

# SUDAN CONNECTIONS

WINTER 2007

VOLUME 2, NUMBER 2



AFRECS - AMERICAN FRIENDS OF THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF SUDAN



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## Connecting Hopes and Gifts

*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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*On the cover: Children at Kakuma Refugee Camp, fall 2006. See stories on pages 4 and 11.*



For submissions to *Sudan Connections*: Send information to Debra Andrew Maconaughey at [downtime66@hotmail.com](mailto:downtime66@hotmail.com)

Dear Members of AFRECS,

It's 2007, and the 3rd annual AFRECS conference is coming up! Save the dates of April 13-15. We'll gather at Christ Church Cathedral in St. Louis, Missouri.

As ever, there will be provocative speakers, updates on all the latest news from Sudan.... Darfur, the Comprehensive Peace Agreement, as well as development efforts, theological education, Sudan repatriation, etc. We will use "open networking" this year to encourage networking on spontaneous, specific topics.

Canon Margaret Larom, Director of the Office of Anglican and Global Relations, will kick off the conference Friday evening (unless she is needed elsewhere in the world!).

Coming from Sudan will be **The Rt. Rev. Peter Amidi** of Lainya Diocese, and Finance Chairman for the Province; **Mama Darias Kwaje**, Provincial Mother's Union Worker; **The Rt. Rev. Bullen Dollie** of Lui Diocese, which is in companion relationship with the Diocese of Missouri and St. James Church, New York City; **The Rev. Canon Dr. Oliver M. Duku**, Principal of Bishop Allison Theological College in Juba, and a member of the ECS Commission on Theological Education. He will be in residence at Virginia Theological Seminary the month of April. Once again, **The Ven. Michael Paget-Wilkes**, Chairman of the Sudan Church Association, will come from Coventry, UK. **Pauline Walker**, Church Mission Society missionary supporting the Episcopal Church of Sudan from Kampala, will be there. We also expect **Lucian Niemeyer**, author and photographer of "Africa, the Holocausts of Rwanda and Sudan (2006)". Mr. Niemeyer has been nominated for the 2007 Pulitzer Prize for this book. Many of the above attended the Juba Round Table in November 2006, and news, ideas and proposals will be shared from that meeting.

The Executive Committee is waiting for confirmations from other invited speakers. There will be workshops scheduled at least twice (your suggestion from previous years).

And, of course, there will be joyful singing and worship at Christ Church Cathedral Sunday morning.



Are you working in resettlement here in the USA? Are you concerned about learning more about development work in Sudan? Are you a Sudanese refugee looking to use your skills in Sudan? Are you looking to make connections? There will be something for every need.

*"Meet me in St. Louis"... April 13-15!*

Nancy Frank  
*Executive Director*  
*American Friends of the Episcopal Church of Sudan*

P.S. Please renew your membership to AFRECS. The newsletter and consulting services are only available to AFRECS members.

# PILGRIMAGE TO SOUTHERN SUDAN: Connecting Hopes and Gifts

Jerry Drino

Together with Jerry and Ann Marie DeLuccio (NY), David Jenkins (VA), Hal Stallworth (GA), Lola Toloba (WA)

*Connecting hopes and gifts* is the current focus of the American Friends of the Episcopal Church in Sudan and was clearly manifested in the November visit to Kakuma and Sudan. Canon Mark Atem Thuc and Jerry Drino designed the visit to provide participants with experiences in exposure to the current reality of the Sudanese in Kenya and Sudan and building links for the future. The first venue was to assess the needs and plans of the Church in Sudan within the context of Sudanese society at this important juncture in their recovery process. The second was to attend the Round Table of the ECS and funding partners, fortified with first-hand experience and debriefing at all levels of southern Sudanese society.

## *Assessing the Needs and Plans of the ECS*

It is impossible to separate the needs and plans of the Episcopal Church in Sudan from those of Sudanese civil



Women at church, Kakuma

society. The participants had opportunities to interact with leaders in the Diaspora living in Nairobi, and with leaders and ordinary people in Kakuma Refugee Camp. There were extended meetings with the Governor of Jonglei State, three Commissioners in that state, the Secretary General of the SPLM, and the Commissioners of Education, Health, and Infrastructure. Part of the experience included site visits, roads and weather permitting, to several regions of Jonglei. Additional agendas included delivering theology books donated by the Rev. Rick Houghton of Michigan and Seattle clergy requested by the Malek Bible School, re-establishing relationships with the Malek Bible School and the Diocese of SW Virginia, attending the memorial service for the Rev. Zacharia Biar Atem in Kakuma, who had died in a massacre two weeks before, delivering medicines to diocesan clinics and sewing machines to the Mothers' Union in several locations, exploring a state-to-state relationship between Washington State and Jonglei, and initiating the building of a diocesan guesthouse compound in the state capitol of Bor Town funded by US resettled Sudanese from Jonglei.

## *Nairobi*

Through the generosity of the Mill Hill Missionary Order, the grounds of their guesthouse in Nairobi became the place of continuous meetings between the traveling team and Sudanese leaders in the days before and after the trip into Sudan. These included meeting with the Rt. Rev.



Nairobi: L-R D. Jenkins, Bp E. Diing, J. Drino, L. Toloba, J & AM DeLuccio, Paul Boyle

## Pilgrimage to Southern Sudan, con't.

Ezekiel Diing, Assistant Bishop and Administrator of the Diocese of Bor, the Rev. Canon Nathaniel Bol, Principal of Malek Bible School, archdeacons, priests and lay leaders, including college students from Jonglei who are developing an extensive organization for Sudanese youth in Kenya and Uganda, and psychologists working with post-traumatic distress healing. Many of these persons were close associates of the late Marc Nikkel desiring to become reconnected to the US Church after nearly a six-year vacuum following his death.

### *Lochiboggio and Kakuma*

We spent one night at the New Sudan Council of Churches compound in Loki before and after our visit to Kakuma Refugee Camp. Our meals were taken at the 427 Compound which has a full meal service and is the staging ground for NGOs, safari tourists, international visitors, etc. We were fortunate to meet good friend and photojournalist, Lucian Niemeyer from Santa Fe, New Mexico, whose book on the genocides of Rwanda and Sudan is up for a Pulitzer. His perspective on the peace and future of Sudan was invaluable.

Kakuma was bitter sweet. It is a time of waiting for the refugees who are still not sure that Sudan is secure or that a return is desirable. While, officially, there is word of closing the camp next year, conditions are such that this is highly unlikely.

Prior to our arrival, the UN cancelled any further repatriation activity until the south is made secure. Three of the four roads into Juba were closed. People are starving in Kakuma and medical services are minimal. Canon Nathaniel, Principal of MBS, said, "Just look at the priests. They are walking skeletons." It is true. To feed several hundred people twice was a small gesture from our travel budget and other funds. One very ill priest showed me his blood tests which indicated Hepatitis and Syphilis. He had been told that he needed to go to Nairobi for more tests. I provided bus fare and funds for accommodations for him, and authorized the medical fund I set up with the CMS to cover his medical expenses. The medical needs of four other priests or their family members were covered from various sources.

Funding is being sought for the two-year-old son of James Ajout, a priest living in the slums of Nairobi. He has been routinely beaten by neighborhood children; he has a broken collarbone, ribs and arm. James had been one of Marc Nikkel's close protégés.



*Nairobi: The Rev. James Ajout, father of injured two-year-old and David Jenkins*

Daniel Yor, an evangelist shot in a raid in Kakuma in 1998, had been supported by funds raised by Marc prior to his death. Since 2000, Daniel has been destitute. Funds were sent for him to travel to Nairobi to meet us. Plans are being made to see that he receives medical attention and can begin attending school.

## Pilgrimage to Southern Sudan, con't.



*Kakuma: Students being prayed over prior to their qualifying exams.*

Sunday morning we attended services at one of the largest outdoor churches in Kakuma's Zone Three, with about 2000 people. An afternoon memorial service was held at the compound where Rev. Zacharia Biar Atem's wife

and their three small children live in a small 8x10 tukhl. There are seven churches in the camp that serve approximately 35,000 Episcopalians.

### *Jonglei State and Bor Town*

The old British garrison town of Bor is starting to revive with 5,000-6,000 people and more coming all the time. There are only five wells, recently dug in the past six months, next to no latrines, a growing business area of small shops and stalls popping up at every turn. Here is the seat of the Governor, the State Assembly, and the state and local governmental agencies.

### *Priorities*

Both the Church and civil leadership reiterated the five priorities that are before them: 1) security, 2) education, 3) health, 4) agricultural and economic development, 5) capacity assessment and communication with college students in the Diaspora in Africa and overseas. The issues of repatriation and re-establishing village communities are contingent upon enactment of these priorities.

1) *Security*: People are reluctant to return from Kenya or Uganda without guarantees for their safety. Many roads have not been cleared of mines. The Khartoum Government sponsored attacks and massacres around Juba only weeks before our visit made the issue of security a priority in our meetings in Bor Town. The Rev. Zacharia Biar Atem had been killed in one of those attacks. Jacob Chol, the Project Manager for the building of the Diocesan guesthouse compound in Bor Town, had to hide for nine days in the bush near Juba with all the building supplies for the project. In Bor, we saw official reports of attacks on villages and killings in places like Jalle, where we had visited only days before.

On one trip to Malek an armed escort was needed. There is a UN presence in Bor Town with SPLA and local security forces patrolling the streets; one of our traveling team was detained when he became suspect for taking pictures.



*Malek bush school.*

Ultimately, the second venue of our trip, attending the Round Table meeting in Juba, took place without American representation because of the insecurities along the roads to Juba and changes in visa requirements.

2) *Education* is most problematical with a scattering of bush schools here and there and only one primary school in the capitol with limited enrollment. There are no funds to pay teachers or provide educational materials. CARE International has set up some tent classrooms, and the first latrine was being dug. Under the

## Pilgrimage to Southern Sudan, con't.

Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) resource sharing was supposed to begin last year; no resources are making it to the state level and only a trickle to the southern capitol in Juba. We reported on the intention of the US-based New Sudan Education Initiative, [www.nesei.org](http://www.nesei.org), which, in January, will start building the first of twenty secondary schools in the south, starting in Yei. These will be leadership academies to train teachers, medical personnel, agricultural specialists and office/project managers. Bor Town will be an early recipient of this project, which will build, supply and provide salaries for five years. This is a crucial step in meeting the wave of returning SPLA soldiers with no skills to the villages, as well as the vast number of young women who had no opportunity for education in the past.



*Malek: Under historic 100 year old tree planted by the first missionary, Archibald Shaw: Elder, Jacob Chol, Canon Samuel Majak, Canon Mark Atem Thuc*

### *Malek Bible School*

The Diocese and faculty have determined to return the Malek Bible School to its original foundation from its exiled location, Kakuma Refugee Camp. Dr. David Jenkins was sent by the Diocese of Southwest

Virginia specifically to do an assessment of needs of MBS at its present location, looking to the future. No fund strategy has been developed to 1) assess the requirements to rebuild the destroyed Malek Institute, which had included a village, schools and medical facilities; 2) secure architects and engineers; 3) fund new construction, transport the library back to Sudan, and support the on-going ministry of the MBS and the Principal, the Rev. Canon Nathaniel Bol.

The MBS would become the hub of a satellite system of theological education. There are 650 priests in the diocese, most of whom have next to no formal theological education. There is a great need for additional clergy in a population of 1.5 million Episcopalians. A theological training consortium of the Dioceses of Wau, Malakal and Bor has been set in place by the ECS.

3) **Health**, which includes clean water and health education, is equally problematic in Jonglei as it is throughout most of the south. There is only one hospital in the whole state, a 1917 complex built by the British and abandoned for over twenty years during the war. Only two wings are barely usable, and the buildings which were not bombed are about to crumble around the patients, who, for the most part, have to lie on beds out on the ground under ancient

## Pilgrimage to Southern Sudan, con't.



*Bor Town: Surgery wing collapsing at the only hospital in the whole state of Jonglei – half the size of California*

mango trees. Since January of this year, a borehole has been dug for water to somewhat improve the sanitation. Doctors Without Borders from Belgium is offering assistance. However, there are only two doctors on-site, one Sudanese and one Western, with a

small generator to run the electricity for events like surgeries. The Lost Boys and Girls Memorial Hospital in south Bor County, sponsored by an ecumenical effort in Grand Rapids, Michigan, is still to be completed.

The Diocese of Bor, through the leadership of Canon Thuc and the Sudan Organization for Rehabilitation and Development (SORAD) has established seven regional village clinics with a grant from CARE. There are plans with the Commissioner of Health to place seven clinics in strategic areas in the counties of Duk, Twic and Bor. Last spring an SOS to the US came when no medicine for malaria and cholera was available. Only \$12,000 was raised. The World Health Organization and CARE informed the state that no medicines would be available because of low donor response.

4) **Economic and Agricultural Development** are showing some signs of movement in Bor Town. Since January, the Freedom Hotel has become the

informal center of governmental, church and business life of the town. This is a remarkable economic development story. Funded entirely by a 30-year-old Sudanese entrepreneur, this 18-tent compound, with dining hall, bar, solar panels to support computers, the internet and satellite TV connections, and cooking area, is a going concern. Many NGOs and state officials are taking advantage of this new enterprise. We knew what was on the menu for the next day by the animals that were brought into the courtyard. Since the Diocesan compound had been delayed in being built because of the insecurity in the south, we enjoyed being at this compound. Canon Thuc and Canon Nathaniel maintained a constant flow of church meetings with clergy and civil authorities. It is hoped that when the Diocesan compound is built a similar level of activity will ensue. The diocesan compound is being funded initially by Sudanese and their families in San Jose, CA, and Seattle, but will be expanded to other donors.

Our meetings with leaders in various villages often touched on the desperate need to have agricultural technology brought to them, as well as simple needs of fishing nets and lines and hooks for places like the leper village at



*Bor Town: Meeting with Commissioner of Bor County (Center) and traveling team*



*Women and children at Malek leper village*

## Pilgrimage to Southern Sudan, con't.

Malek, which has no means of support for its ninety-two members. At Jalle, a youth leader spoke with anger about whether our visit would really result in any follow through. He spoke of the frustration of people coming to visit them, making speeches, and leaving with no follow through being made. The meeting was somewhat surreal with an oil exploration helicopter lifting off a hundred yards away from the gathering and the poverty of the people who formed the circle around us.

### 5) Capacity Assessment of Sudanese College Students in the Diaspora:



*Nairobi: Youth Steering Committee of 300 member college-age group - "The Role of Youth in Post-Conflict Sudan"*

“The middle (parent) generation is pretty much lost. The future and rebuilding of society in southern Sudan is going to depend, to a great extent, on the college students in the Diaspora.” These words by Governor Philip Thon of Jonglei were echoed in many conversations with state and Church leaders. The Secretary General of the SPLM was adamant in his insistence that the youth now in the US, Canada and Australia were never lost and that the term Lost Boys was a journalistic fabrication to sensationalize the massive program of moving the boys out of Sudan in the late 1980s. “There was a clear policy of the SPLA/M to take this generation out of harms way, first to

Ethiopia and then, when that government fell in 1991, into Kenya by way of Sudan. The establishment of the refugee camp at Kakuma, and even the eventual resettlement of some in the West, was part of an intentional plan to save as many as possible, and then see that they were prepared to come back home with necessary skills to rebuild our society.”

This was an important corrective statement for all of us working with Sudanese in the US. What is not clear is how the policies to engage and invite the resettled Sudanese to Sudan are being communicated. A coalition-building mechanism needs to be established so that formal contacts with the Sudanese in the Diaspora are made, including the coordination of educational goals with those of development needs in Sudan.

### *Recommendations*

1) **Create a coalition of Sudanese leaders in Sudan, and in the US**, for the purpose of capacity assessment and coordination of future leadership and resource building. The college group in Nairobi presented the theme: “The Role of Youth in Post-Conflict Sudan”, which captures the essence of this initiative.

The Episcopal Church in America, as well as the Anglican Communion, is in a unique position to join in the heroic efforts of the ECS in rebuilding southern Sudanese society. For most Episcopalians in the West, it is still inconceivable that our Church is, and should be, a significant player in moving a whole society from the tragedy of the civil war into the mainstream of the global community.

## Pilgrimage to Southern Sudan, con't.

2) **Re-establish the Malek Bible School (Institute) at Malek.** The historic foundation of Christianity among the tribes of the Upper Nile cannot be underestimated for its potential to strengthen the Church in the south, as well as catch the imagination of the world Church to enter into partnership with this effort. The Diocese of Southwestern Virginia, with its long commitment through the late Marc Nikkel and Bishop Heath Light, has a significant part to play in this effort. With 650+ clergy and 1.5 million Episcopalians in the Diocese, the urgency for continuing theological and pastoral skills training cannot be ignored.

The possibility of re-establishing the entire center with a seminary, primary and secondary schools, medical facilities and guest compound could re-anchor the Church in Bor and be a draw to outsiders who would want to explore Sudanese and African spirituality and the on-going support of the ECS. Eventually, it can become connected to a university that will be established in Bor Town.

3) **Re-establish connection with the legacy of Marc Nikkel.** Many priests and evangelists, who were taken under the wings of Marc Nikkel, made contact with the traveling team, in the hope of finding support for their education and medical needs. A list of these students is being compiled.

As a part of supporting the policy to strengthen the leadership and institution of the Church in Sudan, a

scholarship review board will be established, under the direction of Canon Mark Atem Thuc to receive requests for sponsorship to theological seminaries and universities. Currently, obtaining sponsorship occurs based on who one knows and how persistent a student can be with email and phone calls. While this determination is commendable, issues of appropriate candidates need to be assessed.

Other recommendations are bound to be brought forward as we reflect on our time together with the leaders of the Episcopal Church in Sudan. We deeply appreciate the opportunity and support given by the Office of

Anglican and Global Relations of the Episcopal Church Center, and AFRECS, to travel to Kenya and Sudan to represent the Episcopal Church in America, and to be a bridge between our two Churches and societies. We believe the priority of connecting hopes and gifts was moved forward, supporting the hope and faith that God has planted in the people of southern Sudan.



*Hal Stallworth with boys in Bor Town*

*Edited by Jackie Kraus*

*Contact Jerry Drino, Exec. V.P., AFRECS, for unedited report.*

# A Return to Kakuma

David Jenkins



*Sudanese refugee children at Kakuma*

In November, 2006, eleven years after visiting Kakuma Refugee Camp with Marc Nikkel, I returned as part of an AFRECS team lead by Jerry Drino, AFRECS Board member, and Canon Mark Atem Thuc, of Bor Diocese. Marc, a missionary appointed by the Episcopal Church USA to Sudan, died six years ago. Our itinerary brought us from Nairobi to Kakuma, and on to Bor in Sudan. Since my last visit, there was news of destructive floods, attacks in the Camp that killed a pastor, and the departure of refugees for their homes in Sudan. I was very curious as to what we would see.

The changes at the Camp were startling. The Camp was larger than eleven years ago, with vendors on the roads selling soft drinks, and most everyone had a cell phone. The improvement in the quality of life was apparent. The biggest change was the availability of water. Eleven years ago there were just four wells for the whole camp. Long lines of people gath-

ered at the wells for a turn to fill their water containers. Now there are many wells. Walking around the camp, I noticed people gathered together conversing with one another. It seemed that they had developed a sense of community.

The children at the Camp are well dressed, healthy, and in high spirits. The contrast between life in the Refugee Camp and life in Bor can be appreciated by comparing this photograph with the second photograph taken later in Bor.

The faces of the children in Bor reflect a grim situation with poor sanitation and uncertain security. Many improvements will be needed in Bor before the residents are able to enjoy the same opportunities as those in the Camp.

We visited study centers in the Camp that had been created at the suggestion of Marc Nikkel and supported by the Diocese of Southwestern Virginia. The Sudanese place a high value on education. While primary education is provided at the Camp by the Kenyan school system, the students need a place to study in the afternoon and evening with ready access to the books used at school. Several study centers had been built four years ago, but then peace discussions began, and we expected that refugees would return home and not need the study centers. Consequently, further funding for the study centers was withheld. But, on our visit we found that the study centers are flourishing and new ones have been

## A Return to Kakuma, con't.

built so that there are now a total of eight. However, repairs are required for cabinets, blackboards, benches, and the pressure lamps used for nighttime study. Also, Kenya has updated their textbooks, so new books are needed. With this information, the Diocese has given about \$15,000 for improvements.

In Nairobi we met youth who had graduated from primary school at Kakuma. They are in Nairobi, to continue their education in secondary school and college. Unlike primary school at the Camp, a fee is required to attend secondary school and college. They told us of their need for assistance in paying these fees. With southern Sudan embroiled in war during the past 20 years, most of the young people have no education beyond primary school. As peace is restored, educated people will be needed who can contribute to leadership and development.

In the afternoon of our visit, we attended a memorial service for Zacharia Biar Atem, a pastor at Kakuma. He and forty others were killed several weeks earlier in an ambush while traveling in a convoy between Juba and Kenya. We learned that Zacharia was a person of profound faith who was regarded as a prophet. In his memory, we established the Zacharia Biar Atem Scholarship Fund with an initial amount of \$10,000 to support secondary and college education of Sudanese youth. The first students are now being selected for the new school year starting in January 2007.

Members of our group brought books for the Malek Bible School, which is now located at Kakuma. Later, we visited the original site of the school at Malek where the missionary Archibald Shaw arrived 100 years ago to begin his work. Nathaniel Bol Nyok, principal of the school and colleague of Marc Nikkel, informed us of plans to rebuild the school at Malek.

At Kakuma, we learned that several of the church leaders were sick and needed to go to a hospital in Nairobi for treatment. And, in Nairobi we met James Ajuot, protégé of Marc Nikkel, who had been supported at school by Marc, but not since his death. James told us that his son had been attacked and had several broken bones. He did not have money required for treatment. To address these issues, the Marc Nikkel Fund for Medical Relief was established with an account at CMS Nairobi. Funds from this account were used to pay for the treatment of James' son.

Since we visited Kakuma on Sunday, we were able to participate in their enthusiastic outdoor church service. We were reminded of the vitality of the Episcopal Church in Sudan. But, we learned of divisions in the church. A former Minister in the Khartoum government, and now deposed bishop of the ECS, Gabriel Roric, has consecrated John Machar as bishop. John has formed an illegal diocese in Sudan, which is not recognized by the ECS or the Anglican Communion. Over the past eleven years, the quality of life in the Camp has improved. While the situation is still difficult, it is far better than what we saw in Bor.

## A Return to Kakuma, con't.

Next fall, a census will be conducted in southern Sudan. We were told by a Commissioner in Bor that the refugees will be asked to return from Kakuma to be counted in the census. But, we were also informed that the United Nations has a policy of giving the refugees an option of returning to their homes or staying in the Camp. In other words, they cannot be forced to leave. People in the Camp will most likely insist on better security, schools and general infrastructure before returning to Sudan.



*Sudanese children in Bor*

## DARFUR Websites

Mouse over the following links that will take you to websites about Darfur:

[Save Darfur](#)  
[UNICEF](#)  
[World Vision](#)  
[Genocide Intervention Network](#)  
[Darfur: A Genocide We Can Stop](#)  
[Sudan Sunrise](#)  
[Our Pledge](#)  
[American Jewish World](#)

The Sudan Studies Association exists primarily to promote Sudanese studies and scholarship. On the website in the newsletters there are many articles giving background and historical perspective on Darfur. [www.sudanstudies.org](http://www.sudanstudies.org)

Please send any additions to this list to: Nancy Frank

# "PROCLAIM GOD'S WONDRIOUS DEEDS"

Karen Porter

Throngs of singing women clad in crisp white frocks and young men and children in T-shirts and trousers surrounded our Land Rover miles before we pulled into Maar town in southern Sudan.

Waving crosses high above their heads, smiling from ear to ear, and singing songs of praise to God, they shepherded us to their home.

The strong sun beat down as drums rolled rhythms of welcome and excitement filled the air. Here at last! Bishop Nathaniel Garang and Bishop Cate Waynick, along with rectors Jerry Cappel (Louisville), Ellen Hanckel, and Kim (Southwestern

Virginia), Deacon Andrew Klatte (Indianapolis) and myself (anthropologist, Hanover College), all the way from the United States, on a journey of pilgrimage and presence to dedicate the Marc Nikkel school and break new ground for a future secondary school and girls' dormitory.

For many of our Dinka (Jieng, in their own language) brothers and sisters, the event was a chance to reunite with their beloved Bishop

Nathaniel and recently ordained Archdeacon Bartholomayo Bol, as well as Bishop Cate and Deacon Klatte who had visited them in earlier

years. The rest of us were newcomers to the village: fresh faces to meet and greet. Once inside the thorn tree and grass compound, we were ushered to plastic chairs we brought with us from Kenya (and left behind upon departure) carefully arrayed in a semi-circle. In a heart-rending Biblical ritual of welcome and love, our dis-



*Welcome to Maar with songs and dancing.*

comfort was assuaged and our sweaty feet carefully and lovingly washed by kneeling women of the church. Temperatures well above 100° F at the tailend of the rainy season, left the air thick with moisture, despite the burning sun, and we all sweated profusely, constantly wiping our brows. Undeterred, the Sudanese tended to our needs, offering us the dignity of rest and the blessing of fellowship.

## "PROCLAIM GOD'S WON- DROUS DEEDS", con't.

I was asked by a trio of curious men if I was a "girl" or a "woman". One added that I "had the face of a woman". After confirming my mature status, I was quickly asked about husband and children, to which I replied "I have neither". Never in my many years in East Africa had I seen such uncomprehending faces. Clearly, my situation was confusing, maybe even troubling, to these men for whom reproduction of lineage was paramount. I quickly added, "education first, marriage later". They slowly nodded. Only once we were back in Panyagor, the town in which our small aircraft, loaded with 9 passengers, cargo, and two barrels of airline fuel piloted by Ukrainians Pasha and Sergei landed, did I learn that my statement was the principle slogan of *Save the Children Foundation*. Indeed, education is a vital component in the effort to rebuild southern Sudan and to entice refugees still dwelling by the thousands in Kenya's major refugee camp, Kakuma, to come home.

But refugees have expressly stated that they do not want to leave the camps despite United Nations plans to close them by 2009. Why? The people desire and need the services provided in the Camp that are as yet largely unattainable to them back home - education and health care. These needs are mainly being provided by non-governmental organizations (NGOs), especially the Episcopal Church and the Anglican Communion, in fellowship with the Episcopal Church of Sudan. Across the USA, parishes have

responded with open hearts and pocketbooks to help the Christian people of war-torn southern Sudan rebuild their communities, repatriate citizens, and create a future for their children at home. Nowhere is that generosity and Christian witness better expressed than in Maar where the Marc Nikkel School was officially dedicated and opened during our visit.



*Marc Nikkel School*

Hundreds of people of all ages and lineages (key social groups) attended the auspicious event. Even the Commissioner participated, along with an entourage of government officials, dignitaries, their wives, and a contingent of SPLA/M (Southern Peoples Liberations Army/Movement) officers to provide appropriate protection. School children sang and danced songs of welcome and many speeches were made.

## "PROCLAIM GOD'S WON- DROUS DEEDS", con't.



*Commissioner of Jonglei state and his wife*

Nearly everyone had a turn at the battery-operated microphone it seemed! The Headmaster and Master of Ceremonies followed a tightly scheduled itinerary, directing speakers on and off the stage to “keep time”. Many eloquent and moving words were spoken, especially those of the Minister of Parliament for the area, who remembered the Rev. Dr. Marc Nikkel from when Marc was kidnapped by the armed forces and marched hundreds of miles across dangerous and volatile southern Sudan. With tears in his eyes, he asked for forgiveness from Marc, Marc's family, and from us and all those behind us, who, inspired by Marc's ministry and passionate commitment to the Dinka (Jieng), were bringing forth fruits of Marc's 20 year ministry and witness of Christ's unfailing love and truth among them. The MP was followed by the Commissioner, a former military leader who lost one leg during the civil war, but has dedicated himself to rebuilding Sudan

and Maar in particular. He spoke with sincerity and grace about the critical relationship between the Episcopal Church and the people of Sudan, extolling the Gospel truth in which we are one people, God's people, called to truth of Jesus the Christ and to “love one another as we love ourselves”. And, right then and there, he promised that the road between Maar and Panyagor would be reconstructed within one month's time. Applause was deafening. And lo, we saw a large engine unloaded before we boarded the Russian Antonov aircraft on which we flew back to Kenya the very next day. Truth brought to life.

After many celebratory speeches and conveyances of gifts of vestments, school supplies, and money, did Bishops Nathaniel and Cate pray for God's blessings on the new school, dip fresh green boughs in sacred water, and gently toss the blessed drops upon us and the new school, resplendent in its solid brick and corrugated iron



*Bishops Cate Waynick and Nathaniel Garang*

roof construction. Cheers were deafening. The Spirit filled each and every heart that day and continues, through God's grace, to call us to service and to steady and faithful commitment to truth, justice, and the dignity of every human being.

## "PROCLAIM GOD'S WONDROUS DEEDS", con't.

The needs of our brothers and sisters in Christ continue, and will continue, for many years to come. Declared one of the United Nations Millennium Development Goals, education is now being supported, though need far outstrips supply. We must offer what we have been blessed to provide - education, meaningful work, health services - and gratefully receive that which our Sudanese sisters and brothers generously offer in return - a deep and abiding faith in the Lord's love, despite unspeakable hardship and turmoil, that truly declares "God is among us". One way you can help is by participating in World Mission Sunday 2007, February 18, which will be a special day of solidarity with Sudan. The

theme is "Proclaim God's Wondrous Deeds!" We will celebrate the participation of youth and young adults in world mission, demonstrate to people of all ages the life-giving power of mission, and collect a special offering to help the New Sudan Education Initiative. The first project to be undertaken by the Initiative is building a network of secondary schools in southern Sudan to help create new leaders (men AND women) and new institutions. Your church can participate by contacting Katie Hatch at [kamatyly@yahoo.com](mailto:kamatyly@yahoo.com), and may acquire information from [www.nesei.org](http://www.nesei.org).

May we all continue to strengthen the ties between the Episcopal Churches of the USA and Sudan that the Rev. Dr. Marc Nikkel sparked through the grace and power of the Holy Spirit. Live the Word!

## RIFT VALLEY INSTITUTE SUDAN FIELD COURSE 2007

The 2007 Sudan Course will be held in Rumbek 20-26 May. The course, now in its fourth year, is an intensive, residential programme offering a fast-track introduction to all regions of Sudan. It is designed for peacekeepers, aid workers, researchers and diplomatic staff - those living and working in Sudan and those about to start.

Taught by Sudanese and international specialists, the course sets the challenges facing the country in the dynamic context of Sudanese history and culture. This year's teaching staff includes Paul Wani Gore of Khartoum University, Gérard Prunier, author of "Darfur: The Ambiguous Genocide", Suliman Baldo of the International Center for Transitional Justice, Aisha Hommaida of the University of London, Douglas Johnson, author of "The Root Causes of Sudan's Civil Wars", and Jok Madut Jok, author of "Race, Religion and Violence in Sudan". The Course Director is Justin Willis, Director of the British Institute in Eastern Africa.

The aim of the Course is to increase participants' professional effectiveness, deepening understanding of the working environment in Sudan and enabling better-informed interaction between Sudanese and non-Sudanese. The residential nature of the course gives extensive opportunity for informal exchange between participants and teaching staff.

# Non-Profits Working in Sudan

Nancy Frank, Executive Director, AFRECS

The following is the beginning of a list of non-profits working in Sudan with which AFRECS needs your assistance. If you know a non-profit organization which is actually doing development, education, training, or other work in Sudan, please write and tell us about it. AFRECS would like to compile this information for all members to use. Send the name, simplified mission, contact person, email and/or phone number and website to AFRECS, [info@afrecs.org](mailto:info@afrecs.org).

Not included are foundations or organizations serving Sudanese refugees in the US, or those which have not yet begun their work.

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Academy for Educational Development, Diaspora Skills Transfer Program for Southern Sudan. Contact Carolyn Garber, Project Manager at [cgarber@aed.org](mailto:cgarber@aed.org) or John Thon Majok, Project Associate at [jmajok@aed.org](mailto:jmajok@aed.org). Website: [www.aed.org](http://www.aed.org) and then search for Diaspora Skills Transfer Program

ACROSS. Interdenominational, international organization focused on Sudan with emphasis on training. Contact Anthony Poggo, Exec. Dir. at [apoggo@across-sudan.org](mailto:apoggo@across-sudan.org)  
[www.across-sudan.org](http://www.across-sudan.org)

AID SUDAN. Public health/hygiene courses for children and adults in Eastern Equatoria. Contact:

Russell Jones at [Russell.Jones@sbcglobal.net](mailto:Russell.Jones@sbcglobal.net).



American Care for Sudan Foundation. A clinic in Duk, Bor. Contact: John Bul Dau [dengakol@aol.com](mailto:dengakol@aol.com) or 315-685- 5048.  
[www.acsudanfoundation.org](http://www.acsudanfoundation.org).

Ministerial Alliance of Midland. This is a multi-faceted, ecumenical ministry in Midland, TX, with many areas of concern, including persecution in Sudan. Contact: Deborah Fikes, Director, Basic Ministries, Inc at [dnfmissions@home.com](mailto:dnfmissions@home.com) or 915-520-3488.

New Sudan Education Initiative (NESEI). Its purpose is to build schools in Sudan. Contact person: Lauren Servin at [Lservin@gmail.com](mailto:Lservin@gmail.com), or Abraham Awolich at [awolichak@hotmail.com](mailto:awolichak@hotmail.com).  
[www.nesei.org](http://www.nesei.org).

Project Education Sudan. Building schools in Sudan, starting in Maar, Bor. Contact persons: Carol Rinehart at [rrcarol@msn.com](mailto:rrcarol@msn.com) or Isaac Bher at [bboldeng@yahoo.com](mailto:bboldeng@yahoo.com).  
[www.projecteducationsudan.org](http://www.projecteducationsudan.org).

## Non-Profits, con't.

RECONCILE INTERNATIONAL. International advocacy efforts, workshops on civic education and trauma healing. Contact: Debbie Braaksma at [Debbie@reconcile-int.org](mailto:Debbie@reconcile-int.org).

A part of RECONCILE, SORRY (Sudan Organization for Restoring Relationships Among Youth) involves drama and music skits in churches in Yei to promote trauma awareness, healing and reconciliation.

Ring True Foundation. Aims to deliver relief to Christians in Sudan. Manute Bol, former NBA basketball player Founder. Contact: 866-547-8326.

Sudan Education Fund Foundation (SEFF). The Diocese of Bethlehem is a Companion Diocese with Kajo Kei. Parishes link with schools for supplies, testbooks and scholarships. Contact World Mission Committee, Diocese of Bethlehem, JoTrepagnier at [JoTrepagnier@msn.com](mailto:JoTrepagnier@msn.com)

Sudan Relief and Development. Education in Upper Nile, Nasir microenterprise, teacher training. Contact Esther Sprague, [esprague11@yahoo.com](mailto:esprague11@yahoo.com). [www.SudanRD.org](http://www.SudanRD.org)

Sudan Sunrise. Furthers the work of Sudan Christians to come to the aid of and stand in solidarity with the people of Darfur and Southern Sudan and to further Christian mission of relief, development, reconciliation, evangelism and church planting. Contact: The Rev. Tom Prichard at [tpritchard@christchurch-op.org](mailto:tpritchard@christchurch-op.org) [www.sudansunrise.org](http://www.sudansunrise.org).

South Sudanese Friends International. Peacemaking, advocacy for self governance, community health, community development (self-reliance) programs. Currently, Women Working Together and Seeds projects. Contact: Julia Duany [www.southSudanFriends.org](http://www.southSudanFriends.org).

Southern Sudan Education Project. Provide basic education supplies, especially in Bor South. Contact: Kristy Swapp at 801-671-5869. [www.Southern Education Project.org](http://www.Southern Education Project.org)

Summer Institute of Language (SIL). Primary education materials development in local languages, trauma healing workshops, scripture translation. Contact: Elizabeth Newport [director\\_sudan@sil.org](mailto:director_sudan@sil.org)

Together for Sudan. The Bishop Mubarek Fund. training for teachers, salaries for teachers, scholarships for Sudanese individuals in Sudan, women's literacy classes. Interested mostly in Kadugli and Nuba Mountains. [www.togetherforsudan.org](http://www.togetherforsudan.org).

Water for Sudan. Digs boreholes in southern Sudan. Contact: Salva Dut at [salvaariik@yahoo.com](mailto:salvaariik@yahoo.com) or [chrismoore8@hotmail.com](mailto:chrismoore8@hotmail.com). [www.waterforSudan.org](http://www.waterforSudan.org).



# A Message from the Presiding Bishop About the Tear Bomb Attack on All Saints Cathedral, Khartoum, on New Year's Day

*Editor's Note:*

*An January 2, The Rt. Rev. Daniel Deng Bul, Bishop of Renk Diocese, sent word to AFRECS Board member, Jackie Kraus, telling of a tear gas attack on All Saints Cathedral in Khartoum. Several people were injured and suffered from the tear gas bomb explosions. Uniformed police rushed into the Cathedral and threw the bombs while the congregation was worshipping. The Islamisc Government of Sudan has denied involvement, and the Bishop of Khartoum has filed a protest with the Government. Bishop Danel, his wife and family, the Hon. Abel Alier (former President of southern Sudan), and hundreds of others were in the building and outside in the compound.*

*Following is a statement by ECUSA Presiding Bishop, Katharine Jefferts Shori about this attack.*

The Episcopal Church deeply laments the recent tear-gassing by police in the Anglican Cathedral in Khartoum. Worshipers were injured and terrorized by this attack during a midnight service of thanksgiving for the New Year. We call on the government of Sudan to take all steps necessary to investigate the cause of this attack, and to prevent any recurrence. Peace efforts are hard won in Sudan, and this action will not serve to facilitate the long search for peace in that divided nation. The Episcopal Church here continues to pray for the Episcopal Church of Sudan, and for people of all faiths and ethnicities, that all may learn to live together in peace. We ask our own government to use diplomatic avenues to investigate and resolve this inhumane treatment of people at prayer.

## Book Review: *Why Haven't You Left?* *Letters from Sudan*

"Why haven't you left?" was the question asked by Sudanese People's Liberation Army captors when Marc Nikkel and three other expatriates associated with the Bishop Gwynne College were taken from Mundri in southern Sudan to begin their long, torturing walk of seven weeks as captives toward Ethiopia.

The captives were told that they had been warned to flee. But they had not fled. While soldiers may have understood an answer such as "A soldier does not leave his post", the reality was that Marc Nikkel, over his years in the Sudan, had become what someone referred to him as – "a white Dinka".

That reference reminds me of an incident in my own life. It occurred at Howard University in Washington, D.C. in the 1970's, when race riots were devastating many cities throughout the country. While on a study leave, some of us accompanied Father William Wendt, an Episcopal priest, on a visit to the Howard University campus, where black militants occupied the administration building around a fire burning on the floor in front of the President's offices. I, for one, as a white man in that context, was understandably and obviously nervous. One of the blacks who were controlling the building said to me, "You are safe. You are with

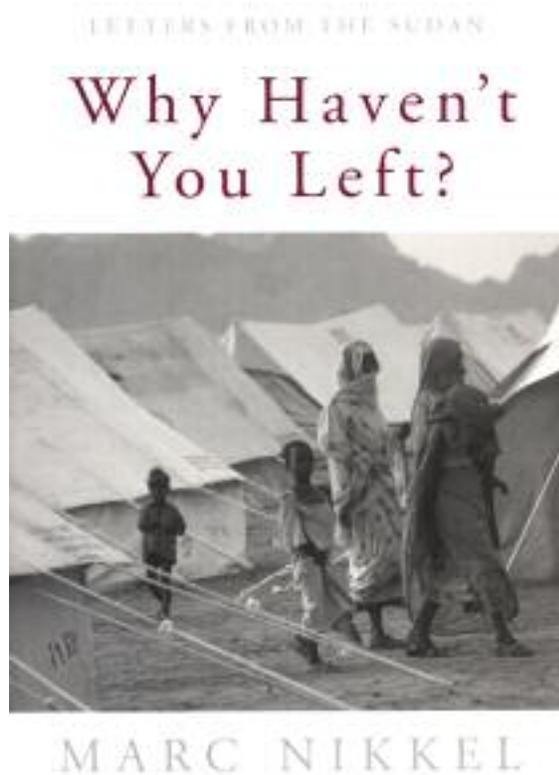
Father Wendt. He is a white man. But he has a black heart." Marc Nikkel was a "white Dinka". But there was an even more profound truth in him. The theological truth of a suffering God who would never abandon the suffering people of God was the prevailing truth appropriated for himself by Marc Nikkel.

The depths of his personal suffering, both for the Sudanese people and arising in the midst of his own battle with cancer of the stomach, is portrayed heroically in his letters and in his life. What cannot fully be captured, even by the poignancy of these letters, is the Christian faith, the artistic skill, and the poetic nature of Marc Nikkel.

The academic and spiritual realities and gifts of the man are all but indescribable and unbelievable: passing the ordinations examinations of the Episcopal Church after only six months of study, earning a Ph.D. From Edinburgh while on leave from the Sudan, all the while communicating his deep faith by words and works of art to people scattered around the globe.

*Why Haven't You Left?* is only an introduction, but a valuable introduction, to the life, faith, and thoughts of a twenty-first-century saint.

*A. Heath Light*  
Retired Bishop of Southwestern Virginia



## Comings and Goings

In an environment of good will and openness, AFRECS will publish a log in each issue of *Sudan Connections* called *Comings and Goings* of all known visits scheduled in both directions between the Protestant Episcopal Church of the USA and the Episcopal Church of Sudan. Following are trips scheduled for winter and spring of 2007:

### Jan. 1-14, 2007

Rev. Thomas M Prichard, Executive Director, Sudan Sunrise, and Rev. Abraham Nhial, author of *Lost Boy*

*No More*, from Kansas City, USA via Kampala to Aweil and Juba to deepen reconciliation between Darfurian Muslims and southern Sudanese Christians, and to call attention to the needs in Aweil.

### April 2007

Rev. Oliver M. Duku, Principal, Bishop Allison Theological College, from Arua, Uganda, to be in residence at Virginia Theological Seminary, Alexandria, Virginia USA.

### April 13-15, 2007

Rt. Rev. Bullen Dolli, Bishop of Lui, to visit Diocese of Missouri and Annual Meeting of AFRECS, St. Louis, Missouri USA.

## Third Annual AFRECS Conference April 13-15, St. Louis, Missouri

The Third Annual AFRECS Conference will be held at Christ Church Cathedral in St. Louis, Missouri, on April 13-15, 2007.

Obtain a registration form from our website, [click here](#).

Learn more about the conference, [click here](#).

How to become a member of AFRECS, [click here](#)

*We hope you'll join us!*