



# WE HAVE A DREAM TOO!

## Who has the Dream? What is the Dream?

In the summer of 1984 a group of deaf and hearing women and men, met together to pray, to study the Bible in the context of the struggles of deaf people, and to explore the implications of liberation theologies as they shed light on the historical experience of the deaf community. Although they were from diverse Christian traditions, they were held together by a common commitment to the Gospel of Jesus Christ and to a dream . . . the eradication of the injustice and oppression that has injured the lives of deaf people.

On the final day of their meeting, at the Claggett Retreat Center in Maryland, they drafted a statement of their shared faith, hurts, and hopes. A version of that statement "The Claggett Statement" in American Sign Language was recorded on videotape by two of the deaf participants.

Since that time the statement has been seen by many deaf and hearing people. The response by deaf viewers has been strong, full of emotion . . . "Yes, that is my story." The group, calling themselves Christians for the Liberation of the Deaf Community (CLDC), has been encouraged by many local leaders of deaf ministries to provide an opportunity for more individuals to come together to discuss some of the issues raised by the Claggett Statement and other topics related to deaf people in the church.

The opportunity is now! Members of the National Council of Churches Task Force on the Hearing Impaired are sponsoring this ecumenical forum for deaf and hearing people interested in exploring "the dream" together.

August 20-23, 1987  
Goshen College  
Goshen, Indiana

Together, participants will pray, study the Bible as it touches the struggles of oppressed people and see how the Good News of Jesus can bring freedom to Deaf People. (Note: The purpose of this forum is **not** to teach or study sign language.)

Participation is open to all individuals interested in deaf people and the church.

**NOTE:** due to the nature of this forum:

- The number of participants is limited to 50.
- Twenty-five or more of these 50 will be deaf people.
- Participants will generally be chosen on a "first come first served" basis. (We hope to include people from many different geographic regions and denominational backgrounds.)
- All participants will be expected to stay for the entire forum.

## Resource People

Resource people for this event are members of Christians for the Liberation of the Deaf Community. Individual presentations will be given by:

Ella Mae Lentz	- Deaf daughter of deaf parents, translator, poet, actress, teaching ASL and developing ASL curricula at Vista College, California, member of United Methodist Church.
Dr. Charlotte Baker-Shenk	- Hearing, ASL linguist, teacher, consultant and co-author of texts on ASL, member of Sojourners Fellowship in Washington, D.C.
Rev. Dr. Mary Weir	- Deafened at age 7, theologian, pastor, professor at Vancouver School of Theology, member United Church of Canada.
Pat Graybill	- Deaf, teacher at National Technical Institute for the Deaf, Rochester, New York, actor, director, ASL translator, Deacon in the Catholic Church.
Rev. Bill Millar	- Hearing, pastor, Winnipeg Church of the Deaf, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada.
Fr. Ray Fleming	- Deaf pastor, St. Mary's Church of the Deaf, Rochester, New York.

## Forum Schedule of Topics

Thursday Evening	Arrival, registration Welcome and Introductions Fellowship
Friday (AM)	"The Deaf Community" - Ella Mae Lentz Discussion Groups Bible Study
(PM)	"History of Oppression in the Deaf Community" - Charlotte Baker-Shenk Discussion Groups Bible Study
(Evening)	Stories from the Deaf Community
Saturday (AM)	"The Good News of Liberation" - Mary Weir "What About Deaf People?" "Calling Deaf People Out of Bondage" - Ray Fleming Group Discussion
(PM)	"Liberation: Tools and Strategies" - Bill Millar "Trying Out the Tools and Strategies" - Pat Graybill Review: "Tools and Strategies in the Deaf Community"
(Evening)	Planning for Worship "The Role of Hearing People in the Deaf Community" (discussion)
Sunday (AM)	Worship Open Reflection Prayer

**DEADLINE** for applications is **May 1**. Accepted participants will be contacted no later than **June 1**. (The registration fee will be refunded to those individuals unable to participate, up to 30 days prior to the forum.)

## **Presentations will be both interpreted and transliterated.**

1. **Interpret** - to convey the spoken English message into American Sign Language or the signed ASL message into spoken English.
2. **transliterate** - to convey the spoken English message into a manual code for English. It also refers to presenting the signed English message into spoken English.

**Participation is open to all individuals interested in deaf people and the church.**

**Become part of the Dream!**