

Haasnoot Happenings



Equipping Church Leaders in Kajo-Keji, South Sudan

December 2013

This year has been special for us in many ways. We celebrated our 25th wedding anniversary, Jaap was ordained as a deacon and we have enjoyed our work in South Sudan! We will tell you a bit more about these and other highlights in the past year.

We have been busy teaching this past year. But that is good of course. In the 2nd semester we had two groups finishing their studies and two groups starting. That meant more classes to teach.

Mirjam taught English, Study skills and Children's Ministry. More than half of the population of South Sudan is younger than 18 years old, so it is important that pastors have a clear vision for working with children and youth in the church.

Jaap taught a variety of subjects: African Theology, OT Hebrew, Philosophy & Apologetics, Apocalyptic literature and Understanding the OT. Together we also organised an Alpha Course for students. In African Christian Theology we looked at the relation between the Gospel and African culture. It is important to express the Gospel in a way that is relevant for the situation in South Sudan. That doesn't happen automatically and it was (and continues to be) a good challenge to be dealing with.



Above: The College compound – photo: Michael Blyth



Ordination

At the beginning of July Jaap was ordained as a deacon in the Episcopal Church of South Sudan and Sudan (name change as of late November).

That was a very special and moving occasion. Jaap was the first 'white person' to be ordained in Kajo-Keji. Jaap's job description hasn't changed much but now we are more part of the Church. It is also good to be ordained yourself when training pastors.

Desta and David were with us in South Sudan that day and also some mission colleague's from Yei visited to witness the occasion.

25th Wedding Anniversary

In August we had a wonderful holiday near lake Naivasha in Kenya with our all our boys, our daughter-in-law Tirza and Mirjam's sister Els.

Some of us climbed Mount Longonot and the five 'boys' explored Hell's Gate national park by bicycle. We also visited the campsite where our Africa orientation course started in 1996!

One evening, we prepared special food and celebrated our 25th wedding anniversary as a family with good memories and music.

On the actual date of our anniversary, October 24th, we were in Kajo-Keji. We had a moving service of Thanksgiving at the College with students and colleagues. The principal, Rev. John Mono, led the service. We renewed our marriage vows and received a blessing. After the service we had a joyful meal with the college community.



The Dutch division

Joel and Tirza live in Velp, near Arnhem. They have an apartment on the 10th floor with view on one of those IKEA megastores! Joel enjoys his job at the Dutch Railway company. He works in the IT-department and is part of a team that develops an app for customer feedback. Tirza studies General Linguistics at Utrecht University. They are actively involved in church activities.

Jesse lives in Ede. He is in the second year of Teacher Training College. He enjoys his internship in grade 6. He likes being part of the youth group leadership team at church. That also keeps him busy. His girlfriend is called **Anke**, she studies nursing. In February she will start with a work/study programme at the hospital in Ede. She will be working for four days and needs to study the rest of the week.



The Dutch in Turi

The only two Dutch students in St. Andrew's School in Turi, Kenya are Desta (16) and David (14). Both of them had a good year at St. Andrew's.

Desta did very well at his IGCSE's. He had 6 A*'s, 3 A's and 2 B's and got a scholarship for the last two years at Turi. We are very proud of him! Desta was also part of the cross-country team and the football team. Desta's Dutch girlfriend is called **Inge** and she lives in Kampala. Her parents work with MAF. They see each other during school holidays and sometimes Inge visits Turi together with Mirjam during the family weekends.

David had Common Entrance exams at the end of year 8 and he performed very well. He also got a scholarship! David is now in Senior school in year 9 and was happy to exchange his uniform shorts for long trousers! (The wooden shoes were not part of the uniform though...). David enjoyed being part of the rugby team a lot and didn't mind the bruises too much. He is also part of the technical team doing sound and lights for school plays.



Working on the Bari concordance

Concordance

Our former Wycliffe colleagues will be happy to hear that we not have forgotten our 'first love'! Together with 8 students we have been working on a small concordance in the Bari-language of South Sudan.

The Bari Bible is very much in use but there are no other resources for Bible study in Bari. When Jaap taught Lay Readers (most of them don't know English), he saw the need for a concordance to help them prepare sermons.

We used the 'index' in the Good News Bible as a basis but also added a number of key words. Mirjam did a lot of checking and typing and Jaap worked with the students and did the fine tuning.

The concordance has 415 entries and will be printed soon.

We wish you a merry Christmas and blessings for the New Year!



Did Jesus Christ ever kill a lion?

One day a missionary went to a remote area in Tanzania to proclaim the Gospel among the Maasai. He explained that Jesus is the Son of God, the Saviour and Redeemer of all humankind. When he finished, a Maasai elder slowly stood up and said to the missionary, "You have spoken well, but I want to learn more about this great person, Jesus Christ. I have three questions. First, did he ever kill a lion? Second, how many cows did he have? Third, how many wives and children did have?"

(From: Joseph G. Healey, African Stories, For preachers and teachers, Nairobi, 2009²)



The 3rd year students finished the Alpha Course this month. In January we will continue with the 1st year students.



Departure MAF plane Kajo-Keji airstrip. Photo: Michael Blyth



Sokare (far left) is one of the many high school students who attend the English service in the Cathedral. She lives with her grandma and earns 37 S-Sudan pounds with fetching water for someone. That is exactly the amount she needs for school fees. Photo: Michael Blyth

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