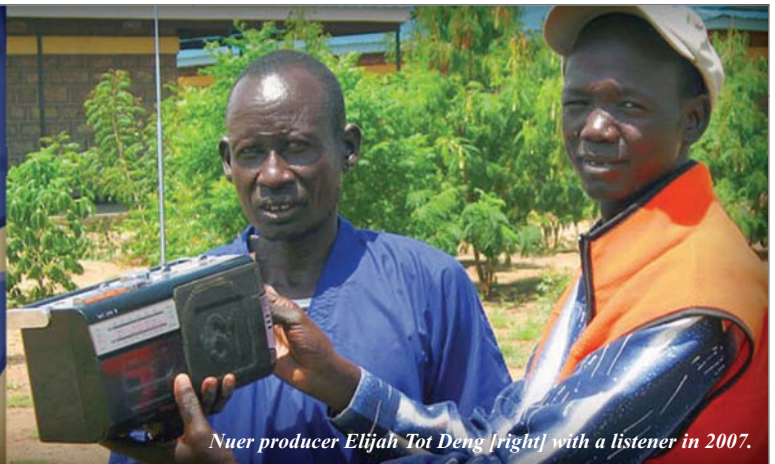


# Words of HOPE

UPDATE

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*Nuer producer Elijah Tot Deng [right] with a listener in 2007.*

## Sudan Broadcasts Continue After Leader's Passing

In mid-January, senior Nuer language broadcaster and Sudanese pastor Elijah Tot Deng traveled from the Lokichoggio ministry center near the Sudan-Kenya border to Nairobi for treatment of persistent nosebleeds. He was admitted to a Nairobi hospital where his symptoms initially improved. In February, Elijah's condition worsened and on March 5, 2008 he unexpectedly passed away from undiagnosed liver cancer. His friendship, dedicated leadership, and inspired Bible teaching are deeply missed.

Elijah was only 43 years old and leaves a 28-year-old widow Nyadeng Chol and five young children. He had produced

Nuer programs for nearly a decade. He had served as the Sudanese production team leader since 2003. An ordained minister of the Presbyterian Church of Sudan, Elijah's edifying gospel broadcasts touched hundreds of thousands of Nuer listeners throughout his homeland. His effective management of the Middle East Reformed Fellowship's (MERF) Lokichoggio ministry center facilitated the Biblical training of hundreds of fellow Sudanese pastors and evangelists.

That unique training ministry is operated by Words of Hope's ministry partner MERF. It has borne considerable fruit since it began operating in 2003.



*Elijah's successor is David Wat, pictured in this November 2004 Lokichoggio graduation photo.*

Lokichoggio ("Loki") graduates have been instrumental in the planting of dozens of churches and the growth of hundreds of

Presbyterian congregations throughout Sudan. In addition, all four of the current Sudanese broadcast producers are graduates of the Lokichoggio training effort which is based at the same facility where Words of Hope's Nuer and Dinka radio producers live and work.

Producers David Wat Puot and Gabriel Riek Tap are Loki graduates who now produce nightly 30 minute gospel broadcasts in the Nuer language. Similarly, Loki alums Peter Machok Monykuer and William Malot Dhieu produce nightly 30 minute Dinka broadcasts.

According to extensive 2007 audience research conducted by the Words of Hope-sponsored Media Research Institute (MRI), these are the most-listened to broadcasts among southern Sudanese listeners. The leadership development training is helpful to the church at large as well as to the Dinka and Nuer broadcasting efforts.

SEE OTHER SIDE FOR:

• Max & Esther DePree

## A Conversation with the DePrees

*Words of Hope has been blessed through the years with wonderful support and leadership from volunteer board members. Max and Esther De Pree are great examples. Both Esther and Max have served as trustees of the ministry, and have also served as co-chairs of a Words of Hope fund-raising campaign to expand into new broadcast languages. David Bast recently visited the DePrees at their home in Holland, Michigan to talk about their relationship with Words of Hope.*

**David:** How did you first become involved with the ministry of Words of Hope?

**Esther:** Well I think that we probably knew about it from the time it started. Of course your dad had a tremendous ministry through Words of Hope and what was then Temple Time. And I think we all just admired everything that he stood for in his preaching.

**Max:** For me, when I was quite a young man, Henry Bast was a mentor to me. He got me involved in some things that I felt I was a little young for. But he told me I did not have any business trying to decide that. He said that if you are called, you are called. And so he was one of the early people in my life with whom I had a mentoring relationship. And that of course carried over into our feelings towards Words of Hope as well.

**David:** What is it about the ministry of Words of Hope that still engages you at this point in your life?

**Esther:** I think Words of Hope has just a tremendous ministry — radio ministry around the world. All of the preachers that have been involved, I think have been very evangelical, very grounded in the Word. And it just is so important that they continue to reach people by radio because so many of them would not hear or be witnessed to in any other way.

**Max:** Yes, one of the interesting



*Max and Esther DePree have served as Words of Hope trustees.*

things to me in addition to what Esther says is that we live in a world which is more and more culturally riven, and there are no general rules about things. One has to respond in terms of what is possible, and we are learning that one of the things that is most possible in the world today is communication through radio — partly because so much of the other media are so extremely controlled by secular forces. And so I think providentially radio is the way in which we can reach many, many people who would otherwise be left out.

**David:** What do you pray for when you think about the world?

**Max:** Well, I think there are several things at play. It isn't as though we are praying adequately if we pray

only that people may be won to Christ. I think if we have a Christian heart about the efforts to reach people, we also want for them to have a sense of justice. And we want them to have a sense of opportunity. We would like for people to be fed. We would like people to have a chance at education. We know how important education is in relation to both, for instance, both being fed and in relation to justice. And so it seems to

me that the goal is to pray in a full way: that in their lives people may meet Jesus in an effective way but at the same time that their other needs [will be met].

**Esther:** I do think that a lot of the people that you are reaching probably are not being well fed both spiritually and physically. And that of course is a big part of the gospel.

**David:** You both have been long-time supporters of Words of Hope. Why do you continue to give to and pray for Words of Hope

**Esther:** Because we do really believe in their ministry.

**Max:** Yes, since we have both been trustees, we have had the opportunity to know Words of Hope intimately. And we know the results, and we think it is one of the most effective ministries that we are aware of. So it is natural to support it.

**David:** Thank you.

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