



The SCOTT CRABTREE Family

Missionaries to the Deaf

"There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard." Psalm 19:3

As we reflect on the first year of LifeSigns Deaf Baptist Church, the words to the song, "God's Been Good" come to mind. Although it has been a tremendously faith building experience (and still is), God has been good and we have been blessed beyond measure. For an opening day service or a first anniversary service, a church planter has absolutely no idea what to expect! You typically plan and pray (and cross your fingers and toes) for the best outcome. For our service we were privileged to have Bro. Steve and Joyce Houghton from St. Augustine, FL, as our special speakers. They have faithfully worked with the Deaf for many years. We also had representatives from Troy Baptist Temple, one of our supporting churches, who were with us for the service. **What a blessing to see supporting churches get involved with their missionaries!** We showed a video of what the Lord has done over the last year and had the blessing of baptizing Greg Bucher, who is being disciplined, at the end of the service. On Easter Sunday, we had 57 people here for the service with Cari getting baptized that day. We were also blessed to see 85 people in attendance for the anniversary, even with some of our regulars being out of town. We still average about 30-35 each Sunday, and like any church would have about 50 if everyone came at the same time! My wife mentioned the other day how much we used to be elated if we had at least 17. God has slowly increased our numbers and the spirit of the church remains sweet.

It has been commonly said that when the hearing become offended by something, they move to the back seat of the church. When the Deaf become offended by something, though, they typically leave altogether and **may** come back in a few months. It's a statement in general or said in jest, but we recently saw this in action. A Deaf couple had been coming faithfully since our opening day, but they allowed something that happened with them in the Deaf community to influence their faithfulness. We hadn't seen them in months. They had moved to a new location and I was unable to find them except through text. I would text them occasionally to let them know we loved them and missed them. Our hearts were thrilled when we saw them walk through the doors on Easter Sunday. We were in tears when we saw them and so were they as they realized how much their church family had missed them. I was so proud of how our people welcomed them back with open arms. They have been coming ever since.

The wife of one of the families who comes told me the other day how she is disappointed during the week when it is not yet Sunday. She anticipates coming to church and learning more about the Bible and being with the family of God. These are encouraging words to a pastor or missionary!

Please pray with us as we still have several folks who are unsaved and know it. The common words I hear are, "I know I need to be; I know what will happen if I don't; I'm not ready yet." They just cannot let go of the fact that salvation is not a set of religious rules to follow--many come from a Catholic background. We covet your prayers regarding this matter.



SENDING CHURCH: TEMPLE BAPTIST CHURCH • CLARENCE SEXTON, PASTOR • 1700 WEST BEAVER CREEK DR. • POWELL, TN 37849 • (865) 938-8182
MISSION BOARD: BIMI • ACCOUNT #1519 • P.O. BOX 9215 • CHATTANOOGA, TN • 37412 • (423) 344-5050 • BIMI.ORG
CONTACT: SCOTT/TRICIA CRABTREE • 6956 CARDINDALE DRIVE • KNOXVILLE, TN • 37918 • SCOTT@DEAFWORLDVISION.COM
WEB: DEAFWORLDVISION.COM • PHONE: SCOTT: (865) 314-0815 TRICIA: (865) 314-6926

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