



# ELDA

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



## FROM THE PRESIDENT

*Linda Fairbanks*

Trust in the LORD with all your heart; do not depend on your own understanding, Seek His will in all you do, and he will show you which path to take.

Proverbs: 3:5, 6 NLT

***Linda Fairbanks***  
***ELDA President***

Greetings! Summer is almost here and my garden has been planted. My husband is enjoying his new tractor and tiller. I have tended to the flowers and mowed the lawn, several times so far. There are so many outdoor chores we can do and activities that we can attend. I love summers the best, in fact I love all the 4 seasons that we have here in Minnesota.

Recently, I attended a play “Refugia” at the Guthrie Theatre in Minneapolis and enjoyed it very much. My oldest son, Shawn was one of 2 Certified Deaf Interpreters (CDI) who interpreted the 3 hour play. The two of them did such a great job and I am proud of them. It is great that Guthrie Theatre would hire CDIs as well as other ASL interpreters. They also provided captioning which was shown right above the interpreters. I even went back the next day to see the play again. I wish more Deaf people would go to plays or other performances. Maybe they would be more interested if CDIs could interpret at some events. ELDA should consider hiring Certified Deaf interpreters if there is a need.

This past school year, I got to know Jay-R Lacorte, an exchange student from the Philippines who came to live with my son, Sonny and his family for almost one year. He was a wonderful young man, so full of life and eager to learn. He participated in all the sports, dances, prom, trips off campus and made friends from other states as well as Minnesota when he traveled with his teams to other deaf schools. I love being host grandma to Jay-R as well as Jane from



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# GREETINGS FROM THE PRESIDENT (CONTINUED)

Malaysia and Kate from Australia. Those 2 girls came to stay with Sonny and his family a few years back. All 3 of them are deaf and were able to attend MSAD in Faribault, MN. I feel fortunate to learn about Deaf youth in other countries. Maybe some of you could consider hosting a Deaf student from other countries. To host a student through AFS, check out this link:

<http://www.afsusa.org/host-family/>



This summer will be a busy one for our ELDA Board. The ELDA Board has approved for funds to send both Mark Koterwski and Don Rosenkjar to Dallas, Texas to attend the 4th Global Methodist Missions Conference of the Deaf in Dallas, Texas. That event will take place on August 1-4th and they will also attend an ELM meeting. I am sure Mark and Don will bring back information to share with the ELDA.

The ELDA Board will be meeting in Las Vegas from August 20-23rd. The purpose of that meeting will be to tour the hotel which will be the site of the 2018 ELDA Conference. We

will also hold our business meeting and the main topic on our agenda will be the 2018 conference. It is easier for us to meet in the place where the conference will take place so we can see what the rooms look like and so forth. The host church in charge of the conference is St Mathews Lutheran Church from North Hollywood, CA. The chairperson, Don Rosenkjar and some of his committee members will be attending the meeting and tour in Las Vegas. See the "Save the Date" flyer in this newsletter, and do make plans to join us at the ELDA conference next year!

ELDA Fun Facts: Volume 1 Issue 1 July 1999 of the ELDA Newsletter was printed for the very first time. That was 18 years ago and the Editor was Barbara Schmidt from Bread of Life Deaf Church, Minneapolis, MN. The first newsletter was only 3 pages long. Brenda Rockwell used her computer skills to put the newsletter together. Next issue; I will have more ELDA fun facts.

Thanks to our churches and ministries that have paid their annual dues or contributed to the HOPE Fund. The HOPE funds help with our mission trips to Jamaica and for those individuals who are interested in Deaf Ministry. If you haven't done so or if you're interested, please send a check to **ELDA Treasurer Jeff Panek 625 S. Mary Drive, Tea, SD 57064**. If you have Thrivent Choice, please donate to ELDA. Thank you!

Enjoy those warm and sunny summer days! Safe travels to those of you who are going on vacation. Peace, I leave with you. John 14:27

-Linda

# DIRECTOR'S REPORT



Dear ELDA Friends--

As I write this, it has been three months since my surprise diagnosis of a large brain tumor and ten weeks since my emergency surgery to remove it. I am happy to report that surgery was a success, I am recovering swiftly, and the tumor was benign (no cancer). I experienced NO PAIN at all. I wanted to thank each of you who knew about this for your heartfelt faithful prayers, cards, and other support. YOU were part of the miracles I experienced and I am very grateful and in awe of God's presence and power. To God be all glory!

I am especially thankful to be alive to celebrate our youngest son Micah's graduation from high school, our oldest son Jesse's wedding this month, and our middle son Aaron's Easter engagement.

The Director of Disability Ministries at ELCA churchwide offices, Rachel Bouman, just resigned for health reasons. This means that I have no "supervisor" at this time. However, I explained again that Disability Ministries and Deaf Ministries are two separate programs in the ELCA. This is the eighth person who has left while I remain.

Recently, I had a good meeting with a young Deaf couple who graduated from NTID/RIT and now live there to run the Campus Crusade for Christ program with the Deaf students. Dakota and Heidi Tiger (Dakota is a Creek Indian) call their program CRU and make it their mission to help students discover God's love. Many Deaf students show up on campus needing support, guidance, and an introduction to faith experiences. If you know of a student going to NTID/RIT who needs support, direct them to [Godschamp.blogspot.com](http://Godschamp.blogspot.com) or [dakota.tiger@cru.org](mailto:dakota.tiger@cru.org). If you want to financially support this couple, go to [give.cru.org/10730729](http://give.cru.org/10730729). Consider this a mission gift as this is the only Deaf CRU group in America.

Gallaudet's group fell apart years ago. As far as I know, the Deaf Lutheran church in Rochester no longer has a pastor.

Can you help us? We're trying to verify Deaf ELCA churches that have interpreted ministries in each state. Many are not listed in the ELCA yearbook but you may know of some in your Synod or area. Please contact Linda Fairbanks at [lindafairbanks22@gmail.com](mailto:lindafairbanks22@gmail.com) so she can contact these churches and invite them into ELDA.

I just received a contact of a Deaf Lutheran ministry in Jordan and the Holy Land. Vicar Fursan Zumot ministers to the Deaf Community in Jerusalem and the West Bank. The retired bishop directing Europe, the Middle East and North Africa says Pastor Zumot is fluent in Arabic, English, and sign language. I hope to learn more soon and put us in contact with this part of the world as we have been in contact with Jamaica, Nigeria, Haiti and other places.

Speaking of Jamaica, our team has five women and one guy ready to go in September. We could use another guy and another woman to make room arrangements easier. Financial donations can be sent to our ELDA treasurer and will be used for supplies and gifts to Jamaica Christian School for the Deaf in Montego Bay. We thank the Lori Fuller family and Katherine Hall for their recent gifts!

Enjoy the summer. Hope to see you next year in Las Vegas!  
Pastor Beth Lockard+

# Summers at BOLD...

It has been nearly one year since I met you. I arrived at BOLD unsure of myself, yet sure that God was leading me to serve with you. I still stand in awe at what God has done with us in such a short time. Thank you for your patience with me, for your openness to include me in your lives, and for your willingness to teach me a new language and how to be a pastor.

Now, I cannot imagine my life without you figuring into it. Wherever I go, I talk about you and your resilience, persistence, hard work, gentle and joyful spirit, your hunger to know God, and your desire to grow in faith. Again, I find myself standing in awe of what God is doing through you. I am so grateful and humble to be your pastor and to

be with you as we discern together where and how God is calling us to serve in the world and to lead in the wider church.

This summer, with the council and other church leaders, I will continue to look and pay attention to what God is bringing to us. What are the common themes? Where is the energy to try something out? What can we give up so that God can do a new thing through us? What new thing are you willing to try with BOLD this summer?

God is not done with BOLD! So you can know that God will use us to get GOD's work done! And when God is driving, hang on tight! We are in for an exciting ride!!

Peace and Joy to you,  
Pastor Michelle

## July 2017 at BOLD

- Sunday Schedule in July (2, 9, 16, 23,30)

Coffee Hour, 9:00 a.m.      Education, 9:15 a.m.

Announcements, 10:20 a.m. Worship, 10:30 a.m.

- Tuesday, July 4—Independence Day
- Tuesday, July 11—Staff Meeting at BOLD, 11:30 a.m.
- Friday, July 21—Movie Night: Luther, 6:00 p.m.—9:00 p.m.
- Sunday, July 23—Council, 8:30 a.m. (no Bible Study)

### Reading Ephesians

In mid-July to early August we are studying the Letter to the Churches in Ephesus. You are invited to read Ephesians at home as we study it in worship.

July 16 (Week 1): Ephesians 1:1-14—God was planning something big before we knew it!

July 23 (Week 2): Ephesians 2:1-22—God's plan was necessary because people are separated from God and one another. Jesus breaks down the divisions between us

July 30 (Week 3): Ephesians 4:1-16—God's plan has implications for separation in the past, AND for our present and future.

August 6 (Week 4): Ephesians 6:10-20—In the present, God continues to help us in the struggle of human life.

**We need your servant hands and hearts!**

## **Travel to Montego Bay, Jamaica**

**September 7--16, 2017**

to work daily with 50 students in a mountain school  
**JAMAICA CHRISTIAN SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF**  
and take a side trip to central Jamaica's  
**DEAF VILLAGE**

We will stay at Holiday Inn Resort, Montego Bay for 9 nights  
Cost approximately \$1400 includes round trip airfare, lodging, meals,  
room tax, shuttle, and travel insurance

### **If you want to go:**

- Confirm your interest NOW to [lockardbeth@gmail.com](mailto:lockardbeth@gmail.com)
- Find a roommate to travel with you (we may have someone)
- We will help you book your flight & room (need \$1400 now). Those flying from outside Philadelphia **may** have a slightly different cost.
- Have a U.S. passport that does not expire until after March, 2018.
- Indicate if you want to work with youth or do building repair
  - No visas or vaccinations are needed

### **We would like to bring the following requested by JCSD:**

- \*school supplies (dry erase markers, craft supplies, glue sticks, markers, etc.)
  - \*Cash gifts will pay for additional supplies like printer ink
- \*a Bible story curriculum for the school & books for their new one-room library
  - \*some student tuition grants (\$500 a year for each student)

**Old luggage with wheels will be used to carry the gifts to the school. We fix up buildings and lead a Vacation Bible School. We need a teacher to train staff in current Deaf Ed trends (especially reading and writing)**

***This will be an annual working trip.  
If you cannot come this year, please let us know your interest for 2017.  
+ Dorothy Sparks & Beth Lockard+***

# **SAVE THE DATE**

***July 22 - 29, 2018***

**Hosted by St. Matthew's Lutheran Church,  
North Hollywood, CA**

**Evangelical Lutheran Deaf Association  
and ELM Conference**

***TUSCANY SUITES AND CASINO, Las Vegas***



**Sunday, July 22 - Arrive in the afternoon  
July 22 through 24: Pastoral Workers Meeting  
July 24 through 25: ELDA Board Meeting**

**July 26 through 28 (Thursday through Saturday):  
ELDA/ELM Conference**

**Sunday, July 29 - Check-Out; Farewell**

**Watch for more INFORMATION,  
check ELDA Newsletter and Website  
For information, contact Donald Rosenkjar at [donkhai99@AOL.com](mailto:donkhai99@AOL.com)**

## ELM MISSION AND VISION STATEMENTS

*Mission Statement: "In the Presence of Jesus Christ, with mutual love and respect, the Episcopal Conference of the Deaf (ECD), the Evangelical Lutheran Deaf Association (ELDA) and the United Methodist Congress of the Deaf (UMCD) partner together to inspire and transform the lives of Deaf people."*

*Vision Statement: "Together as one, with God's help we strive to build a spectrum of ministries with Deaf people, passionately engaged in creating and supporting diverse ministries, outreach, communication, worship resources, and leadership development that show the love and grace of Jesus Christ to everyone we meet."*

## THE ELDA MISSION STATEMENT

*The Evangelical Lutheran Deaf Association (ELDA) is a national Lutheran organization of Deaf ELCA congregations, interpreted ministries, and their members which supports a core value of ASL and American Deaf Culture. ELDA advocates Deaf spirituality and empowerment, Deaf global missions and youth outreach, interpreter training, and a biennial conference.*



## WOLD PICNIC

The Word of Life Deaf Church, WOLD had worship service at the picnic with Christ the King Deaf Church, CTK last Sunday, June 11th. It was very windy, and it was still nice worshipping together with friends and great food. WOLD now has worship services every Sunday. Everyone is happy and thrilled about that.

# RUTH ULEA FROM AFRICA

Greetings in Jesus Name! Here is the report for the 47th Annual Zonal Easter Camp for the Deaf on 13-17 April 2017 at the Church for the Deaf in Jimeta. 36 deaf people accepted Jesus Christ as their personal Saviour. That was out of 76 deaf people at the camp. Praise the Lord! Some of them earnestly wished that the camp would have lasted for one week instead of four days. All of them spiritually and socially enjoyed the effectives of the camp activities, like sermons, Bible Study, Drama and Devotions, marriage counselling, etc. Praise God!

I also preached in the Christian Mission for the deaf on Mother's Day. The topic was: "The Concern of a Mother"  
Text: 2 Tim 3:14-17  
Exodus 2:7-9  
Luke 1:43-59

-Pastor Ruth Ulea





# A one-in-a-million ministry

# M

ary Grace Asuncion takes pride in accomplishing tasks that some may consider just ordinary: working, managing money and paying bills.

But those everyday responsibilities remind Mary

Grace of how far she has come since getting connected with DeafCAN! – the human service program of Christ the King Deaf Church in West Chester, Pa.

This life-changing ministry serves deaf refugees and immigrants from 15 countries, with support from your gifts through an ELCA World Hunger domestic hunger grant.

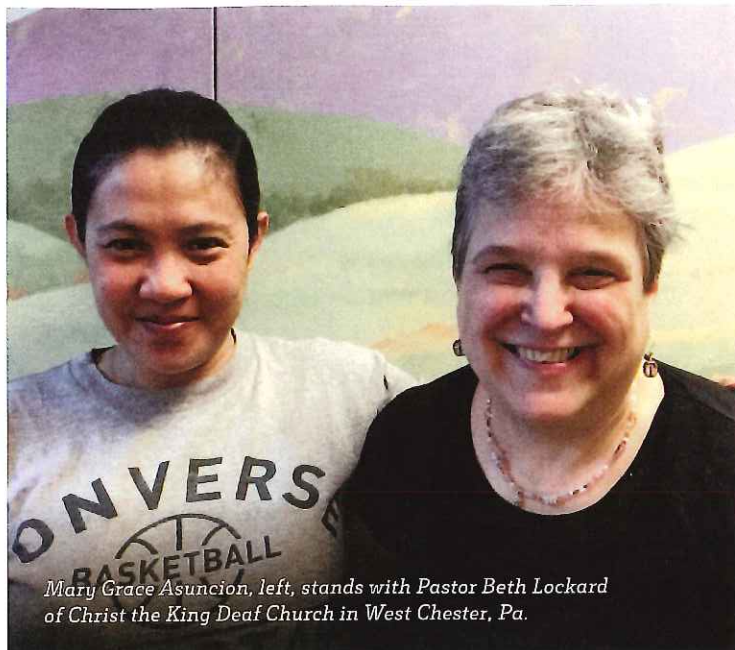
Refugees and immigrants are often vulnerable to hunger and poverty as they rebuild their lives. When this vulnerability intersects with the challenges often created by a lack of services for people with disabilities, the risks can be more severe.

Since 2010, Christ the King Deaf Church and DeafCAN! have accompanied disabled immigrants and refugees to turn this risk into opportunity – to build community and break the cycle of hunger and poverty.

“I’ve learned how important it is to develop my own skills and to be self-sufficient,” said Mary Grace, who emigrated from the Philippines four years ago. “I have a bicycle to help me get to and from work. I am learning American Sign Language (ASL), and studying for my citizenship and driver’s license. I look forward to becoming a citizen and voting someday.”

When Beth Lockard, pastor and executive director of DeafCAN!, first met Mary Grace, she was at risk of experiencing poverty and hunger. She had just left an abusive relationship, was unemployed, and lacked a support network in her new country. She was cut off from community and resources – a precarious situation in a new place.

Through DeafCAN!, Mary Grace received case management services, and she enrolled in a variety of classes. She also learned how to access resources, such as ASL interpreters, assisted listening devices, video cell phones and other technology.



Mary Grace Asuncion, left, stands with Pastor Beth Lockard of Christ the King Deaf Church in West Chester, Pa.

In addition to serving differently abled immigrants and refugees, DeafCAN! also advocates for systemic change to help build bridges out of poverty and hunger for good. For example, DeafCAN!'s Support Service Provider program for people with both vision and hearing impairments has become the model for a new program, launched by the state of Pennsylvania. This will allow more Pennsylvanians to receive assistance with shopping, going to medical appointments, banking, handling mail and other tasks.

“We see our ministry as holistic: to help people satisfy their physical, emotional and mental needs, so they can then understand spiritual aspects of life,” Lockard said. “Throughout the process, they grow and understand those deeper issues. They learn to navigate the world as they become more independent and productive.”

That has been true for Mary Grace, who now calls Christ the King Deaf Church her “church family.”

She volunteers at church and joins Lockard and other members in reaching out to individuals who are deaf and deaf-blind, living in nursing homes and other facilities.

“Now I see that I am giving back,” Mary Grace said. “I’m in a community now, I have new friends and a family at church. There are games and socials. We share the same stories and culture. Today I have a life.”

# SPIRITUAL SIDE:

by Dorothy Sparks, AIM at BOLD, Minneapolis, MN

I was excited to receive letters and coloring pages from Rev. Ruth Ulea's Deaf students at LCCN (Lutheran Church of Christ in Nigeria) Deaf School. In September, Rev. Beth Lockard and I will give them to the Deaf students at Jamaica Christian School for the Deaf. The



theme for the Vacation Bible School in Jamaica will be 'Deaf Children around the world.'

Last year, we asked the Deaf students in Jamaica to write letters and draw something for the Deaf students in Haiti. We hope we will get letters and things from Haiti, soon.

The goal is to connect with the Deaf children in other countries. Then Deaf students can feel

part of the Deaf Children around the world. Also they become more aware of millions of Deaf children in the world.

As I read Rev. Ruth Ulea's students' letters, they touched my heart.

Here are the letters without names. It's for security reasons.

- Our class lack textbooks. So I need you to help our school.

- Every morning, I go to school on foot. My brothers and sisters go to school on bus. We need your assistance.

- I want to have a female friend from the Jamaica Deaf School.

- I always say prayers for your Jamaica Deaf students. Please pray for us, too because Prayer is key to everything.

- LCCN Deaf School is a good and happy place but our parents did not pay our school fees regularly. They have complained.....'

- I am deaf and crippled. I need your help because I find movements are not easy, also includes school fees.

- Our classroom had been burned last year. I am ashamed to stay in a burned room with black smoke.

- My daddy did not pay my school fees. I am worried because I don't have someone to help me and I fear I may lose my education.

- My parents dislike me because of my deafness. They neglect me and left me with my uncle. I need

any relevance help to pay my school needs.

- My parents are from the village and they don't know the value of education for a girl child. They cannot pay my school fees and they want me to stay at home for farming. Please help me with my education.
- My parents cannot pay my school fees because I am deaf. It was Pastor Ruth's husband who helped me to pay my school fees. Please, I need your assistance.

I can see that education is valuable to the Deaf children. If not for education, how will they learn and know about Jesus?

*Romans 12:10 "Love each other as brothers and sisters and honor others more than you do yourself."*

You may send your comments about the letters to ELDA President Linda Fairbanks. [Lindafairbanks22@gmail.com](mailto:Lindafairbanks22@gmail.com)

God Bless you!

Dorothy Sparks, Associate in Ministry



# ELDA Online

Remember our website is [www.ELDADeaf.org](http://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.

## September, December, March and June

Read through this issue and let us know what you think. 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 President Linda Fairbanks, [lindafairbanks22@gmail.com](mailto:lindafairbanks22@gmail.com) and I will share with our Newsletter Editor. Thanks!