

Silent Word Ministries

Deaf Ministry Evaluation Checklist

Successful deaf ministries are planned. The following checklist will help **evaluate a current Deaf ministry** or **plan for the future**. Items should be considered and discussed with those involved. Pastors and deaf ministry workers should create realistic long-term goals based on the people to whom they minister and the location of the church. **Silent Word Ministries** is here to help and to serve. **Please contact us for more information about the Deaf Ministry.**

Heart for the Deaf Ministry

- Is the church committed to the Deaf Ministry in the long term? What is the ultimate vision for the Deaf Ministry?
- Is the pastor committed to the Deaf Ministry? You can never build a successful Deaf Ministry without the pastor's heart. -- Two Goals: Reach Them, Teach Them.
- Comments: Your hands can get them but your heart will keep them. Without the Word of God, there is no Work of God.

Stages of Deaf Ministry

- Interpreting Ministry - Interprets when Deaf people come. No Deaf Bible class. Deaf people are onlookers and not involved.
- Deaf Ministry (Hearing Church) - Deaf Bible Class. Deaf people involved as ushers, greeters, teachers, helpers, etc. Teach to needs of Deaf members.
- Deaf Church - Separate services - Deaf Language & Culture. Meet the needs of Deaf community. Need 50+ Deaf people. Can meet at hearing church property or separate.

Deaf Ministry Program

1. Interpreters

- Qualified - Know Sign Language well enough to **clearly** communicate the message. Spiritually qualified to interpret. Meets church worker guidelines.
- Beginning Sign Language Class - Once-a-year or Ongoing. Can be 2-week, 10-week, etc.
- Intermediate Classes - Teach how to interpret, not just sign.
- Advanced Training - Skilled interpreters attend outside workshops.
- Audio of messages - Interpreter cannot personally pay attention or remember message. It is good to give tape or CD to interpreter after service.

2. Deaf Class

- Develop good Deaf Christians, leaders, preachers, missionaries
- Taught in Sign Language to the needs of Deaf people.
- Systematic way to learn the Bible.
- Divide classes when age, education, or other factors require.
- Use visual aids, interaction, Deaf culture.

3. Outreach

- Gatherings - Go where Deaf people meet: Malls, restaurants, bowling, organizations.
- Home Bible Study - Enlist nonmembers and unsaved Deaf people
- Visitation - Goals: 1. Make Friend, 2. Invite to Church, 3. Win to Christ
- Mailing - Newsletter - Every 2 months, one page, testimonies, announcements, salvation.
- Teach church to be aware of Deaf people - Look for ILY, door lights (wires), "Deaf Child" signs, Deaf people at shopping centers, work, driving. Note addresses, locations, and any other information. Submit to church office.

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4. Activities

- Monthly - A time of Christian fellowship and evangelism.
- Invite ALL Deaf - especially unsaved.
- Ability-based - Choose activities to match the Deaf class. Older? Younger? Active?
- Devotion - Always have a spiritual emphasis. Good time to present the Gospel.

Advertising

- Church Literature - Bulletin, Tracts, Flyers - should include a statement about the Deaf Ministry. Examples: "All services interpreted for the Deaf.," or "Deaf Bible Class."
- Web Site - List the Deaf Ministry with equal emphasis as other ministries.
- Fliers - For Deaf Ministry activities and special events. Mail or hand deliver. Take to Deaf gatherings or organizations which serve Deaf people.

Create A Deaf Culture Atmosphere

- Encourage the church to be **friendly** to Deaf people. Smile, shake hands, learn a few "welcome" signs. Learn to be patient with communication
- Greeters** - Should know where Deaf Class meets, know a few signs, carry pen & paper, be alert for "quiet" visitors who may be deaf.
- Deaf Class **signs** placed appropriately and prominently.
- Access** - Deaf class should be easily accessible to all ages and handicaps. Interpreted section should be near the front with an easy view of the platform. Many Deaf people appreciate seeing the Pastor's expression as he speaks. (Remember, without his eyes a Deaf person is Deaf and blind.)
- Deaf Bible Class** - Lesson should be clear, informative, heart-touching, life-changing. Interaction (questions and answers, sharing) is a valued part of Deaf culture.
- Pulpit** - Welcome Deaf visitors when appropriate. Treat Deaf people much the same as hearing people. Pastor should not normally talk with interpreter during the message. Also, most interpreters find it helpful for the pastor to brief them regarding difficult terminology or illustrations and main point of sermon. Allow for delay when addressing Deaf people, as the interpreter is always behind.
- Involvement** - Encourage Deaf people to become involved in the overall ministry - Nursery, usher, Deaf choir, prayer, teaching, yard work, cleaning, etc.
- Study **Deaf Culture** - Many things are a little different in the Deaf World. Examples: Clapping is done by raising and shaking hands. When leaving a group say good-bye to all.

Set Goals

- Personal - Improve Sign Language skills. Maintain personal spiritual growth.
- Church program - Integrate Deaf Ministry into overall church program
- Deaf people - Plan what to teach. Teach what they need.
- Deaf Ministry - Develop from within. Train ministry workers and interpreters. Improve the program. Evaluate ministry level: 1. Interpreting Ministry, 2. Deaf Ministry, 3. Deaf Church

Use Resources at Silent Word Ministries

- Start or Reorganize Deaf Ministry** - Contact SWM for more information.
- Missionaries** - Deaf Emphasis Sunday; Special Deaf Ministry activities; Help with visitation or Sign Language training; Present the Deaf ministry to your church; and more.
- Conferences** - Fantastic Saturday, Deaf Day, ASL Institute (July/August), more.
- Literature / Videos** - Books, manuals, tracts, lessons for Deaf people and Deaf Ministry workers.
- Deaf Bible Institute** - Deaf people can learn the Bible by mail. Twenty courses.
- Web Site** - www.SilentWordMinistries.org - Resources, order online.

"We are here to help and to serve you."