



ELDA

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Evangelical Lutheran Deaf Association
a ministry of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA)



Mark Koterwski
ELDA President

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Greeting everyone,

We are excited to have the ELDA conference 2014 in less than 6 week from today! Wow time goes fast and I'm sure excited! This will be my last term as president, my term expires after the 2014 ELDA conference. I want to take a look back since 2005 when I became president. At first, we weren't able to meet for ELDA Board meetings once a month due to technology limits. Then in 2007 we were able to meet for ELDA Board meetings on a monthly basis using Instant Messenger. We had to type while we discussed the business. In 2012 -Pah!!! We can see each other during ELDA Board meeting via videophone and VRS for our hearing people who do not have videophones. I want to say thanks to ZVRS for providing this technology to allow us to use ASL to communicate instead of typing on AIM. We are very blessed to have wonderful technology today!!!

Since 2005 that we have done much! We have provided interpreting workshops twice, supported interpreted ministry, finished an ELDA directory, donated funds to Haiti and Jamaica, worked for The Kids Against Hunger during ELDA Conference, purchased an ELDA banner & display, upgraded our website, taken a mission trip to Jamaica, done ELDA outreach at Deaf Expo in Chicago, IL, set up criteria for screening pastoral workers (work with ELCA to set up guidelines), and finally we have invited the Episcopal Conference of the Deaf, United Methodist Congress of the Deaf, United Methodist Committee on Deaf and Hard of Hearing Ministries to join our ELDA Conference in 2014 for the first time!

I want to say many thanks to ELDA officers who had been worked with me since 2005: Lori Fuller, Rev. Gisele Beringhaus, Connie Wallace, Luanne Bartens, Don Rosenkiar, Linda Fairbanks, Jason Andera, Jeff Panek, Pr. Susan Masters, and Pr. Beth Lockard.

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AND MORE...

FROM THE PRESIDENT (CONT.)

I want to say many thanks to Don Rosenkjar who has served on the ELDA board for 15 years. He will be missed as he did a great job with ELDA as president and immediate past President. After the ELDA Conference 2014, I will take his place as immediate past president. We have an open position as president, secretary, and pastoral advisor. If you are interested on one of those positions, please contact Jeff Panek, Election chairperson at jbpanek@iw.net.

I am looking forward to see you at ELDA conference 2014 in Chicago during July 27th - Aug 3rd!
You all have a great summer and God Bless you all!!!

Mark Koterwski

ELDA President

From Don Rosenkjar...

After serving two terms as Immediate Past President, I wish to say that I have very much enjoyed working with the entire board, especially our president, Mark. It was a very good, hard-working board, and I commend each and every board member. My responsibility, among other, was to advise current president, especially during the transition period, but Mark did so well with very little advice from me. I am happy to see Mark taking over my position as Immediate Past President after the election of new officers, and am certain, with his wisdom and dedication, ELDA will continue to sail through all kind of waters very well.



Don Rosenkjar

WHAT HAPPENED TO GOD'S BEAUTIFUL CREATION?

by Pr. Susan Masters
Pastoral Adviser, ELDA

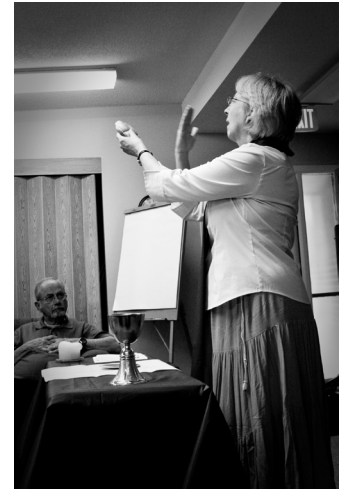
Please watch this video on youtube.com – it's an ASL translation of Genesis 1:1 – 2:4 by Bob Alcorn in his beautiful sign language.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yJuubz3wwG8&list=PLaXwWbGTQW2yMfIQFe9RjoA8Chsn2JM9r&index=59>



If I asked you to draw a picture of God's creation of the world, many of you would draw pictures that show Adam and Eve lying naked beside beautiful, clean lakes, with green trees and beautiful, colorful flowers filling the fields. Lions and bears and lambs would be playing together in harmony. And all of creation would be worshiping God, the one who created them.

I think your drawings would be accurate because it would show how harmonious and beautiful the world was when God first created it. But now we have to ask the question: What happened?! Why are the lakes no longer clean? Why are trees being cut down and not replaced? Why is the air so polluted? What has happened to the beautiful world that God created?

Many Bible scholars believe that humans have caused so much damage to creation because we have misunderstood the creation story in Genesis. We tend to interpret the story to mean that God created a hierarchy: Humans come first, then plants and animals come last – and humans are supposed to control and dominate the earth. But Genesis 2:15 reminds us that God put Adam and Eve “in the garden of Eden to till it and keep it.” In Hebrew, the word for “till” is abad, which can also be translated as “serve”.



When you serve someone, what do you do for them? You take care of them, make sure they are safe, and make sure their needs are met. If God put humans in charge of serving the earth, how must we act toward the environment? We are called to lovingly cherish the earth, protect it, and make sure it is well-cared for.

This relationship is not about hierarchy – it does not mean humans are most important and we are on the top, controlling the less important creation at the bottom. I like to think of it as a horizontal relationship, meaning that humans, plants, sky, animals, land, water, air are all EQUALLY important in God's eyes – and we depend on each other for survival. When the air and water are suffering from pollution, birds and fish suffer and die. When they die, humans lose important food sources. But we also lose the magnificent beauty that birds and fish add to our lives. When we use pesticides that destroy bees, they are not able to pollinate plants that provide food to animals, and

WHAT HAPPENED TO GOD'S BEAUTIFUL CREATION (CONT...)

then those animals die. And on it goes, like a cycle. We all influence each other – we are all important for the survival of all of creation.

For too many years, humans – even Christians – have exploited God's beautiful creation for our own recreation and satisfaction, not thinking about the ways we cause pollution or use up limited natural resources that cannot be replaced. We own too many cars (which cause pollution), we cut down too many trees (destroying precious woodlands), and we throw too many chemicals into our water. This is bad enough, but the worst part is that the people who suffer the most from this destruction of the environment are the poor. They do not have the resources to clean the water and the air in their towns, so they suffer – and even die.

done a good job of tilling, serving, and keeping the earth he entrusted to our care.

I'm proud to say that the ELCA has a program called "Lutherans Restoring Creation", which works to educate and advocate for policies that focus on taking good care of God's creation. One of the things they do is encourage all ELCA congregations and church members to check to make sure the companies you've invested your money in do not have policies and behavior that causes damage to the earth. For example, do they take your money and invest it in other companies who dump chemicals in lakes and rivers? Or in companies who do not follow laws about filtering the dirty exhaust fumes that their factories dump into the atmosphere? You have a right to ask these companies to prove to you that they do not participate in causing damage to the earth.

I THINK OUR GOD IS GRIEVED TO SEE THAT WE HAVE NOT DONE A GOOD JOB OF TILLING, SERVING, AND KEEPING THE EARTH HE ENTRUSTED TO OUR CARE.

Historically, Christians have not been concerned enough about how we are destroying God's beautiful creation. We have spent too much time arguing with people who believe in evolution. Or while the earth has suffered from devastating pollution and abuse, Christians have been more focused on arguing about whether dinosaurs really existed.

I think our God is grieved to see that we have not

I invite you to think about the changes you can make in your own life to become a good servant of God's beautiful creation. It's not too late – if we drive our cars less frequently, walk more often, buy less food that has been treated with pesticides, recycle, and only buy those things we really need, we can make a difference. All of creation – including animals, plants, waters, sky, air, and humans - will be healthier and stronger – just as God intended us to be!

NOMINATE SOMEONE FOR AN AWARD

I know that you know someone in your ministry who shines! Go to our website to download a nomination form so that person can be recognized. <http://www.eldadeaf.org/ShiningLightAward.pdf>

Just like the award says “Make your light shine, so that others will see the good ... and praise your Father in Heaven” (Matthew 5:16)

Also... we would like EVERY ministry or organization to fill out a “City on a Hill” award nomination. I know your ministry is humble but we want to know all you have done to be like

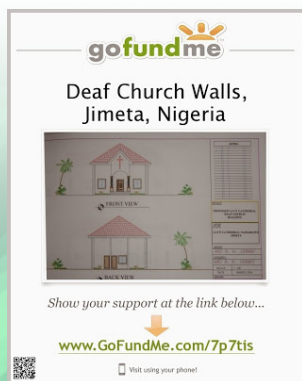
God’s light for the whole world to see, like a city built on top of a hill. (Matthew 5:14)
<http://www.eldadeaf.org/cityonHill.pdf>

Please take a moment and let us know who you think deserves this for our awards at the ELDA conference coming up next month! ***Nominations are due June 30th. (Nomination forms on Page 10-11)***

God’s Peace,
ELDA Nomination Committee

DEAF MINISTRY IN NIGERIA

Pastor Ruth Ulea is doing work for Deaf Ministry in Nigeria. Their goal is to raise \$5,000 for the “Deaf Church Walls Fund” You can visit their website to donate <http://www.gofundme.com/7p7tis>



To read more about Pastor Ruth Ulea’s work in Nigeria go to Jay Johnson’s blog at <http://jayinnigeria2014.blogspot.com/2014/04/always-smile-caroline-lccn-deaf-centre.html>



Pastor Ruth Ulea with the supplies purchased with the money leftover after the sports uniforms were purchased.

FOR THE ELDA GROUP:



If you are coming to Chicago for the ELDA conference please keep these things in mind!!!

1. Your rooms for lodging and the meeting rooms will be assigned when you arrive for registration.
2. The schedule for the week will be in your registration bag and also posted throughout the week.
3. Our dress code for the week is quite simple. Casual wear throughout the week and comfortable shoes for the tour on Friday evening are encouraged. Dress/formal wear for Saturday evening is encouraged. We will have group pictures, the banquet, an award program and closing worship services.
4. Don Rosenkjar will give the Devotions on Friday morning after breakfast.
5. The worship at the beginning of the conference on Thursday will be before supper. Pastor Beth and Dorothy Sparks will be the worship leaders.

6. There will be a workshop/panel discussion on Thursday evening after supper. The group leaders will be introducing their ministries and the panel will discuss what the differences between their ministries are. We will need names of those who will be group leader(s) in introducing their ministries and those who will be on the panel.

7. Please, send in your nominations for the Shining Light Award and the City on the Hill Award. Deadline is June 30th, 2014.

8. Please, send in the names of your departed members. We will list all the names together for the "Remembrance of Saints" and will read the names at the worship service.

8. The Word of Life Deaf ministry, (WOLD) will host the first social on Thursday night. Thank you, WOLD and congrats on 20 years!

9. Please, send in the names of the deaf members of ELDA who are willing to join us to do a song. We are looking for people of all ages and color who want to have some fun.

10. If any of your churches have brochures or other information to share with all of the churches, please bring enough for 100 people.

Thanks for any assistance you can give us! Our conference committee 2014 thrives to make this conference an exciting and enjoyable one for all. Send your information as well as any questions to Linda Fairbanks. Lindafairbanks22@gmail.com

FROM THE DIRECTOR

Dear ELDA Friends--

As I write this, a mission team of ten is planning to fly to Montego Bay to work at Jamaica Christian School for the Deaf. Included in this team are ELDA members AIM Dorothy Sparks (Bread of Life Deaf Lutheran, MN) Belinda & Jeff Panek (Heartland Ephphatha Ministries, SD), and Pr. Beth & Bill Lockard (Christ the King Deaf Church, PA).



Our team of men and women come from four states, four different denominations, and we are in our 20's--60's. We will be leading a Vacation Bible School for 50+ students from kindergarten through high school. Our theme is Psalm 23--"The Lord is My Shepherd."

When we think about this psalm, it has many

awesome things to teach us about God--how He leads us, takes care of all our needs, refreshes us, protects us from the fears and dangers in our lives, and honors us in front of our enemies. We hope to share and discuss these ideas with the youth through drama, story, crafts, and games. We will be sharing more ASL story books from Mill Neck's Lutheran Friends of the Deaf in NY. We will also take these books deep into the island where we will visit the Jamaica Deaf Village near Mandeville.

When we see you at our summer conference, we hope to share some highlights with you. Perhaps some of you can join us for future trips to JCSD. It is fun to explore a new country and culture, and pick up some Jamaica Sign Language! Thanks to ELDA for granting us \$500 to help pay for supply expenses.

Blessings.

Pastor Beth

ELCA Deaf Ministries Coordinator





Philippians 1:27

I will know that you are working together and that you are struggling side by side to get others to believe the good news.

ELDA 2014 CONFERENCE

(ECD, UMCD and ELDA working together)

We welcome *all* to the 2014 conference in Chicago, IL. Please fill out the registration on the back to join us.

Dates: July 27-August 3, 2014

Church Workers and Leaders Meetings:

Monday July 28 -

Wednesday July 30

General Assembly:

Thursday July 31 -

Sunday August 3

**PLEASE REGISTER SOON, FIRST COME
FIRST SERVE AVAILABILITY AT THE
RETREAT CENTER!**



Go to the Cenacle Website for directions and details on the retreat center
<http://www.cenaclesisters.org/chicago-retreat-conference-center/>

FROM THE VICE PRESIDENT

ELDA Conference 2014
By Linda Fairbanks

Welcome to the ELDA Conference 2014 in the beautiful and windy city of Chicago!

For those of you who have not yet registered for the conference and still want to join us in Chicago, you need to contact Mark Koterwski or Linda Fairbanks ASAP. Mkoterwski@gmail.com or lindafairbanks22@gmail.com We will help you find a hotel room. You can take your meals with us and you need to pay for them when you send in your registration form. The deadline is July 11th. The reason for this new change is because all the rooms at the retreat center are booked. Thanks!

The ELDA warmly greets and welcomes the United Methodist (UMCD and UM-DHM) and the Episcopal (ECD) Deaf Ministry groups to the 2014 ELDA Conference as our guests!

The conference will start off with the pastors and church workers arriving for the pastoral retreat on Sunday, July 27th. The conference committee will arrive on Sunday also as the ECD, UMCD and the UM-DHM guests arrive early in the week to start their business meetings. The ELDA Board will hold our business meeting. Then the ELDA delegates arrive on Thursday, July 31st.

All of our groups will hold their business meetings in separate conference rooms. We will join together at meal times, evening social times and for workshops, worship and devotion times. Each of our groups will host one social time, devotions and worship.

Our tour will be on Friday evening and we will take a cruise on the lake and visit the Navy Pier. There will be no talent show this year. We have several

workshops planned and all are welcome to attend them.

On the last evening of our conference, August 2nd, there will be several events. We will start off with group pictures at 5 pm. The Banquet will take place with Mark Koterwski as Emcee, followed by the Awards Program with Linda Fairbanks as the Presenter. There will be a Closing Worship. We will end the evening with a social time in which snacks will be provided. We are encouraging everyone to dress in your Sunday best or formal for Saturday evening.



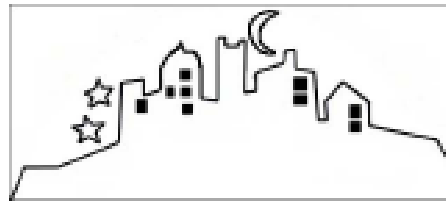
As you can see the ELDA 2014 Conference committee with Mark Koterwski and Linda Fairbanks as co-chairpersons has been hard at work with all the planning and registrations as well as the communications made with all the deaf ministry groups. This is indeed a history-making event as it is the first time ever that we have invited other denominations to attend the conference with us. We Are The Church Together! Our God is truly an Awesome God! See you in Chicago!

Linda Fairbanks,
ELDA Vice President





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ELDA CITY ON A HILL AWARD

"You are like light for the whole world. A city built on top of a hill cannot be hidden." (Matthew 5:14)

This award is for any congregation or organization in recognition of their donation of resources, programs, or ministries that strengthen the Church's outreach to Deaf people with the Gospel anywhere.

Church Nominated: _____

Street Address: _____

City, State, ZIP Code: _____

E-mail Address: _____

Please explain why this church or ministry has been nominated: _____

Who is nominating this church or ministry: _____

Contact E-mail: _____

Contact Phone: _____

TTY: _____

VP: _____

Voice: _____

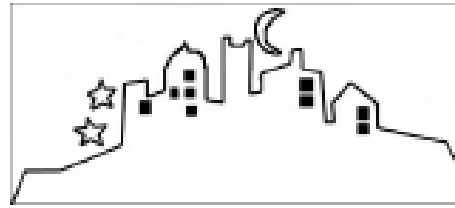
Mail your nomination to:

Jason Andera ELDA Secretary
4401 S. Florence Ave.
Sioux Falls, SD 57103

Email
to jason.andra@gmail.com
to lindafairbanks22@gmail.com



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ELDA SHINING LIGHT AWARD

**"Make your light shine, so that others will see the good that you do and will praise your Father in Heaven."
(Matthew 5:16)**

This award is for any individual in recognition of his or her outstanding Christ-like ideals demonstrated through his or her work.

Individual Nominated: _____

Street Address: _____

City, State, ZIP Code: _____

E-mail Address: _____

Please explain why this person has been nominated: _____

Who is nominating this person: _____

Contact E-mail: _____

Contact Phone: _____

TTY _____

VP _____

Voice _____

Mail your nomination to:

Jason Andera ELDA Secretary
4401 S. Florence Ave.
Sioux Falls, SD 57103

Email
to jason.andera@gmail.com
to lindafairbanks22@gmail.com

ELDA ONLINE

Remember our website is www.ELDADeaf.org
our facebook page is:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/ELDADeaf/>

NEWS

Please help our newsletter! Send me your pictures and stories about your ministry. We'd love to put it in our next newsletter.