

The Dundons

Missionaries to the Deaf in Philadelphia

WORLD WIDE
NEW TESTAMENT BAPTIST MISSIONS



Matt, Colleen & Aiden

Current support level:

100%

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The Beginning of a New Deaf Church

Philadelphia Baptist Deaf Church conducted its grand opening on April 30th and May 1st. The first day drew in over a hundred people, the second drew in about 65 but with 15 new faces. That means we had 125 individuals who came to church over the first weekend! The deaf ministry from Solid Rock Baptist Church in Berlin NJ, who is almost an hour away, and their deaf pastor, Chris Harris, were a big help to us in conducting the grand opening.

May 1st

For May 1st, Sunday, we had just a single service in the afternoon with myself preaching the Gospel and fellowship afterwards. No decisions were made but we pray seeds were planted. Right after the service, some deaf Philadelphians come up to me and informed me that they have been praying for a deaf pastor to come into the area for three years, which is about the same



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amount of time I spent on deputation. I was struck with amazement at that statement. Several others came up to me and said that they wanted to attend regularly.

The Sundays Afterward

We decided to have our deaf church's service in the afternoon every Sunday from 2-3pm. Even though the church building we're using has two chapels, so two services could be held at the same time, we felt that it was important to emphasize our deaf church as a separate church. If our church wants anything done, I don't want them to depend on others for it.

After having several services in the afternoon on Sunday, we realized a few unexpected benefits. One, we get to have more time preparing before church starts. Two, we realized that about a third of our deaf adults work night shifts, so they truly appreciate the afternoon service. Third, no one is in a hurry to leave for lunch anymore! I noticed that our church typically stay for 1-2, sometimes 3 hours after church just socializing. This has given us great opportunities to better understand the people we're ministering to. Many of them are typically deprived of normal interaction with others during the week as they work, go to school, or even when they see their family, so that when they come to church, they just want to be able to communicate without issues. I fully understand that too well. As of now, we're starting small and only conducting one service each week.

Our second Sunday was Mother's Day so of course I gave out a sermon on Mothers and we gave out small pots of flowers to each mother as a present. They truly loved it! We weren't sure what to expect after our grand opening but we were glad to see most of the locals who came on the first weekend come back.

For Memorial Day weekend, we invited everyone from church for a cookout at our home after the service. We had about 20 people in our backyard and it was a great opportunity to get to know everyone and for them to know us.

On Father's Day in June, I gave out a message on the importance of fathers and gave out a small tool to each of the fathers in attendance.

Throughout the first two months of our church, we have had new visitors almost every Sunday. Many of them have been local deaf people who came just out of

curiosity and haven't come back. Most of them have never been in a deaf church before, only interpreted services. It was very encouraging that they came after being invited by our regulars.



Deaf Baptist Fellowship of America

The Deaf Baptist Fellowship of America (DBFA) is an annual conference for deaf independent baptists that is held in different states each year in June. This year, it was hosted by Solid Rock Baptist Church's deaf ministry in Berlin, NJ and being so close to home, we couldn't pass up the opportunity to go this year! It was certainly a wonderful week spent listening to different sermons preached in sign language by deaf and hearing preachers. I also had the opportunity to preach which is great blessing. The fellowship were also wonderful.



First Missionary!

Under normal circumstances, I would not have a missionary come to our new church so soon after opening but because of DBFA being held in the area we had one deaf missionary family come to our church at the end of June. Their names are Mike and Ruth Douglas, missionaries to the deaf in Brazil. They're both deaf with two hearing daughters and are

currently on furlough. When they go back to Brazil they will work in a new deaf ministry with the hopes of it becoming a deaf church. We decided to go ahead and support them with a very small amount. We certainly were not expecting to support a missionary this early in church planting!

Prayer Requests

We truly appreciate every one of your prayers. After PBDC started, it was evident that you were praying for us. Ever since the church began, we averaged about 20 people each Sunday, about half of that are deaf adults and the other half are their children. We were not expecting to have a children's ministry right off the bat, but we are blessed with children between the age of three to fifteen. After being with our church family for at least two months, it has become clear that we need your prayers over several things:

- 1) Most of the deaf adults are already saved but are still babes in Christ. Many of them have various sins in their lives that will need to be dealt with at some point. Pray for us to have wisdom in guiding them to be more like Christ and to have more desire of the milk of His Word.
- 2) As mentioned, we have about 10 children, all of them are hearing. Our biggest challenge with them is that more than half of them do not know sign language, despite having deaf parents. Unfortunately, this is somewhat common in the deaf community, depending on the parents. Some deaf people grow up without communicating with their own parents so they do the same when they have children of their own. Others are able to get by with minimal communication with their children using whatever hearing/speaking ability they have. As a result, there is not much of a relationship or communication between the deaf parent and their hearing children. As a parent myself, that breaks my heart. Since my wife is the sole interpreter and the sole teacher for the children, the latter takes priority. As a result, almost all of the children, and some of the teenagers who don't know sign, go with her to children's class where she can sign and talk at the same time. That means she handles a group between 3 and 15 years old on most Sundays. Pray for us as we teach them the Word and sign language.
- 3) A small number of the deaf adults and older children who attend regularly are not saved, please pray for them to know Christ.