SIGNS FOR HOPE

New Beginnings School for the Deaf

What an amazing trip!
So thankful God connected Orphan Voice to Signs for Hope, for such a time as this!

"Many, LORD my God, are the wonders you have done, the things you planned for us. None can compare with you; were I to speak and tell of your deeds, they would be too many to declare."
Psalm 40:5

I cannot begin to tell you how many things God taught me on our first trip to Vietnam to see firsthand what He is doing there. My entire scope of "adventure trips" and our God has been broadened beyond anything I could have imagined. I have asked both Tony Brewer of Orphan Voice and Ralph Bradshaw, one of our "adventure team" members, to share with you this month.
Their stories are below.
There is an opportunity for just a few of you, to be involved on a deeper level with these precious deaf children, their families and their teachers. Orphan Voice has partnered with Deaf Child Hope International to seek monthly sponsors, "Heart Adopt", these deaf children. Just $38 monthly, coupled with daily prayer will be miraculous in its impact at New Beginnings School for the Deaf. Eight sponsors are needed! Please contact me for more details.

New Beginnings School for the Deaf

Tony Brewer, Orphan Voice

It began as every Orphan Voice project has begun in Vietnam. The need so pressed itself upon us that to ignore it would have been to disobey the leading of Christ's compassion in us.

We began working with special needs children in 2011 when our government partner invited us to a district with many special needs children, but with no therapy services available.

While working with that group of precious ones, we heard about deaf children who were not going to school. Something about it caught our attention. We asked about them and learned that deaf children in that area do not attend public schools because the schools do not have signing teachers. Families are poor and, thus, cannot send their sons and daughters away to attend boarding schools in far off cities. As a result, the deaf (and their families) do not learn sign language, are not educated and grow up isolated, confused and sometimes angry.

Armed only with a desire to help and trusting that God would provide the needed resources, we sent a love-filled staff member to signing classes. After several months of intensive study and practice, she learned the basics. We were ready!

In November 2014, New Beginnings School for the Deaf officially opened with 7 scholars! Wow! What a blessing—and also a challenge. During my first few visits to the school, I wondered if we would ever get to the place where they would stay in their seats when visitors came!

But progress did come. Mai, New Beginning's teacher, proved to be outstanding. In the short time that we have had them, they have learned some basic sign language and have benefitted immeasurably from learning to communicate with one another and with their families. Despite my early doubts, their behavior improved.

In addition to sign language classes, they study math, social studies, reading and writing. They have learned to wash their hands before eating and that cigarettes are bad for their health. One misguided family member teased one of the boys that the family would not take him to school the next day. The boy, believing the story, got up at 4:00am the next morning and walked an hour to New Beginnings, getting there long before it opened.

It is a privilege and honor to serve the Lord Jesus Christ by serving those that he called "the least of these." With help, our 7 scholars (now 9) are becoming the head and not the tail. They sense opportunity and adventure ahead.

We believe that the One who came to give them life and who started them on their adventure will see them safely home.

Becky: Signs for Hope is better because of our partnership with Orphan Voice. Please join us all in praying for the New Beginnings School for the Deaf to be fully funded, annually. The annual estimated operating budget is $13,000. We have a long way to go to be fully funded! If God should touch your heart to support this amazing work for deaf children, for any amount, please contact Tony Brewer at Orphan Voice.

It is Easy to Give Up!

Ralph Bradshaw

It is easy to give up on something. My wife and I knew we wanted to use bicycles on our vacation. In our garage, we have an old yellow bike with flat tires, worn brakes, and the regular dings and bumps from active boys. Instead of "refurbishing" the old bike, it was easier to go to the local big box and buy a sleek looking, shiny new bike (with an installed cup holder) for only $99. The old bike was forgotten and the new one helps me look good as I slowly plod along the path. How, you may ask, does this relate to Signs for Hope?

Just last month, I joined a SFH team going to a south Asian country where 0rphan Voice saw a need and started a small school for rural deaf students. The SFH team hoped to provide support where there was little experience with deafness. It was curious to me that an orphan organization would stretch this far. As we visited with the leaders and staff, it became apparent that, though they focused on orphan work, they were really called to a ministry of meeting needs in a rigidly secular country. Adoption led to dealing with the *unadoptable* both by working in government orphanages and by independently establishing their own.

Because children aged out of the system, young teens were faced with hard life choices just to survive. The work branched out to provide living space for older teens, protecting them and giving them a chance at a fuller productive life. Children in schools were also victims of the same temptations to veer off the path. 0rphan Voice responded by developing "More Precious Than Gold", where students learn from their teachers to value themselves.

Their work in a rural area included setting up a physical therapy treatment center. Though aimed at children, we also saw them helping a young adult walk again after a vehicle accident threatened to leave him a paraplegic. One of the children receiving physical therapy was also deaf. They discovered that a number of other children in the area were deaf but, because of the poverty of the families and the rural location, they lived isolated lives without opportunities to learn any signing.

One of their workers was willing to return to school to learn sign language. Following this, the New Beginnings Deaf School opened in November, 2014. From early reports of those who saw the new school, it was pretty wild. The SFH team arrived eight months later. Only God's love and grace working through dedicated believers could have performed the miracle that we saw. These children, who just months before had little or no language, were freely signing with each other, soaking up vocabulary, solving math problems, learning life skills, and building new relationships. Where once condemned to live lives of loneliness, they joyfully communicated.

After healing on the Sabbath in Matthew 12, Jesus fulfills Isaiah's prophecy, "A bruised reed he will not break, and a smoldering wick he will not snuff out, till he has brought justice through to victory. In his name the nations will put their hope." The world often values people carrying the dings and bumps of life much as I viewed my tired old bike, as being unimportant or even as useless as a bruised reed or a smoldering wick. Observing Signs for Hope and 0rphan Voice in action, I am both humbled and encouraged that they do not give up on those the world ignores but through their work, the nations will put their hope in His name.

So do not throw away your confidence; it will be richly rewarded. You need to persevere so that when you have done the will of God, you will receive what He has promised. For, "In just a little while, He who is coming will come and will not delay."
Hebrews 10:35-37

From my heart to yours...

These past three months, May, June & July, have been full to overflowing with travel, God-connections, new revelations of His truth and His leading, willing volunteers, deeper dependence on Him, many opportunities for prayer & truth-sharing, humbling, God's continued faithfulness in every area, peace that passes all understanding, resting in Him, inspiring, obedience, waiting for His perfect timing, encouragement from so many of you, conviction of sin, face-to-face meetings with so many of you, and that list goes on. These are all a result of your prayers for me and for Signs for Hope. Please do not stop praying, now! This work has only just begun!

I marvel at what God is doing and I am humbled by what He is doing. So often, I am literally in AWE! I do not have any answers when it comes to "why me?" however, as I challenge others, I must respond with "why not...me?" The same is true for each of you. God has prepared works for each of us to do, not to earn our salvation, but out of our gratefulness to Him for our free gift of salvation through His grace. These works are what God uses to show the world His great love and salvation. What a privilege it is that God allows us to do these works, trusts us to do these works and actually prepared them specifically for each of us to do, in advance, and all because of His great love for us. ONLY GOD!

Becky

"But because of His great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions— it is by grace you have been saved. And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with Him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus, in order that in the coming ages He might show the incomparable riches of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus. For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— not by works, so that no one can boast. For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do."
Ephesians 2:4-10

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