

Haasnoot Happenings



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

December 2011

We had lots of 'happenings' this past year. Some sad, some exciting. We will give you updates from three countries: South Sudan, Kenya and The Netherlands.

The hardest thing this past year was the passing away of Mirjam's father, Henk van der Vlist. He was diagnosed with stomach cancer in March and he died on May 16th of complications after major surgery. We were able to go to the Netherlands for the funeral and be with family. We really miss him but we are thankful for his life and his example.

South Sudan

From the beginning of the year until September Jaap travelled back and forth from Kampala to Kajo-Keji to do his teaching. He really enjoyed the teaching but the times away from the family were not ideal.

July 9th marked the independence of South Sudan and Jaap was there to celebrate. People are very hopeful for the future but there is still a long way to go.



St. Andrew's School Kenya

Desta and David started boarding school in Kenya in September. The first few weeks were difficult for all of us but now they are enjoying it. They made some friends and have good grades. There are a number of opportunities to see each other during the year. At mid-term and term breaks we meet up in Kampala, Uganda.

Canon Benaiah Poggo College

We (Mirjam and Jaap) live now in Kajo-Keji, South Sudan at the compound of the College. Jaap taught a number of theological subjects this year and Mirjam has been teaching English to students at the College and also to high school students. We really enjoyed our teaching. It is so encouraging to teach students that are eager to learn. Mirjam: "It is really fun to help students develop their speaking skills in English". Jaap: "I have fond memories of teaching at a Lay Readers' training. I had to use an interpreter into Bari language but the students were just so willing to learn and know more. It was a great experience and it is a blessing to be able to help equip church leaders in this way".



Desta, Jaap, Mirjam and David in Kampala



Grandpa Henk van der Vlist and David in 2007.



Joel (22)

The past year has been a very busy one for me: New Year's Eve was (just barely) spent with my girlfriend Tirza, after a great trip to Uganda for Christmas.

In January I finished a crossover program at a university, successfully passing the exams for a big course-load to meet different requirements. I then spent 5 months at an internet marketing company as an intern, developing an iPhone app to present interesting deals that are close by for my graduation project. I graduated in July (with mom, Desta, David and Tirza present at the ceremony), and since then have been working full time on developing reservation and ecommerce websites for Deskbookers, a company I started with two partners.

In September, After 999 days of dating, I proposed to Tirza after a picnic in a nearby nature reserve, and she said Yes! We have yet to set a final wedding date, but we hope to get married next August.



Photo © Hanneke van de Put

Jesse (18)

This year I graduated from secondary school (*Ichthus College* in Veenendaal) and started studying in Ede. I am studying to become a primary school teacher. Ede is the place where I live at the moment. I stay with a family that was willing to take me in when my parents left for Sudan. I am also active as a youth group leader in our church and I have 2 part-time jobs. I enjoy listening music and hanging out with friends.



Desta (14)

This year has been a busy year. The biggest things were the death of my grandpa and moving to a boarding school in Kenya. On May 16 my grandfather died. This was quite shocking for me. Of course I knew he was really ill and that there was a chance he was going to die but it still came with a shock.

Then on the 4th of September I started school at St. Andrew's School in Kenya. In the beginning it was a big of a struggle. It is now 11 weeks into the school year and I am having a lot of fun. In two weeks it is Christmas holiday and I will be able to go home for a month.

I am in year 10 (grade 9) now and have chosen my subjects. I chose: History, French, I.C.T., and P.E. I also have to take: English, Math and all the sciences. I am really enjoying all these subjects and have recently been moved up into the top set.

This year has had its downs but it also had some major peaks. I have really enjoyed this year and hope you have too.



Desta



David (12)

A very big change this year. First of all a new school with boarding. Getting used to school was hard in the first week but I got over it. Now when it's almost Christmas, weeks come by as if they are days. Mum and Dad also moved to Sudan making communicating a bit harder. For example: internet only after nine p.m. for mum and dad and only telephone network in certain places. I'm really looking forward to Christmas with my family in Kampala. A Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to you all!





“Jesus, the Light of the World, as we celebrate your birth may we begin to see the world in the light of the understanding you give us. As you chose the lowly, the outcasts, and the poor to receive the greatest news the world had ever known, so may we worship you in meekness of heart. May we also remember our brothers and sisters less fortunate than ourselves in this season of giving. Amen”.



Jaap preaching at a College communion service



Cecilia, one of the students in the Pastoral Training course that Mirjam is teaching English

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