

Deaf Ministries International

Issue 45 | April 2023
GERMANY EDITION

*Taking the Gospel
to the Deaf*

MATTHIJS VISITS EGYPT

In February, Matthijs visited our two partners in Egypt. The first is the Presbyterian Evangelical Church in Aziya, Upper Egypt, led by Pastor Hany. The second is the Deaf congregation of 50 at St. Mary's, a Coptic Catholic church in Lower Egypt. These partnerships were established years ago by Neville, travelling as he did to places no-one else would go, and caring for people no-one else would care for.

Both partnering congregations share unique struggles. Christians are often treated as second-class citizens in Egypt. The situation is even worse for Deaf Christians. Aziyah is the only Christian village in the whole Muslim country of Egypt. They have a higher proportion of Deaf than the rest of the country, and many of the Deaf Mattheijs met there are unemployed or have menial jobs with a monthly salary of USD 70-100.

Mattheijs travelled with Sahel Ababseh who acted as his interpreter when needed. Sahel is a well-known Deaf Christian in the Arab region. He is the director of Peace Dove in Jordan and was recently appointed by Wycliffe to coordinate Bible translation in the Arab region.



In Egypt Upper, Pastor Hany plays an important role in preventing loneliness and isolation among Deaf church members, most of whom are illiterate. DMI has pledged to support the work that Pastor Hany is doing. The congregation in Lower Egypt consists largely of elderly people. There are few young Deaf Christians and this is a situation that we feel must be addressed.

Mattheijs recommends that DMI work with our partners to focus on bringing the gospel to Deaf children (primarily) and youth, and to adopt a "teach the teachers" approach for unemployed youth. This involves training individuals to become teachers themselves, so they can pass on their knowledge and skills to others. The goal is to not only take the gospel to the Deaf of Egypt but to provide employment and education to the Deaf children and youth of the region. These are, of course, DMI's very mission goals.

We are aiming to set up a Fatherheart course for the Deaf of Egypt in July and ensure that leaders from other Arab countries (Palestine, Jordan, Lebanon and maybe Syria) are included.



Mattheijs (right) and Sahel (left) flank Deaf locals in Aziyah

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

105:1

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Myanmar - Grace amidst trials

The Immanuel Church of the Deaf in Yangon is alive and well! We have more people coming to the church and showing interest in Christianity than ever before. Every Sunday around 70 people have been attending services compared to 30 before the pandemic. More Muslims are coming to the church, too, and we intend to have a 3-day Bible seminar again this summer, including a baptism program as some people have asked to be baptised. Praise God! The church has been conducting outreaches to the Deaf, typically the lowest socioeconomic group, but many are homeless and sometimes can't be found. But Pa-Lian reports that, "God is so good. Food donations of rice and oil made people very happy and some responded by joining us in church."

The Muir School for the Deaf in Kalay also is running well. There are 33 children studying there now. Teachers and students are currently preparing for exams. But conditions in Kalay are amongst the worst in the country with gunfights occurring every night downtown. We cannot see conditions returning to normal anytime soon and because farmers can't work, the price of staple foods continues



Pastor Naing Naing Kyaw (far right) does an outstanding job overseeing the church in Yangon and caring for the needy Deaf



to skyrocket. Furthermore, it isn't safe for our 7th and 8th grade students to attend the government school so they are staying on at our school in Kalay. They are so welcome to learn with us but now we have 9 classes and only 5 teachers. In the coming academic year, we expect more students from outside Kalay to attend. So the school needs new tables and chairs, as well as an extra teacher. This will all be covered by their allocated budget. Despite the challenges, Pa-Lian's spirit is undaunted. He concludes, "God's grace amazing, everything goes well with us".

TRIPPLE EMERGENCIES BRING CHALLENGES

It's common for us to face an emergency in one field or another but the first quarter of the year has seen us facing three separate emergencies simultaneously. The disruptions and loss have been tragic but the response from supporters has been wonderful.



UGANDA FOOD CAMPAIGN

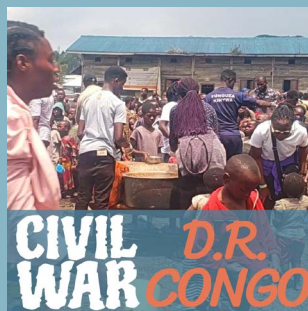
In Lira, we bought land and planted cassava trees to feed the 300 students who now attend Dennis' vocational school. But the trees became diseased through drought. They are being uprooted and maize (corn) will be planted instead. The situation is dire. We are grateful for the AUD6,294.91 that has been sent in to provide relief. More is needed.

If you are able to donate please go to our website:

www.defmin.org/donate

or follow payment details on the back.

Reference: "Surname +UGANDAFOOD"



CIVIL WAR D.R. CONGO

The civil war in DR Congo has escalated. Battles between the M23 rebel groups and government forces have displaced many people, including 13 Deaf who are being hosted by some of our families in the area. The fighting has increased instability in the whole region. We were able to provide food and blankets. No further aid is needed at this time. Thank you to all who have supported this cause.



MALAWI DISASTER RELIEF

Freddie, the strongest tropical storm ever recorded, has devastated Malawi. At the time of writing, 2 of our staff have died, 8 other Deaf have perished and 34 Deaf are still missing. A massive multinational operation is underway to bring relief to the country. We have been providing food, water, blankets, coffins and temporary shelter for the Deaf. Thank you to those who have already offered support. We have raised AUD8,991.95 so far. More is needed. If you are able to donate please go to our website:

www.defmin.org/donate

or follow payment details on the back.

Reference: "Surname + MALDISASTER"

Fatherheart Schools Bringing Healing and Maturity to Deaf Believers

A Fatherheart school was held in Zambia in early February, arranged and facilitated by the local DMI staff, and led by Josephat from Kenya, with Claire from Rwanda and Gunnar playing key supporting roles. Josephat is a gifted communicator, and he led the school very well.

Gunnar reports, "There were 25 of us all together in the Zambian school. The participants were mature and hungry to learn. Their questions and testimonies proved that they were able to grasp fresh revelations. Lives were changed.

"I was especially happy to see how Claire has developed as a speaker of this message. She is a Deaf pastor in Rwanda. I have worked with her for many years now, and I see how God's re-



lation is deeply ingrained within her. She speaks with authority and with anointing."

Many experienced healing after having written letters to their parents, asking them to forgive them for having closed their hearts to them. This is a deep-seated issue within the Deaf community. Some of them even gave their parents the

letter the very same day, and testified how they experienced healing and restoration of relationships.



Philippines - Bacolod



It always brings us great joy when we hear that our students are doing well in school. Watching them first learn sign language, and then develop their communication skills, we see their whole world open up as they continue their education and are taught the gospel and how much their Heavenly Father loves each one of them.

It's even more exciting when a student steps forward and says that they feel God's prompting to become an evangelist or a pastor.

Ryan Menoza, a student from our dorm in Bacolod, is enthusiastic

to enroll at the Deaf Evangelistic Alliance Foundation Bible College to become a pastor or church leader after he finishes his secondary school studies. Rev. Albert and the Bacolod team are thrilled and have asked us to pray for Ryan as he completes his school studies, that pathways will be revealed as he plans for his future.



Kenya

Our integrated program of enrolling both hearing and Deaf students at IICS in Kenya is proving to be a great success. The staff have mentioned how thankful they are to God to see this program flourish. Both hearing and Deaf students are now forming friendships from an early age. The hearing and Deaf students are able to communicate as they are taught sign language as part of the curriculum. The students are also interacting in the playground, at mealtimes and for study. There has been a lot of joy as staff have witnessed the walls of prejudice against the Deaf crumble. The culture of pity for the Deaf has been replaced with admiration and respect. Despite extreme temperatures and drought, the school has not been without water since funds were raised in 2019 by DMI and



Deaf Action supporters. At that time, a pipeline was connected to a neighbouring school's bore - with permission! - so they could always have access to clean water on the school grounds. They are still thankful each day for this provision.

As reported in our February newsletter, the two-acre plot of land for the school kitchen garden and future building projects has been purchased, thanks to our generous donors. The deed is currently in the process of being transferred. As these things are rarely a quick process, we will need to be patient for a bit longer before the purchase is complete. Meanwhile, the surveyor and the advocate have given permission for the boundaries of the property to be marked. It is hoped that as soon as the land is transferred, fencing will be put up and the land can be ploughed ready for planting.



Welding Class



International Conference August 2023!

Registrations are now open!

Time to jump online and start registering for the 8th DMI conference. The conference will take place in Mombasa, Kenya, on August 7-11, 2023. The speaker will be Heo In Yeong from South Korea and the theme will be based on John 17:21 "That all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you".

Usually held every 3 years, due to Covid, it has been 6 years since we've gathered together for an international conference. These conferences are always such an inspiration and a blessing to those who attend, as we hear what God is doing through DMI all around the world. Everyone is invited to attend so bring a friend and come along. Both Deaf and hearing attend these conferences with each country attending providing their own interpreter.

The conference will be held at the Mombasa Continental Resort which is also one of the accommodation options for the duration of the conference. The resort contains a 4-star hotel right on the water boasting beautiful ocean views, a large swimming pool, lounges, bar, recreational facilities, health club, Wi-Fi and airconditioned rooms. The other option is the Shanzu Girls Guide Hostel which is a budget accommodation option not too far from the resort. Breakfasts will be separate (by accommodation) but for lunches and dinners, we will all be together.

The program will consist of sessions with our keynote speaker, Heo In Yeong, mission reports from our fields, group activities, testimonies, time for leisure or to explore the surroundings and a day tour. The day tour will be a choice of 3 locations: Haller Park, Fort Jesus or Crocodile Farm.

There will be optional opportunities for tourism after the conference.

This conference is an opportunity for the DMI family from the fields and supporting countries to come together in one place for fellowship, fun, and to connect and build relationships.

For more details and registration, head to our conference website:

<https://dmiconferencekenya.com>



Burundi - Harvesting crops and souls



New storge building

We're thankful that the soybean and sorghum harvests at the new self-sustainability fields in Burundi have been abundant. The bean and maize harvests were not as good because of the timing of the rains and because of those pesky hippos that sometimes come out from the Rusizi river

and have a little snack. But the field production in general was excellent. Next season we will focus on sorghum and soybeans as these are better suited to our fields. Thanks to a generous response to our last newsletter, Jean-Bosco Mugisha, the young carpenter whose joinery burnt down, has been able to rebuild his joinery and is back at work. He has been able to buy all the timber and tools he needs and is back in business. He is once again able to support his family and sends his great thanks to all those who helped him out.

Our sewing workshops in Burundi continue to provide employment

for Deaf women (and men) as well as producing garments for everyone to wear. Andrew still wears his to work. He hardly ever takes it off. But more importantly, the workshops are also giving back, and this is outstanding. Two ladies recently received new sewing machines to start their own workshop and all the workshops collectively raised \$300 for ministry work!

The Deaf Bible translation project continues to produce great work and to employ a number of Deaf in the process. Five DAB (Deaf Action Burundi) staff are employed in this project and several other ICD (Immanuel Church of the Deaf) volunteers have also been employed, allowing them to improve their living conditions.



Rwanda

Rwanda continues to develop with great maturity and faithfulness. Director Patrick and the DAR (Deaf Action Rwanda) Board are ensuring that our mission goals of taking the gospel, education and employment to the Deaf are being achieved.

Last November, an educational seminar was held from which 15 Deaf, working in 5 support groups of 3 people each, received business loans. Enterprises started this year. First repayments begin in April and loans should be fully repaid by March, 2025. Some of our Rwandan friends are very creative. While some will run shops and do rice farming, others will be trying their hand at a popcorn stall, property development or a billiard parlour!



Patrick and Arsene (Chairman of the Board in DAR) have begun postgraduate studies in theology at the East African Christian College (EACC). DMI is providing the financial support for the tuition fees and an in-class Sign Language Interpreter. Unfortunately,

on December 29, 2022, Arsene was involved in a car accident and spent a week in the hospital. He was diagnosed with a traumatic

brain injury caused by the accident, and the doctor recommended that Arsene rest for three months. So Arsene will recommence his studies in April. He is recovering well.

Despite having 9 congregations in Rwanda, the ICDR (Immanuel Church of the Deaf Rwanda) has no church building so they have established a building proposal and fund. The goal is to build a church building with manse for each congregation. They have been working hard on this and have raised almost \$3000 on their own. They have also posted a signed video on their social media to encourage more support.

To view:

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/p/CfWUvOLD8zi/>

Youtube: https://youtu.be/QCVzHH1x_NY

Facebook: <https://fb.watch/enyGtw6YG1/>



Tanzania

Our staff in DAT (Deaf Action Tanzania) continue in their efforts to be The Hardest Working People in DMI. Their fabulous quarterly report is loaded with encouraging developments in church, education and employment (only outdone perhaps by those posers in Rwanda who filed a 127-page quarterly report - much of it photos but wonderful to read!).

Four dozen new believers in our Dar es Salaam churches were baptised. Scripture classes in schools have continued and receive praise from teachers and parents of Deaf children in Mwanza, Mbeya and Dar es salaam. Parents and teachers gave testimonies about behaviour transformation among some Deaf children. Our staff also visited hospitals to provide support to both Deaf and hearing patients.



The first group of 11 students in the Bible School run by DAT have successfully completed the first of their three years of study. They returned to their home churches for a three-month practical training during which they were assigned to work in schools, Deaf clubs and churches. There, they led Christian workshops among the Deaf congregations and youth leaders teaching on various Biblical topics including the Bible, Christian leadership, courtships and other. DAT will start a Piggery project in a few months to address poverty among the church members and strengthen our ministries across the country. DAT staff and church members benefited from a course in sustainable integrated agriculture (SIA) held at ECHO East Africa Impact Centre. The training was attended by Deaf Christians from Dar as Salaam, Mbeya, Kilimanjaro and Arusha regions. The training program was funded jointly by Wycliffe Associate of USA and J.M. Tours Ltd of Arusha, Tanzania after DAT made a proposal to them.

Congo

New school garden at Minova

There is a new Deaf school in Minova, on the banks of Lake Kivu, just across from Rwanda, which we have begun to support. Temo is the head teacher there and he currently teaches about 30 students. With DMI's assistance, they have begun to develop a kitchen garden on the school grounds to help meet their school lunch needs. Along with some photos of the students learning horticulture and the crops growing, Temo sends us a note of sincere thanks: "We have two fields where we have planted cabbage, beans and



maize. We hope to also rent another field where we will grow cassava and sweet potatoes, too. We really thank DMI for the support which brings smiles to children, young Deaf people and teachers of these students. Please receive our greetings and those of the Deaf children in the name of Jesus Christ."

7 Ladies baptised

Seven Deaf ladies were baptised in February in Bunia. They first heard the gospel from the late Pastor Ochaite who began to prepare them for baptism. Jacob followed up with them after Ochaite's passing and they were baptised by a hearing pastor from a church working in collaboration with our Deaf church. The ladies continue to worship and attend Bible studies at the Deaf church in Bunia.



It's not all fun and games - until it is!



The friendly football (soccer) match pitting our team from Beni against archrivals Butembo (not really - they're good friends) was an exciting event. They pipped us 3-1 in the end but it was a great effort from the Beni Boys who are a newly organised team and just hitting their strides. More games to come. Stand by sports fans.



News from Supporting Countries

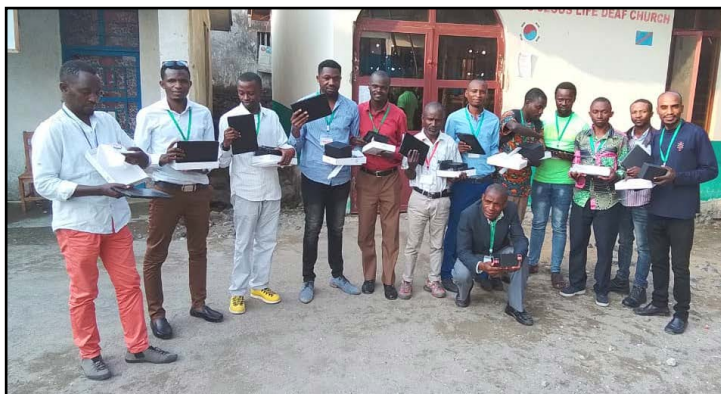
Introducing Kami Alexander



We welcome Kami Alexander as the new Sponsorship Coordinator for DMI Japan. Kami, an American, is a long-term resident of Japan who overflows with the joy of the Lord—both kids and adults love being around her. She also communicates in Japan Sign Language and regularly interpreted for the worship services at Osaka International Church when she was attending there. She has been a DMI sponsor for several years, and recently felt the Lord nudge her to get more involved, just as we were thinking of inviting her onto our leadership team. She will be attending the DMI International Conference in Kenya this August and will interpret into JSL for any Deaf Japanese who will be attending.

Tablets and Projectors

Thanks to a generous donation from a church in the US, we were able to distribute 10 Samsung tablets and 5 portable projectors each to Congo, Rwanda and Uganda. These are being used to take the signed gospel, along with other visual Christian teaching materials to those in more remote areas who are semi-illiterate or illiterate. Trainings have been held for our evangelists and the tablets and projectors are now being enthusiastically used. We look forward to hearing the results in the coming quarter.



Generous Bequest Received

A DMI supporter in the UK has most kindly left his property to DMI in his will. The sale has divine timing. Just as we are preparing to build the new Bible School in Africa, proceeds from the property will cover most, if not all, the costs of the new Bible School - a school which will have generational impact on thousands of Deaf all over Africa. We are most grateful to the supporter who considered DMI and the Deaf we serve in this way.

Bequests are a wonderful and meaningful way to leave a lasting legacy for Christ in the world. After firstly considering your family in your will, you may wish to consider leaving a bequest to DMI. In order to do this you should contact your legal advisor who will help you add your bequest. A bequest flyer is included in this newsletter.



Ambassadors, Members and Volunteers Needed!

On the back of this newsletter there are 5 faces which we claim are running DMI. That's not quite true. There is actually a legion of volunteers, advisors, members and ambassadors – and of course supporters! – who help keep DMI operating. For 2023, we need more volunteers, ambassadors and members. Volunteers typically help in the office preparing newsletters. Ambassadors represent DMI at various conferences and events throughout the year. Members serve as advisors at the AGM (and other meetings). If you are interested in serving DMI as a volunteer, ambassador or member, or knowing more about these

roles, please contact Andrew at

andrew.miller@deafmin.org

We would love to have your help.



Praise and Prayer

Malawi

Please continue to pray for relief efforts in Malawi following Cyclone Freddy. Pray for the Deaf who are displaced, have lost homes, family members and are without basic needs.

Uganda

Pray for Dennis' school in Uganda. Pray for provision of food and a good harvest to come.

D.R. Congo

Rebel forces are gaining strength and moving closer to areas we are working in. Pray for safety. Pray for peace.

Sydney Fundraising Dinner

We pray for the Deaf Action fundraising dinner to be held on April 14. Pray for a good response in attendance that generous funds are raised on the night.

Egypt

Pray for our churches and leaders in Egypt. The cost of living is very harsh even compared to other developing countries, and Deaf Christians are at the bottom of the socio-economic ladder. Pray for peace and provision.

Directors

Pray for the field Directors in each of our supported countries. Pray for wisdom, godly decision-making, fruitfulness and unity within their teams.

Baptisms

We give thanks for the many that have gone through the waters of baptism over the past few months. We give thanks for their faithfulness and pray that this has only fueled the fire in their hearts to continue to grow in their faith and share it with those they meet.

DMI Conference

We give thanks for the opportunity to hold the 8th DMI conference in Kenya in August. We pray that many will be able to come from all around the world and fellowship together. We pray that God's hand will be over all of the preparations for the organisers and the delegates travel plans.



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Prayer Partners

Here at DMI, we want to always firstly give all praise and honour to God who is over and above all things and pray that all we do in this ministry brings glory to His name. In Philippians 4, God asks us to bring all our requests to Him and to thank Him for all he's done. Prayer is such an important part of this ministry, and we'd like to ask you to partner with us in praying for the work that DMI is involved in. Each week we are going to share a few prayer points and we ask that you join with us in bringing them before God in prayer. We may not be able to do much by our strength, but with God, nothing is impossible!!

Would like to become a prayer partner?

To receive weekly prayer points via email: info@deafmin.org

To be a part of monthly online prayer meetings contact

Andrew Miller: andrew.miller@deafmin.org

You can also find prayer points weekly at www.deafmin.org/prayer

Don't worry about anything;
instead, pray about everything.
Philippians 4:6



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*Neville & Lill Muir
DMI Founders*