



PRAYERPOINTS

A PRAYING PEOPLE IMPACTING A LOST WORLD

Deaf Peoples

OVER 200 SIGN LANGUAGES ARE USED AMONG THE 70 MILLION DEAF PEOPLE AROUND THE WORLD. BELIEVERS WORK DILIGENTLY TO TRANSLATE BIBLE STORIES INTO LOCAL SIGN LANGUAGES SO THAT THE DEAF CAN SEE AND RESPOND TO THE GOOD NEWS OF SALVATION IN JESUS CHRIST. THE DEAF ARE SOME OF THE LEAST EVANGELIZED PEOPLE ON EARTH. PRAYER IS ESSENTIAL TO THE TASK OF REACHING THEM.

A Bible translation team needed help accomplishing a great task; God provided

Uncertainty has defined life in many ways for a Deaf team in the Asia-Pacific Rim. But God has been showing one worker, Naya Wilder,* that He provides and is always present. Naya had partnered with a local team in a country where the Bible is not available to the Deaf in their local sign language. This team has been working to translate and film Bible stories, always careful that nothing is added or omitted. It's a lengthy process, and they strive to complete 60 stories this year. Recently, the team offered a trial period to three people who might help in this great task. Ell* was the only one out of the three who showed up for her trial period. That same week, one of the two existing translation workers suddenly left, intensifying the need for help. Ell practiced with a story that had already been completed, and when she got in front of the camera to sign the story, there was no tensing up or nervousness. She communicated

to the camera beautifully, like it was a lost person in need of truth. Ell excelled in her trial period, not only by helping with translation work, but also by reigniting the desire to get signed Bible stories to the Deaf as soon as they were completed. She quickly learned Bible stories to teach them to others. She also applied them to her life and even challenged the other workers to do so as well. Watching her live as someone full of the Spirit and passionate about people knowing Jesus has been a blessing for Naya. Amid chaos and uncertainty, God provided a new co-laborer and a good friend for Naya. Praise God for His blessings. He is the God who knows all and is in control of all!



A Deaf Thai believer practices teaching Bible stories using a Bible storytelling method.



1 DEAF PEOPLES. Ask God to raise up Deaf nationals who are willing to work alongside workers as Bible stories are translated into their heart sign language. Pray that Deaf around the world can access the Word of God, understand the truth, and find hope in the person of Jesus Christ.

2 BORDER KUNA OF COLOMBIA. Please pray for a Colombian couple who is visiting the Border Kuna on a weekly basis to share Bible stories. Pray that they will be well received and that the Border Kuna will open their hearts to the gospel.

3 EUROPEAN PEOPLES. Pray for teachers, students, and their families in the new semester. Most of the children attending school have not heard of a God who loves them and holds their future in His hands. Pray that they will know that they can trust God even in uncertain times.

4 DEAF OF ASIA-PACIFIC RIM. The Deaf team in an Asia-Pacific Rim city is working hard to translate Bible stories. The team currently consists of four people. Pray for God's protection on the translation project, that nothing will hinder it so the Deaf will have the Bible in their heart language.

5 ANGIKA-SPEAKING PEOPLE OF BIHAR & JHARKHAND, INDIA. Of the 3 million people in the Bhagalpur district of Bihar, 99% are either Hindu or Muslim. Few believers live there. For years, workers have shared the gospel, but have seen little fruit. Ask God to open doors for workers and local believers to partner for His kingdom.

6 UNREACHED PEOPLES OF EAST INDONESIA. The Campalagian of West Sulawesi stake their identity in being fishermen and in Islam, mixed with beliefs in a shaman's power. Pray that the Campalagian will hear of Jesus, who called fishermen to a new way of life. May God's power be shown to them in miraculous ways.

7 CITY OF SAND, NORTHERN AFRICA. Nabil* shares the gospel and disciples believers in his city where many Islamic fundamentalists live. Pray that seekers will bravely meet with him to learn the truth about Jesus. Pray for protection as they meet and for kingdom growth in this city.



A new believer is baptized.

8 DEAF OF INDONESIA. Pray for members of a Deaf Indonesian church who desire a deeper relationship with God, that they will learn the Word and share it boldly. Pray for leaders to help strengthen the church and reach the Deaf in their city. Pray for courage in the face of persecution.

9 AEGEAN TURKS OF TURKEY. Please pray for Al,* Murray,* and Zion.* These three recently showed up at church, and some believers have started going through the Book of John with them. They will soon be studying John 2 together. Please pray for true fruit to take root in their hearts!

10 DEAF OF ASIA-PACIFIC RIM. A worker among the Deaf in the Asia-Pacific Rim is finishing language study. Pray that she will continue to understand and be able to sign fluently to the point of being able to clearly and concisely share the gospel with the Deaf.

11 THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION IN KENYA. Pray for a team in Kenya as they start taking theological education on the road to churches, associations, and small Bible schools. "Our ambition is to make theological education accessible to the majority of church leaders who can't attend a centralized institution," they said.

12 DEAF OF THAILAND. Pray that ministry will be fruitful for workers among the Deaf in Thailand. Pray for opportunities to begin a college ministry in one of the cities. Pray that they will have many opportunities to meet Deaf people, share the gospel, and disciple others.

13 AMAZON PEOPLES OF THE AMAZON RIVER BASIN. Continue to pray for workers as they meet weekly with the Naka* people, and pray for a team member who is working on learning the Naka heart language.

14 NORTHERN AFRICAN AND MIDDLE EASTERN PEOPLES. Among the desert peoples of northern Africa, some women are the second wife and must share their husband with another wife and household. Ask God to meet each of these women in their specific situation. May they look to Him, hear His gospel, and find comfort in Him.

15 DEAF OF INDONESIA. Pray for the Deaf of Indonesia as constant lockdowns and government closures have hindered the team from going and sharing the good news with people in remote villages as well as in their city. Pray that through social media, gospel seeds will be planted and bear fruit.

16 SUB-SAHARAN AFRICAN UNENGAGED PEOPLES. The Bozo are known as the fishermen of Mali. One day, a fish jumped out of the water and into the hands of the Bozo man who was guiding the boat. Pray that God's Spirit will move in such a way that many Bozo people will jump out of the darkness and into Jesus' hands.

17 DEAF OF INDONESIA. Pray for a new community center for the Deaf in Indonesia. A team of believers is prepared and ready to open the center. Pray that it will be a place of peace for believers and for the Deaf who are seeking truth and light. May God's name be known among the Deaf!

18 SOUTH ASIAN UNENGAGED PEOPLES. Most Garhwali-speaking people in the Himalayas who have heard of Jesus believe He offers money and health. Pray that the gospel will be communicated clearly. Pray for true believers to establish churches and stand firm amid the tremendous persecution that has begun.

19 CZECHS OF THE CZECH REPUBLIC. The Czech Republic has a rich Christian history, but most Czechs today say they are irreligious. In daily life, Czechs focus more on their job, family, and recreation than on spiritual questions. Ask God to stir their hearts to seek and trust in Him.

20 DEAF OF ASIA-PACIFIC RIM. Pray for a new church plant among the Deaf of a country in the Asia-Pacific Rim. Pray that they will continue to grow and stay true to God's Word. Ask the Father to give members such as Austin,* Willy,* and Danny* guidance as they share the gospel in their community.

21 AZERIS OF IRAN. When Azeris in Iran become believers, they face harsh persecution from their family and community. Pray for them as Paul did for the believers struggling in Colossae, asking "that their hearts may be encouraged, being knit together in love..." (Colossians 2:2-3 ESV).

22 DEAF OF INDONESIA. Pray for the ongoing Scripture translation work into the heart language of Deaf Indonesians. Ask God to guide the hands and expressions of those working daily on this project. Pray that God will protect them as they seek to get truth to those who do not know Jesus.

23 BASOTHO OF LESOTHO AND SOUTH AFRICA. Two orphans were found in a dangerous living situation. Baptist Care Center women, the local chief, and men from the local Baptist church found them a safe place. Pray for the children's continued safety and for the care center staff as they share the gospel with them.

24 CENTRAL AYMARA OF PERU. Before COVID-19, a Peruvian missionary couple hosted a children's ministry on Saturday afternoons for several years. Recently, they were able to restart the ministry, and several children attended! Pray that the gospel will take root in their hearts and produce fruit!

25 DEAF OF LAOS. Workers are partnering with Deaf nationals in Laos to reach to the lost. Ask the Father to give them favor as they make plans for reaching the Deaf of Laos after COVID-19 restrictions are lifted. Pray that many Deaf will see His stories and trust in Jesus.

26 NORTHERN AFRICAN AND MIDDLE EASTERN UNENGAGED PEOPLES. Praise the Lord that the Otoro Nuba in Sudan are no longer considered unreached with the gospel! Over 2% of this population of 55,000 people now follow Jesus. Ask God to use Otoro Nuba believers to reach out in love to those who have yet to hear of the Savior.

27 Deaf of Thailand. Each year the Deaf of Thailand host a cross-provincial soccer competition for Deaf all over the country. This is a wonderful time to share the gospel. Pray that the Lord will be glorified through the competitions and that many Deaf will see the good news.

28 EUROPEAN UNENGAGED PEOPLES. IMB representatives in Belgium host language classes to meet people, and many students are from Bulgaria. Pray for these IMB representatives to meet people of peace in whose heart God is already at work, and to have wisdom in effectively sharing Christ with them.



Portrait of a Deaf Filipino Christian.

29 EAST ASIAN UNENGAGED PEOPLES. The Labapo fear evil spirits. Twice a year, they sacrifice animals near a sacred tree for protection. There has never been a Christian church among the Labapo. Pray for many to hear truth of Jesus and trust in his sacrifice on a different tree for their eternal protection.

30 CENTRAL ASIAN PEOPLES. When registering for new ID cards last year, a group of brave Central Asian believers identified not as Muslims, but as Christ followers. Now they could face persecution. Ask God to give them His favor. May they be an example to future generations of believers.

31 DEAF PEOPLES. Pray that Deaf churches around the world will multiply in other countries as leaders and laypeople boldly share the good news with Deaf each day. Pray for Deaf believers who are persecuted for their faith and for those who persecute them to repent and follow the Lord.

Gospel seeds planted years ago among Deaf South Asians still bear fruit

In 2016, a worker, Bethany Forrester,* briefly met a Deaf South Asian man after she shared the gospel with a large group. “He was one of many people I met that day,” Forrester said. “He said the words struck him, and he went home and could not stop thinking about the difference between his gods and the one God that I signed about. Since COVID-19, he has been attending a Deaf service on a videoconferencing app. He contacted me and wanted to know more about my God. We had a long conversation about our beliefs. He asked me to pray for him as he makes a decision whether to follow Jesus. He knows that if he becomes a believer, he will be kicked out of his home and banished from his parents, wife, and children. He is counting the cost (Luke 14:28).”



“For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost.”

(Luke 19:10 ESV)

Portrait of a Deaf man signing.

Please pray that this man and his family will believe. God has shown His power and faithfulness in that the gospel seeds that Bethany Forrester planted six years ago can still bear fruit!

Deaf Peoples



Deafway Bible App



The DeafWay Bible APP brings the Bible to life through images and videos in various languages of the Deaf!

Read the full article “IMB celebrates work of Deaf Pathway Global” at imb.org/deaf.



Approximate numbers calculated using IMB global population and evangelical Christian estimates. For the complete 2020 Annual Statistical Report go to imb.org/asr.



4,429

HEARD GOSPEL WITNESS



189

NEW BELIEVERS



10

NEW CHURCHES PLANTED

imb

Let's advance
God's kingdom
together

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The stats are drawn from Fast Facts and all numbers come from the Annual Statistical Report on 2020 Data.

*Names changed

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