

# ELDA

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

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MINISTRY REPORTS

SAVE THE DATE  
FOR ELDA 2026



## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

BY REV. LORI FULLER

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Hello ELDA Community, People are getting ready for the summer. Kids are getting out of school, which means teachers are free and many people choose to go on vacation or to camps. This leads to changes in our routines!!!!

Whatever your summer plans are, I want to remind you that God is with us always, no matter where or what we are doing. However, we may need to be more intentional in our planning to ensure that we still have a faith-filled summer.

So, what ideas can you do with your friends and family?!

- Together, create a new prayer and use the prayer regularly over the summer.
- Play Bible Trivia.
- Plan a once-a-week outdoor meal and discuss life, faith, and family.
- Look for events or plan trips around faith-based activities.
- Watch movies together (Prince of Peace, The Chronicles of Narnia, and much more).
- Be on the lookout and share how you see God moving in and around you.

The possibilities are endless!

Find what works for you, your family, and friends. Whatever you do, remember to take God with you wherever you go!

Have a blessed and fun-faith-filled summer,  
Pastor Lori Fuller

# ELDA CONFERENCE 2026

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## SAVE THE DATE

### 2026 EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN DEAF ASSOCIATION CONFERENCE



JUNE 11-14, 2026  
WINTER PARK, FL  
30 MINS FROM ORLANDO  
AIRPORT (MCO)

# #LOVEWINS!

# FROM THE DIRECTOR

BY REV. BETH LOCKARD



Dear ELDA Friends--

I cannot believe it is summer already. I know many of us try to find time to slow down a bit and enjoy God's creation in different ways--mountains, beach, camping, picnics, biking, gardening, or just being outside. I am continually amazed at the diversity of the world we live in and Creator God's artistic touch!

Recently, I travelled up to the Milwaukee, WI area for a retreat with my ELCA team. We met at a beautiful camp called Lutherdale. It would be the perfect place for an ELDA conference! After that retreat, I met with Steve Smart, a new graduate from Wartburg Theological (Lutheran) Seminary in Ohio. Steve is an ASL interpreter and used to own an interpreter agency. He will become ordained in the ELCA July 12 and installed at Mount Carmel Lutheran Church in Milwaukee. I have invited him to our ELDA Conference near Orlando next summer. Steve hopes to be involved in Deaf Ministry in some way.

While at the retreat, I spoke with the ELCA planning team for the National Youth Gathering where Pr. Lori Fuller spoke last summer. This event will happen again on June 28--July 2, 2027 in Minneapolis. I emphasized ELDA's ideas for making the event more Deaf-friendly. This new team of coordinators will try hard to do this. Because it will be in the same city as Bread of Life Deaf Lutheran Church, I hope they will be able to locate Deaf youth to attend. Each of our ministries should consider any of our high school youth as potential participants.

In July, the ELDA Board will meet in Winter Park near Orlando, FL to plan for the next ELDA Conference on June 8--16, 2026 which Palms Deaf Church will host. We look forward to gathering in a new state to support our newest ELCA Deaf Ministry. More information will be shared in future newsletters. I will again serve as chaplain for the special needs camp for Deaf adults for a week in August.

Our Deaf Spirit lay leadership team is in the midst of having a logo designed and selecting a Program Director. Plans are slowly but surely coming together and we hope to provide our first virtual classes in the fall of 2026.

Word of Life Deaf Lutheran and Christ the King Deaf Church will join together again for a Deaf Women's spiritual retreat October 24-26, 2025 in the Pocono "Mountains" of PA. IF interested, there is space for some more women. The cost is \$200 and includes a room and all meals. Contact Connie Wallace at [office@deafcanpa.org](mailto:office@deafcanpa.org).

On a personal note, Bill and I became grandparents again with a new granddaughter, Miriam Ruth, born April 10. She is the daughter of Jesse and Hillary Lockard and the little sister of Ari and Reid. We thank God for His blessing in our family.



# MINISTRY REPORTS

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## PALMS DEAF CHURCH PALM COAST, FL



Palms Deaf Church (PDC) recently welcomed 15 new members! Congratulations to our new members! We plan to offer another New Members Course in the fall.

Also, Palms Deaf Church (PDC) has been partnering with Greater Marion County Association for the Deaf (GMCAD) to host our first “Champ D/HH Summer Day Camp” that we will have for our local Deaf community this summer. We have 12 campers enrolled from ages 4 to 13. Our campers will connect with our community by attending field trips, from touring a local firehouse to theatre, horseback riding, and the University of Florida's wildlife program called “Fish for Success.” Our purpose through these opportunities is to provide access in our language to these opportunities that they wouldn't have, while also having Deaf leaders as role models for our campers. We are excited to see where God takes us next with these campers.

Finally, PDC has been busy preparing for our upcoming ELDA Conference next June. We have some exciting speakers lined up for not only kids but also adults! One of our plans is to have Matthew “Magic” Morgan come and work with our kids who attend camp, sharing the gospel and teaching them magic tricks to perform for us adults at the end of our time together. Plus, we will learn what the bible says about welcoming ALL people and much more. So save the date: June 11th-14th, 2026, in Winter Park, FL, only 30 minutes from MCO airport in Orlando. See you there!

# MINISTRY REPORTS

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## WORD OF LIFE DEAF LANCASTER, PA



Some neat things can be said about WOLD's Bible Study and the Sunday School discussions we've had so far this year. One is that it took 6 years to finish our Bible study, "Bible Stories to Know." The covid pandemic interrupted our study, which is why it took so long to do. WOLD's Bible Study members are proud of covering 172 stories in "Bible Stories to Know!"

After finishing that study, we started the book of Proverbs – for a second time. We did Proverbs several years ago, but now we're doing it again because this time, we have Deaf Missions ASL videos to use! (The last time we did Proverbs, Deaf Missions had not yet translated Proverbs into ASL.)

In Sunday School, Brad Martin did a bible story every last Sunday of the month. Brad told a story from the Bible, and we discussed it afterwards. People enjoyed that a lot.

As for now, WOLD's Wednesday night Bible study (online) and our Sunday School in-church v-log discussion (with Brad's stories) are on summer break – they'll resume after Labor Day.

At the end of June, WOLD plans to show the Deaf Missions "Jesus" movie to our host church, St. Peter's. We will invite Hearing church members from Grace Lutheran, too, because of their interest. It will be interesting to see their reaction to a "Deaf movie" with a "Deaf Jesus." In July, WOLD will have another "Lunch & Movie" event, and that's all we have planned for the summer. God's blessing & Peace to you all!

WOLD



## HEARTLAND EPHPHATHA SIOUX FALLS, SD

Norman Larson Jr. passed away. He was a long-time member of Heartland Ephphatha. The funeral was held at Peace Lutheran Church in Sioux Falls, SD. Memorials may be directed to Heartland Ephphatha Ministries at Peace Lutheran Church ([peacelutheran.com/giving](https://www.peacelutheran.com/giving)) in honor of their decades-long service providing Interpreted worship and other services to the deaf community.

The obituary can be found here

<https://www.georgeboom.com/obituary/norman-larson-jr>





# MINISTRY REPORTS

## LCCN DEAF CENTER YOLA, NIGERIA

Greetings In Jesus' Name, considering this with such diverse challenges, the National Orientation Agency (NOA) paid us a visit on the first November 2024, and they supported 10 students with one year scholarships and school fees.

The LCCN Deaf Centre Academy is a School mainly for the education of Deaf children. The school was started by Rev. Mrs. Ruth Ulea through the headquarters, Numan and she is up to date and responsible for the payment of teachers working in the school.



The current total number of students is forty-three (43). At the nursery level Eight (8) children, at the primary level, fifteen (15) Pupils, and while at the secondary level they have ten (10) Students. This is not encouraging due to the hardship in the country; the school is lacking many more students. Donations from philanthropists are taken as school fees. A church in Abuja sent their donations to our school and it helped a lot during the hardship time through Pastor Anna Luster. God Bless her. The National Orientation Agency awarded to the top ten students in our school the award of Excellence.

The school is moving in the right direction. It shall continue to move on, by the grace of God. It is our earnest prayer that all the donors will look at our challenges and help us out as we pray to God to reward them abundantly. While sticking to our motto, "The Deaf also can do all things by being an asset to the society".

Rev. Ruth Ulea  
On behalf of the LCCN deaf Center.

**June 14th is International Children's Day** — a special day set aside to celebrate and advocate for the well-being of children worldwide. As we mark this important occasion, let us lift up our voices in prayer for children across the globe. Pray that every child will be given the rightful place they deserve — in the Church, where their spiritual growth is nurtured; at home, where they are loved, guided, and protected; and in society, where they are valued, respected, and given opportunities to thrive.



Ask God to ensure that no child is denied the right to salvation through Jesus Christ, the foundation for true hope and purpose. Pray that they will receive proper home training that instills discipline, values, and godly character. Also, intercede for their right to good living — access to basic needs, quality education, protection from harm, and the freedom to grow in a safe and supportive environment. May our actions and prayers reflect the heart of God toward children, who are precious in His sight. Our students came second in March; we won second place. Praise God.

Ruth Ulea.

# MINISTRY REPORTS

## CHRIST THE KING DEAF WEST CHESTER, PA



Each month, Christ the King Deaf Church has a Family Night with a dinner and an event such as an ASL movie, game night, or speaker. In May, we had a Cinco de May Night with Mexican food and hosted Jayson Wallace, son of Connie and Stefan Wallace, who is an accomplished cyclist and attends Kings College in Tennessee on a biking scholarship.

Jayson, a CTK member, represented the US at the World Deaf Mountain Bike Championships in Satoraljaúhely, Hungary last fall. He finished sixth place in the Eliminator Race, ninth in the Olympic Distance Race, and unfortunately, had to exit the Marathon due to a flat tire when he was in sixth



place! This November he heads to the Deaflympics in Tokyo, Japan where he will compete in both road and mountain biking. Jay shared his experiences with us, and we are encouraged to help him raise \$5000 for his expenses. So far, he has raised \$2265. If you would like to add to his fund, please feel free to send a check to Christ the King Deaf Church, 730 South New Street, West Chester, PA 19382 or donate online through [deafcanpa.org](https://deafcanpa.org) donation page indicating the gift is for Jayson Wallace's fund. Deaflympics <https://www.deaflympics.com>

In June, we had a Bengali dinner and hosted speaker Dr. Amir Amiruzzaman, one of our members from Bangladesh. He is a professor at West Chester University and his wife is the head of the ASL Department. We had a delicious dinner of Murgi Aloo (Chicken & Potato Curry), Turkey Aloo (Ground Turkey & Potato Curry), Masoor Dal (Lentil Soup), Vat (rice), tossed green salad, beverages and desserts. We had a trivia game about Bangladesh and learned many facts about this country which is surrounded by India.

These Family Nights bring in a diversity of people from the Deaf Community and has a good reputation for good food and a good time.





## Spring 2025 Highlights!



Our Church Council added two new people to lead our Board. Glen Sparr (above) is our new Vice President, retired, & formerly involved with Deaf Community organizations in Utah.



Council member, **Roseann Hazirci**, (left) is a retired healthcare worker & current caretaker for an intellectually disabled Deaf woman.



The **2025 Deaf Expo** gathered 30 vendors, 300 people, two workshops, and a fun day for all ages! Top right pix shows one DeafBlind guest & new friend.



(Left) A recent immigrant birthday party brought together people from different countries & states asking for Zoom classes. We thank the **WC Lions** for providing \$30,000 to set up a **hybrid classroom** (right) but we are overwhelmed with the many challenges and dangers from the new White House. We need your help more than ever as grants are harder to get this year. **Can you help?**





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## NEWS

Please help our newsletter! Send me your  
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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](mailto:lindafairbanks22@gmail.com) Thanks!