

# Bible Schools for the Deaf Grand Vision

One of our most wonderful and important visions is to develop Bible schools for the Deaf on three continents. We currently have a Bible school in Uganda to train pastors and evangelists from all over Africa. We are also developing a four month Bible school in Norway to serve Europe, but it will even provide scholarships to students from the Middle East and from African countries. And we plan to develop a new Bible school in the Philippines to train the Deaf in ministry from all over Asia.

The work of our Bible schools is truly revolutionary. Training the Deaf to take the gospel to the Deaf is a surprisingly unique approach, yet is so important to effectively reach out to the Deaf and into Deaf cultures and communities. The benefits of running Bible schools on three continents will be almost incalculable to the Deaf all around the world.

Our Bible school in Uganda has been running for 18 years and typi-

cally trains 10~12 students every year. Students study for 3 years and stay at the dormitory attached to the school. Once graduated, our students go on to serve as pastors and evangelists to the Deaf in their own local communities, or go as missionaries to other regions or countries in Africa. Graduates include David Bulime who went on to become the Mission Co-ordinator with Deaf Action Uganda, Papy Muteberwa who is now in charge of the Church of the Deaf in Congo and is the Executive Director Deaf Action Congo, Ruth Karuki who serves in the Immanuel Church of the Deaf in Nairobi, Dennis Dag-Kene who works as Director of Neville Muir School for Children with Special needs in Lira, Ben Buyinza who is a Serving Missionary in Tanzania, Claire Uwineza who is the Leader of Immanuel Church of the Deaf in Rwanda, and many more. So many Deaf are being reached through our graduates. *Continued...* 



#### **NEWS FLASH!**

Just on going to print, we received donations from some very generous supporters to enable us to buy an excellent plot of land on which we can re-develop the Bible school in Uganda. This is wonderful news! This land (and the building we build there) will enable us to train Deaf Christian leaders for generations to come. The impact this will have on the Deaf in Africa is hard to overestimate. Praise God for this wonderful development!

Give praise to the Lord, proclaim His name; make known among the nations what he has done. Psalm 105:1

www.deafmin.org







Running the school is not cheap though. Current monthly funding for the Bible school in Uganda is:

- USD440 for the school (food and school materials)
- USD350 to pay for school principal's wages
- USD600 to pay teachers' wages

This is not enough for our current operations. We need another USD150 per month.

This is just for daily operations. Beyond that, there is a need to redevelop our school in Uganda, to foster our school in Norway, and to build from scratch our school in the Philippines. These costs will be considerable yet we are convinced that this vision is good and right and worth pursuing. We pray for provision to see this vision come to fruition!

#### **New Leadership - Uganda**

A wonderful new era began in Uganda in March when the DAU (Deaf Action Uganda) Board elected Tonny Eyoku to be the new DAU Director and Paul Miiro to be the new head of the Bible School. Josephat Mulongo, head of Deaf Action Kenya, had been Interim Director of DAU and his wise leadership over the last few years and through the current changes was invaluable. We're grateful to have such wise leadership at the helm. Even so, change can bring anxiety so Gunnar, our International Advisor, went to Uganda to oversee the transition. Together, with all the DAU Board and staff, a unified transition was achieved. Tonny and Paul were prayed over and a fresh start for DAU was celebrated. We pray and look forward to DAU going from strength to strength.





Tonny (above), Paul (right)

## **Encouraging growth among the Deaf in Africa**

The pandemic has not hindered growth in the ministries among the Deaf in Africa. This became evident for me when I again visited Uganda and Rwanda in March and April. I found new leaders ready to carry on the responsibilities for the Bible school and the national ministry in Uganda. When I visited the vocational school in Lira (Uganda) I found that Dennis again is gathering nearly 300 young students there. It was wonderful to see how the Deaf and the hearing students were fellowshipping together.



Newly ordained Pastors in Rwanda

In Rwanda I met several leaders

who were ready to take on more responsibilities in the churches for the deaf. Together with Josephat from Kenya we did a workshop on church leadership. We then ordained four new Deaf pastors, a

blessed couple of evangelists and a deacon. The church work among the Deaf in Rwanda is really growing.

After the ordination in Rwanda, we headed off, five hours in a bus, to stay at a school for the Deaf in the north of Rwanda. There we were 35 people gathered, mostly young adults, for six days, to do a Fatherheart program together. It was wonderful to see how the participants experienced Father's love. Many went also

## **Emmanuel - Update**



In our last newsletter, we brought you the wonderful news that Emmanuel had been pardoned and freed after being wrongfully imprisoned for 14 years in Zambia. We're happy to follow up on this and say that Immanuel is now in Kampala, starting his new life and studying at our Bible School. He is in good hands and is doing well at the school.

through deep processes of heart forgiveness in relations to parents and others who had wounded and oppressed them. They witnessed about how they experienced a new freedom and joy.

The African leaders asks us to continue to pray for an increasing and healthy spiritual growth among the Deaf in Africa.

Gunnar Dehli International Advisor DMI



#### Thank you, Daniel - Tanzania



Daniel and his wife, Jane

One of our most exciting fields is Tanzania. Tanzania is surely the great quiet achiever of DMI. Just in the last two quarters they have held for the Deaf leadership training seminars, marriage seminars, Bible studies, baptisms, scripture classes in schools, loan management training and bought a farm! It's been truly inspiring to follow the wonderful work our pastors and evangelists have been doing across the country.

But these developments haven't just suddenly hap-

pened. They are largely the result of one man's faithful toil for the Lord. Daniel Njihia, a Ugandan native, was tapped by Neville 23 years ago to take the gospel to the Deaf in Tanzania. (Anyone who was ever 'tapped' by Neville for service would know where that leads...!) And take the gospel he did! In Tanzania we now have many pastors and evangelists serving thousands of members across 6 parishes.

Daniel has now semi-retired to Uganda where he continues to serve with DMI on a part-time basis. We are so grateful for Daniel's wonderful service. The Deaf of Tanzania, now led by Joseph Hiza and others formerly under Daniel's leadership, share our thanks and are enjoying new life because of Daniel's apostleship there.

Joseph writes about Daniel's legacy here:

You cannot talk about the development of Deaf ministries in Tanzania and all of East Africa without naming Rev. Daniel Nhijia. He has spent nearly two-thirds of his life in Deaf ministries, primarily in Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania and beyond.

In December 1999, Neville sent Rev Daniel to Tanzania; it was the official start of Daniel's 22-year ministry journey in Tanzania. During

The Immanuel Church of the Deaf Tanzania was registered on November 14, 2002. Deaf Action Tanzania was registered in 2017.

#### Lake District - Tanzania

Ben Buyinza is a pastor from Uganda who has been serving under DMI in the Tanzanian Lake District with his Tanzanian wife, Veronica. Neville sent him to Tanzania as a missionary in 2012. Ben has done a wonderful job witnessing to Deaf communities and helping to expand DMI's reach in different districts. In May, he will become



a Tanzanian citizen which will mean he will no longer need to apply and pay for work permits. Recently, funds were raised to purchase him a he could reach all of the districts he ministers to.

Ben is passionate about reaching the Deaf for Christ and loves the opportunity to

- Six other churches were planted in Dar es Salaam, and the Mwanza, Kagera and Morogoro regions.
- Three new first local Deaf pastors were ordained: Joseph Hiza, Sensor Joseph and Alfred Maduga, not to mention the dozens of evangelists and spiritual leaders under his care.
- It was under his leadership that a Bible translation organization - the Tanzania Sign Language Translation Organization (known as BILAT) - was established after he sent some of his new evangelists to Door International in Nairobi in 2003.
- It was under his leadership and vision that the church purchased land and built a church at Buguruni opposite the Lutheran Church in 2005, which is today the church and DAT headquarters.
- This was also a start for mainstream churches in Tanzania to use sign language interpreters in their churches to attract deaf believers after they heard of Daniel's vision for the Deaf.
- Hundreds have received Christ and been baptized.

In his time, no other church in Tanzania officiated so many dozens of marriages for deaf couples, diminishing an immoral life that was witnessed among deaf Christians and couples prior to the ministry. His work also involved his family who joined him in the early 2000s. Besides his wife, his children Ruth, Joyce and Abrahamu stayed in Kenya but they visit him as often as he visited them.

Since he started working in Tanzania, he has truly been an inspiration to many and made them love God's work. He touched many of them and encouraged them. This is why almost all of the evangelists he taught and started with after returning to Tanzania for the second time in late 1999 are still working there in the ministry or with other religious organizations such as BILAT.

Everything depended on a solid foundation that he had put in place. His vision was wonderful, his way of reaching people, even those who seem reluctant, was brilliant. He knows who would be suitable for the ministry. He can reach someone by welcoming him to Christ, even if this person is hesitant, he will continue to follow him with divine words until this man comes to Jesus. The author of this article before his baptism was one of those hesitant people. Most of these hesitant people became powerful spiritual leaders and helped expand the ministry in the country.

Although the hearts of many Tanzanians are saddened by the news of his retirement as a missionary in Tanzania for family reasons, they are reassured by the word of God that whatever plan God has for him is wonderful. We always trust in the Lord.

share the gospel, especially with children so that as he says "they can grow to know God better".

Here are a few words from Ben:

Hello brothers and sisters,

I greet you in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. My name is Ben Buyinza. I am here in Tanzania Lake zone, in charge of DMI work as a missionary. Thanks to DMI's support, the work has grown. We have 2 churches and 5 fellowships in schools. I travel to the 5 districts for outreach. The mission work is going well but some of the motorbike so that school fellowships cannot be accessed by bus, so we must use a motorbike for trips to make mission work easier. Through outreach trips, many deaf have accepted

Jesus as their saviour. Because of DMI, the Deaf know Jesus Christ. Thank you and blessings.



# **Still No Peace For Myanmar**

With the war that's broken out in the Ukraine and other conflicts continuing to rise around the world, it's easy to forget the ones that are ongoing. It's been just over a year since Myanmar came under military rule, turning the country into more like a war zone with people everyday living in fear of their lives - not to mention COVID hitting the country hard and many losing their lives to the unforgiving disease. Our Neville Muir School for the Deaf, like every other school in the country, was closed firstly because it wasn't safe for students to attend due to the violent political conflict, but then also due to the rapid spread of COVID. Some of our teachers fell ill with the disease and we praised God as they slowly recovered. We were saddened when we got the news that some of our elderly church members had passed away and prayed for comfort for their



Thanks to our generous supporters giving to the food emergency appeal, we eventually found a way to send the funds to the churches and the school to buy food for its members. What an opportunity this gave our workers to share the love of Jesus and be a light in such a dark time! We have an amazing bunch of teachers at the school who, despite all that is going on around them, are determined to keep supporting and educating students located in the area around the school. As you would have seen in photos from previous editions, the teachers have been Food aid dressing in PPE and teaching lessons in students' homes.

A year on and the situation is still very grim in Myanmar. People are still living in fear for their lives and there is much violence on the streets. It's amazing what becomes viewed as "normal". Pa Lian says in one of his emails "Yangong is like normal, but sometimes there is random bombing!"

Despite this, our teachers are continuing to go to the students homes and the students are always so happy when they arrive to teach them. They are meeting with 13 students 3 days a week. The church is still unable to meet formally but 12-15 have gathered together a few times a week to worship. They have been able to run a few zoom meetings for those who have access to the Internet, but many have no phones and no Wi-Fi. The church has been able to use funds from DMI to purchase food to distribute to those in most need. 65 Deaf have received packages of rice, noodles, oil, onions and eggs 6 times over the last 3 months. A van has also

been purchased which will be used for delivering the emergency food packages to those who are unable to come and pick them up.

It was hoped that the church would be able to celebrate it's 23rd Anniversary, but Pa Lian and his family got COVID,



so the church had to be closed until the 13th of March. As soon as he was back on his feet, the church wasted no time in getting food packages of rice and oil to 72 Deaf members.

Please continue to lift Myanmar up in your prayers.

# **Disaster Relief Campaign Update - Malawi**



In our last newsletter we launched the Malawi Disaster Relief Campaign to assist our Deaf there in recovering after Cyclone Ana tore through the country causing huge amounts of damage. Thanks to your amazingly generous response this campaign is now fully funded. Funds raised are shown in the table to the right. We at DMI and the DMI Malawi family are so grateful to all those who have contributed to assist in these recovery efforts. Our prayer is that these buildings will be a blessing to all who enter and give opportunity for the love of Jesus to be shared.

	Service Services	

Amount Raised	Phase	What for?
AUD500		Immediate response for food and water
AUD8,000		Extra food relief and temporary shelter for 200 families
AUD19,000	Phase 1	Rebuilding of the Vocational Training Centre – Fully raised
AUD9,000	Phase 2	Rebuilding of the security fence - Fully raised
AUD19,000	Phase 3	Rebuilding of the dormitory plus furnishings – Fully raised
AUD5,000	Phase 4	Replacing equipment for the training centre – Fully raised from the Christmas catalogue.



#### **Uganda Classroom Campaign**

In some editions of our last newsletter we launched the Uganda Classroom Campaign. The campaign is to raise funds for the Neville Muir Comprehensive School for the Deaf to build 4 new classrooms to accommodate the large increase in student enrolments. The school now has more than 300 students with over 80 Deaf and 270 with other disabilities or special needs. Government regulations have meant that makeshift classrooms under trees are no longer adequate.

AUD60,000 was needed to be raised to complete this project and

with AUD45,000 already donated from generous sponsors in Norway, we are well on our way. Thank you to all of those who have already generously given towards this campaign. We need another AUS15,000 to finish the job! We pray that final amount can be raised so these students can not only continue their education, learning life-changing skills that give them a positive future, but learn these skills in a place where they are accepted, cared for, and taught that there is a God who loves them beyond measure.



## Baby! Baby! Baby!



#### Alphonsine & Arsene - Rwanda

We are excited to celebrate the safe arrival of Alphonsine & Arsene's baby boy, Stephen, on the 4th of March. We pray for God's blessing to surround this couple as they begin this new chapter of their lives together. Many of you would have followed Alphonsine's journey over the years through our sponsorship program. She escaped the Rwandan genocide as a child but lost many of her family including her parents. Alphonsine became more known to DMI in 2017 when she needed support after earning her place at university. She and Arsene both attend the Immanuel Church for the Deaf Rwanda where they are involved in Bible teaching and evangelism to the Deaf. Arsene is also on the DAR board and has the position of its treasurer. If you haven't already, make sure you go to the blog on our website and read Alphonsine's remarkable story.

#### Mang Hlei Sang - Myanmar

Congratulations to Mang Hlei Sang and his wife on the safe arrival of their baby boy. Mang Hlei Sang is one of our teachers at the Neville Muir School for the Deaf in Myanmar. What a precious gift of new life after such struggle and hardship over the past few years in their country. We pray for health and safety for this family as Myanmar still struggles to find peace and freedom for its people under military rule.



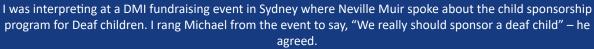
#### Alain – DR Congo



Alain and his wife are filled with joy as they announce the arrival of their new baby boy, Josue (Joshua), who arrived on April 3rd. We praise God that all is well and pray for God to continue to bless them as they adjust to having another addition to their little family. In February 2020, Alain and his wife gave birth to a son, who sadly passed away 3 days after his birth. They were then blessed with a daughter, Gabriella, in early 2021, and now they have been blessed with another precious son.

Alain expresses himself perfectly; "I am about to die of joy...yesterday God re-gave me a son. May the name of the Almighty God be praised. Support me in prayers so that my children grow well spiritually and physically." Alain is not only the Director of the school and leader of the Deaf church, but is a vital member of the Deaf Action Board in DR Congo and is its treasurer, too.

# WHY STUDENT SPONSORSHIP? - TESTIMONY MICHAEL AND ANNE HORTON



Deafness adds another layer of challenge to poverty and it is extra difficult for Deaf children to attract sponsors. We were already involved with the Deaf Community in Australia and can communicate in Auslan. We thought this understanding of visual communication could be helpful if we ever had the opportunity to meet a Deaf sponsor child, even if their sign language was different to ours. We already had a hearing sponsor child, Benjan (now an adult), in the Philippines, so we chose a Filipino Deaf sponsor child, Marcus, in the hope that one day we could see both of them in the same visit.

This dream came true in January, 2020. Benjan picked me up from the airport and drove me to meet Marcus. I recall this meeting being one of the most heart warming moments of my life. This photo that I took captures that moment.

Once you are a sponsor you know the profound truth of Jesus' words, "It is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20:35). We have felt this and seen it outworked on many levels, for example; Marcus had no sign language when his sponsorship and schooling started 2 years ago at 6 years of age, so both Marcus and I have been learning ASL. In a video call, Marcus was able to sign to me the exciting story of how he had lost a tooth. This spurred me on to more ASL learning (online). Learning ASL is bringing lots of joy, new friends and opportunities into my life, but the greatest joy is knowing I can communicate with Marcus in a way that's most comfortable and natural for him.



# Supporting

#### **US Visit a Success! - Andrew Miller**

Running from alligators, staying at Hogwarts and eating hamburgers were not the reasons I went to the US but they were fun things to do anyway. The real purpose of the trip was to visit supporting churches, give them thanks, provide updates and encourage ongoing support - to let them know that the mission of DMI continues; and to visit new contacts and build new relationships in prayer, financial support and service.

In Los Angeles, I met with our partners at Huntington Beach, met with missions teams from three new churches (ranging in size from 60 members to 12,000!) and gave a DMI-tinged sermon at The Garden Church. Each church received me warmly and I look forward to DMI developing partnerships with them in the coming months and vears.

NY Lutheran Deaf Conference

In New York, I met with 9 other leaders in Deaf ministry for an inaugural roundtable conference, hosted by the Lutheran Friends of the Deaf at a magnificent property on Long Island in facilities that looked remarkably like Hogwarts! (Actually some movies had been filmed there!) This roundtable discussion was to plan for a full conference next year and was very encouraging. I believe this relationship will prove to be a very fruitful one for DMI in the

coming years.

Peter and Liz Pfeil, DMI's leaders in the US, hosted me for my visit to the Hilton Head Presbyterian Church which has been generously supporting DMI for many years. It was a pleasure to meet with the large missions team there and share with them the wonderful work that DMI has been doing over the last couple of years in our churches, schools, employment projects and in humanitarian aid. Peter and Liz kindly let me stay in their house for three days even after they had left for Florida - that's when the backyard alligators began to give chase!

The last stop was at The Four Winds Church in Arkansas, another long-term generous supporter. Wes and Weston Syverson were very gracious hosts at their Tech Serve facility, a ministry which prints and distributes our newsletters in the US, amongst many other mission supports. At Four Winds (the third of five large churches all side by side along the street!), Pastor Randy arranged for me to spend time with the missions team, share with about 40 church members about DMI's ministry before the service, and give another DMI-infused sermon.

The trip built new relationships, strengthened old ones, raised good funds and lifted the profile of DMI in the US. Now, back to those fish and chips and lamingtons...

Andrew Miller International Operations Coordinator





Andrew speaking at Garden Church, LA (Right) Andrew and



On March 3, World Hearing Day, we held our Gala Fundraising Dinner in Sydney. It was a sumptuous affair, held at the View hotel in North Sydney, and was attended by 65 guests who ate well, played games, bid in silent auctions, and responded generously to Deaf Action's work.

guest speaker. He spoke about his rugby playing days, his Christian faith and the need for us to be passionate about the things in life that really matter. Supporting those who are vulnerable must be one of those things.























Andrew Miller with his

(left) lucky door prize

winner.

Mum (right) and Carmel



Nick Farr-Jones, the former Australian Wallaby Captain was our

Andrew also spoke on the work of Deaf Action, the students and staff in the field who we support, and appealed for guests to support our self-sustainability projects in particular. The successes of our projects in DR Congo and Malawi are a model for those we are now planning. DMI Australia board member David van Namen and Finance Coordinator Susi Tjhai came up from Melbourne for the





Nick Farr-Jones & David van Namen

and Susi to run around with the Eftpos machine. They both did a great job. Also, a huge thank you to Anne Horton who did an amazing job as our Auslan Interpreter for the night. The evening raised over \$8,000 and a whole lot of awareness of the work that Deaf Action is doing. Over \$5000 of that was raised from the silent auction. We'd like to say an extra big thank you to Nick Farr-Jones and all the businesses that supported the event by donating services and goods to be auctioned off on the night! A fun evening was had by all. Next stop, Melbourne!



# DMI Now Into

DMI is now an official sponsor of Andrew Fisher's Jesus Racing Team! The Jesus Racing Team not only brings Jesus into the public eye on the racetrack but also takes the Life Choices program into schools and the gospel of Jesus into prisons. We're glad to be partnering with such a ministry!

It might seem like an unlikely pairing in some ways, or even an extravagant use of money to advertise in motor sports, but none of this is coming out of DMI's funds. A long term supporter of the Jesus Racing Team has recently decided to donate thousands of dollars' worth of advertising space on Andrew's cars and is thrilled to offer this to DMI. So next time you see the Jesus Racing car screaming around the track, look out for the 'Deaf Ministries International' stickers on the car, give a



cheer and then share with as many friends as possible this delightful ministry relationship.

Thanks to Monash City Church

We'd like to thank the craft group at Monash City Church of Christ in Melbourne, for knitting a beautiful nativity set which was sold to raise funds to help our brothers and sisters in Myanmar. They raised \$150. This may sound like a small amount, but every little bit helps and is appreciated!

We'd love this to be an encouragement to you to see how maybe



your church group, Bible study, craft group, sporting club, group of friends or even you individually, can use your gifts to raise funds to further the work of DMI.

### Beni School – Secondary school building update



Papy and Chief of Police blessing the foundation stone

members, school staff, students and some student families. It was quite the event! Speeches were made by officials and a prayer of blessing said as the foundation stone was laid.

The new building will be a 2-story structure with 11 rooms which

offer secondary education. It was one of the items on DMI's wish list for 2022 and we give thanks to God that the funds have been supplied to do this expansion. A ceremony to bless the project was held on February 22nd which was also attended by The Mayor of Beni, the Chief of Police, Papy (Director of DAC), board

We are pleased to say that Beni Deaf School in DR Congo is thriving! With increased enrolments and students finishing their primary education, it became evident that the school needed to expand and also



The Mayor of Beni, the Chief of Police, Papy (Director of DAC) and board members

allows for future class expansions. The office is also being extended to accommodate the needs for administration.

W A pr w pr

When it comes to building, our Beni team doesn't mess around! A month later and the first story is almost built! Granted, building practices are a little different to what we're accustomed to, but when in Beni... The number of building crew is very impressive and proves that many hands working together get the job done. The soon-to-be secondary students are looking forward to it's comple-

tion and beginning their

secondary school education.

As this newsletter goes to print, we have received fresh news of more killings and destruction in Ituri and the surrounding area of Bunia where Jacob and other DMI members live (about

"To be" secondary students in front of new buildings

100kms from the school in Beni.). The insecurity not only presents threat to life but drastically increases prices. Please pray for Jacob and all in the region.

#### **Praise and Prayer**

- Firstly, we want to give praise and honour to our awesome God who is over and above all things. We pray that all that we do in this ministry brings glory to His name.
- We give thanks for Ben and his wife and the way that they have faithfully served the Deaf
  in Tanzania for the past 10 years. Praise that the funds were raised to purchase him a
  motorbike to assist him with his ministry work.
- Praise for the joy of new life as we welcome 3 babies into the DMI family. We pray for their health and safety, for wisdom and strength for their parents as they raise their children in the knowledge of God's love.
- We pray for Myanmar and the ongoing political unrest. We give thanks for the dedication
  of the school staff making sure that despite the circumstances, the students can continue
  with their education. Praise for Pa Lian and the church leaders who are caring for their
  members and now have a van to deliver food to those in most need. We continue to pray
  for their safety as they continue to be the hands of Jesus amongst the Deaf community.
- We give thanks for Daniel and his many years of service, bring the gospel to the Deaf in Tanzania. For the way he answered God's calling all those years ago and the lives that have changed, through God's grace, because of it. We now pray for wisdom and protection for Joseph as he and others continue the ministry there.







Neville & Lill Muir DMI Founders



Deaf Ministries International

Mrs Gabi McFarland

SMS: 07773 466 771 (Gabi)

e-mail: mcfbobgabi@gmail.com

#### **Australian Office**



Deaf Ministries International
P O Box 395
Beaconsfield, Victoria 3807
Australia

Ph: +61 3 5940 5431 e-mail: info@deafmin.org