Prof. (Pst.) Asiwe Joseph Nwafor Akanwe

March 1962 – January 2023

Remember me when I am gone away Gone far away into the silent land When you can no longer hold me by the hand When you can no longer see my radiant smile When you wish I could with you walk the mile Remember me when no more can I offer my Godly wisdom and humour Remember me when you know day by day With you I would have wished to stay When you think of the future we had planned Only remember me, but You understand It will be late to counsel then or pray Yet if you should forget me for a while And afterwards remember, do not grieve For if the darkness and corruption leave A relic of the thoughts that I once had Better by far you should forget and smile Than that you should remember and be sad

Remember

Celebrating the Life of



Prof. (Pst.) Joseph N.A. Asiwe

ORDER OF SERVICE

PART I – PRE-BURIAL SERVICE

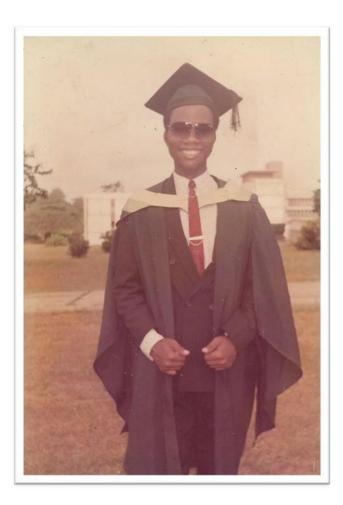
- 1. Opening prayer Pastor Sandy Williams
- 2. Hymn 1 CFC Band
- 3. Announcement of purpose Pastor Sandy Williams
- 4. Sermon Pastor Sandy Williams
- 5. Hymn 2 CFC Band
- 6. Scripture reading Daniel Asiwe
- 7. Hymn 3
- 8. Scripture reading Victor Asiwe
- 9. Tributes
- 10. Hymn 4 CFC Band
- 11. Scripture reading David Asiwe
- 12. Special items Michelle Molokela
- 13. Hymn 5 CFC Band
- 14. Offering
- 15. Announcement Pastor Alvin Erens
- 16. Benediction Pastor Alvin Erens
- 17. Recessional hymn Hallelujah

PART II – GRAVESIDE SERVICE AND INTERMENT

- 1. Hymn Pastor Alvin Erens
- 2. Opening prayer Pastor Matshavha Makgatho
- 3. Committal and prayer Pastor Alvin Erens
- 4. Vote of thanks Daniel Asiwe
- 5. Hymn
- 6. Benediction and departure

PART III – POST-FUNERAL RECEPTION

Biography of the Late Prof. (Pst.) Joseph Akanwe Nwafor Asiwe



Prof. Joseph Nwafor Akanwe Asiwe was born at Aliegbon Quarters, Idumuesah in Ika North East Local Government Area in Bendel State, Nigeria on 20 March 1962 to Antony Orelu Asiwe and Titi Roseline Asiwe (nee Iyare).

He started his education at Ibili Primary School, Idumuesah, Delta State between 1967 and 1975. On completion of his primary education, he immediately gained admission to secondary school at Ute-Okpu Grammar School, in Delta State after a competitive interview process. He then furthered his education in 1980 at the Department of Biology/Chemistry at the Bendel State College of Education, Abraka, Nigeria.

From 1982-1987, he studied B.Sc. Agriculture (Crop Science) at Nigeria's premier university, the University of Ibadan. He excelled as an undergraduate student where he received the Zard grant as the best student in the Agronomy Department. After the mandatory National Youth Service (1987- 1988), he proceeded to do a master's degree program in Agronomy (Horticulture) at his alma mater the University of Ibadan, Nigeria. He was awarded the Zard grant as the

best student in Horticulture courses during his master's degree. Prof. Asiwe later pursued his doctorate degree in breeding and entomology also at the University of Ibadan and graduated in 2004.

His professional career started in 1989 when he joined the International Institute for Tropical Agriculture (IITA) research team for cassava in the Tuber and Root Improvement Program at the renowned CGIAR centre. In career progression, he was elevated into a senior research position to work in the Grain Legumes Improvement Program working on cowpea breeding and entomology research for a decade.

After a good stint at IITA where he meritoriously distinguished himself as part of the highly revered cowpea scientific team, he proceeded to continue cowpea research as an internationally recruited scientist and plant breeder at the Agricultural Research Council (ARC)- Grain Crops Institute (GCI) in Potchefstroom in 2005. He immediately set out to strengthen and broaden the cowpea germplasm for South Africa exploring his past international networks to build a robust cowpea breeding for South Africa that resulted in significant impact leading to the development of high yielding cowpea varieties.

In 2006, he was recommended for the best Scientist Award in Plant Science and Technology Transfer Division, ARC-GCI. Likewise, in 2007 he was recommended for the Enriched Specialist Scientist Position in the Plant Science and Technology Transfer Division, ARC-GCI.

In 2009, he was appointed as programme manager in the Germplasm Development and Biotechnology Division at the ARC Small Grain Crops Institute in Bethlehem. While at Bethlehem, in addition to his research and management responsibilities, he was appointed as a consultant by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) for a technical co-operation expert mission to Zimbabwe and Namibia to train the national scientists.

In 2013, he was employed as a Professor of Plant breeding to conduct research and teach plant breeding, plant genetics, Integrated Pest Management (IPM) and Biometry at the University of Limpopo, South Africa.

His passion for learning towards personal and professional development continued over the years. He obtained a Postgraduate Diploma in Project Management (PGDPM) from the Management College of Southern Africa (MANCOSA) in 2013 and a Postgraduate Diploma in Strategic Management, Implementation and Control, Corporate governance at UNISA in 2014. Given the dynamic nature of his profession, Prof. Asiwe regularly availed himself for several short training courses, conferences and workshops in Africa, Europe and North America to regularly update his knowledge on recent advances in science and management.

As a professor, he mentored many young South African researchers and postgraduate students under the Professional Development Program (PDP) in agriculture. Several of his former students and research assistants from IITA and UL are now doctors in their respective fields of expertise. He was also the principal investigator for a number of national and international projects. He promoted diversification of grain legumes and utilization in rural communities in South Africa and Africa in general.

Prof. Asiwe was very active in community and research dissemination activities. For example, he was a strong resource person for the training of smallholder and commercial farmers on grain legume production practices, development and promotion of new innovative practices and technologies in farming communities and execution of multiple environment breeding trials. He was a strong advocate for the empowerment of the individual through education and economic enhancement facilitated by agricultural innovation and transfer of technology. In recognition of his service, he was awarded in 2021, the Vice Chancellor Excellence Award for the Best Established Community Engagement Scholar in the University of Limpopo.



All through his career, Prof. Asiwe successfully mobilized funds to execute many research and development projects. In South Africa, he won numerous grants; Prof. executed over 15 research projects, most notably the Food Security and Nutrition Project involving resource-use efficient grain legumes in dry areas of Limpopo funded by the Water Research Commission of South Africa from 2015 to 2019. In the course of his work in South Africa, he collaborated with over 14 national and international organizations. He was also a member of seven national and international professional societies.

Prof. Asiwe was a prolific author. In his over 30 years of working experience, he published several articles in international journals as well as abstracts and papers in proceeding of national and international conferences. He also authored or co-authored books. He developed five cowpea varieties that have been registered for release at the National Department of Agriculture and Forestry and had submitted six more varieties for registration at the time of his death.

Prof. Asiwe married his beloved wife, Dr. Doris Asiwe, in 1993 and his marriage was blessed with three children Daniel, Victor and David. He was very passionate family man, loving husband and father who gave his all to build a Christian home driven by strong values. As a devout Christian, he actively engaged as a leader in Christian fellowships, retreats and crusades, becoming an elder, and later a pastor.

As a pastor, he touched many lives through preaching, counselling and philanthropy. He was highly respected as a



man of integrity and truth. As hobbies, he enjoyed reading, listening to Christian music, and did a lot of gardening and philanthropy. He was widely travelled having visited several countries in different continents.

For his values and virtues, he will be missed by his family, colleagues and friends.

May his soul rest in perfect peace.

Tributes by wife and children

Dr. Doris Asiwe:

It seems like yesterday that we became one but it is 10 months short of 30 years. Our first talk of expectations from each other flashes through my mind as I put my emotions down at this moment. Through the years, you kept your promise to me; you were the perfect partner and husband I could have ever asked for. I on the other hand was far from perfect but you were quick to forgive and count each day as new - not counting my faults of yesterday.

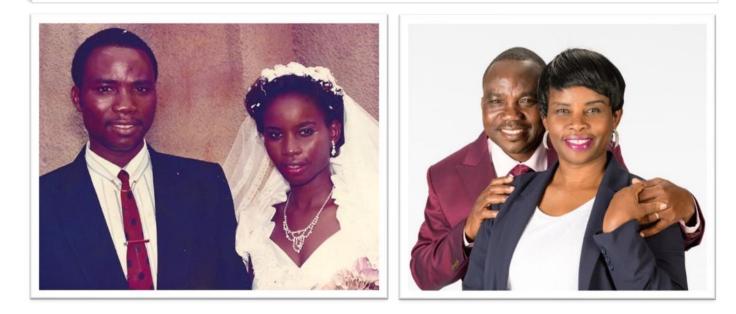
Every day you spent on earth (though short in our human mind) was a win. You desired the best for me and the children, working extremely hard to make sure we never lacked. Your attitude to life was a positive influence on us! Indeed, you lived by example!

My heart was torn into a thousand pieces each day I watched you in pain, no longer the agile and vibrant person that you once were. But on the cold and faithful morning of January 23rd 2023, when I got to your bedside, even though you were no more, the smile was back on your face. I therefore find joy in the fact that you are in a better place with the Lord where you will no longer experience pain. Death indeed has lost its sting!

The greatest legacy you left for me and the children was your zeal and love for God. I promise to uphold this legacy with the help of God.

Rest on in the Lord "D".

Until we meet to part no more, Your wife, Doris



Daniel Asiwe:

It is with deep sadness and unbelief that I pay tribute to my late dad, Pastor, Professor, Joseph N.A. Asiwe, who passed on to grace. My dad was a respected and well-known figure in his field, and his contributions to the academic community will be greatly missed.

As the millennials and Gen Z's like to say; My Dad is a G.O.A.T (Greatest of all time), not only professionally but also as a father and a servant of God, who instilled the spirit of integrity, diligence, and excellence in all his children and never missed an opportunity to evangelise and impart godly wisdom.

My dad was also known for his kind and generous spirit. He was always willing to lend a helping hand to those in need, and his warmth and empathy made him a cherished friend and colleague to many.

My dad practiced what he preached and was a gracious King to his household. The perfect role model one could ask for who raised me to understand that as child of God, dominion is mine and that I can do all things with Christ who strengthens me.

My fondest memories would be all our road trips, the knowledge and wisdom you imparted on me, how you braced the pains you had and danced for joy on Christmas day 2022 coupled with championing your congregation into the new year of 2023. A true servant of God!

The passing of my dad is a great loss, not just to our household or the academic community, but to the world at large. I will remember you as a loving father, a gifted teacher, and a kind and compassionate man of God.

Rest in peace, dad. Your legacy will live on through your children and the many lives you have touched and the countless contributions you have made to the world and body of Christ.



Victor Asiwe:

Professor and Pastor to some, a prodigious student, world-renowned scientist and prolific author to others but simply "Daddy" to me.

Before his death, my saddest memory of my dad was when he moved to Bethlehem for a new job in 2009. I remember fighting back the tears as his car reversed out of the driveway. I'm sure it was painful for him too, but he always put his family first and wanted to ensure that we never lacked in anything. My dad drove for hours every weekend to visit us even after he moved to the University of Limpopo. He was ever-present in our lives, calling regularly when he was away to find out how we were doing and to offer words of encouragement, advice and prayers.

He told us many stories about his life growing up and as a professional. My dad never missed an opportunity to impart wisdom on us. On our many road trips, if we were not listening to a sermon in the car, we would chat about what we were learning at school/university and he would give us lectures on a variety of subjects in Christianity, our academics, and practical topics like managing finances. My dad was erudite and entertaining.

My dad left us with many memorable quotes and wise sayings. I will never forget his ebullient laughter while we were chatting as I completed his sentence to finish his quote. Godly principles and values were instilled in us through endless repetition over the years.

My dad also taught by example. I look back fondly on our excursions with him to assist with him with his research projects in faraway farms. It taught us about hard-work but allowed us to spend quality time with him. My dad also taught us generosity by example. From gifting proceeds of our backyard garden farm to family friends and church members, to donating seeds to farmers and members of rural communities as well as technical expertise on how to cultivate the plants and supporting widows and generally those in need just to name a few.

His brilliance as a student and in his career despite his under-privileged background motivated us to aim to be the best in everything we did.

My dad was a brilliant and passionate chef. "Is it sweet?", he would ask us after every meal he prepared – the answer was always and emphatic "Yes!".

The great memories are too many to recount. There aren't enough words to express what an amazing father my dad was and to express my gratitude for the time we spent together.

Rest in peace Daddy, you will always be in my heart

"Vicky"



David Asiwe:

I always remember how my father would say "Son, your father will not be around forever and when I am gone you will realise just how difficult life is without me" when little me would complain about things that now seem insignificant. I never knew that that day my father was talking about would come this soon.

My father was a man of faith. Everything he did was backed by the belief that God will provide, God will make a way. I remember even with small tasks like opening a tap that was shut tightly he would rely on God to help him. Most people wouldn't even think of God in those moments, but he was a man of crazy faith.

My father was human, he had his flaws and he had his strengths, but one thing that could never be in doubt was his love for us, his children. My father had a unique way of showing love, things I never really noticed until I got older. He would always leave a small piece of meat and semolina with soup behind for us to finish, despite him being a man that LOVED his food. His way of showing us love was ensuring that we were always well taken care of, never lacked anything that we needed and trying to push us to succeed. I remember growing up, my father would always give me mundane tasks like dusting the couches and tables, watering the garden, and worst of all was removing weeds from the garden by hand. I never really realized it then, but he was always teaching me the importance of taking action, of doing, of working – because the hand of a diligent man generates riches. He always pushed me to do better, to look bigger, to aim higher because he saw the benefits of doing so in his own life. My father was not a man that was born into wealth, he had to work for everything we have today. Even beyond the grave he is still looking after us with the legacy he has left behind.

Thank you daddy for everything, I wish I had gotten the chance to show you how grateful I am for all that you have done.



I miss you.

Tributes on behalf of family

Glory Sunday Ossor:

Your death came as a shock to us and as you sit in the arms of the Lord; your family, friends and colleagues mourn your death.

It's all right as each of us have the Lord beside us as we say our farewells. Your body might be gone from this wicked world but your spirit will live on in our hearts forever. Today we will mourn you in our own way as we pay a tribute to you. We still wake up every morning hoping this is a dream, and it hurts knowing you are gone forever.

On the 26th of December, 2022 I spoke to you and it sounded okay and you gave me some wonderful smiles not knowing that, that was the last day I am going to be seeing your face.

Everyone felt the pain that you had been suffering for some time. We will cherish every single moment we spent with you. I guess this is our final goodbye since we never got the chance to do so. Rest in peace my beloved Uncle Prof Joseph Asiwe, we definitely miss you till resurrection day.

Amen!!! ADIEU MY LOVING UNCLE.

Your Nephew

Glory Sunday Ossor.

Dr. Readon Chukwugozi Ideh:

A tribute to a great man: Professor Pastor Joseph Asiwe

Words will fail me to describe the kind of man you were to me. You were more than an in-law. You were a brother indeed; my elder brother and I will greatly miss you. You never failed to give Godly advice to me. Always caring / concerned.

You encouraged me with your words of wisdom. You were an inspiration. You took care of your family. You looked after my sister well! I never heard any grievance from her.

You were a giver! I recall in my medical student days when I would visit Ibadan how you treated me so well and even gave me money back to school. You gave me clothes, suits, ties that I wore proudly in school! You inspired me with your giving. You never complained. I remember the great extent you went for my future wellbeing with the dentist from UCH! Oh, my brother! The likes of you are so few on earth!

You encouraged me to be an exemplary Christian with your lifestyle. You served God and remained faithful to the end! A true Godly man as far back as I remember, and you did not falter.

Farewell dear brother and rest well in the Lord's bosom till we meet again.

Dr Readon Chukwugozi Ideh

Prof. Patrick Nwanze Okoh:

Although I have a blood relationship with Joseph Asiwe, my earliest close encounter with him was during his marriage to his one and only wife, Doris Nkechi in November, 1993 at St. John's Catholic Church, Agbor. I saw in Joseph during his wedding reception, a man highly organised and with outstanding humility. These virtues attracted him to me and marked the beginning of our close relationship.

Joseph lived a disciplined and highly organised life. He was a man who truly loved God and he translated his love for God into his love for his family (Ephesians 5:25). Consequently, he was always ready to make the greatest sacrifice for the good and upliftment of his wife and children. He was a symbol of a good family man indeed.

My wife and I are still trying to grapple with the reality of the most unexpected home-call of Prof. Joseph Asiwe. Even though we lost physical contact with the family since they left for South Africa. His support to us especially when my wife was on her PhD programme at the University of Ibadan from 1996 to 1999 remains unforgettable.

It is our prayers that God will provide the wife and children the greatest comfort that they need at this time and fill every vacuum that Joseph must have left behind.

Rest in peace Prof. Joseph Asiwe!

Prof Patrick Nwanze Okoh Retired Professor of Biochemistry Delta State University, Nigeria





Tributes

by friends and colleagues

Dr. Emmanuel Okogbenin:

Tribute to a great personality

I can't fathom I will be doing a tribute at this time given the dynamic, energetic, and ebullient life you led. It is still inconceivable, and I am still at loss with heavy heart on how to digest your exit. You were my buddy, my best friend, my closest confidant, and best pal I ever had in almost four decades we had known each other. In practical terms, you were my brother in every ramification. Our lives were intertwined from the early university undergraduate days and our paths through our career progress also followed the same trend. You were a gem and an icon both in your private family life and in your professional endeavours. Your quest to bring a positive change to your environment reflected in the muti-disciplinary background (agronomy, horticulture, entomology, and plant breeding) you exuded as a professional during which you received awards and earned recognition for your immense contributions in the aforementioned fields. You transcended beyond these achievements to serve God with stronger passion both as a Christian and Pastor in the church which you were led by the spirit to establish. Writing about you in the past tense sends me cold shivers and shrills. So, you have departed the physical realm of our existence. You were always there in good and the difficult times giving your best and offering suggestions on how to make life and society better. Your integrity, hospitality and motivational prowess were strong values I will never forget. You rendered so much support to me, my family and my parents over the years and they will remain indelible in my heart. I sought your advice on many occasions which severally helped to lift my being and resulted in innumerable tangible outcomes that were positively impactive in my life. Thank you, Joe!!! While it is still difficult for me to comprehend your departure from the stage now, God knows best. We submit to His will. May God grant you eternal rest in peace. You will be sorely missed. Adieu!!!

Dr. Emmanuel Okogbenin Director, AATF, Kenya

Dr. Jeanetta Saayman-du Toit and family:

The passing away of our dearest friend, Prof Joseph Asiwe, on Monday morning, 23 January 2023, came as a shock that nobody could have prepared us for.

Everyone who knows Prof Joseph Asiwe, will remember, his commitment in his fields of expertise and his brilliance as scientist / researcher, mentor, speaker, and writer. We knew all along that he was one of the great minds of our time. We will always remember his passion, dedication, and professionalism in everything he did. He was a great, humble legend. A blessing to science, agriculture, and humankind, whom God has really sent to touch our lives.

I had the honour to work closely with Prof Joseph since 2005 and through the years he became not only a colleague, but a very close and precious family friend. He was a real giant, a great human in every way, a lasting legacy of a life deeply well lived. As friends we knew him as a thoughtful, loving person, with God and his family as the main pillars of his life. We respect and have gratitude for this great, kind, humble and inspirational man. We learned so much from him. We are thankful and honoured for the years we could have known him and salute him for the person that he was.

Our heartfelt condolences to his family. We pray that God will comfort you during this time of grief. A life so beautifully lived deserves to be remembered.

A best friend gone too soon is a tragedy. But what would have been worse is never to have met you, Prof. Joseph.

May your soul rest in eternal peace.

Your friend, Dr Jeanetta Saayman-du Toit and family

The Ogunrombi family:

TRIBUTE TO PROFESSOR JOSEPH ASIWE

1962-2023

Still, the Lord is good.

Brother, you fought! You won!! You conquered!!!

We were particularly challenged by your love, commitment and service to the Lord which you did with all your heart, soul and might. You played your part gloriously. You left indelible legacies and passed the baton of greatness.

Thank you for all you were to our family. We truly appreciate the kindness you showed and help you rendered. We are assured that your light will be a beacon and light up the way for Daniel, Victor and David.

Prof was a man filled with the Word of God. Every decision and interaction were supported by the Scripture. You could not have a discussion with him without a hint of the corresponding Scripture.

In life, he was forever giving of his time, substance and his backyard vegetables! Even on his sick bed, fighting for breath, he still had the time to give one godly counsel or the other. He held on to his faith in God for healing, believing that God could still deliver even on 'death row'. We kept on praying, believing that God would restore His servant to perfect health.

We are comforted knowing that this simple but mighty man of God lived his life and did what he could.

We wished you stayed longer with us – we however take solace in the fact that the Lord has chosen to take you home at the best and right time. In His time, the Lord has made all things beautiful (Ecclesiastes 3:11)

We know he lives because God lived in and through him.

Rest on, our beloved brother. Take your well-deserved rest in the bosom of Christ.

Modupe and Akin Ogunrombi

Pretoria

The Djan family:

It is with a heavy heart that we bid farewell to Prof Asiwe, a truly remarkable friend who became family to the Djans, a man whose life was a testament to the power of faith and love.

Prof Asiwe, lived a life dedicated to serving others and effortlessly put the needs of others before his own. He truly inspired us with his unwavering devotion to God. He was truly a beacon of hope to the community he interacted with.

His infectious smile always and instantly dispelled any dark clouds. His kindness and compassion knew no bounds, and he was always there for us in our time of need. Be it a word of encouragement, making jokes, lending a listening ear, being personally present, opening up the heavens with his powerful prayer, Prof made a profound and priceless contribution to the Djan Family.

Though he will be, and is already deeply missed, his legacy, not only to the Djan Family but to others especially his family will never be forgotten.

As we say goodbye, we take comfort in knowing that Prof Asiwe is now in the loving arms of his Lord and Saviour, who crafted him for the special purposes he accomplished on this earth. May his soul rest in eternal peace in heaven with his creator.

Sophia Sekati and family:

Pastor, Spiritual father to the Nation of God. It has been a fulfilling Spiritual journey for families and Community of Potchefstroom and the Church of God at large. Servant of the most High God you dedicated your life and followed as instructed by God to teach us to be prayerful, to Know God and to depend on Him Alone. Thank you, Lord, for this gift of Life. Servant of the most High God. We thank God for the Spiritual race of Faith you ran tirelessly.

To the Family, Pastor (Dr.) Doris and the family, Friends and Colleagues we salute you for allowing us to share Professor Pastor Asiwe with us.

Lastly Almighty God thank You for this Gift of life of your servant. Thank you, Lord, for the spiritual race he ran for Us to Know You Father God Amen

Mrs. Kangumba and family:

Losing you is still too shocking and painful for all of us. However, looking back at the memories we had of you, my girls and I thank you for the encouragement, and the prayers you shared with us. You planted seeds of faith in our hearts that will continually bear fruits. You were a true servant of the Lord, with a humble heart, and who will never be forgotten.

May you rest in peace Prof Dr. Pstr Asiwe

Mrs Kangumba & Family

Prof. M.P. Bopape-Mabapa:

TRIBUTE MESSAGE FROM THE HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

Condolences to Prof Asiwe's family and friends, the Department was shocked to receive the sad news of the passing of Prof and indeed, this is a great loss. I will share with you an employment journey that i had with Prof Asiwe.

Employment

Prof Joseph N.A. Asiwe joined the University of Limpopo, Faculty of Science and Agriculture, Department of Plant Production, Soil Science and Agricultural Engineering as an Associate Professor in Plant Breeding and Genetics, since 01 January 2013.

Teaching and Learning

Prof Asiwe taught undergraduate and postgraduate modules namely; Plant Breeding, Genetics, Biometry and Scientific writing. Prof Asiwe believed in student centred learning and spending most of the time in the field teaching students practically. After the University introduced online teaching and assessment due to COVI-19 pandemic, he was the only staff member who used INSPERA tool for students' assessment.

Research and supervision

Prof supervised and graduated over 30 Honours, Masters and Doctoral students. His research niche area was on published 25 accredited journal articles, 3 book chapters and attended national and international conferences to share his research findings.

Community Engagement

He was greatly admired and respected by the communities for his contributions in food security project. He established two main community engagement projects in Limpopo Province (Ga-Molepo) and North West Province (Taung) by sharing drought tolerant cowpea varieties and organising information and farmer's day, as well as training communities on various available recipes of preparing a cowpea dish.

As a breeder

Prof Asiwe bred and developed four cowpea varieties, which have been registered for release at the National Department of Agriculture, Genetic Resources, Pretoria. In 2021 he submitted a request to register five more cowpea varieties.

Membership/Affiliation

Prof served as a member of the various Departmental, School and Faculty committees as well as various national and international professional societies, including Southern Plant Breeders Association and African Plant Breeders Association

Achievements

In 2021 Prof was appointed as the University of Limpopo- Distinguished Researcher in Finding Solutions to African Food Security and Nutrition challenges, as a Member of Working Group (WG) of AFRICAN UNION, Addis Ababa, on Research, Variety Development & Production of the African Seed and Biotechnology Partnership Platform.

Furthermore, Prof Asiwe received the 2021 Vice Chancellor's Best Established Community Engagement Scholar in the University during VC Research Excellence Awards.

He was a colleague, teacher, mentor and friend to so many at the University, and he will be missed by all. Deepest condolences go out to his wife and children.

Now that a great tree has fallen, where then does that leave us? His legacy shall remain. REST IN PEACE PROF UNTIL WE MEET AGAIN

Rev. Dr. Elizabeth Parkes:

How are the mighty falling, a great oak tree has fallen, a spiritual giant and a mighty man of valour has laid his tools down in silence. He has fought a good fight, run the race and finished his course, and he has kept the faith II Timothy 4:7

I saw you as a zealous and assiduous student and staff that one could look up to from a distance in IITA. Until, I however got a golden opportunity to serve with you on a Working Group on Research, Variety, Development and Seed Production (RVDSP-WG) for AUC anchored by AATF. You were our amiable colleague who exhibited positiveness and energy to carry along the entire team. You displayed sound knowledge-sharing and brought your wealth of knowledge to bare to facilitate synthesis of insights and information from all parties. You made our group vibrant and apt to take challenges, our results and outputs were impressive. Personally, I enjoyed your warm personality, easy to engage with and affable, down to earth nature and with a great sense of humour. You engaged with everyone with ease and encouraged all to come on board and work together. In our last meeting in Nairobi, you shared with me all that you have accomplished after you left IITA by the grace of God, the exploits God had done for your family and you were careful to count your blessings and attributed it to the grace of God upon everyone in your household. The blessings of God upon your life and the people the Lord gave you grace to impact their lives by your faith and walk with God. I saw an amazing life style and a God pleaser. We and your friends, were very keen and hopeful to meet you again at the ISTRC meeting in November 2022; but I assumed your absence was due to the final quarter in the year pressure and its many deadlines and challenges. I was so sad when I got the message that our friend and Christian brother, a great resource and colleague member for our working group had gone to be with the maker. Prof your legacies will live on, your courage to take up new challenges and confidence to deliver, team spirit and encouragement at all times and your kind smiles and good laughter made you a great and unique person to love to work with. May your gentle soul rest in perfect peace till we meet again. Fare thee well.

Rev. Dr. Elizabeth Parkes

Cassava Breeder & Interim Head of Cassava Breeding, IITA Zambia

Robert Asiedu:

Joe, the news of your demise has shocked me to the core of my being.

I remember clearly how productive you were as a young staff in our Cassava Breeding Program at the headquarters of the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA) in the early 1990's. You stood out as intelligent, articulate, hardworking, meticulous, friendly, and highly motivated. Your zeal for acquiring more knowledge and skills, and your passion for the activities of the program made you highly reliable and a joy to work with. It was obvious at that early stage in your career that you will go far, and you did. I remain very proud of you and of the record of achievement in your career and contributions to society.

When we spoke last year, you expressed excitement about my life as a Christian and you shared kind and encouraging words with me. You also invited me to initiate some work on improving yam production systems in your local government area in Nigeria. It is very sad, and a huge loss for us, that you have been called now, but our God knows best. You played your part in the time that you had, and you did so very well.

Joe, rest in peace with our Lord.

Robert Asiedu Emeritus Director International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA)

Prof. Isaac Busayo Oluwatayo:

TRIBUTE TO AN UNCOMMON PERSONALITY, Prof JAN Asiwe

It was a rude shock when I heard about your passing through a friend on Monday afternoon.

You were such a gentle, amiable, caring, lovable and reliable personality with unparalleled quest for the betterment of everyone around you.

You made my adjustment to living in South Africa easy and stressless because of your humane nature, friendliness and drive to give a helping hand to others around you. It was as if you have known me for ages when I came to South Africa in 2013. Honestly, words alone won't be enough to describe the stuff you were made of

I didn't know that my conversation with you on phone on the 1st of January, 2023 would be the last because you were in high spirit as you have always been.

Prof JAN Asiwe, it is very difficult to bid you farewell but we cannot question our maker. He knows our last moment right from the day we came to this sinful world.

I love you but I believe God loves you more. May the good Lord you know and serve grant you eternal rest in His bosom. May God comfort and continue to keep the family you left behind.

Adieu Prof JAN Asiwe. Rest on.

Prof Isaac Busayo Oluwatayo

University of Venda

A TRIBUTE TO MY COLLEAGE, FRIEND, SCIENTIST AND SERVANT OF GOD – Prof JOSEPH ASIWE

I was lucky to know Joseph when I was a scientist at IITA and employed him in my Legume IPM program. Joseph was a reliable, loyal and completely dedicated colleague who took his work as seriously as daylight. Whenever he entered a room, you knew it was time for business, and I loved that! He was part of the dream team that took care of my research while I travelled the world for work. They helped make me the scientist I am today! I travelled with them across West Africa, including to my native Cameroon. So, Joseph was like family to me. He so versatile, confident and interactive that when I left IITA for the US, there was a scramble for him; thankfully, after his PhD he took off to RSA where God had a pathway for him. He kept me updated of all his activities and his calling into the ministry. He had always walked the walk! Whenever we talked during the past couple of years, he would get me laughing my lungs out with his no-nonsense down-to-earth approach to life. He was practical, yet scientific! He was an avid horticulturalist and a real scholar and I often told him I was proud of his accomplishments. My wife and I would often talk about my conversations with Joseph that lasted for hours. That is why when he went silent recently, we were both very concerned. Even worse, that happened after I created the "IITA IPM Veterans", an online group of my former students and assistants; Joseph never signed in. He had talked with me about his sickness and we became prayer warriors for him, but God clearly had a different plan for him. I knew he was getting better, so when I turned on my WhatsApp on Friday January 27 and saw the message "Good morning Dr. Joe has passed on...with the Lord", I broke down and wept like a child. I could not believe it, but now I know we will never see him again until the day we all meet in Heaven. May his soul rest in God's peace, and may the good Lord comfort and keep his dear wife, sons and family under His protection.

-- Louis and Beatrice Jackai, NC, USA

Ms. Mogala MM:

I feel honoured and privileged to have worked under your supervision. Prof has devoted a great deal of time to us and worked hard to develop our ideas. There was never a moment when you would leave Prof. Asiwe's office without learning something new since he always made sure to offer value for us. Prof valued the truth so highly that whenever he sensed that you were lying to him, he would remind you of 1 Peter 3:10, it is at that point you would also be aware that you had been caught.

As his students, we all looked up to Prof. Asiwe as our supervisor and mentor because he had helped us succeed academically and shown us the way to go. Prof had always believed in practical learning and pushed us to try new things. Because of your efforts, we now enjoy learning and have confidence in our work. He also taught us of the importance of teamwork, so whenever we were at the farm, we already understood that when you finish your trial, you aid your colleague so you can all leave together when the transport comes.

Thank you for being a guide and a good mentor to us, and for teaching us to be always respectful and truthful. We are thankful for a supervisor like you. You will always be in our memories. Farewell Prof. To the family, I thank you for sharing Prof with us and I pray that you find peace and comfort in this difficult time.

Dolo Shila:

I bow my head in silence and remember my friend, my father, my colleague, my mentor Prof JNA Asiwe. My heart is filled with sadness knowing that I will not see you anymore You always spoke your mind You always spoke the truth and loyal to your truth The talks and conversations we had were to encourage and build me You always wanted the best for me You were always eager to see me successful Your concerns when you see me down, made me realised that I found a father in you I will never forget you I will always remember the greetings on our way to the offices I will always remember the questions you always asked me as a reminder of Trusting and Believing in God I will always remember the plans you had to build the department and my future You took a stand in my life to better my future and I wish to live by fulfilling your wishes towards my future I feel blessed to have met you **Rest well Prof Rest well Prof JAN Asiwe**

From Dolo Shila

Yvonne Maboya:

Only a few people knew BEHIND those agricultural attire lies a man with very expensive taste and I'm glad I was one of those few. "Sour Cherry drops" I will miss those sweets I use to loot in your office. It's difficult to sum up the 8 years that I have shared with you as a colleague in a short paragraph, the short version is that I will miss the comedian you more than anything, you were so full of life the last time we spoke, it's hard to believe you are GONE.

BE RESTED

Yvonne Maboya (Department Secretary)

Prof. Bayo Lewu:

Too early exit. Very shocking. God's strength to the family. May your soul rest in peace, my leader.

Prof. Jesika Singh:

Our deepest condolences to all his family members, friends and colleagues. Such a sad loss for the University of Limpopo and Research community as a whole.

I.M. Letsoalo:

Everyone or everything matters, so instead of just leaving a mark on them, leave a great mark on them.

Tribute to my prodigious legend/ambassador/visionary/supervisor/saint/advisor /powerful pastor as well. I met Prof in the academic year 2013 at University of Limpopo. Prof was a real hard worker. This is because there was no time for lunch, Prof will eat while working. To cut the story short, allow me to tell you that I am who I am today because of Prof J.A.N Asiwe's contributions and investments. We have established multiple research projects in places like Ga-molepo, Bela-Bela, Modimolle and Towoomba Research Station. Today, I am a lecturer and supervisor if you know what I mean. I wish I could absorb all the qualities that Prof Asiwe had. **You can lose someone you love and care the most, but in spirit you will meet them**. That is to say, two mountains cannot meet but with their shades they meet.

In conclusion, **Prof JAN Asiwe did not just leave a mark on me, he actually left a great mark on me**. To you my prodigious legend/ ambassador/visionary/supervisor/ saint/advisor and powerful pastor, I say

MAY YOUR SOUL REST IN PERFECT PEACE.

From: I.M. LETSOALO (Plant production lecturer, University of Limpopo).

Elna De Bruyn:

We all at the South African Plant Breeders' Rights Authority are very sad to hear of his passing. May his gentle soul rest in peace. Condolences to his family.

Prof. (Bishop) Sam Mposi:

We lost a gallant soldier both in academia and in the body of Christ.

Babatunde Edward Thompson:

TRIBUTE BY HIS UNIVERSITY OF IBADAN FACULTY ALUMNI GROUP

It is my honour to write about Prof. Joseph A. N. Asiwe who was our colleague at the University of Ibadan, Ibadan, Nigeria where he had his 1st degree B.Sc. Agronomy and on to his doctorate in the Faculty of Agriculture & Forestry. He was our mate from 1983 to 1987 and further with some of us that remained in the academics in the faculty

The sudden death of our dear colleague and brother Prof Joe Asiwe has brought us to the understanding of what Paul says in Philippians 1:21 that _ "for me to live is Christ and to die is gain" _.

Joe was an unassuming and quiet colleague in our undergraduate days. He was well loved and accepted by most. So strong and certain was God's hand on you Joe, in showing you where to sojourn and make an impact as we can attest to this when you moved on to South Africa to find your calling in 2005 and never looked back since then as you made a positive difference in the land. You were particularly close to our mates Dr. Emmanuel Okogbenin and Festus Obotie right from our Uni days and kept that close friendship over the years.

We are proud of you as a distinguished and well-respected academician among our graduating set and you well represented our alma mater University of Ibadan (UI) in all your academic endeavours both in your adopted country and on the world stage. In South Africa you also allowed your faith to enrich others through active ministry. You kept in close touch with our other colleagues who were living in South Africa and never missed any opportunity to spend time with them. You were indeed a person that ran and finished your race well like Paul in all your endeavours.

In paying tribute to our colleague, we sincerely wish to thank God for a wonderful person he was to all that knew him. Joe was an acclaimed and dedicated academician. We will remember you as a living, vital presence of our UI Agric faculty 1987 graduating set and your memory will bring refreshment to our hearts and strengthen us to finish strong in all our endeavours.

Our prayers are with his wife and three sons that he left behind. The Lord will be your stay in Jesus' name

We say Joe: Rest in perfect peace in your heavenly father's bosom

Written on behalf of our UI Alumni Set by

Babatunde Edward Thompson Chairman University of Ibadan, Ibadan Nigeria Faculty of Agriculture & Forestry 1987 Alumni Set

Prof. Gwata:

So, Prof 'J', when you called me last month, it was not about the academic business that we discussed; you were saying Goodbye! What a hard blow! Sad Prof! Heartfelt condolences to yours and may the Peace of the Lord abide with them in this time of grief!

Dr. Aful David:

Goodbye, my brother. Rest in peace with your Maker!

Dr. Shimelis:

Rest in peace, Joseph.

The plant breeding fraternity will miss you.

William Mpembe:

I am really disappointed and shocked by the news. It is indeed a sad day to us individually and Academic Environment to have lost the man Prof Asiwe.

William Mogano:

On behalf of Cowpea farmers at Ga Molepo Rest in peace in Prof. We will always remember you with Dinawa...

Prof. IK Mariga:

It was sad news to hear of Joseph's passing on. He was a dedicated cowpea breeder and loved working with smallholder farmers. What a loss - MHSRIEP.

Dr Sandile:

Worked with Prof Asiwe from ARC-GCI in Potch for long ago as my boss. He taught me almost everything as a young man. Then a bit while he was at UL. Every time we met, he corrected and encouraged me at the same time. What a special and cool guy.

Prof Vusi Mulaudzi:

We pray for strength and comfort to the family, friends and colleagues a giant has fallen MHSRIP

Prof. Norris:

Monumental loss. A gentle giant. MHSRIP

Prof. Mbewe Moses:

May his soul rest in peace. We will meet again in that great reunion in the sky.

Tributes

from the body of Christ and society

Hon. Ochendo J. Igwe Senior:

HOME CALL OF A LEGEND!!! A TRIBUTE TO LATE PROF. JOSEPH ASIWE.

I am still bewildered with great surprise each moment i lift up my head to write this tribute. Your demise is still a puzzle to the Nigerian Union at large.

We can very aptly say that you lived a life of sacrifice, care and extreme love. Your affection for those around you knew no bounds. Your humility and unassuming attitude are quite unequalled.

Just like a dream the news of your death came, the more we waited to end the dream, the more the reality dawned on us that you have departed from this world.

The qualities of your personality cannot be overemphasized even in your Christian life.

Your humility and encouragement are immeasurable.

REST IN POWER, MAN OF GOD.

Hon. Ochendo J. Igwe Senior. For Nigerian Union Potchefstroom

Juddy Baisitse:

Pastor Joseph Asiwe was a humble, lovely pastor, He taught me that prayer is powerful, and God has given us power and anything is possible through God.

RIP Pastor Joseph Asiwe.

Vaaltyn Berries:

Brother Joseph was a kind man and God fearing I served with him in the church eldership at CFC. He loves to sing and very humble and soft-spoken man of God. One of his other attributes was to always witness about Jesus. Psalm 116 v 15 that scripture I would want to console the family with. God bless!

Comfort Igwe:

You were true to yourself and your God!

You spent a great deal of your life on earth impacting and investing in the lives of other people. We will miss your candid and Godly advice during the times when we were confused and didn't know what to do. Heaven has gained an angel! Go well daddy.

Patience Ncube:

It is with a heavy heart that I write this message today.

I thank God for the light that was Ps. Joseph Asiwe in my life, and that of many, and pray that the light he was, and shone in our lives continues to shine on.

Rest easy son of the Most High.

Kay Webber:

He was such a great man of God!

Pastor Olubi Johnson, SPCC, Nigeria:

Lord have mercy! God comfort, strengthen and protect the family in Jesus Name

Pastor Adeboyega Adeyisan, SPCC, Nigeria:

This is sad and shocking news indeed! He was such a vibrant personality! Our heartfelt condolences to his family and friends.

Annette Stander:

My deepest sympathy goes to Daniel, Victor and David and to his wife for losing a beloved father and husband. The lovely young men that you raised together are living proof of the extraordinary role model he was.

Wilfred Nyathi:

This is a hard pill to swallow. Psalm 34:18 "The Lord is near to the broken-hearted and saves the crushed in spirit."

Puleng Koeshe:

What a loss to the nation and family. However, he ran a good race. He will be missed. Condolences to the family and Church.

Israel Chidinma:

Brother, Teacher, Mentor, and preacher of the gospel of God u didn't die you just went to change clothes from your wardrobe to see your maker in heaven, Pastor Joseph your legacy will remain, we shall see u again on the last day of resurrection. Let's wipe away our tears.

Thersia Prinsloo:

It was an honour, privilege and pleasure to have known Prof Asiwe. Truly a remarkable man. My thoughts are with you all.

Vivian Ihedaro:

To our Beloved Pastor Joseph, we will miss your powerful messages, prayers, and the motivation that you were always giving us at church, we will always remember you.

Casandra Keamohetse:

Heaven welcomes you pastor, the messages you left with us through your preaching will remain. We love you but God loves you more.

Brenda Mbaza:

Our Pastor was a teacher, a mentor and shepherd with love, sent by God from up above. He taught us the way by being an example of Christ's love each day.

To us, you were a loving father and Godsent. Those special memories of you will always bring a smile to our faces, you always meant so very much to us. The fact that you are no longer here with us will always cause pain but you are here forever in our hearts.

Until we meet again.

RIP Pastor J Asiwe

HYMNS

HYMN 1 - Great is Thy Faithfulness

Great is Thy faithfulness, O God my Father; There is no shadow of turning with Thee; Thou changest not, Thy compassions, they fail not; As Thou hast been Thou forever wilt be.

Chorus:

Great is Thy faithfulness! Great is Thy faithfulness! Morning by morning new mercies I see: All I have needed Thy hand hath provided— Great is Thy faithfulness, Lord, unto me!

Summer and winter and springtime and harvest, Sun, moon, and stars in their courses above Join with all nature in manifold witness To Thy great faithfulness, mercy, and love.

Pardon for sin and a peace that endureth, Thine own dear presence to cheer and to guide, Strength for today and bright hope for tomorrow— Blessings all mine, with ten thousand beside!

HYMN 2 - How Great Thou Art

O Lord my God, when I in awesome wonder Consider all the works Thy hands have made, I see the stars, I hear the rolling thunder, Thy pow'r thru-out the universe displayed!

Chorus:

Then sings my soul, my Saviour God, to Thee; How great Thou art, how great Thou art! Then sings my soul, my Saviour God, to Thee; How great Thou art, how great Thou art!

When thru the woods and forest glades I wander And hear the birds sing sweetly in the trees, When I look down from lofty mountain grandeur And hear the brook and feel the gentle breeze,

And when I think that God, His Son not sparing, Sent Him to die, I scarce can take it in – That on the cross, my burden gladly bearing, He bled and died to take away my sin!

When Christ shall come with shout of acclamation And take me home, what joy shall fill my heart! Then I shall bow in humble adoration And there proclaim, my God, how great Thou art!

HYMN 3 - What a Friend We Have in Jesus

What a friend we have in Jesus, All our sins and griefs to bear! What a privilege to carry Everything to God in prayer! Oh, what peace we often forfeit, Oh, what needless pain we bear, All because we do not carry Everything to God in prayer!

Have we trials and temptations? Is there trouble anywhere? We should never be discouraged— Take it to the Lord in prayer. Can we find a friend so faithful, Who will all our sorrows share? Jesus knows our every weakness; Take it to the Lord in prayer.

Are we weak and heavy-laden, Cumbered with a load of care? Precious Saviour, still our refuge— Take it to the Lord in prayer. Do thy friends despise, forsake thee? Take it to the Lord in prayer! In His arms He'll take and shield thee, Thou wilt find a solace there.

Blessed Saviour, Thou hast promised Thou wilt all our burdens bear; May we ever, Lord, be bringing All to Thee in earnest prayer. Soon in glory bright, unclouded, There will be no need for prayer— Rapture, praise, and endless worship Will be our sweet portion there.

HYMN 4 - Blessed Assurance

Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine! Oh, what a foretaste of glory divine! Heir of salvation, purchase of God, Born of His Spirit, washed in His blood.

Chorus:

This is my story, this is my song, Praising my Saviour all the day long; This is my story, this is my song, Praising my Saviour all the day long.

Perfect submission, perfect delight, Visions of rapture now burst on my sight; Angels, descending, bring from above Echoes of mercy, whispers of love.

Perfect submission, all is at rest, I in my Saviour am happy and blest, Watching and waiting, looking above, Filled with His goodness, lost in His love.

HYMN 5: I Need Thee Every Hour

I need Thee every hour, most gracious Lord; No tender voice like Thine can peace afford.

Chorus:

I need Thee, oh, I need Thee; Every hour I need Thee; Oh, bless me now, my Saviour, I come to Thee.

I need Thee every hour, stay Thou nearby; Temptations lose their pow'r when Thou art nigh.

I need Thee every hour, in joy or pain; Come quickly and abide, or life is vain.

I need Thee every hour; teach me Thy will; And Thy rich promises in me fulfil.

I need Thee every hour, most Holy One; Oh, make me Thine indeed, Thou blessed Son.

TO THOSE WHO LOVE ME TO THOSE I LOVE AND TO THOSE WHOSE LIFE I TOUCHED

When I have travelled on, let me go To my Lord and Creator still so many things to do Let not my memory bring too many tears Instead, be thankful to God we had many good years

I loved and unconditionally shared with you my life It is just a short while that we will be apart Cherish the memories within your heart

> Our paths had crossed for a reason As I was a firm believer in divine purpose Glad I could touch your lives With good memories to be cherished

Adíen, for now, I will have to travel alone I will wait until it is time to welcome you Home

Appreciation

The entire family of the Late Prof. (Pst.) Joseph Nwafor Akanwe Asiwe

> Express our heartfelt thanks to you for your valuable support

May God Bless you abundantly