

Deaf Ministries International

Issue 55 | December 2024



Taking the Gospel to the Deaf

Alphonsine Graduates!



Raising Deaf leaders is one of our prime goals at DMI. Training the Deaf to take leadership positions not only in DMI but in the business, educational, political, sporting and artistic arenas is key to our mission of raising and empowering the next generation of Deaf youth across all our 21 fields and beyond. Currently over 100 students are being supported through secondary school and 18 students are being supported through tertiary education (as well as dozens more in vocational training).

Alphonsine Uwimana serves faithfully as one of the pastors in our Rwandan churches. She has persevered through good (marriage, childbirth) and bad (COVID restrictions) to graduate on November 22 from the University of Tourism Technology and Business Studies with a diploma in Business Management. This is an outstanding result, and we rejoice with Alphonsine and the DAMR (Deaf Action Ministries Rwanda) team and look forward to the benefits this will bring the whole Deaf community in Rwanda in the coming years. Alphonsine expresses her appreciation: "I wanted to take a moment to express my heartfelt gratitude for your incredibly generous support with fees, school materials and sign language interpreters in class. Your kindness and generosity have not only relieved a significant burden but have also opened doors of opportunity for me that I might not have otherwise been able to pursue. May your kindness come back to you tenfold, and may you always find joy and fulfilment in helping others as you have helped me. May God continue to bless DMI.

And my God will supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus. Philippians 4:19

Congratulations, Alphonsine!

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year

The international and national boards, staff, representatives and volunteers of DMI together wish all our supporters a wonderful Christmas and a very safe, peaceful and blessed 2025. Thank you for your generous prayer, financial and physical support throughout the year. We look forward to serving again with you next year. Merry Christmas to you all!



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

www.deafmin.org



DR CONGO

Training the next generation

Over the last few months our team in Congo has focused on training up the next generation of believers and leaders. In August, many of the DAC (Deaf Action Congo) evangelists attended a Bible study camp in Bukavu organised by Christian Mission for the Deaf. Later that month, many of our female church members attended a Deaf ladies' conference on sexual abuse, organised by the Church of Christ in Congo. At that time, others attended a leadership conference for evangelists and deacons. It's encouraging to see DAC collaborating with other Christian organisations to strengthen its membership.

Three of our Deaf leaders are doing theological studies in Goma focusing on leadership and church growth. The first academic year will finish in the coming month. Up to now, eighteen courses have been successfully studied. Director Papy studies thanks to a DMI scholarship. Evangelists Temo and Fabien study by their own means. DAC Secretary John provides interpretation for the three leaders and they in turn pay for John's academic fees!

In September, five new believers were baptised, four at the church in Goma and one at the church in Beni. The church in Goma also gifted two drums to the church in Bunia which is pastored by a very grateful Jacob. There must be a lot of love in the air at the Goma church as Mika and Valerie also married there in September, and evangelist Obongomi plans to marry his sweetheart, also Deaf, there in December.



Goma Baptisms

Challenges remain. Deaf families displaced in Bulengo camps are facing difficulties due to the lack of food and medicine, and the Deaf in the camp also need preachers to share the gospel with them, and to teach them how to read and write. The Sunday school classes across DAC lack learning materials, and more motorbikes would enable our pastors and evangelists to reach many of those who are currently unreached.

Water of Life - Beni School

On October 30 a grand ceremony was held for the first drilling of the big water fountain project at our school in Beni, DR Congo. Many guests participated in the ceremony including political and administrative authorities of the Beni municipality, DMI Director Papy, Beni school Principal Alain, representatives of the Butembo and Oicha Deaf churches, parents, students and teachers.

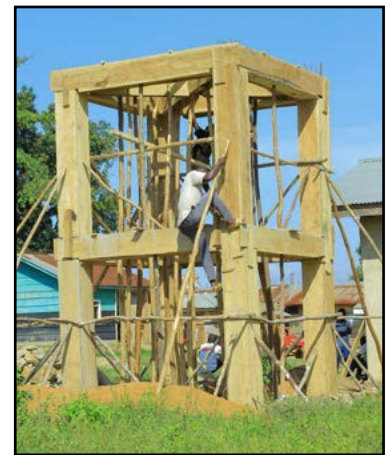


After prayers, hymns and speeches, the drilling began and it wasn't long until water began gushing from the ground, much to the excitement of all the students! As of printing, clean water has been secured in abundance and tank support has been built. Once this has dried (it should take about 21

days), digging for the channels and pipes will begin.

This water project will provide clean water for 300 people in the school community via 5 taps, and for almost 12,000 people in the wider Beni community via 10 hydrants each with five taps at various places around the town. These outside hydrants will be overseen by local chiefs. The project should be completed by the end of the year.

Our sincere thanks to the Australian foundation which provided the grant. Grants change lives. If you are connected to a foundation or trust, please consider providing a grant for the work that DMI and DA are doing.



Drilling the borehole



Building one of the water fountains

MIDDLE EAST

Sunday School classes for Deaf children



Over 40 children aged between 3 and 14 have regularly been attending Sunday School classes at Evangelical, Coptic and Catholic churches in Cairo to hear the gospel and to learn how to

live Christian lives. The classes consist mainly of Deaf children, but also of hearing children of the Deaf and church leaders. The goal of the classes is to teach the gospel in a simple and understandable way that shapes the worldview and behaviour

of the children and youth. Attendees are learning stories and teachings from the Old and New Testaments, especially those involving Jesus' birth, baptism, temptations, choice of disciples, and of course death and resurrection. A focus from these has been the importance of submission to Jesus as Lord. One of the main challenges the leaders face is the illiteracy of the Deaf children. They are looking at how they might incorporate literacy lessons into the Sunday School program. Communication between the Deaf and hearing children was also a challenge but with effort and the passage of time, there has been more interaction between the two groups and the hearing children are starting to use more signing. Each week the classes include a 'share and prayer' time when children discuss and pray about problems they might be having as well as good things to give thanks for.

TANZANIA

Special Service brings hundreds together

A special service was held by Deaf Action Tanzania (DAT) on Sunday 29th September in Shinyanga, a city in central north Tanzania. This was the first of its kind in the region and drew over 200 Deaf people. The service was well attended by DAT members as well as local and regional representatives, invitees from the DAT Bible School and Deaf individuals who had gathered in the city for the International Week of the Deaf. The service was a great encouragement to all who attended and was a means of announcing to those gathered of our intention to open a new church for the Deaf there.



Celebrations for International Week of the Deaf in the Shinyanga Region saw our teams and partner organisations visiting the Deaf in underprivileged communities to help them grow spiritually and understand the Bible. We also provided physical support. Five families received soaps, face masks, toothpaste, clothes, some money and the promise to establish a church in the near future to meet their spiritual and physical needs. Ministry in other regions saw an increase and strengthening of born-again Christians in our 11 churches and fellowships across the country. 20 new members joined the church over this period. Our fellowships in Kigoma and Tanga which were ministered to by Evangelists Robert Mutani and Stanslaus Alfred respectively saw Bible students making progress and planting churches. These young fellowships were attended by over 60 Deaf people in total!

Training in our fields has seen a positive transformation among eight evangelists and leaders who, DAT Director Joseph reports, "before undergoing spiritual leadership trainings acted as if they were neither evangelists or spiritual leaders". Indeed, the last

few months have seen a concerted effort to evaluate and train our growing team in Tanzania. Joseph continues, "The evaluations maintained good governance and unity in our ministry and helped to determine numerous things - celebrate milestones, identify areas where we failed and reasons for failure, how to break impasses and how to advance from lessons learnt."

Yusuf's Story



"Sustainable projects changed my life!"

"This is not the first time that I have worked in the fields, but the work I have done all my life has been done in other people's fields and brought me nothing compared to what I have now," Yusuf Hussein (36 years old) said.

Yusuf, who has never been to school before, thanked our church leaders for starting the

project that transformed his life and his view of Christianity. *"For many years I enriched others,"* he said, *"especially my family and I didn't have a good view of Christianity. I had previously worked on a farm owned by the father of the Catholic Church, but he did not treat me well. He colluded with my family to deny my rights. But the Immanuel Church is clearly different, treating me and others with kindness. I was encouraged to learn SUN and the Bible three times a week every evening and said daily prayers in the evening after dinner. I learned that Christianity is good compared to Islam and that the treatment I received from some Christians does not reflect the Church as a whole."*

Yusuf thanks the leadership of the Immanuel Church for working with the Ubarukuchurch in visiting his parents and educating them on the importance of him being independent. They created awareness about his deafness.

"At first my parents thought that Deaf people were not capable of being independent and deciding their own affairs, but the arrival of the Church in the family home where I was living

changed my life even though I am Muslim," he said. Yusuf, who continues to learn to read and write through SUN, says this farming has given him the first practical opportunity to earn money for himself and has allowed him to move from his family home with his wife after being enlightened by the Church. "Now I live comfortably with my wife, far from the control of my family and far from the worry of being cursed. I am so grateful to the church, and I hope it will continue to educate my parents (and others) about the Deaf so that the whole community will be free and not afraid of anything, including curses and threats," he said.

Hussein said that from December to March, when he started working on various tasks at the Church farm, he earned TSH650,000. With this income, he was able to pay his children's school fees and rent a house and farm where he planted his

own rice on a one-acre farm. "Besides dreaming of becoming a big farmer in the future," Yusuf concludes, "my dream is to convert to Christianity - the same as my wife. I believe that the church leaders will continue to show me the way. Pray for me."



Yusuf with his family

PHILIPPINES

Gerald and Ryan

It's wonderful for us to be supporting the Deaf in developing countries. It's even better when we can train the Deaf to do it for themselves.

Gerald and Ryan are both studying a Bachelor's degree in Elementary Education at the Deaf Evangelistic Alliance Foundation just outside of Manila, Philippines. Ryan is now in his 2nd year of college and expects to graduate in 2027 while Gerald is in 1st year, looking to graduate in 2028. They are both excelling academically and actively participate in classroom activities. Their goal after graduation is to become a missionary teacher or to be a pastor.

They are both good followers of Christ, dedicated to church activities and Bible study. They are growing in their faith. They enjoy learning biblical sign language and studying other subjects as part of their preparation for the future. We look forward to them faithfully serving in the PICD churches after graduation and continue to be pleasing to God with their lives.



Gerald



Ryan

22nd Anniversary of ICD Tabaco

On September 1, ICD Tabaco commemorated their 22nd anniversary. Celebrating under the theme of Psalm 136:1 - "Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good - His love endures forever" - 40 members gathered with special guests to give thanks for the life of the church.

Church member Honey Scarlet (great name!) emceed the event with Welfredo leading the opening prayer. Arnel was the special guest at the event, encouraging everyone to give thanks to the Lord for everything that He has done. Rowena, Sarah Jane and Jiselle, visiting from the Ligao Deaf church lead the praise and worship.

After the worship service, everyone enjoyed eating traditional Filipino dishes such as puto, maja blanca and lumpia. Members caught up with their dear old friends and welcomed new Deaf members to the church. We thank God for this special occasion and hope that this church will continue to grow and mature for many years to come.





Twin Boys!

DAMR evangelist Florentine gave birth to twins on September 29. Mother and babies are doing well.



It's a girl!

Bawi Hlawn Sung, a teacher at our school in Kalay, wife of Mang Hlei Sang, also a teacher at the school, gave birth to a baby girl on November 24. Mother and baby are doing well.



With Sympathy

Evangelists Eria Mboira and Sam Sebanakitta (far left) in Uganda both went to be with the Lord in separate circumstances last week. Eria died after a long battle with diabetes. Sam was killed in a motorbike accident. Both were amongst the first four graduates of the Uganda Bible School and were the first Deaf evangelists to preach the Word of God to the Deaf of Uganda. Truly pioneers of the faith, we are indebted to their faithfulness and passion for the gospel.

It's a girl!

The wife of Papy Kwabo (DAC Director) gave birth to a baby girl on October 3. Mother and baby are doing well.



News from Supporting Countries

GERMANY

DMI Joins Germany

It was amazing to see so many people come together to celebrate the 60th anniversary of Christliche Gehörlosen-Gemeinschaft, a church in Stuttgart, Germany. The church invited representatives from Deaf Ministries International (DMI) to show the strong relationship we have in Europe. For over 40 years, this church has been a faithful supporter of DMI's mission to serve the Deaf community. The church wanted its members to hear testimonies and feel a deeper connection with DMI. Heo In Yeong, Arnel Benitez, Josephat Mulongo, and Matthijs Terpstra attended the event as DMI representatives.

The main celebration took place on Saturday with the theme



Arnel Speaking

"JESUS WOW." Arnel and Josephat played key roles in the day's program, which focused on celebrating and reflecting on the history of the church. They both shared powerful testimonials about how

In Yeong



DMI has impacted their lives. Matthijs also took the opportunity to thank the church for their unwavering support over the years. On Sunday, In Yeong led the church service, adding a sense of unity and thankfulness to the weekend. He shared an inspiring message about Joshua and the memorial stones from the Jordan river (Joshua 4:1-9). These stones served as a reminder for the Israelites of how God helped them cross the river and led them to the Promised Land.

In Yeong encouraged the church to remember their own “stones of faith”, times when God has guided or helped them. He encouraged everyone to reflect on these moments to strengthen their faith and trust in God’s care, emphasizing the importance of remaining unified as a church in their journey forward. The DMI representatives had some free time on Friday before the weekend, so their hosts kindly took them to the iconic Porsche and Mercedes-Benz museums. Everyone was very impressed by the remarkable evolution of automobiles over the decades.



Josephat had everyone talking about his fashion choices!



After the weekend of celebration, Josephat and Arnel extended their stay in Germany. They visited schools for the Deaf, talking about DMI to students and sharing their experiences of living in Asia/Africa as a Deaf person and the impact that DMI has had on their lives. Additionally, Josephat led a church service in Frankfurt the week before, while Arnel conducted one in Munich.

Thank you, Germany!

Matthijs Terpstra
International Development Coordinator

JAPAN

Andrew Jumps Japan

I’ve had the pleasure through November of speaking to a wide variety of groups in Japan including hearing and Deaf churches, universities, high schools, kindergartens and ruffians (my dear friends on the DMI Japan Board!). These adventures in Japan have brought joys, challenges and reward.

It was the first time for anyone from DMI to visit the Deaf church in Nagasaki, pastored by Minatozaki-sensei who has been a keen supporter of DMI for many years. Minatozaki-sensei and his wife were gracious hosts. They sign only in Japanese. I speak Japanese but can’t sign it. Oh, the joys of international communication! But we had a wonderful time fumbling through ASL (American Sign Language) and awkwardly typing on our phones. The Deaf church - about 40 members - embraced the work of DMI and were generous in their support. It’s wonderful to establish this connection.



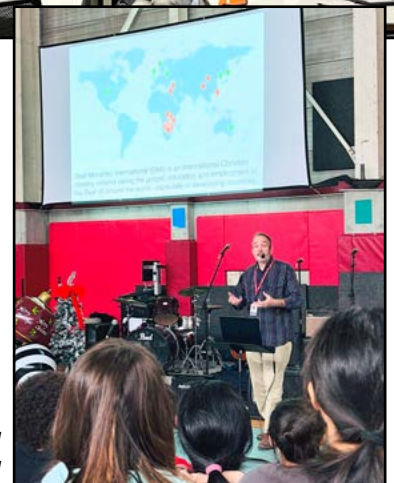
Andrew speaking at Mukomachi Kindergarten

Speaking to students at prestigious universities brought an awareness of poverty and of the Deaf that just might have been life changing. “I learned that being able to go to school every day is not something to be taken for granted. I have decided to actively participate in fundraising activities. It breaks my heart to think that while I’m on my smart phone, there are many chil-

dren living in fear” was a typical sentiment expressed among the students after the presentations. Another which I received with mixed emotions was, “I was very impressed because I’ve never heard of a Christian who wants to be merciful like Jesus Christ. I thought all Christians were Christians just to get to heaven.” The kindergarten students were equally interested in the plight of the Deaf in developing countries as seen in their captivated expressions and thoughtful questions.



Andrew with Kansai University students



Okinawa Christian School International

The Okinawa Christian School International is a new connection for us. I was able to speak to the very attentive middle and high schoolers during their chapel times. Thoughtful conversations followed. The following day I manned a table at the school's Christmas Market. Donations, art sales and student sponsorships resulted as well as a strong connection with the school community which donated 25% (\$1200) from the market's sales to DMI! While in Okinawa, I was also able to catch up with Jack and Keiko Marshall over dinner! What a treat that was. Jack is now 95 and still doing well! Keiko is full of beans and serves as our Okinawa representative.

Andrew Miller
International Director



Christmas Market

AUSTRALIA

Amy Speaks at Sunbury Baptist

In November, Amy, our Communications Coordinator, had the privilege of visiting the seniors' group at Sunbury Baptist Church to share about the impactful work of DMI. Despite the hot weather, those who attended came with a warm and welcoming spirit, eager to learn more about the mission and the ways it is making a difference in the lives of individuals and communities. Sunbury Baptist Church represents a new and exciting connection for DMI, and we are truly grateful for the opportunity to

engage with their congregation. The seniors' group listened attentively, asked thoughtful questions, and offered their prayers and support, which means so much to us. Their hospitality and willingness to learn more about DMI's work is a testament to the strong sense of community that exists within the church.

Notice Board

2024 Wish List

Sincere thanks to all our supporters who have provided virtually all of the blessings on our Wish List this year! These gifts are distributed above and beyond our regular monthly support and enable DMI as an organisation and those working in our fields to achieve our mission goals more effectively. Thank you!



SAVE THE DATE

What?: DMI Conference
Where?: Cebu, Philippines
When?: May 4-8, 2026



Evangelist Profile

Name: Fulgence Uwimana
Age: 25

Work: Evangelist and farmer.

Location: ICD Gatsibo District, Rwanda.

Deafness: From age 7. Sudden Deafness.

Favourite food: Rice.

Favourite sport: Jogging and volleyball.

Greatest challenge: Ministering to the Deaf with poor or no signing ability

Greatest joy: Seeing the Deaf come to Christ

Greatest need: A motorbike!

Our pastors and evangelists need sponsorship to continue the work they are doing. For \$50 a month, would you please consider sponsoring a pastor?

For more on Fulgence, see his soon-to-be-posted DMI Chats interview at <https://interviews.deafmin.org/>

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!!

Eria and Sam

Pray for the families of Ugandan Evangelists Eria Mboira and Sam Sebanakitta who passed away in late November and for the Deaf communities who were under their care.

Alphonsine

Gift thanks for the university graduation of Alphonsine on the weekend in Rwanda. Ask that the Lord would bless her ministry and leadership amongst the Deaf.

DR Congo

Give thanks for the successful drilling of the well/water fountains in Congo. Ask that the project would proceed to completion without disruption.

Philippines, Ligao

Give thanks that our school at Ligao is safe after a large typhoon passed through the area. There was no damage and school was able to resume within a day of it hitting.

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
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NEW! <https://interviews.deafmin.org/>
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