



We Are Still Here! The Lord Is Still Using Us!

It has been a very long time since we wrote a newsletter, and some of our readers might have been wondering what has happened to us. Well, sit back and relax, because we have a bit of a story to tell you about the past months.

In the spring of 2019, our family was dealing with some personal and health issues while we were working in Togo. We were seeking help, and it was hoped that we could continue to serve the Lord in Africa while these concerns got sorted out. Unfortunately, it was not to be like that. In a rather sudden decision, we were brought back to the US so that we could seek the appropriate care necessary to deal with what was facing us.

We landed back in the US on 11 June 2019, and almost immediately began seeking the care we needed. Thankfully, God provided for us through Emily's parents, who let us come and live with them once again. We were also able to find the healthcare professionals we needed in very short order, so that treatment could begin.

When we came back stateside, the hope was that we could be here temporarily, and then be fit to return to service in Togo. However, that was not the Lord's will, and in July the decision was made to end our international service and begin the transition back to permanent life in the US.

The Lord knew His plans for us, and He worked in His special ways, as only He can.

In the same phone call when we were informed about the decision not to put us back in the field, we found out that the gears were already turning to place us in a new mission field: Deaf Ministry in Madison, WI!



From August through October, we worked to prepare ourselves to move to Madison – packing, sorting, finding a house, buying a vehicle. Thankfully, it is only a two-hour drive from Onalaska to Madison, so we were able to make scouting and house-hunting trips.

In October, Ryan made a solo trip back to Togo to properly say our farewells to those left behind, and to prepare our household goods for shipment back to the US. That all went (mostly) as planned, and our things arrived the last week of January.

We moved into our new residence – a rental unit in Cottage Grove, WI – on 1 November, and hit the road running. Ryan started preaching at Our Savior Deaf Lutheran Church on 3 November – All Saints Day.

Make checks payable to either:
"LCMS South Wisconsin District"
and mail to:
LCMS South Wisconsin District
8100 W. Capitol Drive
Milwaukee, WI 53222-1920

OR

"The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod"
and mail to
The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod
P.O. Box 66861
St. Louis, MO 63166-6861

Write **Mission Field: Madison** on the
memo line of your check.

Gifts can also be given securely online through
the LCMS website at [lcms.org/givenow/MFUSA-
madison](https://lcms.org/givenow/MFUSA-madison).



SERVING THE LORD IN

Madison, WI

NEWS FROM THE MCDERMOTT FAMILY



On Sunday 2 February 2020, Ryan was officially installed as a Missionary-At-Large of the South Wisconsin District, assigned to Our Savior Deaf Lutheran Church and the Madison Deaf Community. (Try putting all that on a business card – haha!)

That means that Ryan's Call officially is extended from the Board of Directors of the South Wisconsin District. He is a test case for a new kind of partnership, where about 50% of his support comes from the LCMS Office of National Mission, 40% comes from the SWD, and 10% comes from the congregation, Our Savior Deaf. So, that means that while Ryan is serving full-time as pastor and missionary in Madison, we are still responsible for maintaining our support network in order to make sure that our position remains funded.

Our position budget is not quite as big as it was when we were overseas, but it is still not a small amount. Again, that includes not just salary and compensation, but project money, funds for mission and ministry needs, and a small portion for the wonderful support staff in St. Louis who help to keep things running and make sure you get necessary information and things like tax receipts.

If you would like to hear more about the work here in Madison, please contact us. Even during social distancing, we can visit via Skype/Zoom/FaceTime!

Our new contact information is:

The McDermott Family
102A Maria Lane
Cottage Grove, WI 53527

Ryan.mcdermott@lcms.org

Cell: 608-473-3473

VP: 608-504-3967

News and Prayer Requests

Ryan was recently accepted into a PhD program in Practical Theology at the University of Pretoria (South Africa). His research proposal is to write a textbook for preaching in French for use in our French-speaking partner seminaries. The program is two years, all distance/online. Please pray that things would go well, and his studies would be fruitful.

Rhys, Eva, and Joshua are going to the local public schools (when not stuck at home!). Please pray that their education would continue well, and they would grow and mature in wisdom and knowledge.

Emily is staying home, taking care of Kaj and managing the household. Please pray that Kaj would be a willing student and continue to learn and grow eagerly. Pray that Emily would have wisdom and strength to manage the house well.

We give thanks for all who have supported us through these changes and transitions!



We would love to have you visit us at Our Savior Deaf Lutheran Church!

3110 Dairy Dr
Madison, WI 53718

Worship is at 10:30a.m. on Sundays

COVID-19 and Our Ministry

Since it is the major story in everyone's news right now, I thought I would give you a bit of information about how COVID-19 is affecting us and our work here.

Because the Governor of Wisconsin has prohibited all gatherings of more than 10 people, we have had to cancel all of our in-person worship services and events at church. However, we already had a system in place to live-stream Sunday services, so the McDermott family is serving as the congregation while Ryan leads the Divine Service, with members and others watching the stream online.

Bible studies can no longer be held in person, so we have gotten a Zoom account to be able to have group Bible studies online. Last week was our first run at using Zoom for Confirmation class, and it went well, thank God!

Ryan has been making video devotions and posting them several times a week on YouTube and Facebook for all to see and join in prayer. He is still going into the office on his regular schedule. There is no one else in the building, so no contact risk! His workload has changed, but not lessened. No boredom here!

He has also been attempting to call every household on our membership list to check in and see how they are doing. Many Deaf people are feeling nervous and isolated at this time, especially since key information may not be available in an accessible format. These calls give Ryan an opportunity to share a message from Scripture and to pray with our brothers and sisters in Christ.

The kids have been off school since 19 March, and they will be off until at least 24 April. In God's good planning, we still had several crates of homeschool materials that we had brought to Togo and back, so they are able to use some of those things, as well as material their school district is providing online. This past week, Rhys got to have his cello lesson and Eva her violin lesson online. They have plenty of practice time now!

The stores here in Madison are not as crazy as some reports from elsewhere in the country. We have enough food, and a sufficient amount of toilet paper. We are staying in contact with our members and friends, making sure that everyone is provided for – so far, so good.

Please pray for a swift end to this pandemic. Pray that our Lord would send His holy angels to protect His people from sickness, fear, and despair. Pray that He would give a Spirit of wisdom and knowledge to our government leaders and decision-makers, that they might make good and wise decisions, both for our public health and for our economy. Pray that the holy Christian Church would be strengthened by this test of faith, and that all Christians would be filled with a Spirit of peace and hope in this dark time.