

ELDA

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN DEAF ASSOCIATION
A MINISTRY OF THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA

In This Issue

MINISTRY REPORTS

ELDA 2026

FALL APPEAL



MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

BY REV. LORI FULLER

Hello EDLA Community,

As you may recall, in 2024, at the Rapid City, SD ELDA Conference, the assembly voted for Palms Deaf Church (PDC) to host the next ELDA Event in 2026. PDC is excited to share some updates about the upcoming conference. You will find at the end of the newsletter a registration form to sign up and a flyer with more information that you can share with others.

The PDC Conference Planning Committee worked hard to keep the prices the same as the last conference for next year. In addition, the MCO (Orlando) airport is close to the retreat center; therefore, we hope the prices for flights will be reasonable.

As for what the theme for our conference

is...it's "Love Wins." In a world that is full of division, we want to take some time to remember what Jesus calls us to do. Love. As in John 13:34-35, where Jesus says, "I give you a new command: Love each other just as I loved you. All people will know that you are my followers if you love each other."

There are two notes about this upcoming conference that you'll need to know about. First, we are gearing the conference to include children and youths this year. Magic Morgan and Liliana provide a two-day fun workshop (Friday/Saturday) that shows God is everywhere, including in magic. Then, on Saturday night, there will be a magic show open to the community (this will take place after the banquet).

Second, we will not be having our typical field trip during the biennial conference. Instead of a field trip, we will offer the Deaf Missions "Jesus" movie in ASL, open to the community for viewing,

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

BY REV. LORI FULLER

followed by an opportunity for group discussions and a light lunch. Then, the rest of the afternoon, we will have free time for you to explore the retreat center and city if you'd like.

We also have a guest speaker lined up and much more. We can't wait to see you there.

Blessings,
Lori Fuller
ELDA President

ELDA

FALL APPEAL

BY JANIE BARLOW

The Autumn season brings us to the ELDA Thanksgiving Appeal. The funds from the Appeal support Deaf ministry general funds. This also takes care of the needs of the Board. Any amount that you can donate is appreciated. Thank you!

Send to the ELDA Treasurer

Mark Koterwski

5101 S. Marion Rd. Apt 309

Sioux Falls SD 57106.

Thank you for your continued support!



FROM THE DIRECTOR

BY REV. BETH LOCKARD

Dear ELDA friends--

Blessings to you this Fall season. Many people I spoke with recently said they felt our summer was short! I agree. It has been a busy season.

As I mentioned in the spring issue, our ELDA Board met in July at the retreat site where the next ELDA conference will be held in Winter Park, FL. We were impressed with the privacy and peacefulness of the site, the friendliness of the staff, and the activities planned by Palms Deaf Church. Pr. Lori and her people hope to include the Deaf Community in some of the events during the conference. Instead of leaving the campus, we will be bringing the community into our event! Winter Park is 30 minutes from the Orlando airport although PDC is two hours away in Ocala.

In August, I again served as the chaplain for a special needs camp for deaf adults in PA. Camp Innabah "Signs and Wonders Camp" has been hosted by the United Methodists since 2009 but is ecumenical. Christ the King Deaf Church sent four campers and another attends Word of Life Deaf Lutheran. Our theme that week was "Samson" and we acted out the drama on the last night with visitors coming from all over. This is important because for many campers, their only "vacation" during the whole year is this camp and they learn more about God's Big Story each year. Many of the camper aides who bring them are Deaf themselves and also learn along with the campers. There is much opportunity to offer pastoral care to both campers and staff.

I had the opportunity to return to visit Palms Deaf Church, attend a service, and meet with the members, their Synod DEM, and some Deaf Community leaders in early September. Many of these people have

never experienced a Deaf church nor a Deaf woman pastor! They are learning to be a church in new and different ways.

October 14-17, ELM people will be participating in a spiritual retreat in Austin, TX hosted by the Episcopal Conference of the Deaf. The retreat is being led by Rev. Tom Hudspeth (UMC) and ELDA attendees will be Pr. Lori Fuller (PDC), Mark Koterwski (HEM), Brad Martin (WOLD), and myself (CTK). We will be learning how to use the "Jesus: A Deaf Missions film" as an evangelical tool. Pr. Tom is the president of Serving Educating Evangelizing Deaf Seekers (SEEDS).

Finally, October 24--26 will be our Deaf Women's Spiritual Retreat in the Pocono Mountains of PA. We have 20 women registered and could fit in some more. Please check out the flyer in this newsletter for more information on "Grow in Grace."

In Christ,
Pastor Beth
ELCA Deaf Ministries Director



NEWS AND NOTES

FLORIDA



The ELDA Board meets in Florida to check out the location for the 2026 ELDA Conference.



KENTUCKY

Here are some pictures from the mission trip to Red Bird!

MINISTRY REPORTS

DEAF CAN!
WEST CHESTER, PA

DeafCAN! Now Campaign to Expand Services in 2026

Care...Communicate...Connect...Community

- **September 16**...ASL classes begin (three levels, in-person)
- **September 20**...Zoom online U.S. citizenship classes begin again
- **September 27**...Over the Edge....Sponsor Bill Lockard as he rappels 8-stories of the Franklin Center to raise funds for Camp Dreamcatcher and DeafCAN! in Kennett Square, PA. (10 a.m.—3 p.m.) www.classy.org/team/735020.
- **October 11**...2-6 pm, Join us for a **movie premiere, “Deaf President Now!”** Refreshments, movie, discussion...Donation \$10.
- **October 21 & 28**...3-5 pm, hybrid classes (for community professionals) •
- **November**... livestreaming of Sunday ASL worship services at 10:30 a.m. •
- **November 8**...Celebrating **15 years of DeafCAN! services and practicing allyship.** Stop in for some international food, and meet with refugees/immigrants, returning citizens, and the DeafBlind. (2-6 pm) \$20
- **November 14--December 14**...online Silent Auction www.deafcanpa.org
- **December 14**... Christmas luncheon, \$25 per person; all welcome!
- **December 27**...Holiday luncheon and party for the DeafBlind Community, 11 am—3 pm for DB consumers, their significant others, and SSPs.

For 15 years, DeafCAN! has served over 220 unduplicated individuals annually. We now invest in reaching even more people with our new hybrid classroom.

Our bold vision for 2026 is to serve:

100 new Deaf inmates and returning citizens
100 new Deaf immigrants and refugees
200 new community professionals in areas such as health, human service, and education trained to serve Deaf consumers

Bold Vision = Bold Partners for \$150,000 Campaign

5 individuals or groups \$10,000 each = \$50,000

10 individuals or groups \$5,000 each = \$50,000

100 individuals or groups \$500 each = \$50,000

You Can! I Can! We Can! DeafCAN!

Working With & Serving Deaf and Hard of Hearing People Effectively:



A hybrid workshop for professionals,
students, and family members

October 21 & 28, 2025.....3-5 p.m. EST

Two 2-hour sessions; in-person or remote
(captioning & interpreters available)

DeafCAN! office, 730 South New St., West Chester, PA 19382

Rev. Beth Lockard, M.Ed. & William Lockard, M.A.

TOPICS COVERED:

- Isolation vs. inclusion; communication and coping
- Misunderstandings, mistakes, misdiagnosis, and mistreatment across disciplines
- Family, healthcare, education, legal/criminal justice, employment, drug & alcohol, mental health/IDD, aging
- Facts & Myths
- Disability laws
- Diversity & Deaf culture
- Accommodations
- Partnering with Deaf service professionals



\$150 fee due October 16. Pay online at www.deafcanpa.org (donation page, indicate October workshop) or send payment to address above. Specific questions and concerns encouraged with registration, in the chat box and between sessions. Please contact office@deafcanpa.org for more information.

15 YEARS OF DEAFCAN! SERVICE:

- **3,042 individuals and their families served:** 1,383 with interpreting, 1,211 with information and referral, 966 with ASL classes, and 435 with adult literacy.
- This included 685 senior citizens, 575 with mental health or intellectual development challenges, 233 needing assistive technology, 129 seeking employment, 47 seeking housing, and 15 impacted by domestic violence.
- DeafCAN! was the **first and only organization in PA to offer continuous SSP services for the DeafBlind since 2013**, provided “tactile carnivals” and social/learning events each year. Our SSP Coordinator is DeafBlind himself.
- DeafCAN! is the **only organization in Pennsylvania to offer dedicated services for Deaf refugees, immigrants, and asylees** from almost 40 countries. 13 have been assisted to achieve US citizenship while others are now in fear of ICE patrols and increasing government costs and controls.
- DeafCAN! is the **only organization in PA with dedicated services to 196 inmates and returning citizens** from nine different state and county prisons.
- We have **13 staff members and eight serving on our Church Council**. We host monthly community events and an annual Deaf Expo which brings in 300+ to support Deaf vendors, artisans, businesses, and organizations.
- While we work mainly in Chester, Delaware, and Philadelphia Counties, we also serve people in five other counties, and **with our new hybrid classroom and your financial support, our outreach to those most isolated will grow.**

By the end of 2026, we will provide classes for

100 new Deaf inmates and returning citizens

100 new Deaf immigrants across different states

200 community professionals in health & human services, education, business, and other fields to be better prepared to work with Deaf consumers

Join us to reach and serve these people!

MINISTRY REPORTS

WORD OF LIFE DEAF LANCASTER, PA



As with many churches, WOLD had a quiet summer, although we did have a Lunch-and-Movie event in July. We showed "Ordinary

Angels," based on a true story (look it up!) We also attended CTK's picnic worship in August.

In September, WOLD said "good-bye to summer" with a picnic worship service at the beginning of the month. Wednesday night Bible study resumed on Zoom. We are continuing to work our way through the book of Proverbs. It's interesting seeing how the proverbs are signed! You can join our study by using Zoom to connect online on Wednesday nights at 7pm Eastern. Use Meeting ID: 813 2024 7582 and Passcode: 790079.

Two VERY EXCITING things happened at WOLD's Sunday worship on September 21. The 2nd most exciting thing was having our newly-elected synod bishop attend WOLD's worship. Bishop Herr visited WOLD in honor of his promise to WOLD member Roberta Winkelspecht, made at June's synod assembly when he was elected. She asked simply, "Will you come to WOLD?" He said, "Yes!" And so he did!

But *THE MOST* exciting thing that happened at WOLD on 9/21 was having 7 new members join the church! After attending WOLD worship & activities for some time, Renee Frame, Cathy Holt, Brad & Julie Martin, Sheri Tison, Linda Todd, & Wojtek Roszkowski "made it official" and joined WOLD. AND – as part of that service, Sherri Tison was baptized as an adult. A catered reception followed the service.



MINISTRY REPORTS

ST. MATTHEW'S NORTH HOLLYWOOD, CA



St. Matthew's has been moving through a meaningful season of change and renewal, one that has carried both gratitude for the past and excitement for what lies ahead. We gave thanks for the ministry of Pastor Natalie Benson, who was called to serve at King of Glory Lutheran Church in Fountain Valley, California. Soon after, we had the joy of welcoming and installing Pastor Julie McCain last June, beginning a new chapter of leadership and faith among us. This year also brought transition within Sharing Hands. After three years of faithful service, Christopher Luna stepped down from his role as Coordinator. Under his leadership, the ministry assembled meal bags for our unhoused neighbors once a month, extending Christ's compassion into the community in simple, tangible ways. In gratitude for his work, we now look forward with anticipation as Sharing Hands has voted to appoint Neil Sprouse as the next Coordinator, trusting his gifts will continue to nurture this ministry.

Our life together has also been enriched by visiting leaders. Last spring, Pastor Lori Fuller of Palms Deaf Church in Florida joined us at St. Matthew's, preaching to the congregation and presiding at the table. Her presence was a gift to our worship, and we look forward to welcoming her back this fall for another visit.

With so many changes and blessings woven together, this truly feels like a season of new beginnings. Sharing Hands and the wider congregation are eager for the year ahead, confident that God is guiding us into a future filled with service, fellowship, and hope.

Abiding in Christ,

Neil Sprouse

Coordinator, Sharing Hands Deaf Ministry

Deaf Women's Spiritual Retreat

GROW IN GRACE

*But grow in the grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.
To Him be glory both now and forever. Amen. (2 Peter 3:18)*

October 24—26, 2025

**Tuscarora Inn & Conference Center
3300 River Road, Mt. Bethel, PA 18343
www.tuscarora.org**

Cost: \$195 per person covers five hot “family-style” meals from Friday dinner (5:30 p.m.) to Sunday breakfast (8:30 a.m.) and a cozy room with two beds and a bathroom. Do NOT bring linens/towels.

Two snack times are included and a snack bar and bookstore are nearby as well as pickleball courts, walking paths, and chatting areas. The Delaware River and fall foliage are at our front door!

Plan to arrive by 4 p.m. This is a good 2+ hour drive from West Chester, PA through Allentown and then winding roads through the foothills of the Pocono Mountains. Check in at the Tuscarora Inn office to get your key and go to the Ribe Lodge to unload. Go to the patio behind dining room for an icebreaker. We will be meeting in the Riverside Manor until mid-morning Sunday. (see the map page).
Sunday option: Explore the nearby historic (est. 1815) Stroudsburg downtown shops and lunch out. Funds needed for snack bar & lunch.

Need help? Contact Pr. Beth at text 484-995-9376.



ELDA 2026
Conference

#LOVEWINS!

Registration Form

June 9-10, 2026 - ELDA Board Meeting (TUE-WED)

June 11-14, 2026 - ELDA Conference (THUR-SUN morning)

June 14-16, 2026 - ELDA Pastor and Leaders Retreat
(SUN afternoon -TUE morning)

PERSONAL INFORMATION

Full Name

Email Address

Text Number

Address

City, State, Zip Code

Emergency Contact
Name and Number

PREFERENCES

Check which you will attend: ☐ ELDA Board Mtg ☐ ELDA Conference ☐ Pastor and Leaders Retreat

Church Organization

Tshirt Size
Circle all that apply

YOUTH: YS YM YL

ADULTS: S M L XL 2XL

Accessibility Needs

☐ Voice (for Hearing)

☐ Deaf/Blind

☐ Mobility limitations

☐ Tactile (for Deaf/Blind)

☐ Low Vision

☐ Food Restrictions

Airline, Flight number and
Arrival/Departure Time

Arrival:
Departure:



CONTACT INFO:

VP: 727.223.6209

email: Lori@palmsdeaf.org

Palms Deaf Church

**OPTION A CONFERENCE ATTENDEE
(THURSDAY-SUNDAY MORNING)**

2 IN A ROOM=\$350/PERSON
3 IN A ROOM=\$325/PERSON
4 IN A ROOM=\$300/PERSON

**OPTION B BOARD MEETING + CONFERENCE
(TUESDAY-SUNDAY MORNING)**

2 IN A ROOM=\$550/PERSON
3 IN A ROOM=\$525/PERSON
4 IN A ROOM=\$500/PERSON

**OPTION C CONFERENCE + RETREAT
(THURSDAY-TUESDAY MORNING)**

2 IN A ROOM=\$700/PERSON
3 IN A ROOM=\$675/PERSON
4 IN A ROOM=\$650/PERSON

**OPTION D BOARD MTG + CONFERENCE + RETREAT
(TUESDAY-TUESDAY MORNING)**

2 IN A ROOM=\$750/PERSON
3 IN A ROOM=\$725/PERSON
4 IN A ROOM=\$700/PERSON

**OPTION E COMMUTER'S (FOOD ONLY, NO BEDS)
(FRIDAY AND SATURDAY)**

ONE DAY = \$50/PERSON
TWO DAYS = \$100/PERSON

**CONFERENCE
ENTERTAINMENT!!**

F: ASL JESUS
MOVIE WITH
DISCUSSION,
FRIDAY;
DONATION
ACCEPTED
10:30 AM-2:30
PM (LUNCH 12:30
PM TO 1:30 PM)

G: MAGIC
MORGAN SHOW
ONLY SATURDAY;
\$10/PERSON
7:00 PM-8:00 PM

CHILDREN COMING FOR CONFERENCE? HOW MANY? AGE?

CHILDREN UNDER 12=FREE
YOUTHS 13-17 YEARS OLD=\$20/PERSON

FEES, AND WRITE THE TOTAL COSTS

OPTION A B C D E F G
CHILDREN(S)___ AGE (S)____

TOTAL COST: \$

2026 EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN DEAF ASSOCIATION CONFERENCE

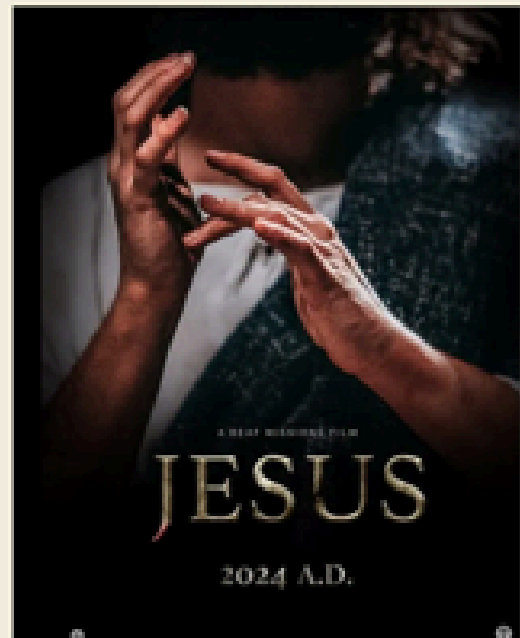


MAGIC MORGAN & LILIANA
WILL HAVE WORKSHOPS FOR
KIDS (FRI/SAT) AND PERFORM
FOR THE COMMUNITY ON
SATURDAY NIGHT

JUNE 11-14, 2026
WINTER PARK, FL
NEAR ORLANDO



**PLUS A SURPRISE GUEST
SPEAKER, PANEL, AND
MUCH MORE**



FRIDAY-SHOWING OF DEAF
MISSIONS JESUS MOVIE IN
ASL AT 10:30 AM

**For more information
contact Pastor Lori Fuller
at lori@Palmsdeaf.org or
call VP 727 223 6209**

#LOVEWINS!

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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.

NEWSLETTER DEADLINES

This is your newsletter; we want to know what topics and
articles that you want to see in the newsletters. If there is a
person, a church or something of interest that you want us
to spotlight on, let us know! Feel free to send your feedback
to Linda Fairbanks, lindafairbanks22@gmail.com Thanks!