

Haasnoot Happenings



Helping to equip church leaders in Kajo-Keji, South Sudan

December 2012

We look back on a good year with many highlights. We tell you a bit more about what we have experienced: stories from South Sudan, Kenya and the Netherlands.

To refresh your memory (since we only write an English newsletter once a year): Mirjam and Jaap (Jacob) live in Kajo-Keji, South Sudan. They both teach at a small theological college in the Episcopal (Anglican) Diocese of Kajo-Keji. Desta and David spend most of their time at a St. Andrew's School in Turi, Kenya. Joel & Tirza and Jesse live in the Netherlands.

We are doing well! We like our work in South Sudan a lot and Desta and David do well at school in Kenya. The 'Dutch division' is also managing okay. Of course we miss each other every now and then but we have learned to accept it and we try to make up when we see each other!

Mirjam has been teaching English Language at the College. Jaap taught a variety of theological subjects this year: NT Greek, Evangelism, Current issues in Theology and Counseling.



Sharpen your spear

At the end of April, Jaap travelled to Adol near Rumbek to teach an Understanding your Bible better workshop for 30 Dinka pastors.

Many pastors in that area have had very little theological training. They only have the New Testament translated in Dinka Bor so it is quite a challenge for them to teach the whole Gospel. They expected the training to be like sharpening your spear in order to be a better hunter. Jaap taught four subjects: Understanding the Bible, The Story of the Bible, Preaching and Special Topics.

The pastors learned new things and the training helped them to grow in their role as pastor. Jaap: "Since revenge killings are part of daily life in the area, we discussed forgiveness and also healing trauma. It was humbling to hear how these pastors try to stop the revenge chain and go against the tide. We need to pray for these leaders and for the Gospel to really transform their culture and communities".



Desta, Jaap, Mirjam and David in Kampala

We wish you a Merry Christmas and blessings for 2013!



Mirjam at the market in Kajo-Keji

The wedding

A big highlight was the wedding of **Joel** and **Tirza** on 15th August this year. We were already in the Netherlands for a 2-months' furlough.

It was a wonderful sunny and warm day with African-like temperatures! We had Ethiopian food for lunch and after the legal ceremony in the town hall, we had a beautiful wedding service in Arnhem.

The couple found a nice apartment near Arnhem (and also very close to an IKEA store, so useful..). Joel got an IT trainee position with the Dutch Railways and Tirza is taking a gap year from her studies.



The life

Jesse (19) has many favourite phrases but one of them is “#thelife” (in Dutch: “#deleven”) which he normally uses when he is enjoying life. He was actually enjoying life as a first year teacher training college student a bit too much but he made it to the second year.

He is a very busy person: two part-time jobs, youth leader at church, going to concerts and many other things. Well, and studying of course!

He likes his studies and he had quite a bit of internship time at primary schools this year, which he enjoys.

Anything to add? Relationships, perhaps? No news. Seems to be quiet on the Western front...



The school

The school is St. Andrew's School in Turi, Kenya and the two special students are Desta (15) and David (13). Both of them had a good year at St. Andrew's.

Desta is busy with his IGCSE Exams this school year. He was part of the cross-country team this last term and the team became first at an interschool competition. Desta got a scholarship from St. Andrew's for year 12 and 13 and his parents are very proud! Although Desta was born in Ethiopia, he is also promoting Dutch culture at school by wearing his bright yellow wooden shoes at times.

David started year 8 in September and he will be joining Desta at Senior school next year. David feels very responsible in his prefect role but also enjoys the privileges that come with the position! David likes scouting a lot and has been really doing well at school in all areas.



The future of Missions is here

Kajo-Keji is a fascinating place. In my job in the Netherlands (with the Dutch Evangelical Missionary Alliance) I (Jaap) was studying new developments in mission and now I see it all happen in real time. In May this year two couples from mainland China came to Kajo-Keji to work with the church in South Sudan. They belong to a large unregistered church in China. They have not come to minister to other Chinese but to reach out to South Sudanese.

Then later in the year two brothers came from the Anglican Church in Nigeria as missionaries to South Sudan to strengthen the church and do evangelism. Venerable Isaac and evangelist Chidi Moses bring a new dynamic to our community.

It is wonderful to see that God is doing new things. The future of missions is in the global South and it's happening right before our eyes! Chidi Moses is convinced that "this is a new move in the calendar of God". He continues: "African Christians will take the Gospel back to Europe in a fresh way. And the church in Nigeria will play a major role".





“The Christmas story [...] isn't about an escape from the real world of politics and economics, of empires and taxes and bloodthirsty wars. It's about God addressing these problems at last, from within, coming into our world – *his world!*...”

(N.T. Wright, Sermon Christmas Eve 2006)

Don't choose like hyena

Every Thursday we have a Community Worship at Canon Benaiah Poggo College. We worship God together and we celebrate Holy Communion. A few weeks ago one of the Diploma students, Rev. Kwanyi Henry Peter, preached during that time on Joshua 24:14-15 (“...choose yourselves this day whom you will serve.”). We summarize part of his sermon here to give you a feel of life at the College.

Rev. Kwanyi started by saying: Don't choose like a hyena! Hyena was hungry and came to a junction in the road. On the one side he smelled fish, which he liked. On the other side he smelled rotten meat, which he also liked. He couldn't choose, he was too greedy. So he put one leg towards the fish and one leg towards the meat, because he wanted to get both! Hyena was stretching himself so much that he split into two and died. We shouldn't be like hyena. We can't serve the LORD and at the same time the gods of our ancestors. That is what we often try, but the passage in Joshua challenges us to put our trust in God alone. So let us not be like hyena but like Joshua! That means that we fear the Lord and serve him with faithfulness and in truth.



Martha and Asanti are now neighbours, staying with their grandparents Alex and Mary. The girls have lived in Juba and first spoke only Juba-Arabic. They now learn Bari and also some English. When they see us, they say at least five times: “How are you fine?”. They have changed our sleepy corner of the College compound into a lively place!

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