

ELDA

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

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BY REV. LORI FULLER

Hello, Evangelical Lutheran Deaf Association Community,

It's incredible how fast time flies. We are now in the middle of Lent, the six weeks before we celebrate Easter.

Many things have happened recently, especially with our government, and the sudden changes are hurting many families. Many long-time workers have lost their jobs, health benefits, and retirement without warning. Agencies helping others, like USAID and Lutheran Family Services, were told to stop. Deaf people worry about Gallaudet University, the video relay service, Rehabilitation Act 504, and hiring for jobs because DEI was stopped. There is confusion, fear and anger.

During this time in Lent, I ask that we look at Jesus's journey on earth thousands of years ago. Jesus, we see, had dealt with various political issues of His time. For example, on Palm Sunday, the crowd was all cheering Him on and praising Him as He entered the city of Jerusalem. Then, only days later, the same crowd wanted to crucify Jesus. True Biz, Jesus was arrested, whipped, and died. His disciples were confused, afraid, and angry with the sudden change of events. They hid from government and church leaders.

As a community, I ask that we look deeper into how Jesus handled challenging situations during His time here on earth. He continued to share His love. He told the truth to government and church leaders. He forgave their hatred and mistakes and challenged people to change their hearts. Can we do the same? None of us are perfect. We all make mistakes (including me!).

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People who followed Jesus during His time also made mistakes. For example, Judas sold Jesus to the church leaders. When Jesus was arrested, Simon Peter had a sword and cut Malchus's ear off. Jesus responded by saying, "Put your sword away." Jesus challenged their disbelief.

In the end, Jesus showed love in all He did (and still does). We can reflect on whether we show love in all we do during Lent. If not, what changes do we need to make?

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Although Jesus died on the cross, we know the story doesn't end there. The story continues. God raised Jesus to life. That gift of life is offered to you and me. Death is not final. The Holy Spirit walks with us each day to lead us through confusion, fear, and anger and helps us share God's love and peace with other people. Thanks be to God!

**IN GOD'S LOVE,
PASTOR LORI FULLER**

SPIRITUAL ADVISOR

BY JANIE BARLOW

When we think of Easter, we always picture Easter being colorful, fresh, renewing, and a day of celebration. And, it is truly a day of celebration. However, I get pulled back to Good Friday, the day of Jesus' crucifixion. Without that, we possibly could have never known the depths of God's Grace, God's Love, and the Power of God and what He can and will overcome. There would be no Easter without Good Friday.

I am sure we all have a very similar image in our mind when it comes to Good Friday: dying, bloody Jesus on the cross. The situation seems miserable, hopeless. I also think of the two men on either side of Him. Some gospels differ in saying that the two men mocked Jesus or that one man mocked him while the other man repented. The result is the same in the gospels - One of these men changed his heart. He simply believed and asked Jesus to remember him. Jesus said "I tell you, truly, you will have a place in Paradise with me." True belief and full trust is powerful with Jesus.

In our fast-moving, ever-constant flow of information world today, it is easy to get pulled towards the negativity, the sadness, the anger, feelings of injustice, and despair (the absence of hope). Everywhere we look, it possibly feels like something is always coming up that may cause negative feelings. It may be easy to get wrapped up in the chaos, but it is even more challenging to really look inside your heart and ask yourself if you truly believe and trust in the good of the world in spite of all that is happening around the world. You see, for the good around the world, that is where Jesus is. If we can fully and wholeheartedly believe as the man on the cross did, then we continue to have hope. Do not lose hope. Continue to be the good in the world, even when the season of Easter has come and gone. May God's love and grace be with you, always.

Janie Barlow, Spiritual Advisor

FROM THE DIRECTOR

BY REV. BETH LOCKARD

Dear ELDA Friends--
God's grace and peace be with you!

As I write this, we have changed back to Daylight Savings Time earlier this month and this week we welcome the first day of Spring. Today our neighbor brought over a bouquet of bright yellow daffodils! This was hard to believe because we still have some freezing temperatures at night in Pennsylvania. **Seeing** the flowers helped me believe in spring.

As we journey through Lent and the longer days, it is like our winter changing to spring. The first Easter, it was hard for the disciples to believe Jesus had risen from the dead. The women at the tomb were the first to share this Good News. Yet, the disciples did not believe until they **saw** Jesus' hands and feet.

Many people today do NOT believe in God. Yes, part of the problem is that they cannot "**see**" God in the flesh. With all the chaos and fear in the world: in our governments, in the weather and terrible storms, in leaders of many countries who choose to harm their people, in the destruction of our beautiful earth, in the hatred, killing, and divisions, people cannot **see** God or God's love.

But, people can **see** us. We are the only Bible some people will read. We represent God's love and forgiveness in this dark world. God challenges each of us to live a life that helps people **see** what we say we believe. We are the Easter people!!

Can people **see** something different in our lives? Can we stand up for the truth when evil is all around us? Can our words and actions show that God is real while fake news, misinformation, and disinformation is not? Love is stronger than hate!

Light is stronger than darkness! We have a responsibility to carry this love and light to our neighbors, our community, our nation, and the world... both deaf and hearing.

As we travel through the 40 days of Lent, let us look at ourselves and agree to let God use us so others can **see** and believe!

Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again, true!

Pastor Beth+
Director, ELCA Deaf Ministries



MINISTRY REPORTS

BREAD OF LIFE DEAF MINNEAPOLIS, MN

Beloved ELDA community, at BOLD, we are continuing to look for opportunities to connect once more within our community. Since our last update to you, some of our congregational work has been to identify and name BOLD's core values and what this may look like. We are very certain that we want to be involved in and invest back into the community but to us, this community means so many different things right now. This community means within the Minnesota deaf community; the global DHH community in which we recognize late-deafness, those learning ASL (hearing and deaf), both in America and other countries thanks to success of our outreach via our Facebook page and YouTube page; endeavors to connect to our online community; and, finally, our local ministry partners. Our church has been in Minneapolis for nearly 70 years, and we still are not known throughout the Minneapolis Area Synod and in their churches! However, we have hope. One ray of hope: We have a new Bishop (elected May 2024) within the Minneapolis Area Synod and she is very aware of minority congregations, providing access to all, and we feel very pleased with how she is leading the Synod so far.

Another ray of hope: For our Lent and Holy Week plans, we are partnering with two other hearing Minneapolis churches to do blended worship services for Lent and Holy Week, and the pastors take turns through worship to lead. We are sharing locations and cultures with one another, in person and afar (online streaming) through our platforms. Sundays remain at our respective locations and congregations, but otherwise, we are sharing this year's Lent journey with others. Until next time, we send love to you all.

Updates submitted on behalf of BOLD by Janie Barlow, Office Manager



MINISTRY REPORTS

WORD OF LIFE DEAF LANCASTER, PA



In February, WOLD finished its longest bible study ever – "Bible Stories to Know." We began this study one year before the pandemic!

It took us 6 years to study 172 of the Bible's most important stories and teachings. You can see all the stories we studied by going to www.wordoflifedeaf.org/bible-study – in each study, the story is shown first from the Deaf Bible (English Version of the Deaf), and then again, but in ASL from Deaf Missions.

Heartland Ephphatha did a ministry fundraiser recently and raised some money. It was fun to get together and make some money.



WOLD & CTK again have had pulpit-exchanges during Lent – Pr. Beth Lockard from CTK will come to WOLD 3 times to preach and lead worship, while Pr. Russ from WOLD goes and does the same at CTK. We started doing pulpit exchanges in 2017; it's an annual tradition that CTK & WOLD members enjoy very much.

In March, WOLD will host another "Lunch-and-Movie" event. We will show the movie "The Good Lie," based on true experiences of over 20,000 children displaced by the Sudanese civil war. Referred to as "the lost boys," these children walked thousands of miles on their own to refugee camps (this happened in the '80's & '90's).

PALMS DEAF CHURCH PALM COAST, FL



Palms Deaf Church has been preparing for our upcoming Red Bird Mission Trip. We have six people from our congregation who are going. It will occur in Beverly, KY, from July 20 to 25. If you want to join us, you can find more information about this work camp at <https://www.redbirdky.org/volunteer>. It's an excellent opportunity to meet other Deaf people from various denominations coming together to serve the community. Hope to see you there!



Dr. Frank Turk and his wife Marlene passed away. The funeral was held at Peace Lutheran Church in Sioux Falls, SD. Although he wasn't a part of our ministry, we were able to help at the funeral service and support his family.

Many in the Deaf community came to pay respects. The obituary can be found here

<https://www.koberfuneralhome.com/obituaries/Dr-Frank-R-Turk-Sr?obId=38893032>

ST. PATRICK'S DAY

By Pastor Beth Lockard

As we just celebrated St. Patrick's Day, some of you may wonder who this man was. Different facts and fiction float around but these are the facts we know. Patrick was born into a wealthy family in the late 4th and early 5th centuries (372-466). Many scholars think this was the west coast of Wales. Patrick's grandfather was an ordained priest and his father a church deacon and tax collector for the Roman rulers.

When Patrick was 16, he was kidnapped by Celtic pirates from his father Calpurnius' home and brought to Ireland to work as a slave. He was forced to work as a shepherd/herdsman and focused strongly on his faith. After six years of slavery, he dreamed his ship was ready and escaped to Britain. He almost starved and was enslaved briefly again before finally reuniting with his family.

Later in France, he became a monk. In the year 432 (age 60?), he had a vision that God

was calling him back to Ireland to be a missionary. There were no Christians in Ireland at that time but Patrick founded 300 churches and baptized more than 120,000 people. It was hard work because many Irish people were against him. But God blessed him with success. He is called the "Bishop of Ireland" and is one of the patron saints of Ireland.

We get our information from his spiritual autobiography, "The Confessio," and his "Letter to Coroticus" in which he scolded the British for their mistreatment of Irish Christians.

When Patrick came to Ireland, he used the three-leaf shamrock to explain the Trinity. In our Lutheran Book of Worship (green), we have a song St. Patrick wrote: "I Bind Unto Myself Today." Here is the first verse:

*I bind unto myself today
The strong name of the Trinity
By invocation of the same,
The Three in One and One in Three*



WHEN MY FAMILY VISITED IRELAND, WE VISITED PATRICK'S MOUNTAIN (CROAGH PATRICK) WHERE HE WOULD CLIMB TO PRAY. CROAGH PATRICK STATUE OF ST. PATRICK WITH CROAGH PATRICK IN THE BACKGROUND, COUNTY MAYO, IRELAND.

REDBIRD MISSION



Deaf ELM (Episcopal-Lutheran-Methodist) is returning to the Red Bird Mission in Beverly, Kentucky!

When? July 20th-25th, 2025



Interested?

The cost is \$500 per person. Includes what? Lodging, meals, and project donations.

Contact Pastor Lori Fuller at lori@palmsdeaf.org for more information.

ELDA EASTER APPEAL



We invite you and your Deaf ministry to support ELDA mission and ministry as we seek to reach out and partner with the Deaf Community domestically (USA) and globally (the world). In the past, we have given to:

- The Deaf Community in New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina, partnering with Louisiana School for the Deaf.
- Sending building teams to El Florido, Mexico to build small houses
- Assist Haiti Deaf Academy (they need our prayers now as gangs run wild and endanger many people).
- Partnered with Red Bird Mission and the Deaf Methodists in the Appalachians in Kentucky to repair houses and distribute clothing.

- Jamaica Christian School for the Deaf in Montego Bay for many summers of VBS with teams of volunteers and many boxes of school supplies!
- Small scholarships for individuals studying for Deaf
- Pastoral ministry through our Zechariah Fund.

As we make our Lenten sacrifices and spread the joy of Easter, we welcome you to join us. Your gifts may be sent to:

ELDA Treasurer Mark Koterwski
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This is God's work with our hands!

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

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pictures and stories about your ministry.
We'd love to put it in our next newsletter.

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This is your newsletter; we want to know what topics and
articles that you want to see in the newsletters. If there is a
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to Linda Fairbanks, lindafairbanks22@gmail.com Thanks!