



Deaf Ministries



International Partnership Ministries
 100 Spring Ave., Hanover, PA 17331-2717
 Home Address: 2449 O'Connor Dr., San Pablo, CA 94806
 Phone: 510-417-2792
 Email: deafministries@ipmworld.org

Rev. Kevin Maki
 Director



Your partner with national missionaries around the world

Dear Friend,

November 2017

“That they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate; Laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come...” 1 Tim. 6:18-19

West Africa. Gold Coast. Ivory Coast. These are antiquated names of places with long histories of European colonialism. Today, Ghana and Cote d'Ivoire are modern “Christian” nations in sub-Saharan Africa.

FIRST IMPRESSIONS

Great potential exists in Africa. The Europeans saw the potential in the natural resources that filled this undeveloped land. Missionaries have seen, time and time again, a responsiveness to the gospel that exceeds most people’s expectations or imaginations. China, India, and various Muslim nations now see opportunities to exploit this area by using either business or tribal aspirations for their own ends.

The greatest potential exists among the youth. In July, I taught and preached at a satellite church of Solid Rock Baptist Missions (Anchor branch) that was entirely populated by pre-teen children. They walked to church, set up the chairs, and actively participated in the service in every way. Missing the day that I was there visiting was the one deaf child who comes and sits in the back without an interpreter. Through the week, I met other pastors from various satellite church-planting efforts, including Pastor Damoah (who has four deaf children who have taught him quite a bit of sign language). Dr. George Dapaah explained to me that the mother church (now home to a Christian school and seminary) of these satellite churches also started out with an attending population of entirely children; but, as they grew, became saved, and had families of their own, the church became self-supporting. So, too, it will be with these satellite churches.



In many of these W. African countries, there is not only a shared history of slave trade that accompanied colonial expansionism, but there is also a recent shared history of deaf education (despite the numerous tribal languages and trade languages of the French, English, and Dutch colonials). A modified form of American Sign Language has spread due in part to the efforts of the Peace Corps and the initial pioneering efforts of a deaf missionary from Detroit, MI who set up the first deaf schools on the continent! The great potential for Africa’s youth intersects at this point. The young people who are learning sign language are able to master both receptive and expressive skills in a relatively short amount of time in comparison to adults who never learned to sign as children. This means that the potential for a church with both Deaf and hearing exists in a way that is different than the traditional American model.



LASTING IMPRESSIONS

As the week progressed, I met and heard reports from pastors in five different countries. One of the national IPM missionaries working in a French-speaking region of Africa spoke to us through an interpreter about the great needs among the Deaf in his country. He shared that they arrive to church not only hungry but in need of basic care such as clothing. His church has made a conscious decision to meet the need by providing lunch after church each Sunday. This same missionary had planned for an attendance of 30 Deaf at their camp in August, but attendance was doubled to 60 with the assistance of a Deaf evangelist the week before our conference in July.

Another national IPM missionary brought his deaf worker with him. He sat in the front row and attentively watched the sign language interpretation for each session. Afterwards, he came with a list of 100 or so words to make sure that he understood the meaning and the proper way to use each sign. In his home church, they have a deaf school that is reaching approximately 20 children. They also come hungry, and he struggles to know how they can provide lunch for these children each day. At the end of the conference, he went away eager to implement what he had learned in way of interacting with the Deaf in his own school, not only from the standpoint of meeting their physical needs but also being able to minister the gospel to them.



Bro. Japheth Zuo (on left) with Team Liberia



Deaf Children at Bro. Zuo's School

FINAL IMPRESSIONS

“You are running away so soon?” These were the last words I heard as my passport and visa were being inspected prior to boarding my return flight back to America. I told the worker that I must go home to be able to return to their country next year. IPM nationals in Liberia, Cote d’Ivoire, and Ghana have all coordinated invitations so that, if the Lord wills, part of my 2018 summer will be spent working alongside missionaries already reaching their own Deaf.

Although I took more resources with me to share at this conference than I had taken to the Asia Regional Conference (in Oct. 2016), I did not anticipate that many of the national workers already affiliated with IPM would bring with them numerous other pastors within their spheres of influence. In the end, I had to keep a “team” effort mentality and divide the resources among each regional team until we can return with additional resources for them.

“It is going to take a lot of money!” One of the missionaries gestured to an unfinished building on the church property. I chuckled, having thought through the ramifications of all the invitations to return next year. My flight costs will be more than double the \$2,000 spent on this past trip in order to travel inside of the continent between countries. My material costs will probably be quadruple the \$750 worth of product that I gave away to the “teams”. Please prayerfully consider helping the Deaf Ministries Dept. with on-field training of our national missionaries!



*May you enjoy a blessed Thanksgiving alongside your families and friends.
We have much to be thankful to the Lord for... including you!*



Working with the Deaf for Christ,
Kevin Maki

If you change your email, would you please take a moment to contact us at office@ipmworld.org with your new email and name.
Thank you so much.