

# Deaf Awareness Sunday 2019

## “What is in your Hand?”

*Brief Overview of Deaf History, Language & Culture -*

*Forming a Deaf Spirituality (video clips – e.g. SIGNED video clip lip from Parliament)*

### WORSHIP

#### Call to Worship

*(Normally the Call to Worship may include a response through verbal words. This time instead of a verbal response from the congregation after the Leader speaks there are hand motions.)*

Leader: Welcome! Come it is time to Worship together!

People: (The sign of welcoming)

Leader: Let us lift our praise of thanksgiving to God, creator of all.

People: (Raise hands and shake at wrists as in celebration jazz hands.)

Leader: Let us worship God together!

#### CALL TO WORSHIP (1)

**Opening Prayer:** Lord, we gather together this day with praise in our hands, our minds, and our hearts. We thank You for all that You have provided for us. Thank you for all that You have created. Thank You for sending Your Son, Jesus Christ to remind us that You love us and we are to love one another. Amen.

**Hymn: As we gather may your Spirit work within us**

2. Declaration of Faith

3. Breathing Prayer

4. Cecil Frances Humphreys Alexander (CFHA)

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## Hymn: All Things Bright and Beautiful (CFHA)

Prayers & Lord's Prayer

5. A Deaf Child's Prayer

6. Deaf Person's Creed

**Exodus 4:10-12** Moses said to the LORD, "Pardon your servant, Lord. I have never been eloquent, neither in the past nor since you have spoken to your servant. I am slow of speech and tongue." The LORD said to him, "Who gave human beings their mouths? Who makes them deaf or mute? Who gives them sight or makes them blind? Is it not I, the LORD? Now go; I will help you speak and will teach you what to say."

**Psalm 139:13-17 - Made by God** - *"God created you the way you are for a reason and God doesn't make mistakes."*

### 7. SERMON - What is in your Hand?

**1 Peter 4:10** *Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms.*

"Take, Lord, and receive all my liberty, my memory, my understanding, and my entire will."

**Hymn: Father we love you we worship and adore you**

***Positive & challenging Deaf Images***

**Hymn: St Patrick's Breastplate (CFHA) *I bind unto myself today***

8. Blessed Be .....

The Grace, Blessing & The Peace of the Lord (using BSL)

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## Call to Worship

LEADER: Lord, how awesome it is that we can gather here today and loudly sing praises to your name, and know that we are standing in your presence!

PEOPLE: Lord, I can't stand.  
I use a wheelchair and there is no place for my chair.

LEADER: It really is great, Lord, that we are able to hear you speak to us through the proclamation of the word this morning!

PEOPLE: I'm sorry, God. I didn't hear what was said.

LEADER: And, Lord, it's so fantastic to be able to read your Word along with the pastor, and to recite the creeds, and litanies.

PEOPLE: This morning my vision is dim, God. I cannot read the bulletin.

LEADER: Lord, we really feel blessed that we understand everything that is happening around us in the church in this hour.

PEOPLE: God, why do I learn so much slower than others, and must feel, week after week, that I do not really belong here?

*ALL: Open us, O God. Make us accessible to your Spirit, and accessible to all your people.*  
*Adapted from Rev. Dave Wade*

## Declaration of our Faith

**God, Father Almighty,**

**we believe and trust.**

**Jesus Christ, His Son,**

**we believe and trust.**

**The Holy Spirit,**

**we believe and trust.**

**The Three in one,**

**we believe and trust.**

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## **Breathing Prayer**

Breathe out: **distractions**  
Breathe in: **Come Holy Spirit**

Breathe out: **hate**  
Breathe in: **love**

Breathe out: **worries**  
Breathe in: **joy**

Breathe out: **stress**  
Breathe in: **peace**

Breathe out: **anger**  
Breathe in: **goodness**

Breathe out: **selfishness**  
Breathe in: **faithfulness**

Breathe in: **Come Holy Spirit**

**AMEN.**

## **Cecil Frances Humphreys Alexander (1818-95)**



*Image from Wikimedia Commons*

Cecil Frances Alexander was involved in charitable work for much of her life. Money from her first publications had helped build the Derry and Raphoe Diocesan Institution for the Deaf and Dumb, which was founded in 1846 in Strabane.

The profits from “*Hymns for Little Children*” were also donated to this school.

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Cecil Frances Humphreys Alexander hymns include:

### **All things Bright and Beautiful**

<http://www.hymntime.com/tch/htm/a/l/l/t/allthing.htm>

There is a Green Hill Far Away

**St Patrick's Breastplate** (*I bind unto myself today the strong name of the Trinity by invocation of the same, the Three in One and One in Three.*)

[https://hymnary.org/text/i\\_bind\\_onto\\_myself\\_today](https://hymnary.org/text/i_bind_onto_myself_today)

Jesus Calls Us, There is a Green Hill, Once in Royal David's City

### **A Deaf Child's Prayer**

*Do the angels sing in Heaven, Lord?  
Will I hear music there?  
Or must I stand in a corner  
While others join in prayer?  
While I wonder what they're saying Lord,  
As oft I do down here?  
Must I sit in lonely stillness  
While the bells ring loud and clear?  
Can I read your lips in Heaven,  
Lord Will I be brushed aside,  
And stick my hands in pockets  
Because of wounded pride?  
Will all the saints there praise thee,  
While I in silence wait?  
Will some one up in Heaven  
Help me through the gate?*

*Then God, who loves the humble,  
Whispered in the poor deaf ear*

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*My child, has no one told you,  
There is no silence here.  
Hold out your hands, my little one,  
For Heaven all to see.  
We've heard them pray so many times,  
Each prayer reached up to Me.  
See, all the angels waiting.  
The gates are open wide.  
Your crown of life awaits you,  
And I shall be your guide.  
I have a song to give you,  
You'll sing both loud and clear.  
And the song you sing, my dear one,  
Will be the sweetest song up here.*

Doris Isbell (McDonald) Crowe 1955.

<http://deafworldministries.com/deafpoetry.html>

### **A Deaf Person's Creed**

I believe in God

Who made everything in heaven and on earth including me.

Full Deaf and made in the Image of God.

I believe in the only son of God, Jesus Christ.

Who was born, lived and died for the sake of us all.

Who knew what it was like to be despised and rejected,  
mocked and ignored for who He was.

I believe that Jesus was killed, then rose again,

And by His resurrection we have been saved from the bondage of sin and  
death; from the bondage of oppression

and a world that wants me to pretend that I am hearing.

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I believe in the Holy Spirit of God,  
who breathes life in to each one of us.  
Who calls us forward when we would hang back;  
Who empowers us to believe in who we are and what we can do  
And who in the beauty of Sign Language speaks to my soul.

And I believe in a Church, where I can be myself,  
where all are equal and where this good news of Jesus Christ is challenged,  
expanded and made real  
in its worship and its work.

For now and for ever.

Amen

(c) Rev Dr Hannah Lewis 2000

## WHAT IS IN YOUR HAND?



**Exodus 3** - It is God who calls Moses – He knew that Moses had this speech disorder yet, HE still called Moses. You see, God sees persons with **abilities**, people of **value**....as He sees all of us.

We are all His children – regardless of the condition of our physical bodies. It also shows us that we, too, should recognize the value of “the other” in our church.

Many people with disabilities have great talents that can add much to a congregation. Yet, over 50% of people with disabilities do not attend church because they do not feel welcomed!

They don't attend because we aren't ready for them.

They are individuals with gifts, talents and abilities. We need to try to move away from the general attitude that people with disabilities need sympathy and healing.

**Exodus 4:2-4** – “*What do you have there in your hand?*” the Lord asked him. And he replied, “*A shepherd's rod.*” (Living Translation)

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God tells Moses to throw his staff on the ground and it transforms into a snake.

“That question, ‘What do you have there in your hand?’ is one of the most important questions in life. What is in your hand?”

God tells Moses to throw the staff in his hand on the ground and “something that was dead comes alive,”

- God never does miracles to show off
- God never asks questions that he does not already know the answer.

God asks questions for our benefit.

The staff represented Moses’ identity as a shepherd; symbolized his income because wealth was tied to livestock back in those days; and symbolized his influence – Moses used the staff to pull or push his sheep.

Lay it down and it will come alive...., but Moses, every time you pick it up it’s going to die....

After that scene in the Bible, it was never again referred to as Moses’ staff but always called the Rod of God. The Rod of God was used to part the Red Sea, to turn the Nile River into blood, to perform miracles in front of pharaoh and to make water come out of a rock.

It was just a simple stick. There was nothing magical about it, but once Moses surrendered it to God, it became the Rod of God.

### **What is in your hands?**

“What is in your hand? What is your identity? What is your income? What is your influence?”

If you will take it and give it to Jesus, he will make it come alive. He will do things in your life you would never imagine.

My question to you is: What has God put in *your* hand?

Do you wonder how God might use you? See what He has given you. God equips people in various ways: I like to have people over to my home, you might say. Another might respond, I’m good with my hands. I can help a group

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get things done. I like to cook. I have the gift of the gab. I like to keep things tidy. And so on.

Offer to God in faith what He has given you, no matter how simple, and God will use it — sometimes supernaturally — to do His work. You'll have a new sense of meaning, since you'll begin to realize how God is using simple things in new and wonderful ways.

**The secret is, you don't need much. All God needs to take your life to a higher level, is all you have. A God who created something out of nothing can certainly create something greater out of little. God can do exceptional things with what's in your hand.**

**1 Peter 4:10** *Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms.*