

# Deaf Ministries International

Issue 33 | April 2021

USA EDITION

## *Taking the Gospel to the Deaf*

**DMI continues to take the gospel to the Deaf across Africa and Asia during the pandemic. Our world may be groaning but God is very much alive and at work, changing lives and giving hope to the hopeless in Deaf communities throughout the world.**

DMI Rwanda has not let the pandemic stop them from sharing the gospel! Some have still been able to meet while wearing facemasks, but the church has also been streaming their services online via various social media platforms. They have created their own YouTube channel, Facebook page and Twitter feed where the Deaf can access messages, Bible readings and songs all in their native sign. It's worth having a look. You can find them under the name of **Immanuel Church of the Deaf-Rwanda**.

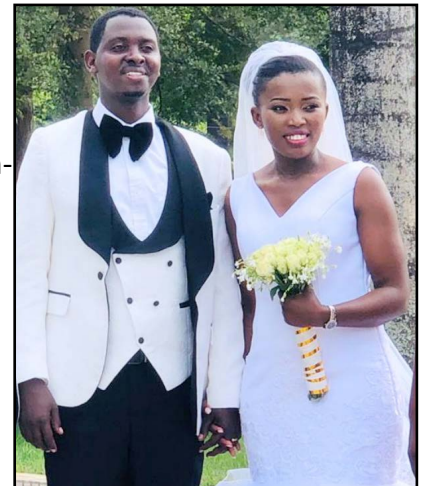
At the end of last year, some members of the church made the joyous decision to follow in Christ's footsteps and be baptised. What a wonderful way to end a year like



2020! We are told that there are more that have made the decision to be baptised this year. We look forward to rejoicing with them as they publicly declare their faith.

### **Congratulations**

On April 3rd of this year our DMI Rwandan family got to celebrate the wedding of Arsene and Alphonsine (both are Deaf). They have been DMI volunteers since 2016. Arsene is on the Deaf Action Rwanda (DAR) board and is also it's treasurer. Alphonsine has been the treasurer of Immanuel Church of the Deaf-Rwanda since 2014 and has been diligently working through university under DMI's sponsorship. May God bless them both as they continue to serve Him and begin this new and exciting chapter of their lives together.



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# Myanmar

## Situation not improving

The situation remains grim in Myanmar. Our director Pa-Lian has fled with his family - as many are doing - to the Chin state near the Indian border. However, the situation is no better there so they have left for an even more remote area and are now temporarily out of contact. Before he left Yangon, he sent what little funds he had to the teachers at the school in Kalay, and the local YWAM donated 60 bags of rice, oil, eggs and packages of noodles to the church. Pastor Naing Naing Kyaw has distributed these to church members remaining in the area. The banks are still closed so our funds can no longer be withdrawn over there. We have temporarily suspended sending any more

# Syria

It has been a while since we've given you an update on the work in Syria. Here are some words from our workers Nedal and Fadi informing us of how they've coped after COVID struck their country. Even though there were many struggles, they still found ways to reach out to the Deaf and show what love in action looks like.

"We all experience pain in life, whether emotional or physical pain. No pain is alike, we must all walk the journey and path that God has for our lives, yet God promises that there is a purpose in all pain. We can press on each day knowing that our God loves us and wants to use the hurt and pain in this world to bring him glory. Jeremiah 29:11 can help us to understand the purpose of pain in our life and encourage us to find joy in the midst of suffering. We must not give up hope; God has so much more for our life! Despite the difficult years of war that we have passed through in Syria, the news of the spread of Corona virus carried a lot of fear and panic. Life in Syria became more difficult due to the collapse of the economy, but the



**Fadi at the Hands Speaking Center**

church had an important role in offering hope amid pain. We would like to share with you some of the hope that we have experienced over the past three months with Deaf Ministries in Syria.

We thank our Lord that we were able to provide the non-Christian Deaf people in Damascus with a lot of food and detergents in August and September. We also provided food aid to some families of Deaf children, too. The church and all the meetings were closed, and the Hands Speaking Center in Damascus was also closed, but we

though the need is great and will resume support when the situation stabilises and the banks reopen.

The Muir School for the Deaf in Kalay did open again briefly in early March with 14 children (7 Deaf and 7 hearing (neighbourhood kids)). Saw Monday and the other teachers did a stellar job pressing on, but we believe school has now been suspended again because of the increasing social unrest. As far as we know, none of those under our care have been harmed by COVID or civil dangers and we are profoundly grateful for that. Let's continue to pray for the Deaf churches in Yangon and Pindaw Oo, and the students and staff attending the school in Kalay.



**Food and aid packages**

no one supporting them. This was a great joy for us. In the Hands Speaking Center's studio, we were able to film the interpretation of the sermon that our church was broadcasting every Sunday via the Internet.

The summer has passed, and we have not been able to hold our summer conference for the first time during the 15 years that Deaf Ministries has been in Syria. The challenge...the world has changed with corona virus. People have chosen to stick to their houses for fear of infection. Do we stop, too? The challenge for us is "go ahead and I am with you". So we ask that you pray for the deaf ministries in Syria to rise and continue. The Lord is our hope, we will not be afraid and worry. We reached a Deaf girl named Remy in Tartus. She had not met any other Deaf throughout her life. We also reached two Deaf twin girls in Damascus named Catherine and Caroline, who had also not met any other Deaf in their whole lives either. Please pray for Caroline, Catherine and Remy. Pray for Deaf Ministries in Syria."

Nedal & Fadi

were able to visit the Deaf communities in some cities such as Fairouza and Marmareta in the middle of Syria and Lattakia City. We provided them with financial aid. We paid one-year's rent for a family of three old Deaf sisters who had



**Caroline & Catherine**

# Tanzania

## Pray for our Tanzanian Leader.

Daniel is the DMI leader of Tanzania but he originates from Kenya. He headed back to Kenya over a year ago to renew his work permit and then COVID-19 struck and he got stuck! His work permit was denied which he believes is due to some that are opposed to him sharing the gospel. He reports that there are a group of people who stand near the church each week trying to turn people away. With a roller coaster of lockdowns in Kenya, he hasn't been able to reapply for the permit. This has not stopped Daniel. He has spent time preaching to the Deaf in primary and secondary schools in the Nakuru area. This is where he worked previously until God called him to Tanzania in 1999. The students aren't allowed to leave the compound due to the virus which has left many in need of spiritual care and counselling.

Daniel has asked us to pray for the Deaf churches of Kenya and Tanzania. With lots of them closed, many Deaf are spiritually starving and struggling in their faith. He has also asked us to pray that he will be able to obtain his work permit so he can return to Tanzania and continue the work there.

## Jestina's Story – Tanzania, Lake District

### *From prostitution to evangelism*

Jestina is a Deaf single mother who overcame prostitution and physical abuse to become an inspiration to both the Deaf and hearing in her community in Biharamulo, Kagera Region, Tanzania.

An only child, she was just seven years old when her mother died. The death occurred while she entered standard one in a Deaf Unit in primary school. Her mother had suffered from breast cancer for about 10 years. A year later, her father remarried. However, her stepmother did not love her. When she returned from school, she was given heavy responsibilities and deprived of food and rest. She also endured beatings, especially when her father was away. Her stepmother threatened to kill her if she told her father. Eventually her father came to hear from neighbours of his daughter's torture but didn't take any action to stop his wife or defend his daughter. So, when she was in standard five, two years before completing primary school, she could no longer tolerate her stepmother's cruelty. She dropped out of school and moved to Bukoba town. Jestina started to live on the street. She began by collecting and selling plastic bottles. However, she soon noticed that she attracted the attention of many men and succumbed to making a living from prostituting herself. She did not like this business but felt she had no other choice.

## Lower Egypt



Lower Egypt experienced a second wave of COVID-19 at the end of last year which was considered to be worse than the first. Our worker Hany and his team have been keeping in touch with the Deaf daily to ask them about any symptoms and offer assistance where needed.

Christmas was celebrated differently with people keeping to their homes without the usual large Christmas parties. Hany and his team took the opportunity to drop packages which included gifts and meals at the homes of the Deaf community.

Sometimes men would use her without paying or beat her which traumatized her. Then at the end of 2019, she approached a group of Deaf Christian evangelists in the streets and asked what they were doing. She expected that they were trying to save her from prostitution, but instead they told her about Jesus Christ. Immediately she sensed God's love, however, she didn't know where to find Him and kept wondering why He had allowed her to fall into darkness, until one day she had a vision of Christ Himself smiling at her. The evangelists invited her to attend Bible study on Wednesdays, and Sunday services at their church in Bukoba. This is where she accepted and came to learn how much Jesus loves her. Since then, she has experienced a massive change in her heart. Jestina now courageously spreads the gospel to all who come across her path. She was baptised in December last year and has a boyfriend who has a heart for Christ as she does. They are making plans to marry soon.

What a precious example of God taking the downcast and broken-hearted and using them for His glory. Praise be to God!



*Jestina's Baptism*



# Uganda

## 18 new converts in Uganda!

Our senior advisor in Africa, Sam Begumisa, led a mission in Kwanja in central Uganda where Richard Odongo serves as an evangelist and leader of the Deaf Church. Sam stayed in Lira with Dennis Dag-kene for security reasons and together they drove and joined Richard for the outreach. 18 Deaf people 'heard' the Word and came to Christ at the meeting! They wanted to be baptised immediately but were 2 kilometres from water so had to postpone the baptisms until a later time. Even in the face of danger, our evangelists continue to spread the Word of God, and even in challenging times, the love of God is still breaking into people's lives. That's good news!



*Leading the new converts to Jesus!*

# Australia

## Meat tasting event is a success

Even though it was a cold and wet day in Melbourne, 60 people braved the weather to come and participate in an event where they not only got to eat delicious cuts of lamb, but by doing so, raise \$1000 for DMI thanks to Tastepoint Australia.

We'd like to thank Susi for all of the organising and following up of people to ensure there were 60 people to participate on the day. 60 was the magic number. If we didn't have 60 people, we wouldn't receive \$1000. Also, a special mention to Jeanette Lee and Chris Hennequin for helping out on the day. Jeanette generously gave her time to interpret for the duration of the event and Chris not only manned the reception desk, signing people in and directing them where to sit, but gave up his spot and went on the stand-by list.



**Maybe this has inspired you to hold your own fundraising event for DMI. No-matter how big or small, every little bit helps us to continue to provided education, small business opportunities and most importantly, take the gospel to the Deaf throughout Africa and Asia.**



# Philippines

## Lots of water in Ligao

Our Ligao school and church have seen a number of developments over the last few months. In late October, super typhoon Rolly- the strongest landfalling tropical cyclone on record - devastated much of the Philippines. Our church compound (now inside the school grounds) in Ligao was not spared and a huge mop up job began. Praise God we were able to send over \$10,000 to help. There was a wonderful community spirit in the clean up as the photos show. Much of the damage has now been repaired and the compound is starting to look its paradisiacal self again! After all that water falling down, the Ligao school then had a problem with the water coming up! Their vital Deep Well



**Damage after the typhoon**

dormitory, kitchen, toilets and Guest House. The Deep Well pump malfunctioned (possibly because of collapsing

mantle) and urgently required new Deep Well drilling. We were able to quickly send another \$10,000 and the water is now flowing...um...well! So, crisis averted!

The school in Ligao has also just seen its new church

## Bacolod

At the dorm at Pastor Albert and Kim's house, only 3 students are able to receive face-to-face instruction at the moment because of ongoing COVID restrictions and the delay in receiving vaccines. It may be a long time before enough vaccines are available in the Philippines, especially in the provincial areas. Government schools are using modules and online instruction. Students have been studying via modules for almost a year.

The roof of the dorm was falling into ruin and leaking badly. Funding from DMI has so far enabled the roof to be replaced, and the next goal is to replace the ceiling with new boards and electrical materials. This will cost 112,000 Php.



**Clean water!**

son services have resumed with COVID restrictions. We praise God for all these developments.



**New church building**

The Philippines Immanuel Church for the Deaf (PICD) in Bacolod is back to meeting in person and worshipping together while continuing with COVID regulations. Pastor Rodel has been leading small worship groups in Zamboanguita and Dumaguete City as well as teaching Filipino Sign Language to some interested members at Dumaguete First Baptist Church. He continues to work towards self-sustainability by managing the chicken project (20 new chickens delivered on April 12) in Zamboanguita, as well as working on a mushroom production project which has also been started but it is difficult to grow fresh mushrooms and avoid the spoiling of fruit bugs!

In another project, three rental units are now ready for occupancy at the Clutton residence in Zamboanguita. Proceeds from any rentals will be donated to PICD. Unfortunately, with travel restrictions in place, it is very difficult to find tenants. It is hoped that long term tenants will be found so that regular income can be given to PICD.



# DMI's International Board

In each newsletter this year, we are (re)introducing DMI's various leadership teams so that all our supporters can know how DMI is structured and have confidence in the organisation.

The purpose of the International Board (IB) is to *"seek to establish resources and facilities to bring the message of Christ and aid to deaf people...to improve the life conditions for the deaf in all parts of the world by evangelical work. Through church-life and different social, economic and educational initiatives, we will support the deaf in their effort to achieve good and dignified lives."*

The International Board is made up of 9 members, 3 from Australia, 3 from Norway, 1 from Kenya (representing Africa) 1 from Korea (representing Asia) and the International Director (another Norwegian). Each member of the International Board is a passionate and mature believer in Christ, and desires to see the mission of DMI achieved, the legacy of Neville continued, and the glory of God known.



## **Steve McAllister (Chairperson) - Australia.**

Steve (hearing) serves DMI as Chairperson of the IB and as a member of the Australian Board. DMI is blessed to have Steve's faith, wisdom and experience at the helm of its most senior team.



## **Gunnar Dehli – Norway.**

Gunnar (hearing) has been a much loved and leading figure with DMI for many years and has been serving as DMI's International Director since last year when Neville stepped down.



## **Rod Chapman – Australia.**

Rod (Deaf) has served DMI for decades and is the current Chairperson of the Australian Board.



## **Matthijs Terpstra (Finance Manager and Secretary) – Norway.**

Matthijs (Deaf) has served DMI for 4 years and is the head of DMI Norway. The youngest member of the IB, Matthijs has a big future ahead of him at DMI.



## **Andrew Miller - Australia.**

Andrew (hearing) is the newest member of the IB and serves as Australia's National Co-ordinator.



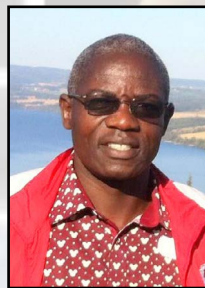
## **Kirsti Vuorimies - Norway.**

Kirsti (Deaf) is a volunteer at the Norwegian DMI office in Stavanger. She is Finnish, but has lived in Norway most of her life, and is a member of the board of DMI Norway.



## **Ulla Maija Brauti - Norway.**

Ulla (Deaf) is also from Finland but lives with her family in Norway. She is a teacher at Ål Folkehøyskole for Døve (a boarding college for the Deaf) and is also a member of the board of DMI Norway.



**Josephat Mulongo Iyadi - Kenya.** Josephat (Deaf) has been pastoring the Deaf Church in Nairobi for many years. He is the National Director of DMI Kenya and for the past three years has also been the Director of Deaf Action Uganda. He supervises DMI leaders in various African countries.



**In Yeong Heo – South Korea.** In Yeong (Deaf) pastored the Chuncheon Church Of The Deaf for many years before moving on to focus on DMI's international work. He serves on the committee which presides over financial requests from the fields of DMI.



# Thank you for feeding the hungry

## Food Emergency Appeal Progress:

Food emergency funds collected so far:	DMI AUD	DA AUD	Total AUD
	58,676	35,040	93,716
Food emergency Distribution:	DMI AUD	DA AUD	Total
Congo workers and Beni School	1,687	3,000	4,687
Congo Beni School lunch Program	2,925	16,970	19,895
Neville Muir Comprehensive School, Uganda	2,602	3,945	6,547
Kenya School	7,994	5,100	13,094
Myanmar School (including workers in Yangon)	1,193	3,000	4,193
Rwandan Student		300	300
Rwandan Workers	1,434		1,434
Malawi	1,700		1,700
Ugandan Workers	15,581		15,581
Syria	1,377		1,377
Kenya Church	10,509		10,509
<b>Total</b>	<b>47,003</b>	<b>32,315</b>	<b>79,318</b>



DEAF MINISTRIES INTERNATIONAL  
presents

# Classic Car COLLECTION



**MAY 20**



### GUEST SPEAKER:

Hon Mr John Howard OM AC,  
former Prime Minister of Australia

We have an exclusive fundraising event coming to Sydney on May 20.

A renowned Christian philanthropist is opening his collection of classic (and very valuable) cars for viewing and providing catering.

Former Prime Minister John Howard, who has struggled with hearing loss most of his life, will be guest speaker. Andrew be saying a few words, too! This event is part of our efforts to reach corporate sponsorships although everyone is welcome to attend. Very limited places but please contact Andrew at [andrew.miller@deafmin.org](mailto:andrew.miller@deafmin.org) if you would like to attend. Proceeds from the evening will go to DMI's Self-Sustainability fund.

## Congratulations Matthijs!

DMI CFO Matthijs Terpstra and wife Katrine welcomed a beautiful baby girl into the world on 3 April. Mother and baby are both doing well. Congratulations!  
*Children are a gift from the Lord; they are a reward from him. Psalm 127:3*



Need a gift for Mother's Day?



**DMI SHOP**  
[www.deafmin.org](http://www.deafmin.org)  
All profits go  
towards the  
ministry





# Praise and Prayer

- Pray for the grave situation in Myanmar. For protection over our staff, students, church leaders and congregations as they try to navigate through their days living in a country that is currently openly hostile.
- Praise for provision of funds to help clean up and rebuild at our Ligao school and church after such a destructive typhoon last October. Give thanks that school, church activities and church services have resumed and they are able to meet in person again.
- Pray for Daniel in Kenya as he reapplies for a work permit to return to Tanzania. Pray for all of the Deaf Christians who are struggling at this time in Kenya and Tanzania, that they will know God's peace in the midst of so much uncertainty.
- Praise God for the safe arrival of Matthijs and Katrine Terpstra's baby girl. Pray for them as they settle into life as a family of four.
- Give thanks for the way DMI Syria and Egypt have found ways to continue to reach out and support the Deaf during this season of COVID-19, and that they have been able to bless people with provisions and show God's love even when times are tough.
- Pray for strength, wisdom and guidance for our International Board as they make decisions and govern the work of DMI & DA.

## How are you receiving your newsletter?



If you would like to receive this newsletter by email instead of post, please email [info@deafmin.org](mailto:info@deafmin.org) with the email address you would like us to use.

Keep up to date with all the latest news from our schools, sponsorship program and projects by receiving our **Deaf Action** Newsletter.

If you would like to receive this in addition to the DMI newsletter, please contact us at [info@deafaction.org.au](mailto:info@deafaction.org.au)



Neville & Lill Muir  
DMI Founders



[www.deafmin.org](http://www.deafmin.org)

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