

SUDAN CONNECTIONS

SUMMER 2012

VOLUME 7, NUMBER 1

JULY 9, 2012

1ST ANNIVERSARY OF INDEPENDENCE OF SOUTH SUDAN



AFRECS - AMERICAN FRIENDS OF THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF SUDAN



CONNECTING HOPE AND GIFTS

SUDAN CONNECTIONS

SUMMER 2012

VOLUME 7, NUMBER 1

American Friends of the Episcopal Church of Sudan (AFRECS) is an organization of U.S. churches, non-governmental organizations, and individuals who care deeply about the struggles of the Sudanese people.

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Photo
Dr. Peter J. Morris©



A LETTER FROM THE AFRECS PRESIDENT

Dear Friends of the Episcopal Church in Sudan,

One year ago, on July 9, 2011, we were celebrating the Independence of South Sudan. I personally experienced a touch of the jubilation in Juba in November. Seeing this profound joy convicted me that I had not fully appreciated the liberties of life at home.

Shortly after Independence, however, we began to hear of violence along the border and in the Nuba Mountains. At my dinner table in Virginia, I heard first-hand accounts of the destruction of the home and office of the Bishop of Kadugli, of fighting in Abyei. I could not help but be moved to help my friends.

We are especially proud of the peace efforts of the Archbishop and Primate of the Episcopal Church in Sudan. Archbishop Daniel Deng Bul has been tireless in negotiating peace and is continually called upon by the President of South Sudan. He is being flown by United Nations helicopters to points of conflict and violence. His stature as Archbishop allows him to be a trusted advocate for peace.

AFRECS has recently (through your donations) been able to make a \$10,000 grant to allow the Archbishop to place a deacon trained in peace-work in Pibor in Jonglei State for six-months to implement a peace plan that he was able to negotiate among six tribes.



AFRECS is also advocating for peace in Sudan at home. Our Executive Director, Richard Parkins, is well acquainted with the ways of Washington and is an invaluable resource in facilitating our work of advocacy. This is especially important in allowing our visitors from Sudan to visit the State Department, Capitol Hill and the White House. Your support of AFRECS allows this important work to continue.

AFRECS is eager to facilitate introductions of Sudanese bishops who desire partnerships with Episcopal dioceses and parishes. These personal relationships are inspiring at home and very helpful abroad. We can assist with advice on travel and guidance on first steps in developing relationships. We know of dioceses ready and eager to develop partnerships. Do not hesitate to ask for help.

AFRECS will be present at General Convention with a booth in the Convention Center. If you are in Indianapolis, please visit us. We are eager to make new connections and to share the story of the Episcopal Church in Sudan.

Faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "David Jones". The signature is fluid and cursive.

David Colin Jones
President of AFRECS

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

C. RICHARD PARKINS



Photo by Constance Wilson©

A CALL FOR MORE PARTNERS

Dear Friends,

As the first anniversary of the Republic of South Sudan approaches, we will reflect on the joy that many of us felt as we vicariously celebrated with our friends in Juba that South Sudan's long awaited independence had finally arrived. Few people in recent history struggled so valiantly to be safe and free.

A year later we are seeing signs of new beginnings but are also reminded that the baggage of the past has not been totally discarded as tribal conflict has plagued Jonglei state. Hopefully, the recently secured respite from the conflict will hold and the important work of Archbishop Daniel Deng Bul as a peacemaker will be vindicated. What is evident is the front line work of the Church as a source of reconciliation.

The influx of thousands of South Sudanese from the north into South Sudan attests to the violence that the government in Khartoum wreaks upon its own people in South Kordofan, Blue Nile and Abyei forcing them to seek refuge. Thousands more are entrapped in war zones as the Sudan government continues to commit atrocities against those who remain in these disputed territories. Compounding the crisis has been the further marginalization of Christians in the north and the imposition of laws and policies that further diminish their ability to freely practice their faith.

Standing in the midst of these multiple crises are faith based groups along with the churches, both here and in Sudan, which have long accompanied those Sudanese whose hope has been bolstered by countless acts of accompaniment. AFRECS has renewed its commitment to initiate new relationships, nurturing old ones and rededicating ourselves to being faithful purveyors of God's reconciling love.

AFRECS seeks to introduce new friends to dioceses in Sudan that could benefit from a partnership with an American diocese or parish. Several dioceses have joined this network since the last General Convention of the Church. We seek to foster more friendships that will embrace those in Sudan who find hope in the witness of outsiders willing to step forward in faith to walk with them. Those of us who have shared this journey know that it can be both challenging and rewarding. The faithful Christians of Sudan and South Sudan deserve our embrace. The Gospel mandate calls us to extend it.

Faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Richard Parkins', written in a cursive style.

Richard Parkins.

Executive Director

TESTIMONY OF SUCCESS & BLESSING OF DIOCESE TO DIOCESE RELATIONSHIP...CHICAGO AND RENK

“The Episcopal Diocese of Chicago and the Episcopal Diocese of Renk in the Church of Sudan have enjoyed a highly collaborative and deeply enriching mission relationship for ten years. We have visited frequently with them, and they with us. More than two dozen of our congregations work directly in partnership with parishes in Renk to build and support schools, churches and hospitals that provide essential services to people whose country was torn by war for decades and is now newly independent and fragile. Here in Chicago, we have been blessed beyond imagining by the steadfast faith and courage of our sisters and brothers in Renk.”

Companion Bishops, Joseph Garang Atem and Jeffrey Lee, join in blessing the first-ever mosque to become an Episcopal church, St. Paul's, village of Halaga, Renk Diocese.



Photo by Charlie Simokaitis, Renk Media Team©

Province of the Episcopal Church of the Sudan

مجمع الكنيسة الأسقفية السودانية

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APPEAL OF THE ARCHBISHOP ON THE PREVAILING SITUATION BETWEEN SUDAN AND SOUTH Sudan

23.04.12

“I will hear what God the LORD will speak: for he will speak peace unto his people, and to his saints; but let them not turn again to folly” Psalms 85:8

“Male and female created he them; and blessed them ...” Genesis 5:2

“Blessed are the peacemakers; for they shall be called the children of God.” Matthew 5:9

The people of the Republics of Sudan and South Sudan are in their respective countries by the divine will of God. God created and gave them that land and blessed them to enjoy and live in harmony. But the developments of the last few months have created a worrying trend.

Whereas the people of both countries:

1. Want peace
2. Have no grudges against each other
3. Are the losers when war breaks out

I am deeply concerned that:

1. The conflict between the leadership of the two countries has escalated close to leading their respective armed forces to a full blown war
2. The African Union High Level Panel failed to note the escalation and call of the international community in time to arrest the situation. The escalation saw the Government of Sudan close the border, stopping the flow of goods and services between the two countries and the subsequent shutdown of oil production by the Government of

South Sudan.

3. The signatories to the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) and the International Community have lost the momentum follow through with their commitments regarding:

- a) South Kordofan
- b) Blue Nile
- c) Abyei
- d) Border demarcation and
- e) Other outstanding issues in the CPA

4. The Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and friends of IGAD were not called in to arrest the escalating situation between the two neighbours in time

5. The two neighbours were left to exchange a war of words which escalated into a serious conflict along their border.

I recognize:

1. The presence of the President of the Republic of Sudan at the declaration of the independence of South Sudan and his offer to work with and promote brotherly neighbourliness with his counterpart in the Republic of South Sudan.
2. The action of the President of the Republic of South Sudan in embracing his counterpart and offering to pursue peace.

The two aforementioned points, in my view, were a sign of forgiveness for the last 55 years and a commitment to write a new chapter of peaceful coexistence between the people of the two republics. The two presidents should not lose the great amount of goodwill from their people and that of the international community but should use it to build a strong bond between their people.

My appeal


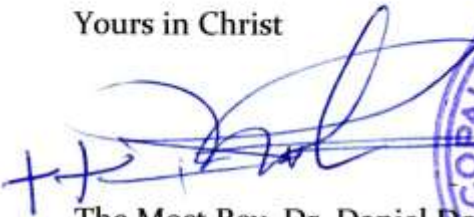
1. To the Presidents of Sudan and South Sudan: continue with the pursuit for peace in spite of the challenges you and your respective governments face
2. To the international community: follow through with your commitment and momentum which led to the signing of the CPA which granted the Independence of the Republic of South Sudan, to ensure that all outstanding issues are amicably resolved. Chief among these are:
 - a) Border demarcation
 - b) Abyei
 - c) Southern Kordofan
 - d) Blue Nile
 - e) Others which were part of the CPA
3. To the people of both countries: refuse to be incited to return to war by your respective leaderships

In Conclusion

It is incumbent on all people of goodwill to build trust between the people of the two countries for their peaceful coexistence. We should learn from the 55 years of war not to return to it so hastily. The blood of those who fought for peace should not have been poured in vain. We call on all sides to exercise restraint and pursue peace at all costs. God is on the side of those who seek peace.

“Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright; for the end of that man is peace”
Psalms 37:37

Yours in Christ



The Most Rev. Dr. Daniel Deng Bul Yak
Archbishop, Primate and Metropolitan of the
Province of the Episcopal Church of the Sudan and
Bishop of the Diocese of Juba

AFRECS SUPPORTS PEACEMAKING IN JONGLEI STATE

A central concern of the Episcopal Church of Sudan (ECS) and its leadership has been to end a number of conflicts in Jonglei State that had become increasingly violent. These eruptions were costing lives and diverting the attention of the Government of South Sudan and the ECS from keeping these outbreaks from becoming a serious destabilizing force in the political and social fabric of this new nation. Archbishop Daniel Deng Bul accepted an invitation from President Salva Kiir to be principal negotiator in bringing the six main tribes, including the Lou Nuer, the Murle and the Dinka, to the negotiating table. The result has been a general cessation of hostilities, although concerns persist that the peace is fragile and a return to war is a distinct possibility.

At the request of the Archbishop, AFRECS agreed to provide financial support for two representatives of the ECS, The Rev. Wilson Fadil and Deacon Tony Henry, to be placed in Pibor, a central location in the state, as a religious presence to monitor the peace process and foster ongoing dialogue among the parties to the settlement. The intent is to nurture the gains made by the earlier intervention and to move those involved in the conflicts to a point of reconciliation and cooperation. It is hoped that their presence will allow what is now a fragile peace to become more secure.

To download all-jonglei conference resolutions_final.doc, google John Ashworth Sudan, go to “Jonglei Peace Conference Resolutions”. It is the document produced by The Presidential Committee for Community Peace, Reconciliation and Tolerance in Jonglei State at the conference held in Bor, May 1-5, 2012.

A TRAGIC TRADITION

By C. RICHARD PARKINS,
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF AFRECS

Many of us were introduced to the crisis of Sudan through encounters with Sudanese refugees, either in refugee camps in Kenya or Uganda, or in U.S. communities where resettlement agencies were welcoming Sudanese into their adopted homeland. For most, our initial knowledge of Sudan was linked to the displacement of thousands of Sudanese as a result of a protracted civil war, a tragedy that was recognized belatedly. We hoped, as we journeyed with our Sudanese friends to the creation of a free and independent South Sudan, to turn the page from a story featuring thousands of uprooted persons to one where our friends became members of a stable and peaceful state. On July 9th, 2011, that expectation was realized, but the history of displacement continues as a dominant piece of the Sudan story.

World Refugee Day was observed on June 20th – a time when we are called to honor the resilience of several million refugees, and also a time to recognize that the world still has several million more who have been uprooted and sent on a journey, often without a compass or a map, to find a new place of safety. Both themes are embodied in the history of our Sudanese friends. We have witnessed the incredible achievements of many Sudanese in the communities that welcomed them a decade or so ago. We are connected to many in South Sudan who are tackling the tasks of nation building and peace making and give thanks for this.

However, we also read tales of the desperation of those in the Yida camp on the Sudan-South Sudan border who live in squalid conditions, hoping that the land from which they fled will become a place to which they can return. We know of thousands who reach Juba only to find that they cannot comfortably return to ancestral villages because this new nation is not quite ready to receive



This photo taken at the Jamam (in Renk Diocese)refugee camp, shows Anima Hassan Omer cradling her granddaughter Khalifa at a Medecin Sans Frontiere (MSF) field hospital in South Sudan's Upper Nile state, where over 100,000 refugees have fled conflict in Sudan's Blue Nile state since September 2011. (AFP Photo/Hannah Mcneish)

them into the fragile circumstances of a new and struggling nation. We are actively supporting the Episcopal Diocese of Renk as they receive thousands of displaced neighbors whose protection depends on the largess of a faithful church trying to be faithful to the Gospel mandate to welcome the stranger but with diminishing resources to do so. Even the Kakuma camp in northern Kenya, where some of us visited with Sudanese refugees in the mid nineties, is being repopulated with new refugees from Sudan.

All of this is happening because a brutal regime in Khartoum, in the pursuit of wealth and power, is undaunted in its determination to wreak havoc on its own people. At the same time, an international community struggles with the intransigence of the Khartoum government in trying to stop the onslaught that could become the most devastating humanitarian crisis of recent history. Ironically, the circumstances that we encountered when we entered the stage several years ago as partners with and advocates for South Sudanese friends are reasserting themselves. The tragedies of the past are reappearing. Will the wounds of the past fester for as long as did those earlier wounds before the world responded with a peace agreement, which has only been partially fulfilled? We can count on the courage and resilience of the Sudanese people. Can they count on our prayers, our advocacy, and our faithfulness as steadfast friends? ❖

EPISCOPAL AND CATHOLIC BISHOPS READY TO “DO ALL IN THEIR POWER” TO BRING AN END TO WAR

EXCERPTS FROM ANGLICAN COMMUNION NEWS
SERVICE: ACNS5106
BY ACNS STAFF
MAY 14, 2012

Episcopal and Catholic bishops from South Sudan have said that together they “stand committed to do all in their power” to realize an end to war between Sudan and South Sudan.

Following a three-day meeting in Yei, South Sudan, led by Archbishop Paulino Lukudu Loro and Archbishop Daniel Deng Bul, the 14 bishops issued a ‘Message of Peace’ which laid out their hopes and plans for an end to conflict.

Referencing the famous Martin Luther King speech, the bishops said: “We dream of two nations which are democratic and free, where people of all religions, all ethnic groups, all cultures and languages enjoy equal human rights based on citizenship. We dream of two nations at peace with each other, cooperating to make the best use of God-given resources, promoting free interaction between their citizens, living side by side in solidarity and mutual respect, celebrating their shared history and forgiving any wrongs they may have done to each other.

“We dream of people no longer traumatized, of children who can go to school, of mothers who can attend clinics, of an end to poverty and malnutrition, and of Christians and Muslims who can attend church or mosque freely without fear. Enough is enough.

There should be no more war between Sudan and South Sudan!

“Blessed are the peacemakers; they shall be recognized as children of God (Matt. 5:9).

We take this very seriously, and we stand committed to do all in our power to make our dream a reality. We believe that the people and government of South Sudan desperately want peace... We invite the International Community to walk with us on the painful journey of exploring the truth in competing claims and counter claims, allegations and counter-allegations. We invite them to understand the peaceful aspirations of the ordinary people, and to reflect that in their statements and actions.”

The bishops’ document...included calls to both the international community and the nations of South Sudan and Sudan, specifically ones requesting the implementation of U.N. resolution 2046 and for protection for the marginalized.

Bishops from the Republic of Sudan were unable to attend the meeting due to the current political situation.

Sudan and South Sudan must immediately cease all hostilities, withdraw forces, activate previously agreed security mechanisms and resume negotiations under threat of sanctions. ❖

U.N.Resolution2046—<https://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2012/sc10632.doc.htm>



*Archbishop Daniel Deng Bul,
Primate of the ECS at All Saints’
Cathedral, Khartoum.
Photo by Charlie Simokaitis, Renk
Media Team©*

BRAVE WOMAN/ THE PROPHECY

By LINDA TARTISIO, WRITTEN APRIL 12, 2012

I am a brave woman.

I'm trying to leave a prophecy and not abiding the legacy,
Chasing dreams and dreams chasing me.
Bleeding nose and broken jaw,
Nothing will stop me, for I am a brave woman.

I am a brave woman.

Here comes the first baby,
No shoes, no covers, not even a diaper to put on.
But the comely beautiful angelic baby was just looking,
Connecting to nature in her new world.

I am a brave woman.

So difficult to perceive, two years already passed,
Second baby arrived still hiding in the BUSH.
There is no way for a record of birth, but I am
Not mad, for that's my fate, I am a brave woman.

I am a brave woman.

I know it's not safe to be here,
But can I behold my future tragedies?
I am seized by fear from beneath my skin to my lungs,
Fear of loss, fallen husbands, but in the war zones,
They call them fallen heroes.
We turn to singing songs with Arabic and African rhythms,
Hoping to keep the army's morale at peak
By cooking and serving peanut butter soup.



Linda and son, Eric, on the far right, Rebecca Kueth in the middle with son, Alier, Sara on the left with son KK, and Susan Bentley between Sara and Rebecca.

I am a brave woman, maintaining my beautiful smile
Not asking for much, still walking miles
Crossing oceans and crashing rocks.

Four years already passed, hard to believe 3rd baby arrived
Not knowing whether timing is right.

Airplanes bombarding falling down like rain
One strikes me hard.

Rippling pain, I knew I was to go, time to meet the
Almighty.

I looked my precious in the eyes, and said with a downfall
tone,

I don't mean to leave you;

You should know I am only a servant here on earth.

Dare to fulfill the prophecy, darling when you grow up
Please read Isaiah 18

And hence try to FORGIVE. I am a brave woman.

Linda was born in Wau, South Sudan. She was a refugee in Egypt for three years, and worked with the refugee women of Sudan at Sacred Heart Cathedral in Cairo. She trained at the American University in Cairo as a community interpreter, between language and culture. Linda arrived in Roanoke, VA, in 2004, with her husband and children. She remains active with the South Sudanese community. Her interests include writing poetry, reading, surfing and research on the Internet. She can be contacted through The Rev. Susan Bentley, sebentley@verizon.net.

REFLECTONS ON MISSION

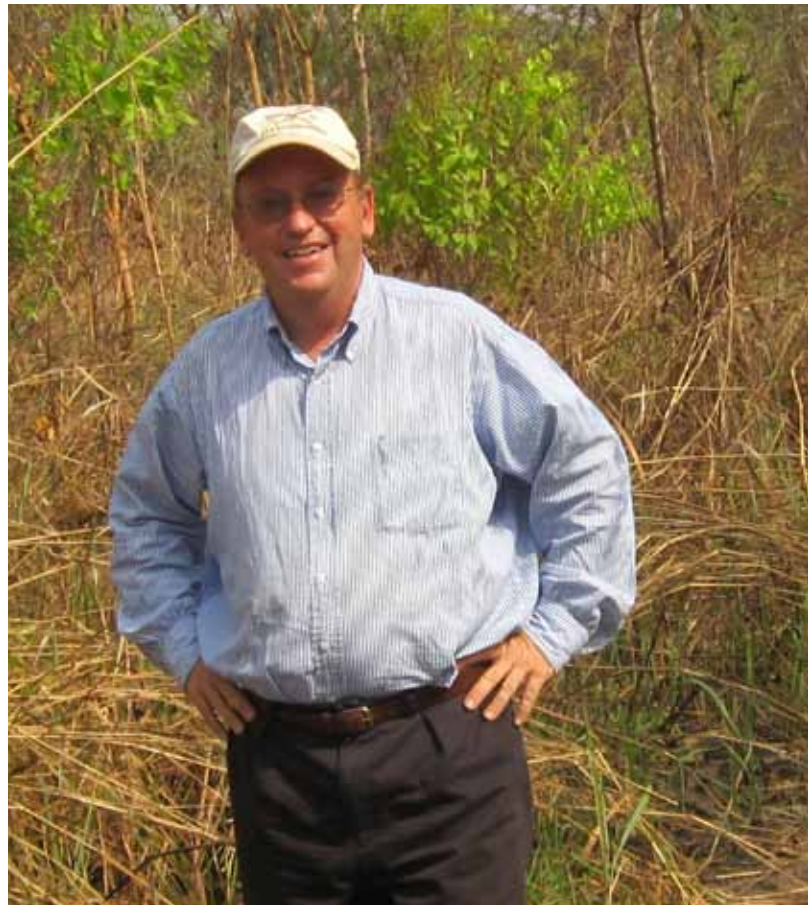
“I LIVE AS AN ALIEN IN THE LAND.”
—PS. 119

BY LAWRENCE DUFFY
TEC APPOINTED VOLUNTEER FOR MISSION,
PROVINCE OF THE ECS

I arrived in Juba in May 2010, a naïve, enthusiastic, though loosely prepared, missionary coming, supposedly, for four months, during which time I was expected to learn everything about the ECS (Episcopal Church of Sudan) Provincial finances, devise new systems of bookkeeping and accounting, train the staff and implement the new systems, make sure everything was working well, and then return home. Sounded simple enough at the time!

I had sold my business of fifteen years and abandoned my previous, rational life in response to what I perceived as a calling from God to devote myself to using the knowledge and experience I had gained to help others. I had only a vague sense of what “helping others” meant, but it seemed like it would involve using my business experience in some type of overseas project. I had contacted the Mission and Outreach office of the Diocese of Virginia and offered myself, if they could envision a need. Shortly thereafter, I received a telephone call from the Diocese asking if I’d be interested in going to a country called “Sudan...”.

Once I learned of the need within the ECS for someone to come and help set the finances right, it seemed like a perfect fit, and I leapt at the opportunity. But having never lived overseas before, in fact, having hardly ever even traveled outside the US before, I was concerned about how I would adjust to life away from home. I was concerned about living “as an alien in the land.”



Larry Duffy on site in Ibba, leading a workshop for ECS

But, I should have known not to fear for God traveled with me. I should have known that I was being given an opportunity to live with my Christian brothers and sisters with whom we all share in one universal body of Christ. Far from being an alien, I have always been treated in Sudan as a welcomed friend and regarded as a brother. I have learned more about the power and strength of faith in Sudan than I ever experienced at home. I have come to treasure the openness with which we express our Christian faith during our working days, beginning our meetings with prayer and asking for blessings upon our work. This has become so much a part of my life now, and I hope I will be able to continue the practice when I return home.

For me, personally, one of the most difficult aspects of my time in Sudan has been remembering that I am, first and foremost, a missionary. My job quickly evolved from being a temporary financial consultant to Chief Financial Officer for the ECS, working long days trying to understand

REFLECTONS ON MISSION. cont'd.

and get control over the finances of the Province. One of the most difficult aspects of owning my own business was getting used to the seven-day workweeks. I had actually looked forward to going to Sudan for the prospect of not having to work all the time. And yet, I soon found myself in Juba working seven-day work weeks, again, as I struggled to pay the bills and manage the cash flows and write project budgets and quarterly reports and all of the other things one does when managing a business. I found that the line between missionary and overworked employee blurred. I had to be reminded by fellow missionaries that my first priority is to the build relationships between myself and the people of the ECS. It is not about how much work I can accomplish. This is a battle I wage constantly with myself. I am fortunate, though, to have friends who remind me to occasionally stop working so much. Go sit in a plastic chair under a shady Neem tree. Enjoy a glass of sweet, spiced tea. Converse with whomever stops by. Share in each other's lives.

I have been fortunate, also, to live and work with Sudanese, to live as they do and to be welcomed into their homes wherever I have traveled. I have learned from His Grace, Archbishop Dr. Daniel Deng Bul, a great deal about managing a church of 31 dioceses in a way which strives to keep peace among the many competing interests of the Church. I am sure, to outsiders who have their own agenda, it appears as though we are opposed to progress, when, in fact, what we are striving for is progress among all the dioceses, rather than merely a few. Add to this complexity the issue of tribalism, which despite all rhetoric to the contrary, is still a huge factor in Sudan. You are confronted with a management problem requiring enormous tact and diplomacy at all times.

I derived the greatest pleasure while in Sudan teaching

either at Bishop Gwynne College or out in the dioceses. During the spring of 2011, I taught two classes at BGC, basic math and an introduction to financial management, to the third-year and foundation-year students. I was scared because I had never taught before, and yet, it turned out to be a wonderful experience. So, too, with the visits I have made to the dioceses, where I have tried to teach basic bookkeeping and management skills. I have, to date, visited around a dozen dioceses and have taught well over 200 pastors and diocesan staff how to manage their finances to some degree, certainly more than they knew before, though not as much as they beg for. Much more training remains to be completed, and I hope if I return to Sudan to spend the majority of my time teaching in the dioceses.

Another critical area that I have included in my teachings is the concept of stewardship, the process by which the laypeople learn to support the Church. There is a great need for this kind of training within the ECS, and I have only begun to scratch the surface. It is vital to the future vibrancy of the ECS. As the ECS struggles to grow in the new economy of South Sudan, it needs resources, which its congregants can provide, if they are educated, and if they have trust that their contributions will be well used. These two critical requirements are lacking. Continuing this training is needed, if the ECS is to grow and not wither.

Learning to survive in a foreign culture, working to create a new life for myself, and learning how to make myself useful have all been important aspects of my mission. Most important has been learning to rely upon God in all things, to trust in His judgment, and to experience the blessing of immeasurable joy; being exactly where God has called me, doing exactly what He has called me to do. It is a joy not everyone gets to experience, but one for which I will be forever thankful. ❖

“AT HOPE AND RESURRECTION SECONDARY SCHOOL, WE LEAVE NO STONE UNTURNED”

By GODFREY MUJUNGU, TEACHER OF BUSINESS STUDIES
HOPE AND RESURRECTION SECONDARY SCHOOL,
ATIABA, SOUTH SUDAN

Bringing up the students academically, morally and spiritually is not easy, but our university-educated teachers are totally committed to doing their best each day. The students are grateful to receive instruction from “bright, humble and knowledgeable teachers selected from Uganda.” All nine Ugandan teachers returned for the 2012 school year, citing that the progress they are witnessing keeps them motivated to do more. Each year, the entering freshman class requires extra attention from the teachers to bring them up to the discipline standards enforced at Hope and Resurrection. Academically, they are behind a level or two, and the new students are not accustomed to the rigors of the school day. The older students serve as mentors and set the example for the entering students. Our female teacher, Marcellina, refers to all the girls as her “daughters”. She visits the communities to personally meet the parents of the girls to say thank you and solidify their trust in sending their daughters to Hope and Resurrection.

A very tangible measure of success came this past April when the national secondary exam results of Hope and Resurrection School’s first graduating class were released. Each of our 16 students, which included four girls, passed the exam. One of the boys, Abraham Marial Akec, scored the highest in math and sciences in the whole of Lakes State and fifth in the nation. The school’s administration, the teachers and the students have come up with a plan to achieve even better results when the class of 2012 sits for their exam in November.



Photo by Jennifer Ernst©

We serve an average of 200 students each year, and girls comprise at least 25% of the student body. The number of girls attending increases each year, a very encouraging sign! Hope and Resurrection Secondary School is located in a rural area, in the village of Atiaba, in Lakes State. It is centrally located, and students walk or ride a bike up to three hours to school and back each day.

By supporting this school, individuals and churches have the unique opportunity to play a critical role in developing South Sudan. Our students are being transformed, and in the process, are transforming their families, communities and even the country!

Our boy students preach gender equality and practice it. Both our boys and girls are peacemakers and spend time in their communities encouraging parents to send their children to school instead of the cattle camps. They are respected members of their communities, and are among the most educated citizens. It is encouraging to witness that

“AT HOPE AND RESURRECTION SECONDARY SCHOOL,
WE LEAVE NO STONE UNTURNED” cont’d.



girls and their parents see the benefits of delaying marriage to allow girls to complete their secondary education.

Deborah Ating Marel represents the other 52 girls as the “Head Girl” at the school. She writes, “In our society here, it was very difficult for a girl child in South Sudan to complete Senior 4 (high school) because of early marriage. But now as the school is near, our parents are seeing the use of education and we are happy with your help, many of us girls are going to complete Senior 4. And we are going to be the mothers of the new nation.”

The top senior this year, Thon Bec Ater, eloquently sums up the importance of educating girls. “Women love peace more than the men. Women love all people. Warrap State was plagued by violence until they elected South Sudan’s first woman governor. She preaches peace in her state, and it has been calm since.”

The students are very grateful for the quality education they are receiving, courtesy of the American people. They openly share that their goal is for their supporters to be

proud of what they’ll accomplish as a Hope and Resurrection School student and graduate. The school’s Head Boy, King Mathiang King, stated that the students will never forget their “liberation from illiteracy”. He shared a proverb from his Dinka culture: “A blind man does not forget about his walking stick even if the eye is opened clearly by the doctor’s operation.” They give thanks to God and the American people who work to provide a quality education which helps develop the new nation, South Sudan. King and the other students remind us that God will reward us in His own way, but the students will reward us when they become strong and humble leaders in the future.

Hope and Resurrection Secondary School is educating the future leaders of South Sudan. We fully expect that high level government officials will be Hope and Resurrection graduates. Maybe even the future president of South Sudan! It’s a rare opportunity to make such a tangible difference. Please consider becoming a partner with Hope for Humanity. We’re proud that 90% of each dollar goes to Hope and Resurrection Secondary School and your gift is fully tax deductible. For more information, please contact Jennifer Ernst at Jpe60@aol.com or visit www.hopeforhumanity.inc.org/ Thank you! ❖

(Ed. Note: Jennifer Ernst is Founder of Hope for Humanity, Inc. She and a team from the Diocese of VA recently returned from an annual visit to Resurrection and Hope Secondary School supported by Hope for Humanity, Inc. Contact Jennifer and ask to be added to the list of newsletter subscribers.)

“WAS IT A DREAM?”

**AN ACCOUNT OF AFRECS BOARD MEMBER,
THE REV. DR. ELLEN J. HANCKEL’S,
CALL TO GO AND TEACH AT BISHOP GWYNNE
COLLEGE, JUBA, S. SUDAN**

As I sit here in familiar Virginia surroundings, I consider the question, “Was it a dream?” And, then the tentative answer, “If so, it was a dream come true.” Then comes a more confident response. “Lord knows it really happened. By the grace of God, I really did that.” And, in my mind’s eye, I visualize a photo taken on that last day, a photo of me surrounded by my students.

The seminarians at Bishop Gwynne College (BGC) come from all over the Republic of South Sudan (RoSS), the newest nation as of their Independence Day on July 9, 2011. The 194th member of the U.N. is comprised of 10 states, divided into 26 dioceses. Including the five dioceses in the Republic of Sudan, to the north, there are 31 dioceses of the Episcopal Church of Sudan (ECS), which all remain one Province of the Anglican Communion.

My students represented 12 dioceses, plus one from a contested border area. Eight of the 10 states were represented. Nearly every geographical location was represented, and included one woman. Altogether, there were nine second year students and 14 studying first year courses. It was a diverse group from mainly two tribal groups, Zande and Dinka. When asked one day in class to name languages they spoke, or that their families and friends spoke, they quickly came up with 22 different languages! Thankfully, we all communicated in English, a requirement for BGC applicants.



Principal Joseph Taban Lasuba is former Dean of All Saints’ Cathedral in Khartoum. Following his studies at Duke Divinity School, Durham, NC, where he earned an advanced degree, he returned to Sudan. He was named Principal of BGC in 2011.

BGC is the oldest of five theological colleges of the ECS. It is considered by many to be the flagship of institutions for theological study in South Sudan. Founded in 1932 by the Church Missionary Society (CMS), it was named for Bishop Llewellyn Gwynne, pioneer member of the Gordon Memorial Sudan Mission of CMS. Its mission was intended to evangelize the Sudanese after the killing of General Charles Gordon, British Governor in Khartoum, during the uprising in the late 19th century.

Originally located in Mundri, the campus of BGC was moved to Juba in the late 1980’s upon the outbreak of the violent civil war. It is currently affiliated with St. Paul’s University, Limuru, Kenya, which oversees a number of colleges in various locations in East Africa offering diploma and degree programs.

“WAS IT A DREAM?” cont’d.

BGC reopened in 2010, under the leadership of The Rev. Trevor Stubbs, Salisbury Diocese (UK), after a hiatus of a year to settle debts and accounts. A new site was developed to provide space for a dormitory, library, classrooms, and a kitchen. A 15-minute walk away is the old site, a building designed in the perimeter style, with rooms opening onto a rectangular courtyard. It is still used for administrative offices and guest rooms for visitors, like me.

The ‘mustard’ seed to teach at BGC was planted in 2004, when I came with a heart tuned for mission to serve as a rector in the Diocese of Southwestern Virginia. The Diocese has a long history with the ECS, a link begun with missionary Marc Nikkel. Marc taught at BGC when it was in Mundri. I have felt the pull of the Spirit increasingly tug me towards the people of and ministry in South Sudan, following in Marc’s footsteps, perhaps. Related experiences with mission and South Sudan led me deeper toward the “dream”.

As a board member of AFRECS, I found myself involved in its annual conference in VA in 2011. It was a period of discernment for me, having resigned from my position as a rector. At that conference, I heard two speakers whose presentations spoke to me. One was Trevor Stubbs, who talked about his and his wife’s work at BGC. The other was Dr. Ellen Davis, Professor of Old Testament at Duke Divinity School, who talked about establishing the Visiting Teachers Program in Renk Diocese for Renk Theological College in northern Upper Nile State, South Sudan. It was then that I felt the idea take hold. And, so with my husband Scott’s support, we found ourselves preparing for four months of living on different continents.

I am most grateful to have had this opportunity to interact with the BGC students, the future leaders of the ECS, during this semester of teaching. The subjects of Romans, introduction to New Testament and introduction to So-

ciology were important and challenging for all involved. Yet, an even greater learning was offered, I believe — that of the importance of building relationships of love and respect in the worldwide community of Christ.

I saw this happening among the students from all across South Sudan who came to study together in Juba. They were forming friendships with each other that hopefully will stay with them for years into the future. By the grace of God, those relationships will bridge the gaps caused by tribal disputes and geographic divides. I also saw friendships forming between people who come from around the world seeking to help the brave people of South Sudan find their way as a new country.

Whatever the future holds for us, as individuals or corporately, in the body of Christ, I will think fondly of the BGC students as they return to their communities for the summer.

Hopefully, they will return to Juba ready to receive more of the education for which they thirst and which BGC provides. Ultimately, I believe all of us involved with BGC hope they will share what they have learned in their minds and in their hearts with others in their communities. Personally, I’m glad the Lord was willing for me to take part in this compelling, worthwhile endeavor...a dream come true.

Ed. Note: To learn more about teaching opportunities in the ECS, contact AFRECS Exec. Dir. Richard Parkins, parkinscr@gmail.com

The 23 students represented 13 dioceses:

Twic East in Jonglei State; Torit in Eastern Equatoria; Nzara, Yambio, Ezo and Ibba in Western Equatoria; Bentiu in Unity State; Wau, which covers Warrap and Western Bahr el Ghazal States; and Abyei, located in the disputed territory north of Northern Bahr el Ghazal State.

COMINGS & GOINGS, ETC.

O God, surround those who travel, in Your service, with Your loving care; protect them from every danger; bring them safely to their journey's end, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

FEBRUARY

The Rev. Susan Naylor, Diocese of Missouri, traveled to Companion Diocese, Lui, led by partners Diocese of Salisbury (UK), the Blackmore Vale Deanery, along with partner the Diocese of Lund, Church of Sweden. Susan served as nurse and chaplain.



Debra Smith, Diocese of MO and Lillian Clement, wife of Bishop of Lui, participate at the U.N. Commission on the Status of Women. Photo credit: Anglican Women's Empowerment

FEBRUARY/MARCH

Debra Smith, Diocese of Missouri, and Lillian Clement, wife of Bishop Stephen Dokolo Ismail, Diocese of Lui, companion dioceses, participated in the U.N. Commission on the Status of Women. They served on a panel for Anglican Women's Empowerment's parallel event about best practices in U.S.-African partnerships.

JULY 5-12

AFRECS Guests at General Convention

John Augustino Lumori, Provincial Secretary of the Episcopal Church of Sudan (ECS), will be guest of AFRECS

at General Convention in Indianapolis, representing Archbishop Daniel Deng Bul Yak, and will speak at the AFRECS luncheon. Monday, July 9. Larry Duffy, Diocese of VA and TEC Volunteer for Mission, is expected to be at General Convention in Indianapolis. Larry has served the ECS as financial consultant, rising to CFO, in the Provincial Office, in Juba, since May 2010.

JULY 2012-JUNE 2013

The Rev. Jacob Panchol Majok, Dean of Student Affairs, Renk Theological College, Renk Diocese, South Sudan, arrives in Alexandria, VA, in July 2012, for one year of study on an international scholarship at Virginia Theological Seminary (VTS).

AUGUST

The Rev. Bob and Karen North, TEC Volunteers for Mission, return from serving in the Diocese of Nzara, Samuel Enosa Peni, Bishop. Their work was supported by the Diocese of IA and Grace Church, Galena, IL. Contact them at robertdavidnorth@gmail.com for further information.

OCTOBER 10-NOVEMBER 18

The Rt. Rev. Dr. Joseph Garang Atem Zorial, Renk Diocese, visits Companion Diocese, Chicago, and partners throughout the Dioceses of Chicago and Virginia. Companion Bishop Jeffrey Lee will host Bishop Joseph at the Diocesan Convention in November, and he will join diocesan clergy for their annual conference in Chicago. St. Michael's, Barrington, IL, will honor Bishop Joseph at its annual Sudan Soiree, November 10, in support of the relationship between the parish and Renk Theological College.

CONTACT THE PRESIDENT, SECRETARY OF STATE, U.S. SENATE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS & MEMBERS

The Advocacy Task Force of AFRECS encourages its members, friends and partners with the Episcopal Church of Sudan to inform President Barack Obama, Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton, and the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations of concerns about the ongoing crisis between the Republic of Sudan and the Republic of South Sudan, since South Sudan gained its independence from Sudan a year ago, July 9, 2010. Letters, phone calls and emails will lift the urgency of instability to a higher priority.

The U.S. Government and those nations that share a stake in the peace process need to exert greater pressure on the Khartoum government to honor its obligations as set forth in the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA), and acceptance of independence of the new country, South Sudan. Without such adherence, peace will unravel with dangerous consequences.

If you contact the U.S. Government advocating for the people of South Sudan and southern Sudanese who find themselves in flight for their safety, AFRECS has set up an email address: advocacy@afrecs.org. Please copy AFRECS with your comments.

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Sources of information to keep yourself informed:

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