



# ELDA

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JUNE 2018

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



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

## FROM THE PRESIDENT

*Linda Fairbanks*

**“Blessed is the Nation whose God is the Lord” Psalm 33:12**

I love this verse because it applies to any nation, whose people worship the one and true God. Here in America, we recently had Memorial Day. Many people use that weekend as a holiday to picnic, camp-out, etc. It is important that they take the time to honor those men and women who died while fighting for our country in times of war. Tomorrow is June 14th and it is also Flag Day, in which we proudly fly the flag of our country; the red, white and blue. We display our flags properly, on a coffin or on a pole or while marching in parades. Soon we will celebrate the 4th of July, and the birth of our nation. Again flags will be displayed, parades with marching bands will happen and we take time to remember those men and women of long ago who left their homelands to come to America, to seek religious freedom and a new land to call home.

We are now counting down the days until the ELDA 2018 Conference in Las Vegas. We hope that you all plan on attending as well. The pastoral workers will arrive first and will hold their own meetings. The ELDA Board arrives next and prepares for the upcoming ELDA Business meetings. Our delegates arrive on Thursday and we attend workshops, a lay ministry class, devotions and other events of interest. There will be some free time for us to explore the city. On Saturday evening, we will have the award program and banquet, jointly with the United Methodist people, and close the week with a joint worship service.

Looking back to other ELDA Conferences, we remember some of them. There is one conference that I fondly remember and it took place in Sioux Falls, SD and was hosted by the Heartland Ephphatha Deaf Ministries (HEM), Peace Lutheran Church. Their theme was “Love in Action”, I left a handprint of LOVE in South Dakota, based on the gospel of John 13:34; “I give you a new commandment that you love one another just as I have loved you.” Which conference was the most memorable or enjoyable for you? Let me know and I will print in the next newsletter.

This newsletter is special....why? It is filled with pictures from the ELDA Mission Trip to Nigeria. Both Deacon Dorothy and Pastor Beth have provided articles, based on their trip experiences. They will also present on the Nigerian trip at their home churches so that more people are aware of what it was like in Nigeria. They will also present at

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the ELDA Conference. The Methodist people will also present on their trips to Kenya and Tanzania. Their mission trips to the African countries will happen towards the end of this month. Please, include them in your prayers!

Thank you for allowing me to serve as ELDA President these past four years! I am truly humbled and thankful for this opportunity. I enjoyed my role very much and God willing, I would be interested in another term as President. The Secretary and the Pastoral Advisor positions are also up for election. If any of you are interested in being President, Secretary or Pastoral Advisor, let me know and I will put your names on the ballot. Again, thank you! -Linda

*The ELDA Board, 2014-2018: Pastoral Advisor Dorothy Sparks, President Linda Fairbanks, Treasurer Jeff Panek, ELCA Director of Deaf Ministries Rev. Beth Lockard, Secretary Angela Koterwski and Vice President Jeannie Fischer*

## PICTURES



*Celebrating our June birthdays!  
Front row left to right - Bendjy,  
John Wilkens, Louidena, James.  
Back row - Pardieu, Yves, Jean. Bon  
Fet!  
At the Haiti Deaf Academy*



*Fathers' Day Celebration today in Nigeria, sent by  
Pastor Ruth Ulea*





## **Evangelical Lutheran Deaf Association and ELM Conference**

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

**At the fabulous and exciting  
Tuscany Suites & Casino, Las Vegas**

**"Sharing Hands with Love"**

### **Pastoral Workers Meeting**

Sunday, July 22 - Arrive in the afternoon  
Sunday, July 22 – Tuesday, July 24

### **ELDA Board Meeting**

Tuesday, July 24- ELDA Board arrives  
Wednesday, July 25-Thursday, July 26 AM

### **ELDA/ELM Conference**

Thursday, July 26 PM-conference delegates arrive  
Thursday, July 26 – Saturday, July 28

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

**REGISTRATION FORM is in the ELDA Newsletter**  
**and on the ELDA website; [www.eldadeaf.org](http://www.eldadeaf.org)**  
**For more information, contact Donald Rosenkjar at**  
**[donkhai99@AOL.com](mailto:donkhai99@AOL.com)**

# ELDA 2018 REGISTRATION FORM

Please print clearly, fill in and mail this page with payment to:

**St. Matthew's Lutheran Church, 11031 Camarillo St, North Hollywood, CA 91602, Attention: Donald Rosenkjar**

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ Female \_\_\_\_\_ Male \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Street: \_\_\_\_\_

VP \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Church or Organization \_\_\_\_\_

Emergency Contact Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Text, VP, or Phone# \_\_\_\_\_

+++++++ **Meals (lunch and dinner) and Housing are included in the price** +++++++

1) **Pastoral Workers:** July 22 PM- July 29 AM      \$ 670.00 per person \_\_\_\_\_

2) **ELDA Board:** July 24 PM- July 29 AM      \$ 420.00 per person \_\_\_\_\_

3) **Conference Attendees:** July 26 PM- July 29 AM \$ 345.00 per person \_\_\_\_\_

4) **Commuters:** (no rooms) (Includes **supper on Thursday**)      \$60.00 \_\_\_\_\_

(No rooms) (Includes **lunch and supper on Friday**)      \$ 70.00 \_\_\_\_\_

(No rooms) (Includes **lunch and banquet on Saturday**)      \$ 80.00 \_\_\_\_\_

(No rooms) (Includes **banquet only on Saturday**)      \$ 70.00 \_\_\_\_\_

(Meal tickets are Non Refundable)      **TOTAL:** \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**\*\*Check made payable to St. Matthew's Lutheran Church; with note at the bottom of check:**  
**ELDA Conference**

**\*Room rates are the same for King and Standard rooms.**

**\*Check which room you would like. Also write down who will be in that room. Thanks!**

King room-1 bed, 1 person \_\_\_\_\_ Name: \_\_\_\_\_

King room- 1 bed, 2 persons, \_\_\_\_\_ Names: \_\_\_\_\_

Standard room- 2 beds, 4persons, Names: \_\_\_\_\_

Standard room- 2 beds, 2 persons, \_\_\_\_\_ Names: \_\_\_\_\_

**PLEASE REGISTER EARLY, FIRST COME, FIRST SERVED:**

**Special Needs:**

1) Interpreter, SSP, Voice Interpreter: (Please circle)

2) Other: Please explain: \_\_\_\_\_

3) Mobility Needs: Wheelchair Y or N

4) Special Meal Needs: Vegetarian, Diabetic etc. \_\_\_\_\_

**\* Early Bird Deadline: February 28, 2018**

**\* Payment by March 31 – pay \$60 more per person**

**\* Payment by April 30 – pay \$110 more per person**

**\* Hotel Check-In** begins at 4:00 p.m. on July 22nd. All guests must check in before 8:00 p.m.

**\* Check-In** begins at noon on July 26<sup>th</sup>. All guests must check in before 8:00 p.m.

**\* Check-out:** by noon. on July 29<sup>th</sup>. All guests must be checked out by noon.

**Transportation:** Use either Uber or Lyft. Be sure you have an account with either one. If not, download an app, and set up an account. Cost of transportation is \$6.00-\$8.00, and is the **cheapest and quickest** way to get to the hotel from the airport. You may take a taxi from the airport, for around \$9.00 per person.

**DO NOT USE THE SHUTTLE TO THE HOTEL!!! (Expensive and long wait)**

**The address of Tuscany Suites & Casino is 255 E Flamingo Rd, Las Vegas, Nevada 89169**

**\* Are you interested in going on the Hoover Dam Tour with Lake Mead Cruise?**  
**Yes or No**, circle one. (This is a post conference tour; July 29 or 30<sup>th</sup>)

(Cost: \$120.00, pay at the conference if there are enough people interested)



# WORD OF LIFE DEAF LANCASTER, PA

## ***WOLD Welcomes New Members***

*by Pastor Russ Rockwell (pictures by Luanne Bartens)*

Springtime was a time of blessing at WOLD. The greatest blessing was having a baptism and receiving four new members to the church!

On May 20 — Pentecost Sunday — 24 year-old Darius Lee Rocha was baptized and received into membership at WOLD. In the same worship service, WOLD received 4 others as new members: Lance Armer, Phil McQuilkin, Louise Sahatjian, and Juliana Satriale.



On May 27 — Trinity Sunday — one of WOLD's newest members, Juliana Satriale, was joined in marriage to Joshua Pappas at a service officiated by WOLD's pastor, Rev. Russ Rockwell.

Earlier in the Spring, WOLD hosted another "Meal-and-a-Movie" event. Approximately 30 people attended the event, sharing a meal together before watching the movie, "Lion."

WOLD also experimented with changing the time of the "Wednesday Night Bible Study" from 7:00 p.m. to 1:00 p.m. Bible study class members enjoyed the afternoon time slot, and will probably keep Bible study in the

afternoon when it resumes in the Fall. WOLD's Bible Study went on break in mid-May because it finished its study on The Bible's Big Story from Crossways International.

During the summer, WOLD will change its worship time from 9:30 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. There is discussion about permanently changing WOLD's regular worship time to 10:00.

In the summer, WOLD will have its annual "picnic worship" on June 10. On June 17, WOLD members will travel to West Chester and join CTK's worship.

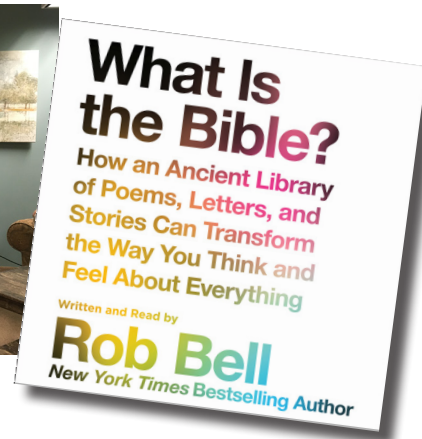




# HEARTLAND EPHPHATHA MINISTRY SIOUX FALLS, SD

## *HEM Shares Bible Study; Serves Meals* by Jason Andera

Heartland Ephphath just finished studying the Bible in a whole new context. We have been using the Book “What is the Bible” by Rob Bell as a starting point to talk about the context of the Bible and why the stories were written down and what they meant to people as they first read those stories. Jason and Sarah Andera are working on Study Guide videos that accompany the book and will share those videos at the ELDA conference in Las Vegas for those interested.



### *Heartland Ephphatha Bible Study*

Also, we have started putting our interpreted worship sermons online at the Heartland Ephphatha Facebook page. We can't wait to see all of you at ELDA!

Jason Andera was live.  
June 10 at 9:19am



88 Views

Like

Comment

Share

### *Heartland Ephphatha Interpreted Sermons on Facebook*

### *Heartland Ephphatha serving*



HEM has also been busy serving. We have done multiple fund raisers at Pizza Ranch by serving and cleaning to raise funds for our trip to Las Vegas. We have also

served people at the Banquet in Sioux Falls which feeds people



in downtown Sioux Falls. We also prepared and served meals for the children of Peace Lutheran Church at the June Vacation Bible study.

# ELCA DEAF MINISTRIES COORDINATOR'S REPORT



Dear ELDA Friends:

Already it is June and we are in the Pentecost season! I wanted to share some highlights from our "Pentecost experience" in Nigeria March 19—April 5. You will see some pictures in this newsletter and a message from Deacon Dorothy Sparks about how

the trip touched her heart (and ours!). She and I are excited to share more with you in person at the ELDA Conference next month.

We left the snow and cold of the East to arrive in a very hot and humid Nigeria. This weather extreme hit our bodies hard and we had to adjust quickly. The air flights were long (each of us had 3 or 4 flights one way) but allowed us to sleep and adjust to the five/six hours difference. The first hostel in the capital city of Abuja had no towels! In Yola, we stayed at one of the two hotels in the town which was well protected by walls and barbed wire. It had air conditioning, an elevator, and ONE towel per room. There was a small restaurant in the hotel with a limited menu where we got two meals a day. We learned we had to order food one hour

or more in advance. During our almost three weeks, we learned to slow down and the Nigerians learned to speed up for us! TV had only several channels and nothing was captioned.

It was great to see Pastor Ruth Ulea again and meet her husband Paul and two youngest sons. Her 28 school children gave us a warm welcome with song, dance, and a banner. We met with her teachers, spoke with the parents (both Muslim and Christian), led a short lesson, and gave out Mill Neck ASL Bible story books. When we saw how little the school had, our team bought some school supplies. The parents hope for better salaries for the staff, a van to transport the students, toys, a playground, and an additional classroom. They only had two.

We met many deaf people at the church service on Palm Sunday and again at the four-day Easter Camp which was attended by 107 people from all over. Some rode a bus for two days to attend. Men and women sit on separate sides of the church in colorful clothes and the Boys Brigade (older male scouts) kept people focused on the speakers. They take a few offerings at each service. Pr. Ruth was delighted to receive the gift of worship stoles and the ELDA Award plus the gift of \$500. We brought ILY pins from the UMCD and the delegates loved them! The people use more initialized English signing mixed with ASL. There is one large Deaf school with 500+ students but there are small groups like Pr. Ruth's school in different places. We visited Remi School for the Disabled that had 48 students and was near the Lutheran Seminary. We visited a vocational center for the Deaf/Disabled around the corner from Pr. Ruth's church. Our team gave the Adamawa Association for the Deaf 60,000 Naira (\$170) to help build their shop to sell Deaf handicrafts. There are not many jobs for the Deaf and few interpreters and other services. The Deaf try to attend college by reading teacher lecture notes.

We met many pastors and bishops and attended a service in the hearing LCCN cathedral which had 2000 attending. We also toured a Muslim temple/museum. The highlight was visiting the Lutheran Archbishop Musa Filibus as Dorothy mentioned. We hope our contact with him leads to ELDA involvement in finding and befriending Deaf people around the world as he leads the Lutheran World







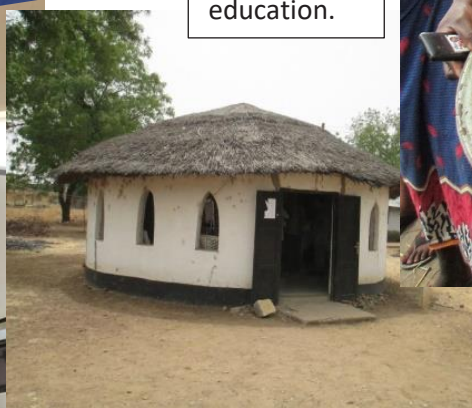
Pr. Ruth Ulea with ELDA plaque and shirt from WOLD church. At top is village of Demsa. We met four Deaf with no language or education.



Left: first Lutheran chapel from 1916. Top: Demsa villagers try to sell us a catfish



Top: Pr. Ruth leads Bob and Karen Pugh of MN in renewing their 45th marriage vows in LCCN Deaf Church that ELDA helped to build. Right: Some of the Deaf vocational students at the Center in Jimeta. Pr. Beth & Pughs in center.





# ELCA DEAF MINISTRIES COORDINATOR'S REPORT CONTINUED

Federation.

We were able to visit a medical center funded by the Minneapolis Area Synod, the first chapel built by Danish Lutherans in 1916, a marketplace, and a small village (Demsu) of grass huts where we found four deaf people who had no language or education. 10,500,000 Nigerian children have no school. The government has oil money but it is not used for the people.

Our last five days we experienced a giant dust storm (harmattan) that made it hard to breathe. The people are used to this in their dry season. They have so many hardships with water, food, housing, transportation, employment, etc. Boko Haram (terrorist group) are a constant threat and many refugees from northern Nigeria have fled into Yola as their family members were killed and villages burned. This affects the number of students at the LCCN Deaf School. As we tried to fly out on our last day, we learned the AirFrance workers were on strike. We got out a day later aboard a charter plane. We came back to more blizzards in America!!

This journey taught us many things. We all developed friendships and contacts with people and hope to visit them again. Some leaders email us. We learned one Deaf couple from Pr. Ruth's Church Council, Samuel and Blessing, recently had a baby boy. Pr. Hosanna, who picked us up in Abuja, became sick and died suddenly. We feel their joy and sorrow across the miles.

Our ELDA Board is discussing how we can strengthen our relationship with the LCCN Deaf Church and School. We thank you for your financial gifts that paid for our visas and allowed us to give LCCN \$500. Since the last newsletter, Heartland Ephphatha added \$300 to the fund. The journey was very important to our team and ELDA deaf ministries. Thank you for your support and prayers!

## 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.***





At left are some of the 28 students at the LCCN Deaf Academy where Pr. Ruth is principal. They were thrilled with the ASL Easter story books from Mill Neck in NY



Clockwise: Pr. Ruth & husband Paul say goodbye at Yola airport; national Muslim mosque in Abuja visited by people of many countries; boys selling water in plastic bags; Deacon Dorothy & LCCN Archbishop Filibus in MN in May; crazy taxis clog the streets in Jimeta/Yola.





# QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ABOUT MY TRIP TO NIGERIA BY DOROTHY SPARKS

## 1) *What made you decide to go to Nigeria?*

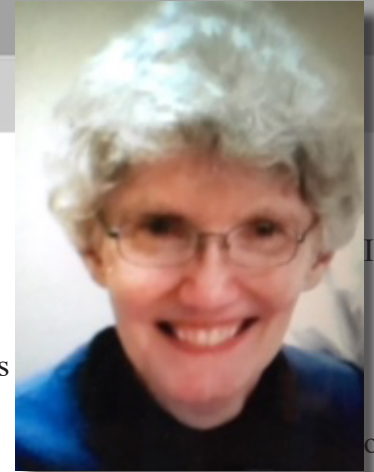
I have felt that Holy Spirit encouraged and led me to go to Nigeria. I believe that the Lord wants to give His love, blessing, grace and support to Rev. Ruth Ulea and Lutheran Church of Christ in Nigeria Deaf Church and Deaf school. Rev. Ruth is the one who came and stayed in America for 6 weeks 2 years ago. I heard her story about her work in Nigeria. She is an amazing person. Few



years ago, my church, Bread Life Deaf Lutheran Church, donated some money for building the Deaf Lutheran Church in Nigeria. I am pleased to enter the Deaf church and meet 107 Deaf people. (picture of Rev. Ruth Ulea) I can't forget her.

I am glad I did go to Nigeria. It was a rich experience. I will never forget the trip. Praise the Lord for leading me to understand the meaning of a mission trip.

### *Team and Church on Mission Trip*



## 2) *How has travel affected your life?*

A mission trip and a vacation trip are not the same. Some people said to me, "Have a nice trip to Nigeria!" I said, "It is not a vacation trip." You may wonder what is different between them. I read an article. It says :

**"Surprise! I think what I liked most about the mission trip was that many times I was pushed out of my comfort zone and had to do things that I would not normally enjoy or be comfortable doing. This brought me closer to God because I had to rely on him to give me the courage and strength to do those things."**

It is very true. My life is not the same after the mission trip. It makes me to think wide open about the Deaf people in the world and their needs.

I remember more than five years ago, I met a lady who came from her trip to Africa. I was shocked to hear when she said, "I want to go back there." I asked her, "What makes you want to go back there?" She said, "People!" I did not understand fully. During my trips to Jamaica and Nigeria, I started to recognize that they don't have many things but they are still cheerful. Because relationships are most important to them than anything. After I returned to America, I realized I can't forget the people over over there. It impacted me how valuable a relationship is than time and money. I told the Deaf Nigerians that I wish that America was not so far





from from Nigeria because I would love to see them again.

***107 people at Deaf Easter  
Easter Camp***

### ***3) You have visited Archbishop Filibus in Nigeria, Tell me more about him!***

Rev. Ruth Ulea led my team and me to visit him. We knew that he is the LCCN Archbishop in Nigeria. But we are so surprised that he is also the president of Lutheran World Federation. He has two jobs. He is a very important person. Wow! Then we found that he was invited to Minneapolis Area Synod Assembly as a guest speaker in Minneapolis on the first weekend in May. Wow! Two members from Bread of Life Deaf Lutheran Church, my pastor, Michelle Lewis, and I attended the Assembly. After the Assembly, I was so surprised that Archbishop Filibus came to my table. I was so pleased to meet him again.

Then two days later, I went to a church and listened to Archbishop Filibus' comments to answer the audience's questions. Then he told the audience a story about our team and me visiting him Nigeria. After that, he wants our Team and me to keep in touch with him about the Deaf ministry.

After I know him more, I found that he is a very warm person. I would love to see him again in the future.



***picture of Archbishop with our team***

# ELDA CONFERENCE AGENDA

## ELDA/UMCD Conference Schedule (Tentative)

The clock is ticking, ticking, and our Evangelical Lutheran Deaf Association Conference is just around the corner. This is exciting, especially for those who plan to make the trip to fabulous Las Vegas, to a truly beautiful Tuscany Resort and Casino. It will be time for each of you to meet your old friends and make new friends, time to eat fine food, time to swim at the hotel's beautiful pool. The theme of the conference is "Sharing Hands With Love", and there will be workshops that focuses on that theme, the theme that ELCA truly embraces — helping others for better lives by sharing our hands together, lifting other people up. In case you have not yet registered to make this exciting journey, there is still time to do so. The conference registration form can be found here in this newsletter. If you have questions, please feel free to contact me via e-mail at donkhai99@aol.com.

### ***Sunday, July 22***

**Pastoral Workers and Methodist students arrive**

12:30 - 5:00 UM Certified Lay Servant teachers and students arrive & set up

5:30 - Dinner

8:30 - Evening Devotional, joint UMCD/ELDA

### ***Monday, July 23***

8:30 - 12:00 United Methodist Certified Lay Servant

9:00 - 11:30 Pastoral Workers Meeting

12:00 Lunch

1:30 - 5:00 ELM Meeting

1:30 - 5:00 Pastoral Workers Meeting

5:30 - Dinner

7:00 - 8:00 - United Methodist Certified Lay Servant

8:30 - Evening Devotional, joint UMCD/ELDA

### ***Tuesday, July 24***

**ELDA board arrives**

8:30 - 11:30 United Methodist Certified Lay Servant

9:00 - 5:00 Pastoral Workers Meeting

12:00 Lunch

1:30 - 5:00 United Methodist Certified Lay Servant

5:30 - Dinner

6:30 - 8:30 UMC and um dhm meeting

8:30 - Evening Devotional, joint UMCD/ELDA

### ***Wednesday, July 25***

8:30 - 5:00 ELDA Board Meeting,

8:30 - 5:00 UM-DHM & UMCD officer Meeting

9:00 - 5:00 Pastoral Workers Meeting

12:00 Lunch

5:30 - Dinner

6:30 - 8:30 ELM Meeting

8:30 - Evening Devotional, joint UMCD/ELDA

### ***Thursday, July 26***

**Conference attendees arrive**

9:00 - 11:30 - ELDA Board Meeting

8:30 - 11:30 - UM-DHM & UMCD officer Meeting

12:00 Lunch

1:30 - 4:00 - Lay Ministry Class: Dorothy Sparks

4:30 - Opening Worship Service

5:00 - Box Dinner/Ice Breaker, Mark Koterwski, leader

### ***Friday, July 27***

9:00 Morning Devotional, led by ELCA

9:30 - 11:30 Future of ELM: Town Hall Meeting, Mark Koterwski, facilitator

12:00 Lunch

1:30 - 3:00 Global Ministry/Immigration  
(Nigeria, Zimbabwe, Kenya, etc.)

3:30 - 5:00 ELDA Board Reports/Business Meeting

3:00 - 5:00 UMCD business meeting and reports  
(including UM-DHM)

5:30 - Dinner

7:00 - Church Skit Competition

### ***Saturday, July 28***

9:00 - Morning Devotional, led by UMCD

10:00 - 11:30 ELDA Business Meeting

12:00 - Lunch

1:30 - 2:30 Homeless Workshop, Pr. Stephanie Jaeger and Donald Rosenkjar, presenters

2:30 - 5:00 - Free Time

5:30 - Banquet

8:00 - Closing Worship Service

### ***Sunday, July 29*** **Farewell**

Hoover Dam, Lake Mead Excursion

Peace, Donald Rosenkjar+

2018 Conference Chairperson



# BERTA FOSTER OBITUARY

**(Andrew Foster's wife)**

The oldest of three children, Berta was born to Friedrich and Ilse Zuther in Berlin, Germany, 30 April, 1939, at the beginning of the war. Four years later, she lost her hearing, due to measles. Since childhood, Berta always loved God and wanted to please Him. Though her parents did not require her to attend church, she chose to be confirmed in the Lutheran church at age 13. Later in her teens, she wanted to become a missionary to the deaf or deaf-blind in less-fortunate places.

In 1959, she met Andrew Foster at a World Federation for the Deaf conference, which was held in Germany. She had read about him in a German deaf magazine, that he was a deaf missionary and educator to the deaf in West Africa. She recognized him, and since she had already taught herself English, introduced herself and told him of her interest to be a missionary. Andrew was a little skeptical if her beliefs aligned with that of his mission organization. She eagerly accepted his offer to study the Bible through the Emmaus Correspondence School, and for the next year, she studied the Bible – in English. During that time, she grew in her understanding of God, and of salvation through Christ alone, and put her trust in Him.

In August, 1960, Berta moved to Nigeria to work for Andrew's mission organization. Soon a romance developed, and they married in Nigeria in January, 1961. Throughout the next decade, Andrew and Berta had five children: Andrew, Jr., Johannes, Faith, Timothy and Daniel. The oldest and youngest were born in Michigan; the middle three, in West Africa.

The Fosters had moved back and forth between the States and Nigeria in the early part of the 1970s. They returned to the States in 1975 for a one year furlough; but in the next year, Berta was diagnosed with ovarian cancer, whose medical care, necessarily lengthened their furlough. Through Berta's encouragement and insistence that "the Lord's work must continue," Andrew made annual months-long trips to various countries throughout Africa. It was hard for him to leave Berta in her illness, but they were mutually dedicated to do the work God had called them to do. For the next dozen years, they endured long separations, considering it their personal sacrifice to minister to the deaf in Africa.

Berta's cancer went into remission just a couple of years after her diagnosis, but physically, she was not yet strong enough to return to tropical life. She worked faithfully as the administrator of Christian Mission for the Deaf, while Andrew was busy on his mission trips. Over the years, her strength gradually increased so they discussed the possibility of Berta returning to Africa with Andrew in 1987. They decided not to proceed with those plans; instead, Andrew went back on his mission trip alone. It turned out to be his final expedition, for he died in a plane crash in Rwanda in December, 1987.

After Andrew's death, Berta cheerfully took on as much of Andrew's executive load as she could, in addition to her administrative load. After all, the work "had to be done." In 1989, she was able to revisit Africa, for the first time since the mid-



1970s. She spent half a year in 10 different countries, visiting some of the schools and churches for the deaf which Andrew had founded. After returning to the States, she continued to work in the mission office, supporting her African colleagues overseas. The hard work and long hours took a toll on her health. At the age of 55, she suffered her first heart attack. It was so severe that she needed a quadruple-bypass surgery. Berta was forced to slow down for her health's sake; meanwhile the work piled up. So, with gusto, she resumed working in the mission office as soon as possible. She embodied Romans 12:1 – she truly was a "living sacrifice, presented to God."

During her sixties, Berta experienced occasional heart attacks. They were not as severe as her first one, so she returned to work soon after each incident. In 2006, she was able to visit the Democratic Republic of Congo (formerly known as Zaire) – her first time back to Africa since 1989. It also turned out to be her last visit to her beloved, adopted continent.

A couple months before turning 70, Berta went to the hospital following a mild heart attack. During a routine medical procedure, a heart catheterization, she suffered a major stroke – a 1/1,000 chance. This stroke was much more devastating to her than any of her heart attacks that she was forced to retire a few months later. Berta made much progress during her first year after her stroke; the next several years saw many ups and downs. She steadily declined in the last year of her life. In the early hours of Saturday, 27 January, 2018, God called Berta into heaven. The first voice she heard since early childhood was the Savior's voice saying, "Well done, good and faithful servant. Enter into the joy of the Lord."

Berta is survived by her sister Ilse Krause and a brother Friedrich Zuther, both of Berlin; her five children: Andy (Liselotte), Johannes, Faith Haynes (Mark); Tim (Sheryl) and Dan; 14 grandchildren; and 2 great-grandchildren.

## 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!