



# ELDA

Volume • 8 Issue • 24 April 2011

*Evangelical Lutheran Deaf Association*

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

## President's Corner



The worst of winter is gone, and the warm weather is here. I am sure everyone is looking forward for a warmer climate! I am looking forward to that as well!

Easter is here soon! We will celebrate Jesus' resurrection on April 24, 2011. Children can't wait for the Easter Bunny to bring Easter Eggs to their house. I remember when I was young; I did not realize what EASTER meant. I thought it was about bunnies who brought eggs, candies, and toys. When I got older, I learned a lot about Easter! I wonder how many children really understand what Easter means? I found a neat Easter Poem for us to remember on special day!

It's wonderful to have families and friends to get together to remember what Jesus has done for us.

Peacefully,

Mark Koterwski  
ELDA President

### Easter Joy

*Jesus came to earth,  
To show us how to live,  
How to put others first,  
How to love and how to give.*

*Then He set about His work,  
That God sent Him to do;  
He took our punishment on Himself;  
He made us clean and new.*

*He could have saved Himself,  
Calling angels from above,  
But He chose to pay our price for sin;  
He paid it out of love.*

*Our Lord died on Good Friday,  
But the cross did not destroy  
His resurrection on Easter morn  
That fills our hearts with joy.*

*Now we know our earthly death,  
Like His, is just a rest.  
We'll be forever with Him  
In heaven, where life is best.*

*So we live our lives for Jesus,  
Think of Him in all we do.  
Thank you Savior; Thank you Lord.  
Help us love like you!*

By Joanna Fuchs, via Poem Source

# From Pastor Beth

Blessings of God's peace be with you all. It is winter wonderland for many of us. Freezing temperatures, ice, snow, bare trees, and cold winds remind us that God has designed an elaborate pattern in nature when the earth is allowed to "die" and "rest" until new life is "born again" in the spring. We know that this cold darkness is temporary and in a couple months we will be seeing flowers and green grass again. This helps us understand our own death and promised resurrection.

Because of the economic recession and other changes in funding, the ELCA went through some budget cuts and restructuring last fall. Last August we had the opportunity to meet our new ELCA Director of Disabilities, Jensen Seyenkulo. He visited our ELDA Conference and warmed our hearts with his interest and support of our Deaf Ministries. But in October, both Pastor Seyenkulo and his administrative assistant were laid off as were many other ELCA staff people. I was told Deaf Ministries was moved to a new unit called Congregational and Synodical Mission. While we are still part of ELCA, the details are still being worked out. I hope by the next newsletter that I will have more information to share with you. I know many of us are very disappointed to lose Pr. Seynekulo and we pray he has found a new ministry. In this way, ELCA is in "winter" mode right now and we wait to see what new life will happen.

You also will remember celebrating Elizabeth Pulver's 79th birthday last August on opening night of the ELDA Conference. She loved celebrating with all of you. She had attended many ELDA conferences in the past and told me this was her "last" one. I did not believe her. However, after being hospitalized briefly in January, she quickly and peacefully entered her heavenly home. Elizabeth was an active and faithful member of St. Philip's Lutheran Church of the Deaf (Philadelphia) where she served on

the Altar Guild, the Lutheran Ladies Aid, and sewed banners. She helped with the youth programs and actively visited the sick and home bound. When she died, she was serving at St. Philip's Council treasurer. We will remember her deep faith, her love of animals, and her caring for others. Philadelphia was buried in deep snow and blizzards the week she died and the funeral was moved a couple of times. Her life will be celebrated at a memorial service in April. She is now a member of the Church Triumphant! For her the "spring of resurrection" is in progress.

The pastors and synod leaders of the Deaf ELCA churches in Pennsylvania met in December and January. They invited the leaders of local Catholic, Methodist, and Episcopalian churches to discuss how we could "share" ministry and become stronger. As I write this, the Deaf leaders from these Def ministries will meet and continue the discussion. It will be interesting to see what "springs" from these meetings. When God's people gather prayerfully together, we know God will lead them to new ways. I hope to share more in the next newsletter.

May you journey through the "winter" season of Lent into the "spring" and new life of Easter.

In our great God,  
Pr. Beth Lockard,  
ELCA Coordinator of Deaf Ministries





# From the Treasurer

We have received one generous gift to Evangelical Lutheran Deaf Association in the past six months. I would like to spread the word and thank them for their love gift which will enable ELDA to continue its mission and ministry in many different ways.

A heartfelt thank you to:

Christ the King Deaf Church for Thanksgiving Appeal \$50  
West Chester, PA

Please remember your 2011 dues which are now \$125 for each ministry and are due immediately. While this letter is late going out, we still need your annual support so that we can keep ELDA doing "God's work with our hands." Our dues help pay for the costs of operating ELDA and we appreciate the support of each Deaf Ministry.

That reminds me that it is time for our Lenten Appeal which will support our HOPE Mission Fund. A perfect example for our mission is that we sent the Haitian Timoun Foundation \$1000 to rebuild their Deaf school and are now investigating funding to help the Japanese Deaf Community. Please consider an extra donation for this fund. The 40 days of Lent is a time when we are encouraged to sacrifice to share with others in need. All checks may be sent to "ELDA" at the above address on the letterhead.

This year, we are encouraging individual donations as you are able to give. Because you are all messengers of God like angels, we want to recognize the donors with angel categories. Please consider the following gifts in the Angel Circle:

Cherubim (\$5--\$50)

Seraphim (\$51--\$100)

St. Gabriel (\$101--\$300)

St. Michael (\$301 or more)

In Christ,  
Connie Wallace



## IN LOVING MEMORY...

Elizabeth Pulver was born August 5, 1931 and was laid to rest on January 29, 2011 at her funeral. Elizabeth will be deeply missed by her family and friends. She was known for her deep faith, her love of animals, and caring for others. Memorial gifts may be sent to St. Phillip's.



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## From the Vice President

In January Word of Life Deaf Lutheran Church hosted a benefit fundraiser for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services (DHHS) of Lancaster (PA). The fundraiser was an ASL movie event for the movie "Gerald" by ASL Films. WOLD used its church fellowship room and dining room as the movie-watching area for those who came to see "Gerald." Both deaf and hearing people came. It was amazing how so many people came regardless of the horrible weather (the roads were filled with drifting snow.) 105 of the about 150 expected people showed up! We had wonderful support from DHHS for planning the ASL film event. The funds raised will be used to provide interpreters for workshops that DHHS sponsors for the deaf community. The DHHS staff who supported the event in many different ways with some help from WOLD. It was beautiful to see everyone working together to make this happen. This was the 1st time an ASL movie was ever shown in Lancaster! We were glad WOLD (especially deaf community) was able to be part of it. At the same time, I think this was a great way to help the deaf to see where the WOLD church is. Pastor Dave Fisher from our synod office was there. I think it was great for him to experience the Deaf world for a night, because it helped him see deaf people from so many different backgrounds in one room, enjoying fellowship after the movie. He said he loved the movie -- everybody did because it was a good story and great plot!

-Luanne Bartens

# Letter of Apology

by *Donald Rosenkjar*

During the summer of 2002 during Evangelical Lutheran Deaf Association conference at Lincoln, Nebraska, I made a bad mistake for being judgmental about the quality of one pastor's signing fluency, and I deeply offended the Lincoln community. From that unfortunate incidence, I believe I have gained a better understanding and appreciation about our languages, hearing and Deaf. I want to write down my thoughts.



No matter where we go in this country dominated by people who uses spoken language, we will always be classified as a minority that uses American Sign Language. That is a given, a fact. Second given is the scarcity of trained clergy who is fluent in the language of the Deaf, American Sign Language. Third fact, I have come to realize, in a profound way, is this: There is no language that is superior to any other language.

In March of 2000, historian John Lukacs spoke on the campus of Eastern Nazarene College in Quincy, Massachusetts wrote: "Language is a very mysterious gift from God. In the beginning was the Word. Not the Fact. Not the Picture. Not the Number. Not the Image. It is through words that we relate to each other. It is through words that we can give pain or pleasure to each other. And because of this - and every historian worth his salt ought to know this - the choice of the word is not only a matter of accuracy, not only an aesthetic choice, it is a moral choice." Without some type of language in common with other people, in our case, sign language, we would find ourselves totally isolated even when surrounded by other people. We use language to convey all kinds of ideas and messages. You can tell someone we love them or tell someone we hate them with language. We can encourage someone to taste the delicious peaches or warn them not to eat the poisonous mushrooms. With language we

can search out the mysteries of the physical realm. You can explore each other's thoughts, likes and fears. God reveals himself to us through language primarily. Even complex thought within ourselves would be difficult without language. Language truly is among the greatest of gifts. And God gave us American Sign Language, and we have the freedom to communicate, to talk, to chat, even to curse. God also gave us English, both spoken and written, and that language is widely used throughout the world (have you ever seen a Japanese camera or car logo in Japanese?) Because of scarcity of clergy skilled in ASL, God gave us intermediaries: interpreters and clergy willing to learn ASL, and they become the bridge between the two languages. What is truly important is that that communication intermediary functions as a bridge of us, who are Deaf, with God, that the path is opened to bring our understanding about God. Think Mark VII, the story of the Deaf man in the Bible. Thus, we must welcome, with love, everyone who may be hearing, perhaps not with great signing skills but is able to deliver the message of the Gospels to the Deaf. That, I believe, should be, and is the position of Evangelical Lutheran Deaf Association.

Lastly, but not the least, I want to express my profound apology to everyone whom I have caused grief for my comments that I made in Lincoln, Nebraska during the ELDA conference. Likewise, I must express my gratitude to the same people of Lincoln for giving me the opportunity to change my way of thinking.



# Focus on Ministry

Each newsletter we'll take a close look at ministry being done at one of our Deaf churches. This time we focus on Christ the King Deaf Church in West Chester, Pennsylvania

## CTK Deaf Church Begins DeafCAN!

As local services for the Deaf and hard of hearing were cut, CTK noticed a significant increase in people coming to the church for assistance. The Bishop of SE PA Synod, Rev. Claire Burkat, suggested that CTK apply for a grant that helps start programs with social service needs. CTK established a Committee composed of church and community leaders to study the situation and wrote a proposal for seed money. A grant was received from Diakon Lutheran Social Services in August 2010 and the Deaf Community Action Network (DeafCAN!) was born.

The philosophy of DeafCAN! is that D/HOH people CAN do anything and must be involved in all aspects of any organization that serves the community. When our decision-making authority or direct service involvement decreases, so will the effectiveness of the organization. It is CTK's intent to serve all people regardless of race, gender, sexual orientation, age, faith, or communication mode.

Since April 2010 DeafCAN! has been:

- teaching 11 Deaf developmentally and intellectually challenged employees at HandiCrafters
- teaching spring, summer, and fall

**DEAFCAN! COMMITTEE:** Our Church Council has established a "DeafCAN!" Committee to advise them on the needs of Deaf and hard of hearing people, best service possibilities, finding resources, and keeping Deaf/HOH people in the forefront of all decisions and planning. Four of the seven Committee members are Deaf and hard of hearing. The following are members of that Committee:

***Kate Carbone, Kathie Gray-Plotkin, Michele Krech, MSW, Rev. Beth Lockard, M.Ed., William Lockard, M.A, Dr. Virginia Sutton, Connie Wallace***

American Sign Language classes at CTK

- teaching Deaf adult literacy classes at CTK (although temporarily on hold)
- regularly visiting and educating Deaf inmates at Graterford State Prison
- counseling and case management of Deaf and HOH consumers
- providing daily information and referral (walk-ins, phone-ins)
- working with a Deaf immigrant family from SE Asia who are now in Philadelphia.
- hosted a holiday party for Deaf/HOH kids with a signing Santa (40 attended)
- serving over 100 different people in various capacities

In 2011, DeafCAN! will work to:

- establish support services for the Deaf-blind and parent-child support groups
- establish a range of employment, housing, mental health, and other social services

CTK just received a surprise grant from Frank E. Clark Charitable Trust from their synod Fund for Mission to continue the work. Bread of Life Lutheran Church of the Deaf also sent a surprise gift as did different individuals. CTK feels blessed to expand their outreach and service to the community through DeafCAN! and are strongly committed to meeting the needs of the D/HOH community. Now they are looking at collaboration with larger agencies to serve more people.





## Drama at CTK

Methodist Bishop Peggy Johnson (left) and Rev. Beth Lockard (right), pastor of Christ the King Deaf Church.

Bishop Johnson used a drama to convey her spiritual message, assisted by Bill Lockard, and Susan

Gompers, a church member. Bishop Johnson portrayed Dr. Pink, assisted by her diagnosing nurse (played by Ms. Gompers). The two helped their patient (Mr. Lockard) by diagnosing and treating the spiritual afflictions of his head, heart, and hands.



## Facts about Christ the King Deaf Church

**LOCATION:** West Chester, PA

**PASTOR:** Pastor Beth Lockard

**MISSION:** The mission of Christ the King Deaf Church is to be a place open and welcoming to the Deaf Community teaching God's Word, sharing Christ's love and growing together in God's Spirit.

**WEBSITE:** [www.ctkdeafchurch.com](http://www.ctkdeafchurch.com)



# Lenten Discipline

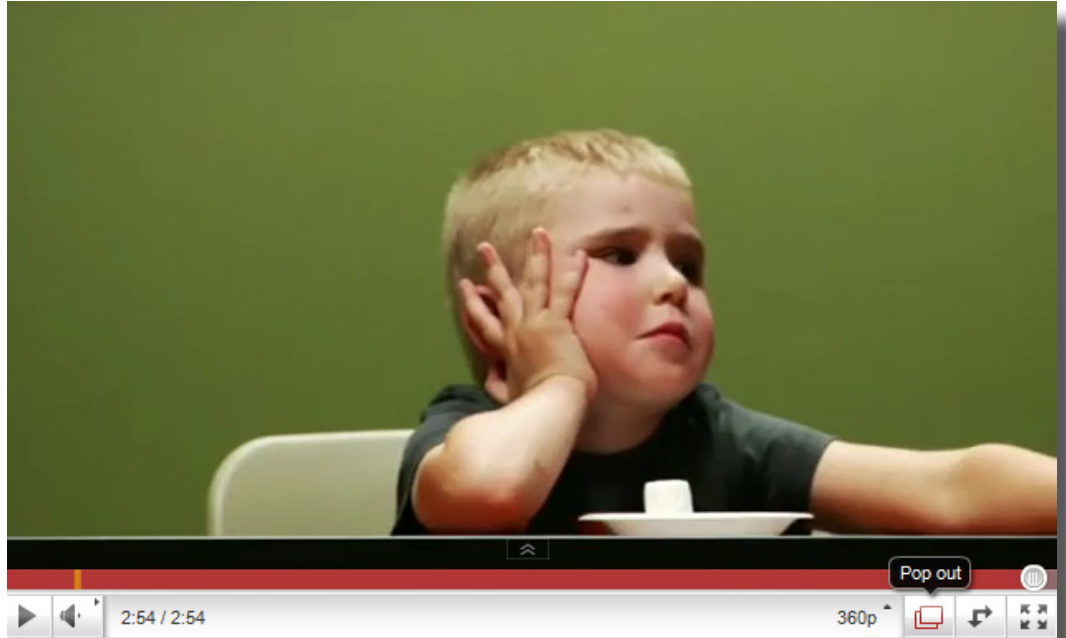


***Pastor Russ Rockwell of Word of Life Deaf Church in Lancaster Pennsylvania used this video to prepare for Lent.***

“The Marshmallow Test” is an experiment in delayed gratification. The way I used it, however, was as a metaphor for the Lenten experience, and how we handle temptation. What are we willing to put off and

deny ourselves for the sake of something good that is promised to us -- something very much worth waiting for (think of Hebrews 11). How do we handle the temptation the world puts before us to give up waiting (in faith)? Do we flirt with temptation, drive ourselves crazy with wanting/not wanting, ignore it, or give in?

The video made very effective points about temptation. At the end of my sermon, I handed out marshmallows. The idea was for people to keep them around where they would see them during Lent, so that they would remember the kids in the video; and think about themselves and how they handle temptation. I asked them to think, when it comes to temptation, “Which kid are you?”



The video begins with a lady telling a child to sit in the chair (different kids are seen from a hidden camera throughout the video). She gives each kid a marshmallow and says, “Here’s the deal: this marshmallow is for you. You can either wait, and I’ll give you another one if you wait, or you can eat it now. When I come back, I’ll give you another one so you’ll have two. It’s your choice. It’s up to you -- you can have it now or you can wait. But stay in here and stay in the chair until I come back.”

The lady leaves and then the kids are observed.

Go to <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6EjJsPyIEOY> to watch the video.