

Adventist International Deaf Ministries

A newsletter by the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists for the Deaf and those ministering with them for the Deaf

3rd Quarter – July 2013



Coming Events

September 20-22, 2013
Euro-Asia Division
Hearing Impaired Congress: Zaoksky Adventist Seminary and Institute Adventist Seminary and Institute, Russia

January 21-23, 2014
Inter-American Division Special Needs Ministries Directors' Meeting

European Deaf Conference

Fifty-six attended the Deaf conference hosted by the South France Conference. Of these, 30 were deaf. Ten children also attended. This special even was held in Flaine, France about 45 minutes from our Adventist University of France (Collonges). The attendees came from eight different countries and represented 6 audio languages and six different sign languages! **Valerie Lefebvre**, the conference president's administrative assistant, was the primary coordinator. **Corrado Cozzi**, the recently appointed Inter-European Division Liaison for Deaf Ministries, lent his support as well. The multiple languages represented presented unique challenges but the camaraderie was strong.



Young Adult Deaf and Workers for the Deaf

Several young adults were among those who attended the European Deaf Conference. They brought with them enthusiasm and a zeal for reaching out to the Deaf of all ages.



Coming from the United States were **David Trexler** (Director of 3 Angels Deaf Ministries) and **Alfred Griffith** (Gospel Outreach associate) and **Larry Evans** (representing the General Conference). David and Alfred were the presenters. In addition to the seminar presentations Pastor Trexler also presented the Sabbath sermon at the Adventist

University of France (Collonges France). The sermon was signed in ASL (American Sign Language), which was then voiced by Pastor Griffith into English, which was then translated into French and Spanish. The Spanish and the French verbal languages were translated into their own sign language. The verbal French was also translated into verbal Dutch for those hearing meeting

with the Deaf. The conference provided two excursion trips – one to Geneva, Switzerland in which some Reformation highlights were seen with explanations given by **Dr. Roland Meyer**, Seminary Dean. The other excursion trip was to a little village in the foothills of Mt Blanc--the highest peak in Western Europe.

Instant Closed Captioning in Church!

Rita Colquhoun can type a minimum 200 words per minute, an ability honed by 16 years on a courtroom stenograph. Her expert hands now provide real-time captioning for Pastor Mike Brownhill of the Albion Seventh-day Adventist

Church which is seen immediately on the big screen.

Plans are to use Rita's captioning skills for a public evangelistic series in August. The captioning benefits both the deaf, hearing-impaired and those who did not speak



English as a first language.” – July 3, 2013, Quest Community Newspapers, Brisbane, Australia.

Reflections by the Editor



“There is a general assumption in churches that since there is no Deaf ‘in our church then they must be going somewhere else.”

“What? NO WAY!”

His puzzlement was real.

Here was a very bright sixteen year old young man, who had been Deaf since his early years, who was totally baffled by my comment that God can understand the beautiful language of American Sign Language (ASL).

He signed emphatically, ‘God doesn’t know sign language! He is a Hearing God! God cannot understand my signs!’”

Like most Deaf people, he was the only Deaf person in his family. Although his parents dragged him to the church for his entire life, he still made little or

no sense out of the gospel.

I assured him that God both signs and reads sign language with incredible skill. God knows his thoughts, feelings, experiences and loves him completely. God is the creator of everything and the author of all languages and cultures. I explained, in sign language, that God wants a personal relationship with him through Jesus Christ.

... There is a general assumption in churches that since there is no Deaf ‘in our church then they must be going somewhere else.’ The reality is that, by far, most Deaf are

going nowhere for worship or Bible study. There is a general disconnect with spiritual things.” – Taken from *Deaf Diaspora—The Third Wave Deaf Ministry* by Bob Ayres, p. 33.

It

‘God doesn’t know sign language! He is a Hearing God! God cannot understand my signs!’

has

been estimated that only 2-4% of the world’s Deaf (an estimated 200-300 million) are Christian of any kind. It is no wonder after reflecting on the true story just told. This must change. This newsletter isn’t just for the

Continued

Deaf. It is for the hearing too. The challenge is so big, so huge that we cannot afford to approach this crisis separately. The Deaf are just as much an unreached people group as those we now target in some regions of the world. The big problem, of course, is that Deaf are mixed into every culture. They must be found and the best ones to find them

are the Deaf themselves. The hearing can play an important role – no doubt about it! Yet what is so desperately needed by the Deaf youth today is an interaction with Deaf adults who are sincere and mature followers of Christ! When that is not possible the hearing must step up. Never, underestimate what God can do! If we make

ourselves available God will work miracles through us. Let's join hands and make a difference. Never underestimate what God can do whether you be Deaf or hearing. If we make ourselves available God will work miracles through us. Let's join hands and make a difference where we are and reach out beyond our comfort zone.

Recently Appointed Division Liaison Representatives for Deaf Ministries

A major accomplishment for the future of global Deaf work was the appointment of a liaison/coordinator for Deaf work by each of the thirteen divisions. Each carries other responsibilities but they have been carefully chosen and will work closely with Larry Evans, General Conference Liaison for International Deaf Ministries. These appointed division

representatives are:

East Central Africa:
Elam Musoni

Inter-European:
Corrado Cozzi

Euro-Asia:
Vladimir Kotiv

Inter-American:
Samuel Telemazuesa

North American:
Debra Brill

Northern Asia-Pacific:
MinHo Joo

South American:
Edison Choque

Southern Africa-Indian Ocean:
Passmore Mulambo

Southern Pacific:
Lee Dunsten

Southern Asia:
To Be Appointed

Trans-European:
Michael Hamilton

West Central Africa:
To Be Appointed



"One day children were brought to Jesus in the hope that he would lay hands on them and pray over them. The disciples shooed them off. But Jesus intervened: "Let the children alone, don't prevent them from coming to me. God's kingdom is made up of people like these." After laying hands on them, he left. - Matthew 19:13-15, *Message*

Without Deaf Christian role models, Deaf children and teenagers do not know much about God.

A Home for Adventist International Deaf Ministries

While Deaf ministries have their own identity, the General Conference administration has created a unique umbrella to broaden its services to those with special needs. The committee formed and commissioned to this specialized ministry is called the “Special

Needs Ministries Committee” and is co-chaired by Geoffrey Mbwana, a general vice president, and Jonathan Kuntaraf, Director for Sabbath School and Personal Ministries. This new committee is composed of individuals representing each of the seven areas of special needs: Hearing, Hidden (disabilities that are not easily observed), Mobility, Psychiatric, Speech and Visual.



Contact Information for Adventist International Deaf Ministries:

Larry R Evans, D.Min.
12501 Old Columbia Pike
Silver Spring, MD 20904-6600 USA

Email: EvansL@gc.adventist.org

Phone: Office: 301-680-6185

Cell: 240-535-1890