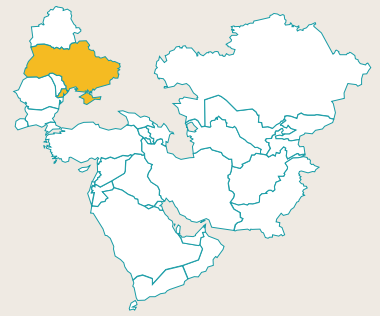




Language: Ukrainian Sign Language

Signers: 400,000



Dates: 2020-2023

Project Goals: Gospels of Matthew and John

UKRAINIAN SIGN LANGUAGE

EURASIA — UKRAINE

THE PEOPLE

About 400,000 Deaf people living in Ukraine use Ukrainian Sign Language to communicate.

The country boasts nearly 60 schools for Deaf children, as well as 13 universities that can accommodate Deaf students.

However even well-educated Ukrainian Deaf people find it difficult to overcome the stigma that others place on them. They are most frequently offered blue-collar positions, working as cleaners, seamstresses or carpenters. Like other Ukrainians, they typically grow vegetables and keep livestock to meet their daily needs.

When interacting with the society around them, the Deaf generally face a number of challenges, such as lack of acceptance. Deaf individuals who read lips are often treated as superior to those who use sign language.

The majority of the Deaf population identify as Christians. But some feel neglected by their local churches.

To help the Deaf community better understand God and his ways, Scripture is needed in Ukrainian Sign Language.

THE PLAN

We're partnering with a local Deaf team as they translate New Testament portions into Ukrainian Sign Language!

To clearly communicate the gospel message to the Ukrainian Deaf community, two Gospel accounts will be translated. The Gospel of John will be finished first, followed by Matthew.

The sign language translations are produced as videos, so the process generally takes longer than for written translations. The team must film the person signing the translated Scripture, then check, edit and revise it, and finally publish the video recordings.

A translation committee is providing direction for this three-year project. Comprised of pastors and leaders from several local churches, the committee is eager to produce materials for use in regular worship services.

With access to Scripture in their sign language, Ukrainian Deaf Christians will also be equipped to study God's Word on their own — and engage those who don't yet follow Christ.

THE IMPACT

Besides managing the Ukrainian Sign Language project, Vitalii Zvarych and Oleg Stralkovsky are leaders in the local Deaf community.

Oleg is a pastor and director of the Bible School for the Deaf. He leads the Bible Translation Committee for the Deaf of Ukraine.

A former missionary, Vitalii is also pastor. He has worked as a sign language translator and taught at the Bible School for the Deaf.

Both men are highly educated and motivated, as are the other staff. In fact, the team had already started translation work when this project began.

"Representatives from six churches came together to begin the Gospel of John," Pastor Oleg said. "Together, we agreed on the appropriate signs."

Now, the team is excited to make the gospel message available in their sign language for the first time.

Your prayers and gifts will help the Ukrainian Deaf access God's Word in a language and form that impacts their hearts!