

Jackson Nasoore Ole Sapit elected Kenya Anglican archbishop, succeeds former GAFCON chair Eliud Wabukala

by [Fredrick Nzwili](#) in the [July 6, 2016](#) issue

Jackson Nasoore Ole Sapit, a traditionalist Anglican bishop who nonetheless steered clear of sexuality issues, has been elected the new archbishop of Kenya and is being installed on July 3.

Ole Sapit, 52, who headed Kericho Diocese in western Kenya, will replace outgoing archbishop Eliud Wabukala and also serve as bishop of All Saints Cathedral, the national seat of the Anglican Church. Wabukala's official retirement date was June 26.

Ole Sapit said a priority would be playing a role in restoring stability in his multiethnic country with its recent history of election violence and ethnic conflict, as well as terrorist attacks by the Somali al-Shabaab militant group.

"The church has spoken and this is the voice of God," he said. "The first task is to unite ourselves, so that we can unite the country."

Ole Sapit comes from the Maasai, a seminomadic people who worship their own deity, though a number have adopted Christianity.

Many expect Ole Sapit to follow in the footsteps of Wabukala, a strong opponent of same-sex unions and the ordination of LGBT people in the Anglican Communion.

Wabukala chaired the Global Anglican Future Conference, a 2008 gathering in Jerusalem of conservative Anglican leaders who supported the creation of a breakaway Anglican church in the United States because of the Episcopal Church's stance on sexuality.

Shortly before a pivotal summit to explore the future of the Anglican Communion in January, Wabukala said he longs to see the communion united and the divisions healed, but in a way that honors God. At that meeting, leaders censured the Episcopal Church over its acceptance of same-sex marriage and suspended its ability to vote on doctrine or policy at meetings.

“There can be no true walking together with those who persistently refuse to walk in accordance with God’s word,” Wabukala said.

While avoiding the specific subject of sexuality, Ole Sapit said the church will continue to preach the gospel under the authority of the scriptures.

Ole Sapit has also been involved in efforts at community building and conflict resolution nationally and in his diocese.

According to the Anglican Communion News Service, Ole Sapit “mobilized local and international resources to transform communities, improve food security and enable economic empowerment. He has established a number of health clinics in the new diocese and is passionate about sustainable development.”

Joseph Kagunda, bishop of Mount Kenya West, noted that Ole Sapit brokered a truce during the 2007–2008 wave of postelection violence.

“I think he can unite the people of Kenya,” he said. —Religion News Service; added source

*This article was edited on June 20, 2016.*