

Deaf Ministries International

Issue 53 | August 2024

*Taking the Gospel
to the Deaf*

Mabuhay Philippines!

The Philippines was the place to be in June as DMI leaders, pastors, evangelists, teachers and school graduates gathered for two weeks of discipleship, planning, encouragement and fellowship. Gunnar and Matthijs travelled from Norway, International Board member In Yeong came from South Korea, DAU Director Tonny swung in from Uganda and Andrew dropped in from his current stay in the US. Locals joined us from the Davao, Bacolod and Ligao regions.

Davao

Our first stop was Davao where we were enthusiastically hosted by Glenn Yray and his wife Evelyn. Glenn pastors our newly relocated church in Davao and led the service where 70 Deaf turned up (some visiting from satellite churches) to hear the Word and share in fellowship. In Yeong preached and each of the leaders shared a brief word of encouragement. Tonny taught the Filipinos how Africans really dance in worship! The service was followed by a fellowship lunch. It was so encouraging to see 140 hands so keenly 'chatting' and engaging in fellowship.



In Yeong preaching



Gunnar, Andrew, Tonny, Matthijs, In Yeong & Pastor Glenn

Bacolod

The week-long Fatherheart A school, held in Bacolod, was the focal point of the trip. The teaching was primarily conducted by Gunnar (affectionately known as 'the barefoot preacher') with In Yeong, who initiated running this school in the Philippines, and Matthijs. The Fatherheart school not only teaches about the love of our Father but encourages students to actually experience this love for themselves.

The after-session times of fellowship were enjoyable if not raucous, strengthening friendships and deepening working relationships. Albert and Kim are to be commended for doing such a great job

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

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organising the event, with a special shout out to Kim and her three angels who cooked breakfast, lunch and dinner for everyone every day!

The Sunday after the Fatherheart school, all attendees joined the 20th anniversary of the Immanuel Church of the Deaf Bacolod, led by Albert. Matthijs and Tonny preached, a festive fellowship feast was enjoyed and a thousand photos were taken. Congratulations to Albert and Kim for so faithfully serving at Bacolod for 20 years!



Gunnar teaching



Manila



Meanwhile, Andrew was off in Manila speaking at Emmanuel Church Ministries International - a new connection - where he was warmly received. The church has shown an interest in partnering with DMI in the Philippines. This is an exciting development. It would be the first time that a church in the Philippines has supported our work. We hope it will be the first of many and that the Philippines will begin a transition from a 'supported country' to a 'supporting country' as South Korea has done.

Ligao

Not done with the Filipino smile or the adobo, Andrew and Matthijs met up again to visit our Bicol Deaf Action school in Ligao (formerly the Fishermen of Christ Learning Center). This was something of a scheduling mistake because it was school holidays and there were no students at the school, and most of the teachers had already been in Bacolod for the Fatherheart school! But it turned out to be a time of valuable discussion with the BDA leadership and teaching staff, and unhurried fellowship with all at the school. You get a much broader picture of things in talks outside of the scheduled



discussions! There was also opportunity to complete recording for our new DMI PR video and conduct interviews (which began in Bacolod) for the new DMI Chats blog which we have just begun to publish. (See separate article.)

Andrew and Matthijs inspected the farm and all the expanding facilities at the school and together marvelled at the magnitude of achievements that Neville was able to realise in one lifetime. Matthijs has a way about him. On his last day, he talked everyone into quad biking and then Andrew into paying for it. He also talked

Andrew into butchering a chicken for lunch, an unnerving experience for the Australian, although everyone seemed to enjoy eating it. Matthijs finally went back to Norway that evening leaving many new friendships in Ligao, and Andrew to reassess his ability to say no. (It was a very enjoyable time of fellowship!) It must be said, the teamwork in BDA is inspiring.



We saw teachers sifting through rice for impurities and pastors gutting chickens while principals poured drinks. Everyone rolls up their sleeves - it's all hands on deck and happily so. The visit has given DMI's leadership confidence that our next International Conference to be held in the Philippines in 2026 will be a resounding success.



'Fatherheart A' School



Fatherheart School leaders and attendees

The 'Fatherheart A' school is a week-long seminar which focuses on the love of God the Father. The love of the Father, forgiveness, healing and 'sonship' are central elements of the teaching. At the end of the week, attendees are encouraged to write letters to their parents asking for forgiveness. (Many Deaf in developing countries come from abusive homes. Healing starts by asking for forgiveness for one's own wrongs, not recalling hurts.)

Our team member from Uganda shared a powerful testimony about his childhood, where he had been violently abused by his pastor father. His father had even broken his arm in one outburst. A couple of years ago, this team member attended an A-school where he wrote a letter to his father, asking for forgiveness for closing his heart to him. This led to a wonderful reconciliation with his father who then publicly asked for forgiveness for his behavior.

Many of the participants at the school in the Philippines had similar experiences. They saw that they needed to return to their

parents with the heart of a 'son'. Letters were written with tears. The day after the school finished, one of the participants, a young Deaf man, emotionally touched, told how his hearing parents had cried and embraced him when he gave them his letter, asking for forgiveness. That same day, his parents went out and bought him a present. Similarly, the wife of one of the pastors, herself a Deaf school teacher, expressed an overwhelming joy because she now understood that she is a daughter of God, her loving Father. She said, "Thank you so much for coming from afar to give us this revelation!" After this first A-school for the Deaf in the Philippines, the local Deaf pastors concluded that they needed more Fatherheart schools for the Deaf in their country.



Bacolod Team



Ligao Team

Micro loans reach the Philippines

DMI's micro loan program has now reached the Philippines. Long centred in Africa, the program has now been made available to the Deaf in the Philippines. Business plans include variety stores,

burger joints, piggeries and more. Thirteen businesses have been approved for this initial run. We look forward to seeing a wealth of progress in the Philippines!

IVORY COAST

DMI reaches into Ivory Coast!

To date, all of DMI's work in Africa has been in east Africa and in Egypt to the north. In July, we made our first foray into west Africa when Josephat from Kenya and Claire from Rwanda conducted a Fatherheart school in D'Anyama, a small town outside the city of Abidjan on the southern shores of the Ivory Coast. This was organised through Ps Ake, who leads a Baptist church for the Deaf and hearing, and who started a school for the Deaf in D'Anyama. We first met Ps Ake at DMI's International Conference in Mombasa last year.

The Fatherheart school was attended by 31 Deaf who responded well to the teaching of the course. Josephat and Claire made the most of their time on the Ivory Coast, visiting a tailoring project for the Deaf, a Deaf church in D'Anyama as well as Ps Ake's Baptist church in the same town. We will prayerfully consider how we might continue our relationship with the Deaf in the Ivory Coast.



Josephat teaching Fatherheart students



Deaf/Hearing Church



Pastor Claire teaching at the Fatherheart

MYANMAR

Thank you for your support

Supporters would have received a letter regarding the tragic state of affairs in Myanmar at the moment. Pa-Lian reports that life in Yangon, though increasingly expensive, is relatively stable. Despite the heavy rains (it's rainy season now), church attendance is good and the love of the saints is strong.



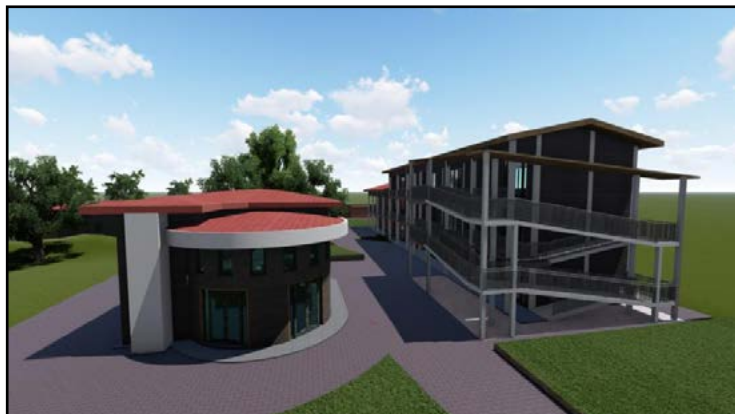
Church service

To the north of the country where we have our school and second church, it's a different story. Houses have been bombed, burned or bulldozed, and family members of our students shot or blown up by bombs or mines. Many of our students have escaped into India or are hiding in the jungles of northern Myanmar. Currently 24 students (and 2 pigs!) are staying at the school with teachers and support workers. Prices are outrageously high. In the three days we ran our campaign for Myanmar we received almost AUD25,000! That will provide enough food and equipment to keep our school going for some time. Thank you, thank you, thank you to all those who so generously gave. Let's continue to pray for safety for our Deaf family and for peace and prosperity in Myanmar.



RWANDA

African Bible School



Proposed plans

We are on track to open our new Africa Bible School in January 2026! This is an exciting development as we work to realise one of our greatest visions: to have a Bible college for the Deaf on each of the African, Asian and European/Middle East continents. These colleges will see Deaf students from all over the continent trained up in Christian ministry to be pastors and evangelists who will go back to their home countries and share the good news of salvation in Jesus to the Deaf, planting new churches and leading the Deaf to maturity in their faith.

The new college in Rwanda has had all its assessments and modifications approved. Building will start imminently. Of course, it's not just the facilities that are being developed but the whole operations of the school. The team in Rwanda heading the project have just submitted for DMI's approval the "African Deaf Bible College (ADBC) Operations and Management Plan" which includes details of the

school's mission, enrolment procedures, course offerings, student accommodation and more. It's wonderful to see the school taking shape.

Donations towards the building of the school - including naming rights for rooms! - are most welcome.

- Classrooms 1 ~ 6 - \$10,000* each
- Computer lab - \$10,000
- Library - \$15,000
- Prayer Hall - \$15,000
- Dining room - \$20,000
- Dormitory 1 - \$20,000
- Dormitory 2 - \$20,000
- Guest House 1 - \$50,000
- Guest House 2 - \$50,000

**All figures are in Australian dollars*

Donations can be made here: <https://deafmin.org/donate/>

DMI Chats starts

The DMI blog has been in hiatus for a year and has re-started under a new name and format.

DMI Chats is an interview-style blog in which we meet some of the most colourful members of the DMI family: staff, students, pastors, supporters and mission partners – they're all fair game - and learn more about their connection to DMI and the Deaf community. We hear about their quirky ways, all in an entertaining yet often moving conversation. In Yeong Heo is our first victim...

Readers can find DMI Chats here:
<https://interviews.deafmin.org/>



DR CONGO

In June, DMI sent \$1,000 to help with the food emergency unfolding in DR Congo. DAC Director Papy and evangelists Temo, John and Eric teamed up to distribute much-needed food relief to 40 Deaf families. Supplies distributed included rice, corn flour, beans, sugar, oil, salt and washing detergent. Thank you to all our supporters who gave so generously to this campaign.

Waiting for food



UGANDA

Flexing once again



Andrew and Tonny

It's been a vexing 12 months for our team in Uganda as restructuring has taken its toll. Kudos to DAU Director Tonny for steering the ship through the storm and the DAU Board working with him. Things came to a head in April when the head church in Kampala was forced to temporarily close. It re-opened three weeks later on Palm Sunday to a large congregation keen to sail ahead. The DAU board appointed three people to lead the church for 6 months as an interim measure: Evangelist David Muleme, Pastor Simon Marwas and Pastor Ojok Charles. These three have been warmly received by the church as the ship steadies and the sails start to billow. Numbers on Sundays have been encouraging. Derrick Musoke was appointed as the Youth Leader at the ICD church in Kampala and he is currently preparing for ICD National Deaf Youth Camp in Koboko (Northern Uganda) which will run from 24th-30th August 2024. A new Deaf church fellowship center was established in the Kabale (southern Uganda) district during the SUN training program. This is a welcome development and the church thanks God for it. In ICD Lira, in the north of the country, Pr. Richard Opwonya is teaching a group of five who are preparing for baptism. This is a cause for celebration. Church members continue to fellowship and worship in a small, hired room. In Bugiri to the east, Evangelist Francis Soniti thanks DMI for buying him a motorcycle that enables him to carry out mission work and teach in towns he could never have reached before. Many of the Deaf live in remote villages far from church so this motorbike is a godsend. With it, he also travels to Mukose Primary school in Busanzi to engage in fellowship with the Deaf adults in the region. The DAU team are also working hard on their new poultry and farm IGA. This project began in May with 300 broiler chicks. 10 died but the rest were sold in July bringing in revenue of AUD3,365. We're told they were delicious. In July, the second phase of the project began with the purchase of 400 chicks. We look forward to seeing this project go from strength to strength and DAU growing in self sustainability.

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Didier and Notuan - Golden Opportunity!

A seven-month Bible training program has been organised by the Deaf International Institute in the Philippines. This program focuses on Bible stories rather than theology - an effective approach for the Deaf with short term training - and enabled participants to fast-track into ministry. It is scheduled to run from September 1st, 2024, to March 31st, 2025. The specifics of the training at the Institute focus on 'Reading through Signing' (interpreting the written and spoken word), 'Signing through Meaning' (grammar-based signing) and 'Location and Direction Reference' (emphasizing the location of the speaker, listener and subject).

Didier Sinakubeshya, a member of ICDR-Kicukiro in Rwanda, and Notuan Ceu, a young student from Myanmar, have been selected to join this program. Didier was chosen by DII representative Seung Ho Kang who was visiting Rwanda. Notuan Ceu was tapped by our very own Heo In Yeong from South Korea who will escort him to the school. It's marvellous that in the midst of such terrible warfare, Notuan has the opportunity to attend this training before returning to Myanmar where he can bring some very good news to the Deaf.

News from Supporting Countries

AUSTRALIA

Trivia Nights a great success

Fundraising trivia nights were recently held in Melbourne and Sydney. These were a lot of fun and raised \$9000 in total! Thank you to all the nerds and non-nerds alike who made it such a fun and successful evening. The Melbourne fundraiser was hosted by St James Anglican Church, Pakenham where around 90 people turned up to feast and to enjoy the action. The Sydney event was hosted by St Marks Anglican Church, Northbridge where around 70 people

turned up (another friendly rivalry between the cities emerging?) to enjoy more gluttony and splendor. Thanks to all those who participated at these events. Thank you to Amy, Kay, Susi and Australian Board member Grace who worked so hard to make the nights so successful. Thank you also to our generous sponsors who provided silent auction items on the night.

MELBOURNE



SYDNEY



Thank you to the businesses that supported the fundraiser:



2024 Wish List

Here is a list of all the things Deaf Action and DMI would love to achieve in 2024. We are excited to report that, thanks to our generous supporters, we have already achieved many of the goals on the list! Thank you!

2024 Projects Wish List

- ✓ African Bible School, Rwanda USD260,000.
- ✓ Nairobi Church building USD18,000.
- Motorbikes USD10,000.
- ✓ Papy's university study USD480.
- ✓ Judith's university study USD2000.
- Burundi Church and Training centre USD120,000
- ✓ IICS (Kenya), Toilet and painting of the school. USD2700.
- ✓ Beni School, 3 wheeled motorbike. USD 3000.
- School and dorm in Minova (DRC) USD 60,000.

DMI Leadership

The International Board of Deaf Ministries International continues to uphold the mission goals that our founders Neville and Lill Muir set in place as 'An international Christian ministry bringing education, employment and the gospel to the Deaf in developing countries.' Please read about the great work that is happening around the world in our bimonthly newsletters.

Matthijs our International Development Coordinator is, as of August, reducing his time with DMI to a day a week and consequently we have had to slightly alter our Leadership Structure. Although the roles of leaders will be very similar to what they have been, there will in time be changes to allocations and expectations.

We have decided to give our leaders titles that are shorter and more understandable to the international community.

Gunnar Dehli - International Advisor
Steve McAllister - Chairman, International Board
Andrew Miller - International Director
Susi Tjhai - Finance Coordinator
Matthijs Terpstra – International Development Coordinator

Thank you for your ongoing support to this wonderful ministry where so many Deaf people are meeting Jesus and giving their lives to him.

Your brother in Christ,

Steve McAllister
Chairman, International Board

Praise and Prayer

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. We may not be able to do much by our strength, but with God, nothing is impossible!!

Evangelists on bikes

Pray for all the evangelists in our fields who have received motorbikes for ministry purposes. Give thanks for these gifts and pray that the evangelists would be kept safe and would be enthused to take the gospel to the Deaf in the most remote areas.

China

Pray for our leaders and church members in China. Workshops for Christian parenting, marriage and relationships etc are needed. Pray for funding and guidance as these are prepared, and ask that these would have a deep impact in the Deaf Christian community.

Egypt

Pray for our leader Hany and church members in Egypt. Pray also for our clothing factory as it prepares for its next stage of production.

Weekly prayer points can be found on our website or sign up to be a prayer partner and receive them directly to your email.

<https://deafmin.org/prayer/>



Andrew Miller
International Director



Matthijs Terpstra
International
Development Coordinator



Susi Tjhai
Finance Coordinator



Amy Jack
Communications
Coordinator



Kay van Namen
Sponsorship &
Administration
Coordinator



Neville (OAM) & Lill Muir
DMI Founders



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DMI Australian Office



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



03 5940 5431



(SMS/WhatsApp)
0487 209 881



info@deafmin.org