

**St. Luke's Theological College
and
Christian Outreach in Refugee
Empowerment (CORE) Mission Center at
Adjumani Refugee Camp**



Meet the NALC's worker in South Sudan:



My name is Reverend Matthew M. Riak. I was born in the war zone of South Sudan and became aware of Jesus as my Savior when I was seven years old. These two facts have shaped who I am and the nature of my ministry today. My strong personal relationship with Christ has brought me to the place where my only desire is to allow him to work through me in whatever way.

In 1992 I came to Kakuma Refugee Camp in Kenya, where I stayed for nine years and completed high school (1999). During that time I worked as the Adult Christian Education Field Director, trained as a Bible translator for the Dinka language, served as a Sunday school and Mothers' Union teacher, and worked in youth leadership training. I received a diploma from the Theological Education by Extension Ministry, Sudan Program (TEEM).

In 2001, I married my lovely Sudanese wife, Achol, but soon after left for the United States as part of the resettlement process. In the U.S., I was invited by Pr. Kelvin Smith to minister to the Lost Boys of Sudan in Charlotte, NC. In 2003, Achol joined me while I studied for a degree in Christian Education at New Life Theological Seminary. I was also a pastor for the Sudanese Christian Community Fellowship in the Episcopal Diocese of NC. I took every opportunity to share with churches about the pain and suffering of the Sudanese people caused by the civil war in South Sudan, and to let people know why the Lost Boys Sudan are here in America. At the end of 2003, God gave me an opportunity to form Sudan Lutheran Community Development (SLCD) to address a variety of needs of South Sudanese people in both the US and South Sudan.

In August, 2004, Achol and I moved to Grand Rapids, Michigan where we joined with ELCA churches in developing a South Sudanese ministry in Michigan. God blessed this vision with the outcome of forming Sudanese Christ Lutheran Church in Grand Rapids which worshipped for the first time on May 23, 2005. This congregation has grown to serve many South Sudanese individuals and families in Michigan.

In the last few years, I have earned a bachelor's degree, a master's in Christian education from Newburgh Seminary, and a master's in theological studies from the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago. I am an ordained pastor of the NALC and LCMC assigned with my family to missionary service through World Mission Prayer League to develop St. Luke's Theological College in South Sudan.

Today, with the help of St. Luke's Lutheran Church (LCMC) in Grand Rapids, MI, World Mission Prayer League, the North American Lutheran Church, and several LCMC congregations, I travel between the U.S. and South Sudan to share the Gospel and develop Christian leaders through St. Luke's Theological College

in South Sudan. With my wife and son, Emmanuel, I look forward to serving the Lord we worship through this ministry.

Due to civil war in South Sudan, St. Luke's Theological College in Bor, which I worked for some time to establish and open, has been temporarily closed. With new headquarters now in Nimule, St. Luke's Theological College plans to reopen in 2015. Classrooms and an administrative building will be built on land donated by the Anglican Church.



In the interim, I opened the Christian Outreach in Refugee Empowerment (CORE) Mission Center with the aim of addressing the needs of South Sudanese refugees in Uganda. Its particular focus is "hope, healing and help to South Sudanese children and youth in the Adjumani Refugee Camp."

This mission center for children in the refugee camp offers counseling services (especially for those children with no parents or family in the camp) as well as recreation and education, with the aim of building up their self-confidence and hope while working to protect them from neglect, violence and exploitation. We currently seek to add a counselor to the staff.

St. Luke's Theological College built a compound at the refugee camp with seven classrooms and opened St. Luke's Core Primary School in May with seven teachers and 700 students. Enrollment has swelled to 1,700 students and 12 teachers. With funding from the United Nations, permanent classrooms are under construction, and the day to day operations of the school are handled by local leaders and the Parents and Teachers Association. The United Nations recently recognized and praised this important and timely work.



Financial support for me and my family is funded through gifts to World Mission Prayer League. Donations to St. Luke's Theological College Development Association provide funds for the College and the primary school at Adjumani Refugee Camp.

May God's will be fulfilled!

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