

Light to the Nations

NILE THEOLOGICAL
COLLEGE
NEWSLETTER

NOVEMBER 20, 2018

**SPECIAL POINTS
OF INTEREST:**

- **Graduation for our Seniors will be on Monday, December 10th, 3pm, at the Juba Basketball Stadium in Nimra Talata. If you are in Juba, come Join us!**
- **We have just admitted 35 new students for our new intake, beginning January. Celebrate with us!**
- **Please pray with us in the search process for our new Academic Dean.**

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From the Desk of the Principal

I am very delighted to reintroduce our Nile newsletter after a long absence. I thank God for bringing Rev. Bob Rice, who, with a group of students and staff, are again producing our twice yearly newsletter. I would like to seize this opportunity to share with the readers our aspirations, dreams and visions. Nile Theological College's top priority is acquiring land. Achieving this dream will stabilize the College after its latest relocation from Malakal. While friends and partners may feel reluctant to invest in infrastructure due to war and

the fragile political situation, acquiring land is important as one day the situation will stabilize. Organizations which



acquired land during the last war of 22 years are the most fortunate. Our second priority is faculty development. Currently we are only three full-time

teaching staff. To fulfill teaching all courses, we supplement ourselves with part-time teachers from other institutions. Soon we will add two teaching staff who are on studies at Africa International University. We aspire to enroll teaching staff from expatriates who volunteer to teach short courses which we offer every year. We plan to increase the number of the full time faculty to at least 10 teaching staff in the next 3-5 years. Moreover, we shall add more masters holders to the teaching staff, also aiming to train at least 3 PhDs holders in the next 3-5 years. Other top priorities for us at NTC, Juba,

Remembering our Beloved Dean

The late Reverend John Tong Puk, who had served faithfully as our beloved dean, had gone to Khartoum to see his family during the college break where he died on the 13th of June. We, the leadership the South Sudan Presbyterian Evangelical Church (SSPEC), hosted a second funeral here in Juba in early July. When I heard the news of Rev. John's death, I felt shocked as we had worked together for a very

long time, going back to the time serving with the Egyptian missionaries and also the American Mission. Because we both spoke Arabic well, we were able to minister to many different tribes. Rev. John Tong Puk was very active. He considered his work at NTC a calling and he was a true follower of Jesus. He was selected for this work because of his long experience working with

the church in many different places. Rev. John was someone who sat and spoke with all people, especially the students. He would sit with them and encourage them. This quality in a leader is rare. Whenever confronted with a difficult situation, John Tong would always say "Cebom Elong" (in the Nuer language), which means "It is very serious, a difficult thing." I think of him as as "zol insaan," a justice person; he had a good idea of right and wrong. We have lost a great man.

Both front page articles continued on page 2...

From the Desk of the Principal (continued from page 1...)



Principal Rev. Santino Odong receives partners and friends from the World Council of Reformed Churches and the Presbyterian Church (USA)

“I think of him as ‘zol insaan’, a justice person; he had a good idea of right and wrong. We have lost a great man”

include: developing and upgrading our library, revising our curriculum to better suit our context, upgrading our college to a university, and to make the college self-reliant through generating projects. In conclusion, big things begin with small ideas which turn in to actions where there is commitment. By God’s income grace, prayers and our combined efforts, we trust that a considerable portion if not all of these visions will be actualized.

Rev. Santino Odong

Remembering Our Beloved Dean (Continued from page 1...)

I hope that when the college is able to buy land and build that we can give the name of Rev. John Tong Puk to one of the classrooms or the conference hall. I am very sorry for our loss. We need you to pray. We lost a great man in this church and someone deeply committed to the college.

This article, written by Presbyterian Church (USA) mission-worker Rev. Bob Rice, summarizes an interview of Reverend James Partap who serves as Moderator of the South Sudan Presbyterian Evangelical Church (SSPEC) and also serves as Chairman of the Nile Theological College Council.



The Late Rev. John Tong Puk remembered

New Staff Profile, Rev. Oman Amum



Rev. Oman Amum, from Upper Nile State, joined Nile Theological College in 2005 after ten years of serving as a volunteer evangelist of the Presbyterian Church of Sudan (PCOS) in Khartoum. He graduated from NTC, Khartoum, in 2008 with a Bachelor of Theology degree (BTh) in Pastoral Ministry, whereby

he then served as a pastor in training, also in Khartoum, until his ordination on March 26th of this year, after which he came to join us here in Juba. Rev. Oman continues the journey and call of God upon his life. He currently assists the college with the intake of new students and assisting with general administration and academic affairs. Rev. Oman

prays for his brothers and sisters to be blessed in the mission God has given them, to stand strong in the face of the temptations which face them in their studies and service. We can pray for Rev. Oman in his pursuit of further studies (Master degree, PhD) and for him as he grows more comfortable and proficient with English.



Rev. Michael Aban (pictured left), Registrar of NTC, ably handles the role of Acting Academic Dean in the absence of our late dean. We are grateful for his service!

NTC could not function without the faithful commitment of its staff (pictured right): Paulino Othow, Mama Sarah John, Veronica Peter, Bhakita Ajiba, Mama Tabitha Odhok.



Reflection from Thomas Tut, Member of 2018 Graduating Class

First of all, on behalf of my colleagues, I would like to register my sincere thanks to Almighty God who makes it possible for me to be given this privilege to represent the whole class. I also appreciate NTC leadership according to my personal experience during these last four years as a student. I recognize the able leadership of the NTC administration, transferring the college from the Upper Nile Region (Malakal) to Juba, the capital of South Sudan, in 2014. I have witnessed also the commitment of lecturers,

both from South Sudan and also abroad, to equip students to be the theological leaders and community leaders of tomorrow. I appreciate the progress of the college in the areas of spiritual nourishment, fellowship, seminars and spiritual transformation. Overall, I have experienced and seen God's guidance and His compassion on the college. As the former student body chairperson, I want to share the challenges we have experienced and also my hope for the future. From the start of the conflict in 2013 until

present, we lost the lives of some of our fellow students. From the senior class we lost these two students: Late Reverend Peter Lam Beach, Late Evangelist Ochan Ojolo Ochan. From the junior class, we lost these two students: Late Reverend Daniel Gil Pal, Late Evangelist Simon Ngout. Regarding the future of NTC, I expect many good things. I have a dream that in two years' time NTC will be the best theological university among the theological schools in the Republic of South Sudan.



"I have a dream that in two years time NTC will be the best theological university among the theological schools of South Sudan"

Staff Development

Rev. Santino Odong, Principal, is interested to pursue doctoral studies with particular interest in sacramental theology, specifically "The Lord's Supper/Holy Communion." He is currently working on his research proposal which highlights his area of interest, "the validity of the solutions given by Western Missionaries for partaking in Holy Communion especially in regards to polygamists." Rev. Santino intends to begin his studies next year by distance learning either in South Africa or at Aberdeen University in Scotland.

Rev. Michael Aban, current Acting Academic Dean, has been accepted for PhD studies by the Oxford Center for Religion and Public Life (OCRPL) in collaboration with

Stellenbosch University in South Africa. Exploring the intersection of faith and culture, Rev. Michael's proposed dissertation title is "Northern Luo Beliefs and its Relationship to the Living Dead." His vision for continued studies is to help NTC establish a graduate school which can produce scholars for South Sudan, Africa, and the world. Rev. Michael also hopes to help establish a publishing house in Juba to help the coming generation of Christian leaders. The administration of NTC seeks help from partners and friends for scholarship support for Rev. Michael's studies. The total cost of the 4-5 year program is \$17,000, not including annual travel to South Africa for the annual month-long

residency. Rev. Michael asks for prayer so that he can balance his busy schedule of teaching at the college along with his part-time doctoral studies which will commence in October, 2019. **Rev. Oman Amum**, Teaching Assistant, seeks to begin his Master Degree in Theology next year in Cairo, Egypt, followed by doctoral studies; he hopes to begin next year by God's grace. **Revs. Solomon Wuor Nyuop & Andrew Juth Kang**, Teaching Staff, are currently studying for their Master of Divinity degree at Africa International University (AIU) in Nairobi; they will join the faculty in July, 2019.



The NTC family commemorated "College Day" on October 20th, celebrating 27 years of God's faithfulness to our community



Nile Theological College was established by the two Presbyterian Churches (Presbyterian Church of Sudan and Sudan Presbyterian Evangelical Church) in 1991 in Khartoum, Sudan. In 2011, with independence of South Sudan from Sudan, the College opened a new campus in South Sudan, situated in a northern city called Malakal. Due to breakout of war in South Sudan in 2013, the College was relocated to Juba, the capital city of South Sudan. Nile Theological College seeks to provide theological and practical training to equip men and women for effective ministry in fulfilling the Great Commission (Matthew 28: 16 — 20) in South Sudan today. The College exists to glorify God and to ensure character formation through the training it offers to God's servants both women and men in South Sudan and the region.

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A team of students, staff and faculty create the twice yearly newsletter. Members of the team, pictured from left, include: Sebit Adwok Jongdit, Daniel Achwil Obany, Peter Ayul(staff), Rev. Bob Rice (faculty), Otor Kudit Aney, and David Dach Kueth.

Visiting Professor Program

Rev. Paul Hensley, an Anglican priest from USA, came to South Sudan as a short-term missionary. He inspired us as Nile Theological College students by his intensive course on reformation church history taught over three weeks, though it felt like three months with so much material to cover! Usually in South Sudan it is not common for a teacher to share a table with his/her student, but Rev. Paul Hensley, driven by compassion to live the life of Christ by example, humbly shared the table with students, eating jenyjaro (beans) with them every day. Rev. Paul created a bridge instead of gap

between students and him. Paul said “although in USA life is simple in term of security, but I feel like God is calling me to spent some time with you guys, and I promise that I am willing to be back if I have a chance.” Students were more excited for visiting professor Hensley, who is willing to leave his comfort zone and get out to serve students.



This article is written by Sebit Adwok Jongdit, a junior student who has the gift of photography and who often raises his hand from the back of the classroom with something meaningful to share. Sebit and his fellow students invite others to come as Paul came as a visiting professor. Come, join us! (Rev. Paul pictured right with junior student John Ohdong; a special party was hosted by NTC for Paul's farewell).