

PRAYERPOINTS

DEAF PEOPLES

The 80 million Deaf people around the world use over 300 sign languages. They are some of the least evangelized people on earth. Prayer is essential to the task of reaching them. Will you join us in praying for them?

DEAF WOMAN EXPERIENCES SPIRITUAL BREAKTHROUGH, FREEDOM FROM FEAR THROUGH FAITH IN CHRIST

By Penelope Sonnen, a worker in Southeast Asia

The first thing to understand is that in Southeast Asia, people are more in tune with the spiritual realm than we are as Americans. When I first got here as a missionary, I learned that people wouldn't whistle because they fear that might summon a demon. They wouldn't clean their homes at night because they believe that might upset demons. They live terrified of evil spirits. For my Deaf friends, terror often visited them in their dreams. My friend, Naiyana, is 21, and she feels that she has been haunted by a spirit her whole life. She was always aware of it, especially when she tried to sleep. Years ago, she saw a movie about Jesus born in Bethlehem to save the world from sin. Throughout her life, Naiyana learned more stories about Jesus. When she got to college, some friends invited her to come to our group and see stories about Jesus signed in her language. We told her about when Jesus set a man free from two thousand



*Portrait of a Deaf Southeast Asian Christian.
IMB Photo.*

demons by the power of His words. When Naiyana gave her life to Jesus and chose to follow Him, she experienced peace, and the evil spirit she felt had haunted her through her whole life was gone. She told us that she still gets scared sometimes. But when she does, she can cry out to Jesus in prayer. And she knows now that He can protect her.

Thank the Lord for rescuing Naiyana from the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of God. Thank Him for redeeming her and several other Deaf Christians who gather in her city each week as a church. Pray for God to unify them and work through them to be His witnesses in their community and to the ends of the earth. Ask God to send more missionaries to reach the Deaf in Southeast Asia and around the world.

GOSPEL TRANSFORMATION STORY

In the 21st edition of Loving the Lost Through Prayer, we asked for prayer for the Deaf of Tunisia. Fewer than 2% of them know Christ, and His Word is not available in their sign language. Praise God that within the past few months, workers have been making plans to move forward with translating Scripture into Tunisian Sign Language.

1 DEAF OF SOUTHEAST ASIA. Praise God that Deaf believers in Southeast Asia have learned to create worship songs based on Scripture. Pray they will continue to grow in Him and worship Him "in spirit and truth" (John 4:24). Ask for boldness for them to share God's stories with other Deaf.

2 GLOBAL DEAF PEOPLES. Thank the Lord for sending short-term volunteers from the United States who work among the Deaf around the world. Pray that, as they return home, God will guide their future in ministry among the Deaf.

3 DEAF OF WEST AFRICA. A young West African Deaf man who has attended church for years can now legally be baptized because he is 18. Praise God for his desire to identify publicly with Christ. Pray for believers in this Deaf community, that God will continue to move in and through them.

4 DEAF OF SOUTHEAST ASIA. Pray for a new ministry in a spiritually dark city with a mix of Muslim and Buddhist communities, where many Deaf people live. Pray for the two believers who are intentionally sharing the gospel in this city.

5 DEAF OF WEST AFRICA. Two local Deaf believers visited three Deaf brothers and their Deaf parents. The believers shared a Bible story, and the brothers asked many questions about the story, God, Christianity, and Islam. Pray for this family. Pray for these believers to not tire of doing good.

6 DEAF OF SOUTHEAST ASIA. Last summer, Deaf theological students hosted an event to share the gospel using methods they had learned. Pray for people they shared with, some who had never

seen Jesus' name signed before and cannot read or write. Pray that the good news will continue to advance among the Deaf.

7 DEAF OF SOUTHEAST ASIA. "Most Deaf people in our city who call themselves Christians don't know the gospel. Our team joined local Deaf believers and shared the full gospel at a cafe, attracting 20 Deaf people to watch. Pray for our team as we plan to plant reproducing Deaf churches."

8 DEAF OF WEST AFRICA. A group of Deaf students went on a field trip to learn about raising animals, planting, harvesting crops, and using land resources while God's Word was being sown in their hearts. Pray for their future work and livelihoods. Pray God's Word will flourish in their hearts.

9 DEAF OF SOUTHEAST ASIA. Two believers visited a Deaf school with 40 enrolled students. The staff told them most students are Muslim and none are Christians. Pray for the believers to form good relationships with the school and be able to share the gospel there.

10 GLOBAL DEAF PEOPLES. When Deaf college students are at school, it's easier to find opportunities to connect with other Deaf and learn about God's Word. Pray for those who return home on school breaks and feel lonely. Pray they will remember Bible stories they learned and draw near to God.

11 GLOBAL DEAF PEOPLES. Two local believers who had gone through a theological training became trainers themselves! They recently taught 15 students. Ask the Lord to continue blessing this training and to use it to reach more Deaf people with the gospel.

12 DEAF OF SOUTHEAST ASIA. Deaf work team leaders, Madeline and Victor Hawthorne, are thrilled about two new teammates. Pray for them to learn the language and culture quickly. Praise God for providing language coaches and new friendships.

13 DEAF OF SOUTHEAST ASIA. Thank God for a father and daughter who now regularly attend a Deaf church! They are interested in learning the Bible and applying it to their lives. Pray for the Deaf church leaders to disciple them well. Pray that this family will know the truth and love of God.

14 DEAF OF WEST AFRICA. Anne, a retired woman, recently joined the team in West Africa to share the gospel among the Deaf. She helps young women learn sewing skills so they can earn an income. Pray for Anne as she shares God's love with these women and continues learning the local language.

15 DEAF OF SOUTHEAST ASIA. Praise God for the opportunities for workers in Southeast Asia to share with Deaf college students! Pray that the gospel seeds that are being planted will bear much fruit and that Jesus will be known among the Deaf students on this college campus.

16 DEAF OF SOUTHEAST ASIA. Working with college students, Gretchen Snow asks you to pray for her to connect with more people who are motivated to learn about Jesus and able to disciple and teach others on the campus. Pray that the Father will guide her steps, giving her strength for the work.

17 DEAF OF WEST AFRICA. Life on the field has its joys and challenges, from relocating to cities to waiting for travel documents and to seeking God's guidance about

new ministry opportunities. Pray for workers during seasons of transition as they share the gospel throughout Deaf communities.

18 DEAF OF SOUTHEAST ASIA. A woman is passionate about learning more about Jesus. She feels alone and longs for a church that uses sign language. Pray for her to share the gospel boldly and invite local Deaf to gather and worship as a group.

19 DEAF OF SOUTHEAST ASIA. Pray for Deaf college-age believers as they attend a retreat to study the Bible. Pray for the church leaders who are pouring into college students, asking that the students will deepen their walks with the Lord and continue hungering for His Word.

20 GLOBAL DEAF PEOPLES. Pray for a Deaf woman who has denied her faith in Jesus and for the believer who had invested in her. The worker writes: "The Father has the best plan. It is all for His glory. He is teaching me to be humble and obediently follow Him."

21 DEAF OF SENEGAL. A Deaf volunteer team served in Senegal, encouraging a ministry team there and sharing the gospel with local Deaf. Pray for God to continue working in the hearts of those they met. Ask Him to draw these volunteers to continue reaching Deaf Africans with the gospel.

22 DEAF OF SOUTHEAST ASIA. Worker, Victor Hawthorne, and some local teammates minister to Deaf college students in a capital city. Please pray that the students and their families will be open to the gospel and form lasting relationships with the team.

23 DEAF OF WEST AFRICA. Jared Penn and his family serve among the Deaf in West Africa. He is discipling two men. One is taking him out to new villages to meet the Deaf. The Penns are also connecting with a Deaf school. Please lift up this family as they share the gospel in a difficult area.

24 DEAF OF SOUTHEAST ASIA. Worker, Gretchen Snow, and a local ministry partner met a group of Deaf people and shared Bible stories with them. Praise God that two people chose to follow Jesus! Pray for their discipleship. Pray for more gospel-sharing opportunities for Gretchen and her ministry partner.

25 DEAF OF SOUTHEAST ASIA. Workers, Timothy and Isabelle, recently got married! Pray for them as they settle into marriage and Deaf ministry in Southeast Asia. Lift them up as they train and learn how to better serve their community. Pray that they will grow and learn together.

26 DEAF OF MALAWI. Please pray for the Church in Malawi to spread the gospel to the hundreds of thousands of Deaf or hard-of-hearing people in Malawi. Ask God to call many Deaf to Himself and raise up men and women within their communities and groups to lead.

27 DEAF OF SOUTHEAST ASIA. When ministry leaders travelled to a neighboring country, they met 20 Deaf people who spent hours asking questions about the gospel and said they wanted to start a Bible study in sign language. Pray for the leaders who are connecting them with local Deaf believers.

28 DEAF OF SOUTHEAST ASIA. "College-age volunteers joined our work in Southeast Asia during a school break, inspiring our Deaf college group to share their faith in Jesus too. It was an exciting time. We still need people of all ages to come and share God's love with the Deaf."

29 GLOBAL DEAF PEOPLES. Often in Deaf students' hometowns or villages, their family and community members have not learned sign language. They are isolated and often persecuted, often just for being Deaf. Pray for Deaf students who face isolation and persecution during breaks from school.

30 DEAF OF SOUTHEAST ASIA. Pray for the Bible translation work in Southeast Asia. Local Deaf ministry partners have found a studio they can rent to record Bible stories they've translated into sign language. Pray for the Bible translation work and the studio rental process to go well.

31 GLOBAL DEAF PEOPLES. Most of the 80 million Deaf people around the world have never seen Jesus' name signed in their language. Often ignored and oppressed, the Deaf are some of the least-evangelized people on earth. Pray for more missionaries to be sent out to reach the Deaf with the gospel.



A volunteer from a Deaf Baptist church in the U.S. signs to an American sign language interpreter on a public bus in Buenos Aires, Argentina, during a volunteer trip. IMB Photo.

ONE DEAF MAN'S FAITH LAUNCHES SPIRITUAL RIPPLE EFFECT

"Your prayers are critical to our work — I've seen the results," Paul Yount said. He leads the Deaf work in West Africa, translating the Bible and hosting camps where Deaf can come learn Bible stories. At one of these camps, a Deaf man watched, riveted. "As a Muslim, he knew the risks of following Jesus," Paul said. "Nevertheless, this man was convinced of his need for Jesus and believed." After the man was baptized, he didn't stop there. "Once the camp ended, he hurried to contact a Deaf friend and told him the stories he'd learned. His friend understood his need for Jesus and was baptized! Then he went to another Deaf friend and shared the same stories. The Spirit convinced that man to trust in Jesus for salvation too. This is an exciting time, and I am thankful you are a part of it!"



A Deaf believer learns how to present the gospel visually at StoryOne Camp. IMB Photo.

Most of the 80 million Deaf people around the world have never seen Jesus' name signed in their language. Through Bible translation into local sign languages that are recorded into videos, more Deaf communities are gaining access to God's Word. Every translated story can create ripples of gospel transformation. Your partnership in prayer helps break down barriers, bringing hope to Deaf people who've waited generations to learn, in their heart language, of Jesus' love for them.

2024 FAST FACTS

GLOBAL DEAF PEOPLES



145

unengaged and unreached Deaf people groups worldwide.



~80M

culturally Deaf have almost no access to Scripture in their heart language.



300+

sign languages. Our Deaf and hearing missionaries share the gospel and empower Deaf nationals to plant churches.



1,700

Each day, more than 1,700 Deaf people die without having trusted Jesus Christ as their Savior.



INVISIBLE

The Deaf are the "invisible" people in every country. Few share the gospel with the Deaf, who are often marginalized, stigmatized, oppressed, and feel forgotten. Many Deaf people think God does not know sign language.

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**REACHING
THE NATIONS,
TOGETHER.**