eubanks

**In Memory of Deborah Wines**  
Bryan & Pam Eubanks  
Kevin & Cathy Holmes



## Prayer Requests and Praises

**“I pray that the God who gives hope will fill you with much joy and peace while you trust in Him.”**

Romans 15:13, English Version for the Deaf

**Special Prayer Request:** We humbly ask for your prayers as we carefully consider our current building situation for the Deaf Institute/Deaf Streetlight. Increased safety concerns and potential repairs have prompted exploration of a new location. If you know of any small building or house in Hamilton County, Ohio that might meet our needs, please contact us.

**Pray** for wisdom for **Will Dickmann**, his family and our **Board** as we continue transitions and for mission needs.

**Pray** for the family of Deborah Wines and her church family at the Southport Heights Deaf Christian Church as they grieve her loss. Her husband James serves as the Minister there.

**Pray** for successful **Families First** Events and **Summer Reading** Programming for 2022 and Pam Blair’s transition as **Family Ministries Representative**.

**Pray** for our **Deaf and Family and Friends Camp** on July 14-17, 2022, at Lake James Christian Assembly and our **Dean, Corey Stapp**.

**Pray** for **NCCD October 7-10, 2022, in Rochester, N.Y.**

**Praise** for the completion of the translation of the **ASL Bible**. Go to [www.deafmissions.com](http://www.deafmissions.com) for more information.

**Pray** for **ICOM 2022 in Columbus, Ohio** on November 3-6, 2022. Visit us at **Booth #735**.

**Pray** for God to provide someone to fill the **Teen Director** position to allow the mission to continue moving forward in an efficient manner.

**Praise** for the support from **you** and organizations like **GE & GCF** who partner with us to help families with deafness through our **Gifts of Hope, Shared Reading Program** and **Summer-Time Kids Families First Activities**.

*Your prayers and support help make a difference in the lives of families with deafness.*



“His Love ...  
Our Hands ...  
Touching Hearts”

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