

FEB. 7 -- PRESIDENT OF SUDAN ANNOUNCES ACCEPTANCE OF SECESSION BY THE SOUTH

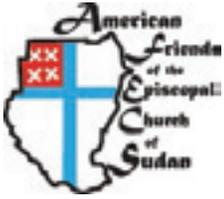
SUDAN CONNECTIONS

WINTER 2011

VOLUME 6, NUMBER 1



AFRECS - AMERICAN FRIENDS OF THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF SUDAN



CONNECTING HOPE AND GIFTS

SUDAN CONNECTIONS

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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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COVER:

Archbishops Daniel Deng Bul Yak and Paulino Lukudu show their inked fingers to Jimmy Carter after voting in the Referendum.



Send submissions for the next *Sudan Connections* to Richard Parkins, Exec. Director, at parkinscr@gmail.com by May, 15, 2011.

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

C. RICHARD PARKINS



Photo by Constance Wilson©

Dear Friends,

We give thanks for the relatively calm atmosphere in which the Referendum occurred. While not without incident, the process was more peaceful than many had predicted. Our prayers and those of brothers and sisters in Sudan and in other parts of the world were heard. Thanks be to God.

As we look with cautious optimism at what lies ahead for our Sudanese friends, we recognize that as the Episcopal Church of Sudan (ECS) and its Archbishop anticipate new challenges and opportunities, our partnership with them must become even more faithful and robust. It is this recognition that will guide the work of AFRECS in the coming months and year, most particularly in our outreach to donors and our planning for our national conference in June.

The Archbishop and the leaders of the ECS have already demonstrated the gift of reconciliation and peace-making. The need for healing and bridge building will become ever more important as the challenges of nation building become more pressing. The protection of Christians remaining in the north persists as a post referendum concern. Many CPA related issues, not resolved before the Referendum, will need urgent

attention. Already, thousands of Christians are moving southward, impacting the limited resources and fragile infrastructure of both church and state.

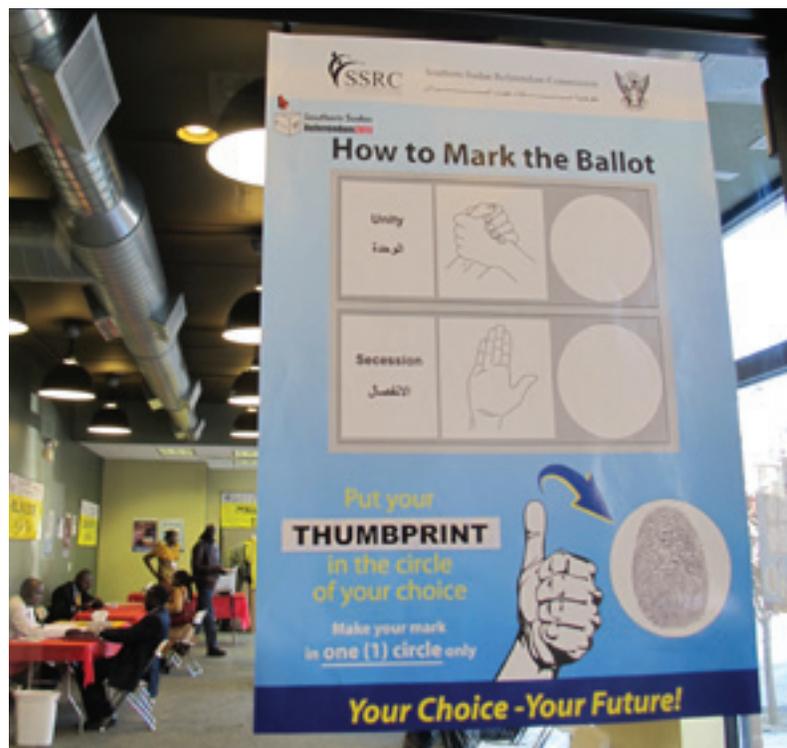
The good news is that the courage and faithfulness of our Sudanese friends remains steadfast. Hope abounds with the thousands who have awaited this day. The challenge to us is to be worthy of that courage and faithfulness that has brought a new day to Sudan.

Let the prayers and hard work of those who shared in this journey to independence for South Sudan continue as a new chapter in Sudan's history unfolds.

Faithfully,

Richard Parkins

Executive Director



AN ANSWER TO PRAYER AND A LOOK TO THE FUTURE

THE RT. REV. DAVID C. JONES, SUFFRAGAN BISHOP, DIOCESE OF VIRGINIA



When President Obama spoke of the peaceful way that the Referendum was conducted in Southern Sudan in his State of the Union Address, my heart was full of joy – joy for the people of Sudan and joy that prayers from around the world have been answered.

On the evening before the Referendum voting began, I took part in an interfaith prayer service at Christ Church, Alexandria. Seated to my left was a Jew and to my right was a Moslem. Together we sang the first four verses of *“The God of Abraham Praise, Hymn 401*. The words spoke to me in a new way as my colleagues sang in full voice. The hymn concluded with the words *“Who was and is, the same, and evermore shall be: eternal Father the great I AM, we worship thee.”* That night it became clear that our prayers extend far beyond the

Church to the whole people of God in Sudan.

While the Referendum has been peaceful, and we anticipate the formation of a new country, there are mammoth challenges ahead. In addition to building a new government for a new country, there remains a devastated infrastructure of roads, communication, education and medical care. The process of building and rebuilding will take decades.

AFRECS is carefully listening to Archbishop Daniel about his priorities, long term and immediate. They can be summed up as (1) **peacemaking and reconciliation**; and (2) **strengthening the capacity of the Province to serve its dioceses and bishops**.

Under the first priority, we have learned of the

Archbishop’s personal efforts to broker a ceasefire between Lt. Gen. George Athor and the Government of Southern Sudan. This was possible because of the level of trust enjoyed by the ECS. The Archbishop was appointed Chair of the High Level Committee on Reconciliation by President of the South, Salva Kiir, because he is known and trusted as a man of peace. We have also learned of successful pre-Referendum meetings in southern dioceses, which were funded by Episcopal Relief and Development (ERD) in cooperation with AFRECS and the Overseas Partners.

The priority of **strengthening the capacity of the Province** to be of service to the whole church in Sudan is absolutely critical. The dioceses are unable to fund the Province, but they desperately need it. In fact, they depend on the Province for the most basic services that we might take for granted in the West. Toward that end, AFRECS is cooperating with the Overseas Partners in meeting specific needs that will strengthen the Province. The Partners include the dioceses of Bradford and Salisbury in the UK, Sudan Church Association in the UK, Church Missionary Society (CMS) in Africa, Tear Fund, Christian Aid, ERD, The Mother’s Union, CMS Ireland, and Salisbury Medical Link. AFRECS is fully cooperating with the efforts of these groups, all of which have a particular role to play in strengthening the Province.

Our Board of Directors is funding all of the operations of AFRECS so that donations beyond the basic membership dues will go directly to the Province. That has allowed us to send \$5,100 recently toward the efforts of peacemaking, and we will send more. We encourage membership and generous donations.

In solidarity with the Province of the ECS,

Faithfully,

David Colin Jones
President of AFRECS

ADVOCACY PRIORITIES ON BEHALF OF ECS ADOPTED BY AFRECS BOARD

ANNOUNCED BY THE RT. REV. DAVID C. JONES, AFRECS PRESIDENT

With the peaceful and successful completion of the January 2011 independence Referendum, the focus of AFRECS advocacy on behalf of the Episcopal Church of Sudan (ECS) and peace in Sudan necessarily changes. The AFRECS Board adopted these priorities for upcoming governmental advocacy efforts at its Board meeting, Feb. 4, 2011.

Protection of religious minorities, especially Christians living in northern Sudan, who are fearful of renewed persecution based on statements made by the Khartoum government.

Emergency relief, particularly as may apply to movements of refugees and outbreaks of fighting.

Support for local peacemaking efforts to resolve intertribal and other conflicts, particularly church efforts, such as Archbishop Daniel Deng Bul's current efforts in Abyei.

Adoption of strong transparency measures to assure accountability of oil and other resource revenue and help to prevent corruption.

Support for literacy, particularly carried out in connection with Bible translation and related tribal language efforts.

As the Khartoum government and the government of South Sudan negotiate their future relationship, the US and other countries will play key roles in helping the parties reach workable arrangements for peaceful cooperation. The AFRECS Board believes that emphasizing these priorities will strongly support the ECS and its efforts to secure the peace and improve the lives of the people in both countries.



Become a member of AFRECS today! Join the efforts of AFRECS and the ECS in building a new nation in South Sudan. And, get on the AFRECS_E-Blasts@afrecs.org list for weekly updates on developments and opportunities to serve -- and PRAY!

Website: www.afrecs.org

CHRIST CHURCH, GLEN ALLEN, VA HOSTS THE 6TH ANNUAL AFRECS CONFERENCE

JUNE 17-19, 2011

Attendees at the 5th Annual AFRECS conference (L-R): Carol Reinbart, Francis Majok Gai and Sudanese Charge d'Affaires Akec Khoc. Photo by Constance Wilson©.



Christ Church, Glen Allen, VA, (outside Richmond) welcomes the 6th annual AFRECS Conference, Friday through Sunday, June 17-19, 2011. The Rev. Paul Johnson, the Rev. Hillary West, and the mission-minded folks at Christ Church are enthusiastic about hosting the annual conference and have sent warm messages of welcome to the AFRECS staff and Board. Jennifer Ernst, who has played such a vital role in encouraging US parishes and dioceses to form companion relations with the Episcopal Church of Sudan (ECS), will coordinate local arrangements, joining with the Board in carrying forth the conference theme -- **MOVING FORWARD WITH SUDAN**.

This sixth annual Conference will focus on both the challenges and opportunities arising from South Sudan's newly achieved independence, which will formally be announced on the cusp of the Conference, July 9. The Conference will be an occasion for partners to redouble their commitments to accompany the ECS, and to adopt concrete measures of support and tangible expressions of cooperation. The Conference Planning Committee is designing a format that will motivate participants to become active partners in equipping the Province of the ECS to take on the responsibilities ahead of it.

The Most Rev. Dr. Daniel Deng Bul, Archbishop of the ECS is invited to be present to address the Conference. The Most Rev. Katharine Jefferts Schori, Presiding Bishop of The Episcopal Church (TEC), will preach at the closing Eucharist, Sunday, June 19.

AFRECS invites all Episcopalians and friends from the wider Church who have not previously been involved in Sudan to attend and participate in this 6th Annual Conference AND to join with active partners in widening the base of support and solidarity with our brothers and sisters in Sudan at this historic time in the life of the ECS.

Watch for details about registration, accommodations and local arrangements on [AFRECS website, afreecs.org](http://afreecs.org), and join AFRECS_E-Blasts@afreecs.org for weekly updates.

In the words of Bishop Joseph Garang Atem, Renk Diocese, "You have to remember everyday that you are building a new nation in South Sudan. Keep going and God will reward you." ❖

AN APPEAL TO OUR PARTNERS

EXCERPTS FROM A LETTER OF APPEAL TO PARTNERS OF THE PROVINCE OF THE ECS



Dear Partners and Friends in Christ,

As many of you know, there has been unrest within Northern Jonglei and Unity States, which spiked in recent months due to the conflict between rebel forces and the Sudan People's Liberation Army. Steps have been taken to resolve the conflict, and as a result of extensive peace talks, in which I was involved, a ceasefire was brokered and reconciliation is occurring. We thank our partners in prayer both for Sudan and

around the world for their constant support and encouragement to us as a Church and a people. We also congratulate the Southern Sudan Referendum Commission, the United Nations, the African Union, the European Union, the various governments around the world and groups of Referendum observers who offered their time, money and technical support to make this Referendum the success it currently is.

We give thanks to Almighty God, that since January 9, southern Sudan has been relatively peaceful, with very few reports of violence or Referendum irregularities from Sudanese, international Referendum observers or the media at this time. However, there is still lingering violence along the border, particularly in Abyei and Greater Unity State. While most southern Sudanese rejoice after the opportunity to vote for freedom, our brothers and sisters in the Diocese of Aweil, particularly Abyei, look on helplessly. Their referendum has not taken place.

The Episcopal Church of Sudan (ECS) has proven time and again to be an effective mediator in conflicts, and is able to use its influence in such situations because of the reputation it has built for itself, and the confidence people have in the Church to effectively bring communities together. One of the main reasons for the Church holding such a strong position is because of the timely aid from our partners who encourage us, pray with us and for us, and assist

us financially. We now call upon you again, friends in the Lord, to help us with our intentions for this year.

I, along with my support team, propose an immediate visit to Abyei to view the situation on the ground in order to be able to report with confidence and accuracy to the international community on the situation as it stands. Over the next few months, we also hope to visit Aweil, Malakal, Renk, Kadugli, Yirol and Bentiu to conduct assessments, encourage those we find there, and take our findings and stories to you and to others who can help us make a difference in these communities.**

I am greatly concerned that while there are efforts from many organizations to quell violence and support returnees, the Church is not doing enough. To be candid, our greatest hindrance is the lack of financial capacity to enable us to carry out such crucial missions. But, we also desperately need you to pray for us, and for the people of Abyei Town and northern Abyei who have experienced displacement many times. The ECS and the Sudan, on the whole, have a long way to go before they can stand alone and solve their own internal affairs without assistance from the international community. We, therefore, ask our partners not to forget us and those suffering at what would otherwise be a jubilant time, and to consider supporting our appeals for this year generously.

Yours in Christ,

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

***ECS Survey Budget for travel to six dioceses totals \$42,300. Contact the ECS Provincial Office for a break out of expenses to each diocese, ecsprovince@hotmail.com. Contributions for the Province of the ECS can be made through AFRECS - www.afrecs.org Also, contact Bishop David Jones, Pres. of AFRECS, 703-824-1325 or djones@thediocese.net.*

ECS ARCHBISHOP CHAIRS HIGH LEVEL COMMITTEE FOR RECONCILIATION

REPORT FROM THE OFFICE OF THE ARCHBISHOP

On Wednesday, January 5, 2011, four days prior to the commencement of the self-determination referendum for southern Sudan, representatives of Lt. Gen. George Athor and the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) signed a ceasefire agreement, formally reconciling Lt. Gen. Athor and his forces with the SPLA. With the signing of this ceasefire the most concerning hostilities that emerged as a result of Lt. Gen. Athor's mutiny against the SPLA in April 2010 have now been put to an end.

Archbishop Daniel was called upon by South Sudan President Salva Kiir to serve as Chair of the High Level Committee for Reconciliation. Lt. Gen. Athor suggested the involvement of the Church, especially Archbishop Daniel, as he felt the presence of a Church figure would guarantee sincerity on the government side. At the conclusion of a series of meetings between the parties, Archbishop Daniel, Athor, government and SPLA representatives, and members of the Committee for Reconciliation came to a peaceful agreement leading to the ceasefire.

The ceasefire outlined the terms to which the SPLA and Lt. Gen. Athor and his forces were to adhere if both sides agreed. It was not simply a termination of actual planned acts of violence. It was, additionally, a pledge to resolve all future difficulties through dialogue rather than force, and to create ceasefire zones and assembly areas allowing for genuine reconciliation between the two parties, and with local residents who had suffered as a result of the fighting in Jonglei state.

If this ceasefire had not been reached, northern Jonglei and Upper Nile would not have been able to participate in the Referendum. "We thank God for giving the President and First Vice President of South Sudan the wisdom to involve the Church as the mediator in this issue", said Archbishop Daniel.

The timing was perfect to come to a peaceful agreement just before the voting on the Referendum was to begin. The Archbishop's peace work is a direct outgrowth of the work the ECS accomplished during 2010. The ECS has gained the reputation of being an honest broker for peace.

The Church in Sudan puts much energy into peace and reconciliation work. At the diocesan level, ECS clergy consider the role of justice, peace and reconciliation work to be of the utmost importance. They organize their own activities regularly. The ECS, as part of its values, seeks to promote peace, equality and respect for human rights through wholistic ministry, and this example of reconciliation is no exception. This outcome is the result of a series of ECS peace and reconciliation conferences and workshops throughout 2010 in Akobo, Akot, Twic East, Rumbek, Juba, Yirol, Aweil and Wad Medani. These essential conferences and workshops were strongly supported by the ECS' international partners and friends, particularly Trinity Wall Street, Diocese of Virginia, Diocese of Salisbury, Catholic Relief Services, and United Nations Mission in Sudan (UNMIS) Civil Affairs. It is through reconciliation work in the spirit of Christ that the ECS believes Sudan can blossom into a strong and peaceful nation.



(Source of updates on Sudan, United Nations Mission in Sudan website: <http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/missions/unmis/>) 

AFRECS BOARD MEMBER RUSSELL RANDLE HONORED FOR HIS WORK IN SUDAN

REPORTED BY REBECCA WILSON, CANTICLE COMMUNICATIONS AND ENS

Russ Randle, member of Christ Episcopal Church, Alexandria, VA, has been chosen by Bonnie Anderson, President of the Episcopal Church's (TEC) House of Deputies, as the first recipient of the President of the House of Deputies Medallion for Exemplary Service.

Russ, a three-time Deputy to the General Convention of TEC, was chosen for his 14-year commitment to aiding the often-persecuted Episcopal Church of Sudan (ECS) in the midst of that nation's civil war and its aftermath. He serves as pro bono counsel to AFRECS, and coordinates much of its advocacy work with the Administration and Congress. He received the award Friday, January 21, during the Diocese of Virginia's annual Diocesan Council in Reston, VA.

A law partner at Patton Boggs, Washington, DC, Russ became involved in Sudan after meeting Archbishop Daniel Deng Bul, now Primate of the ECS, who was studying for a Doctor of Ministry degree at Virginia Theological Seminary in 1997. He was bishop of the Diocese of Renk, located in an especially vulnerable area on the border between Sudan's primarily Muslim north and the Christian and traditional religionist south.

Russ, member of the Board of American Friends of the Episcopal Church of Sudan (AFRECS), has visited Sudan on four occasions and become one of the ECS' most effective American allies. Upon meeting Amos Awan, part of the ECS Dinka Cam Translation project, in Khartoum airport on his first visit in 1998, he was drawn to work with SIL in Sudan, and other donors in the US, to help finance the translation of the Old Testament into Dinka. Russ played a key role in arranging the construction of St. Matthew's Cathedral in Renk, where he was named Honorary Canon in 2006. He was also instrumental in building a health clinic in Renk and recruiting doctors to provide medical care.

Russ has successfully encouraged other Episcopal dioceses and parishes to form relationships with the ECS. Throughout the Diocese of VA 20 parishes, schools, families and organizations are active in 13 ECS dioceses. The Dioceses of Chicago, Missouri, Indianapolis, Bethlehem, Nebraska and others also maintain companion relationships with ECS dioceses.

"The Diocese of Virginia is deeply blessed by Russ Randle's indomitable passion and dedication for ministry in Sudan," said the Rt. Rev. Shannon Johnston, Bishop of Virginia. His tireless efforts have enriched the faith of so many people, not only within our own diocese, but also across the Episcopal Church. It is gratifying to see that the wider church values his talent and spirit as much as we here in Virginia do."

Dr. Anderson established the award to honor individuals and communities who have exhibited exceptional commitment to the work of reconciling a broken world. "At baptism, every Episcopalian promises to 'strive for justice and peace among all people, and respect the dignity of every human being,'" she said. "Some of us keep this promise with such distinction that I believe they deserve to be recognized. Russ is just the kind of person I had in mind when I was preparing to establish this award."

"There are places in this world where even if you know how to read, you can't read the Bible," said Dr. Anderson. "Thanks to Deputy Randle, there is one less place like that. Thanks to him and the brave and effective people who worked with him, Dinka Christians, who live along the Nile River in Sudan, now have a Dinka Old Testament.



AFRECS BOARD MEMBER RUSSELL RANDLE HONORED FOR HIS WORK IN SUDAN, cont'd.

“By his exemplary service, we are reminded of our own baptismal promises and, from his example, we gain courage to embrace God’s work in the world wherever we are called. Russ, you have helped remind me that, as Christians, we belong to Christ and to one another around the globe.”

In receiving the medallion, Russ recognized the numerous other Virginia Episcopalians who work to support ministry

in Sudan. “I am simply a visible representative of the great cloud of witnesses, and I am deeply grateful to be part of it,” he said.

The award comes in the wake of Sudan’s recent Referendum vote, which resulted in a 99.57% majority vote for secession from the North amidst relative peace. “Our prayers for peace have been answered,” said Russ. ❖

BISHOP JOSEPH GARANG ATEM IN WASHINGTON, DC

BY RUSSELL V. RANDLE, AFRECS BOARD & MEMBER OF CHRIST CHURCH, ALEXANDRIA, VA



Ed. Note: Excerpts from the report of Bishop Joseph’s visit at the Special Envoy’s Office of The State Dept., Nov. 3, 2010, giving an update on the state of affairs in Renk Diocese on the border with northern Sudan. Renk is 250 miles south of the northern capital, Khartoum.

Bishop Joseph Garang Atem, Bishop of Renk Diocese, in the Northern Upper Nile region of South Sudan, met with staff at the Special Envoy’s Office of the State Department, giving an update on the troubled state of affairs in Renk Diocese. The report adds even more urgency to the call for advocacy and heightened prayer for Sudan.

Topics of his report included:

Report of fighting near Renk, Oct. 30 - resulting in two deaths and wounding of many others. Fighting occurred as a result of an attack by northern forces east of Renk, within Northern Upper Nile state, an effort to flank the positions of the SPLA to the north along the road to Khartoum. The Bishop has repeatedly urged the SPLA commanders to exercise restraint and to resist responding to provocations.

Threatened border sealing if South votes to secede - The area around Renk is acutely vulnerable to such an economic blockade, because it relies on the North for much of its food supply, particularly fuel, medical supplies, electricity. A power cutoff will cripple the water system. This would affect the over 25,000 permanent residents of Renk and the expected thousands of returnees coming into Renk to register and to vote for the Referendum.

Request for pre-positioning of food medical supplies, tents - Bishop Joseph asked that food, fuel and medical supplies for 50,000 people for 30 days be pre-positioned in Renk in preparation for a cutoff of trade with the North, based on estimated movement of returnees to the South from the Khartoum area, which accelerated with the Minister of Information’s threats that southerners would be denied medical care and the right to own property in the North if the South votes to secede. Bishop Joseph asks, and his partners in the US join in requesting, that the US pre-position such emergency rations and supplies in Renk as a visible means to forestall efforts by the North to impose such a blockade.

BISHOP JOSEPH GARANG ATEM IN WASHINGTON, DC, cont'd.

Request for US diplomatic observers in Renk - While Bishop Joseph appreciates the increased US diplomatic efforts, including the effort to post personnel in state capitals, Malakal, the state capital of Northern Upper Nile state is far distant from Renk, over bad roads. He asks, a request joined in by his partners in the US, that the US government post diplomatic observers in Renk, and do so in a public and visible way to help forestall fighting in that area or any effort to seal the border. The presence of US observers may induce the northern government to exercise better control over its military forces around Renk.

Bishop Joseph expressed appreciation for the joint oper-

ating commands and the improved communications the US government is providing in border areas to prevent incidents from spiraling out of control. He respectfully suggested that the situation in Renk, which is especially tense given its location and vulnerability, warrants a visible US observer presence, Renk being close to the border and a likely starting point for military action or blockade efforts.

(Observers were placed at all voting centers throughout Renk, and as of the date of this issue of *Sudan Connections*, the Referendum was peaceful, with 99% voting to secede. However, food supply is inadequate for the thousands of returnees in Renk.) ❖

PLANNING AHEAD -- LOOKING TOWARD THE FUTURE OF A NEW NATION

BY PHIL DARROW, AFRECS BOARD & MEMBER OF ST. MICHAEL'S, BARRINGTON, IL

Upon landing in Khartoum, Dec. 5, I was struck by the apparent normalcy of life in the capital, given the tension and uncertainty in the weeks before the referendum. Only as we reached the outskirts of the city on our way to Wad Medani did signs of the coming change appear. Buses were lined up in a large marshalling area to take southerners south to Renk, and close behind were open-railed semis filled to overflowing with steel furniture and other personal belongings, ready to follow the buses.

In Wad Medani, on the banks of the Blue Nile, we attended the enthronement of the first bishop of the new Diocese, Bishop Samaan Farjallah. The timing of this event, so close to the Referendum, was an emphatic statement that the Episcopal Church of Sudan (ECS) would remain as one Province, regardless of the outcome of the vote, and Archbishop Daniel gave a passionate address on this subject.

From there, we traveled west and south to Renk, through Sinnar State, also in the North, and near the area of a recent skirmish between northern and southern forces across the border in Upper Nile State (Renk County), which activity was quickly stopped by the respective State Governors. Although this outbreak did result in some northerners living in Renk County to relocate north of the border out of fear of further



PLANNING AHEAD -- LOOKING TOWARD THE FUTURE OF A NEW NATION, cont'd.



outbreaks, both clergy and lay leaders made a point of emphasizing that no northerners have been forced in any way to leave the South. The migration flow we observed was clearly one direction, from North to South.

The first order of business was a tour of Renk Theological College, now with a new vegetable garden, a row of trees through the middle of the "Quad", and a new latrine building, to which a water system with shower is being added. A long meeting with the faculty and the staff to review the state of affairs followed. Two income-generating projects, the cafeteria and wood shop, are contributing some support, and RTC is trying to raise fees from students who come from Renk, Malakal and Bor, but most students are unable to pay. RTC remains reliant on outside funding of scholarships. St. Michael's three-year, very successful, \$200,000 campaign supported the operation and building of the College, but continued scholarship assistance is needed. A scholarship for a student, per year, is approximately \$1,500. Classes resume in February with 15 new students, which will bring the total enrollment to 45.



Bishop Joseph had appointed a Diocesan Emergency Contingency Planning Committee to plan both for the large number of returnees expected from Khartoum to register for voting, most of whom come without resources or local family support, and for the possibility of any disruption in supply from the North as a result of the Referendum.

Thousands of returnees had already come into the area, but no food or other aid had been put in place. The World Food Program (WFP) has since arranged delivery from

Malakal of a one-month supply of food for 2,000 people, but this is not enough for the actual number, and another supply, to be brought from Kosti in the North, has been delayed by a lack of trucks due to the owners not willing to cross the border.

We spent a day inspecting two sorghum fields in Renk, one owned by the Diocese and one leased, approximately 1,000 acres each. The sorghum was ready for harvest, which is done mostly by hand, with a large crew, long knives in hand, lopping off the top of each stalk, and then processing shoulder bags of grain through a sorting and bagging machine.

Some of the harvest expenses, such as machine rental, can be paid out of proceeds, but crew and other expenses are upfront costs (which were increasing rapidly as the vote neared). The Diocese is still trying to raise funds to replenish its accounts. This is the first successful harvest after two prior efforts were stymied by drought and pests. The Diocese has seed for next year, as well as a source of funding for the operations of the Diocese as the grain is sold.



Four hours south of Renk Town is Melut and St. John's parish. Upon the insistence of the Rector of Emmanuel Church, LaGrange, IL, The Rev. Terri Stanford, St. John's partner parish, the first ever conference call between partners took place (at 4:00 AM CST). After several failed attempts using a regular cell phone, the call was completed by satellite

phone. The partners were able to speak with each other, sharing the progress being made for bringing water to the clinic built with support from Emmanuel, and the condi-



PLANNING AHEAD -- LOOKING TOWARD THE FUTURE OF A NEW NATION, cont'd.

tion of the church building.

Chief of the area of Renk, Bior Kiir Akot hosted a meeting of elders with a farewell feast. I heard at length about the need for more support for the returnees, and for Renk as a whole, given the possibility that a vote to secede might result in, at least, a temporary border closure, which would cut Renk off from its only source of supplies via paved road. I was able to contact both US staff of WFP and USAID, who are trying to overcome considerable logistical challenges to get food aid where it is needed, and are trying to keep current on the swelling numbers of returnees in Renk.

On this visit, I was once again fortunate to witness remarkable faith and courage, this time in the face of great uncer-

tainties posed by the Referendum and its aftermath. I was particularly struck by the determination of the people in Renk, who themselves have very few resources, to welcome and care for those "returning" from Khartoum, some of whom have never even lived in the South. The giving nature and amazing resiliency (born of deep faith) of the people are both greatly inspiring and great examples of the many benefits of being in relationship with an ECS parish or diocese. We have much to give, but also much to learn.

(For further information about scholarship support for Renk Theological College students, contact Phil Darrow, pdarrow@hotmail.com or Jackie Kraus, kraus.jackie@yahoo.com) ❖

OUR COMMON PRAYER

BY RICHARD PARKINS, AFRECS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

On the cold, windy evening of January 8th the eve of the Referendum for South Sudan, historic Christ Church in Alexandria, VA, was the scene of a large gathering of Christians, Jews and Muslims whose leaders offered prayers and meditations for a peaceful Referendum in Sudan. The three traditions prayed for peace in Sudan, for a Referendum that would be carried out without violence and which results would be respected by all parties. The Rev. Pierce Klemmt, Rector of Christ Church, and the good people of the parish extended their usual warm hospitality to all who formed the community of prayer that evening.

The Rev. Richard Jones, past President of AFRECS, used his extensive interfaith connections to help bring together representatives of the three faith traditions, both clergy and lay, to offer a common supplication for peace in Sudan. While the languages were different, as we heard prayers in Hebrew, Arabic and English, the message was the same -- peace and non-violence for all of God's children of Sudan. Priest, Rabbi and Imam were united in their desire to see an end to the violence that had been so much a part of Sudan's history; that an era of peace begin a new chapter in Sudan's history.



OUR COMMON PRAYER, cont'd.

In response to the call of our Presiding Bishop that the Episcopal Church observe a “Season of prayer for peace in Sudan”, prayer vigils and services were held throughout the country. Other denominations also invoked God’s blessing for a peaceful conclusion to the Referendum. Evidence to date indicates that the outcome has been relatively peaceful and that those intercessions for peace were heard.

As the unfinished business of building a “new nation” goes forward and as the safety of those who remain outside South Sudan continues to be a concern, may our prayers continue and the peace that has come to several million southern Sudanese become the reality for those who still yearn for that peace. ❖

ARCHBISHOP OF SUDAN CASTS HIS VOTE IN SUDAN’S HISTORIC REFERENDUM

REPORTED BY REBECCA COLEMAN, ECS PROVINCIAL OFFICE



Sunday, January 9th, marked the first of seven days in the historic self-determination Referendum for the people of southern Sudan. The Most Rev. Dr. Daniel Deng Bul Yak, Episcopal Archbishop of Sudan, together with Archbishop Paulino Lukudu of the Roman Catholic Church of Sudan, advanced to Hai Jalaba Junior School polling station to cast their referendum ballots at four o’clock that afternoon. With the Archbishops was an entourage composed of a delegation from the All Africa Conference (AACC) who had come as an ecumenical body of referendum observers.

On arrival, and with big smiles and waves, the Archbishops greeted the crowd of fellow southern Sudanese who had also come to vote. They proceeded inside the station and, after a brief explanation of the process from the polling station officials, they voted. Sharing his thoughts outside, Archbishop Daniel spoke of his elation at having finally cast

his vote. “We have been waiting fifty-five years for this day,” he said. “This is the day, this is our time.”

He went on to remark that southern Sudanese should unite if they had not already done so. He called the Referendum a bridge to a new Sudan and added that this day marked the start of an important event in the history of the Sudan. He noted that all Sudanese had now proved to the world that they could reach this day peacefully.

Archbishop Paulino spoke in a similar vein. He said he and others like him had been working tirelessly to promote the importance of this day. “I vote as an Archbishop, but also as a Christian and a Sudanese citizen.”

The ecumenical delegation of referendum observers were very optimistic about the future of southern Sudan as a new country. Bishop John Onaiyekan, Abuja, Nigeria, spoke of the sorrow Africans had experienced watching southern Sudan go underdeveloped year after year, but added, “many countries have been born. Africa has gone into labor many times and has sometimes suffered miscarriages. Now, we see a live baby being born.”

As the delegation was leaving the voting center, former President of the U.S., Jimmy Carter, and his wife, Rosalynn, made an appearance to greet them. Handshakes and jokes followed as President Carter spoke of the work he and his wife do in their local church when they are not committed to work overseas. On inspecting the two Archbishops’ hands, he noticed four inky fingers and thumbs instead of the two he had expected. The Archbishops quickly reassured him that this was standard procedure and was not an indication that they had voted twice.

ARCHBISHOP OF SUDAN CASTS HIS VOTE IN SUDAN'S HISTORIC REFERENDUM, cont'd.

Today, there was a profound sense that, at last, Sudanese destiny was being fulfilled and small steps toward democracy were being realized. Moreover, a peaceful Referendum, witnessed by the world, and the very act of choosing, are of great significance and an indication that together the governments and the people of Sudan are, at this stage, moving toward a democracy the rest of the world hopes will endure.

The Episcopal Church of Sudan (ECS) fully supports a credible and peaceful self-determination Referendum. The Church also acknowledges the challenges that lie after the

Referendum, especially if southern Sudan becomes an independent state. Knowing the challenges now is an advantage, but only if they are acted upon to escape becoming a 'failed state'. Archbishop Daniel believes it is particularly important for the Church to lead in the teachings concerning the significance of one's nationality, unity and reconciliation with each other, and the teachings against corruption and tribalism, regardless of the Referendum result.

Whether, in the case of unity or succession, the ECS is ready to lead again, as it has throughout the years. ❖

"I VOTED, AND IT WAS EXCITING INDEED..."

AN EMAIL TO JOHN TWIDELL, BRIDGFORD HOUSE, LEICESTERSHIRE, UK
FROM THE RT. REV. ALAPAYO MANYANG KUCTIEL, RUMBEEK DIOCESE

I am going to tell you some things about yesterday's Referendum.

In fact, the first day of voting for the South Sudan Referendum was marked with extreme excitement and jubilation all over South Sudan in general, and in particular, in the 214 voting centers in Lakes State, Rumbek. It's a day of celebration rather than voting. People are shedding tears and shouting for joy. When you ask anybody walking along the road, he/she will tell you, "This is the day we have been longing and waiting for!"

Thousands of people spent the night of the first day in their respective voting centers celebrating. Many people, including myself, said, "We must vote on the first day because we do not know what tomorrow holds for us."

I cast my vote at 10:30 AM, Sudan local time, after the morning services. The turnout was higher than expected. I visited 15 centers and witnessed the excellent turnout. Many people returned home without voting because of the long lines, but they went celebrating and returned to the polling centers at midnight.

There have not been any reports of insecurity as some prophets of doom have been predicting, except the clashes in Abyei area between Dinka Ngok and Arab Misseriea tribes.

There was maximum peace and joy all over the Lakes State, and we hope it will continue that way to January 15, 2011, when the voting will end.

I would describe the happiness I have during the South Sudan Referendum day as my second most joyous day I've had in my life! The first day was April 30, 1972, when I was baptized in Rumbek, after finishing three years of Dinka Bible and Catechism classes. It also wipes away the tears of sorrow I shed during the death of our fallen hero, Dr. John Garang de Mabior, in the plane crash on July 30, 2005. To me, February 14, 2011, when the final result will be announced, will mark the conclusion of our celebration.

Praise be to Almighty God for having kept me and my brothers and sisters to see the joy of this day to exercise our constitutional and democratic rights. I will praise Him forever. ❖



“MY FIRST IMPRESSIONS OF VOTING”

BY LARRY DUFFEE, EXTERNAL FINANCIAL CONSULTANT FOR ECS

I want to share with you my first impressions of the voting...

It was obvious that Juba was in a state of preparedness. Saturday night was the quietest night I have ever experienced in Juba. There was not a peep coming from anywhere! I heard not a car, not even the usual Saturday night blaring from the floor show at Queen of Sheba. There was a full day of prayers at All Saints Cathedral on Saturday. I understand that people started lining up at the polling places around 1:00 AM to be able to vote early.

I witnessed voting in three of the many places in town -- Koni Koni market, Hai Malakia and Hai Jelaba. At each voting center there were long lines of people, but everyone was in good spirits, and all the voters were peaceful and well behaved. Security was well staffed. Voters were patted down when entering the voting centers.

The sun was shining in a cloudless sky, and temperatures were in the low 90's, so it was quite a struggle for some to stand in line for hours. An older gentleman told me that the poll workers told him it was too hot for him to stand in

line, that he should come back later in the week when the crowds had diminished.

I witnessed ECS Archbishop Daniel Deng vote at Hai Jelaba, accompanied by Catholic Archbishop Paulino Lukudu. They had registered together in December. Archbishop Daniel voted first, and he was absolutely jubilant, saying that, “the people of the South had waited 55 years for this day”. Accompanying the two Archbishops was an ecumenical team of observers -- two Muslim Muftis from Kenya, a Methodist Bishop from Ghana, a Catholic Cardinal from Niger, and a Catholic Bishop from South Africa.

While we were at the polling station, former US President Jimmy Carter, with his wife, Rosalynn, arrived to observe the voting. ECS missionary Robin Denney and I each had the opportunity to shake President Carter's hand and talk with him for a second. He actually thanked us for being there! President Carter met with the two Archbishops and the observation team before they all headed off. It was a great moment to witness! ✠

JANUARY 9, 2011 -- A DAY TO REMEMBER

BY THE REV. SUSAN E. BENTLEY, RECTOR, ST. JAMES, ROANOKE, VA



The Sudanese community of Roanoke, VA, gathered in the dark, at 5 AM, on Sunday, January 9, 2011, to prepare for their trip to the Referendum voting center in Alexandria. Spirits were high as the parking lot began to fill with cars, and folks began to gather in the dim light of the Parish Hall. Smiles and handshakes spread throughout the room.

When everyone was present, individual candles were handed out. The Paschal Candle was lit and slowly the light spread from one candle to another as the light of Christ grew and overcame the darkness. Everyone joined in the liturgy of songs, scripture and prayers. Sudanese and American voices called upon the Holy Spirit for guidance into the way of peace, healing and reconciliation. When the last candle was extinguished, 41 Sudanese carried the light of Christ in their hearts, going out into the darkness to board a commercial bus for the four-plus-hour trip to Alexandria. On the bus, Bishop Neff Powell, Diocese of Southwestern VA, gave the final blessing and dismissal, sending them on our way. (Bishop Powell provided the funds from the Bishop's Dollar for transportation to Alexandria to register in November, and to vote this day.)

In Alexandria, the wind blew with a bitter chill, and the line was long outside the voting center. The women, children and those ill or disabled were allowed to wait inside,

JANUARY 9, 2011 -- A DAY TO REMEMBER, cont'd.

but the men waited outside in the cold for three hours. They all reported that enduring the cold was a small sacrifice after all they had been through in Sudan; that it was well worth the wait to be able to vote for their independence and the creation of the new nation -- South Sudan. Waving the new Southern Sudan flag, and an American flag, they sang and danced to keep away the cold. They greeted friends and companions they had known in Sudan but had not seen in years, together they eagerly waited their

turn to cast their vote with the print of their thumb.

Thirteen hours after they left, the "Roanoke 41" returned home to gather at St. James for their usual Sunday evening prayers. Tired from a long, emotional day, they were thankful to God that January 9, 2011 had come, and they could vote in a peaceful manner, being a part of the making of history in their homeland. ❖

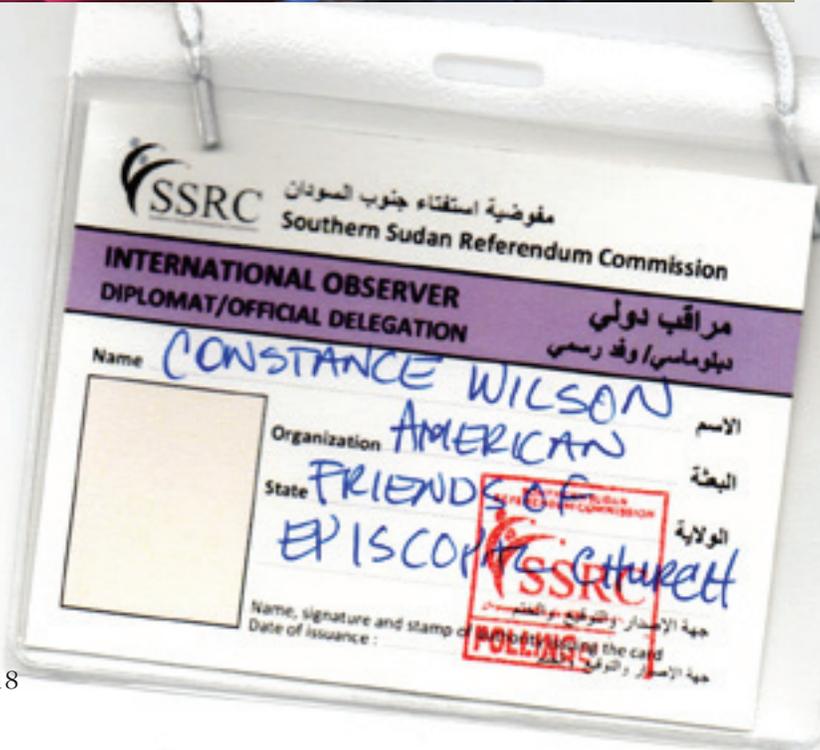
IN THE UNITED STATES, REGISTRATION AND VOTING TOOK PLACE IN WASHINGTON, DC; OMAHA, NE; PHOENIX, AZ; NASHVILLE, TN; CHICAGO, IL; SEATTLE, WA; AND BOSTON, MA.



Photos by Constance Wilson©



VOTING IN CHICAGO





VOTING IN KAJO KEJI, SUDAN



VOTING IN RENK, SUDAN



SUSTAINING RELATIONSHIPS IN A CHANGING MISSION PARADIGM

BY THE REV. E. ROSS KANE, ASSISTANT TO THE RECTOR, ST. PAUL'S, ALEXANDRIA, VA & AFRECS BOARD MEMBER

Before I left on a recent trip to Sudan with others from St. Paul's, a number of people asked, "What are you going to do there?" "We're going to visit," I responded. While our parish had helped build schools, a cathedral and a theological college in the Diocese of Renk, our primary connection for more than 15 years has been a relationship with their bishop. We did not go to Sudan to do anything in particular; we went to be with people and deepen our connections.

St. Paul's link with this diocese is a typical example of how mission relationships between American churches and churches in the developing world have changed. Many churches are shifting from institutional connections to local, grass-roots connections. National church ministries continue to offer support for work overseas, of course, but the grass-roots connection, such as the one in my parish, is becoming the new paradigm.

One of the main advantages of this new model is the emphasis upon partnership based in friendship. When a national church supports missionaries or funds projects, knowledge of this work rarely trickles down to local parishioners. When a parish connects with a church overseas, however, individual parishioners hear of these connections week after week. Those previously oblivious of mission projects engage in new relationships overseas.

Suddenly, the theology of what it means to be "one holy, catholic and apostolic church" has a profound meaning for those in the pew. While most denominations generally fund broad initiatives, this paradigm allows funding for smaller projects because of the people-to-people connection. Traveling through Sudan, I saw agricultural projects, brick-making initiatives and small cafes generating income for small dioceses and churches -- projects often initiated with American partners.

The question becomes, how do we sustain these new mission relationships? Our Christian commitment pushes us to care for churches overseas and support people living in poverty. This commitment entails more than short-term projects; it is inherently a long-term affair. A mission relationship must be truly based on mutuality to endure.

I offer four guiding principles to help congregations (and



dioceses) as they consider such relationships and their development over time. These principles are drawn from my experience as an appointed missionary of the Episcopal Church (TEC) working with the New Sudan Council of Churches, as well as TEC's vision document, "Companions in Transformation."

Enter mission companionships intentionally. When looking to engage in mission, take time to discern and explore possible relationships. Make exchange visits with church leaders overseas to see if this mission is a good fit with each other's culture and priorities. Both sides should communicate clearly that they are in an exploratory stage, resisting any pressure to make promises for a long-term commitment until a mutual agreement is reached.

Consider the relationship a long-term commitment. As a companionship is established, agree together on the parameters of the relationship, whether verbally or in writing. For the relationship to endure, it must involve commitment from laypeople, as well as clergy. Cultivate buy-in and structure for the long-term relationship through lay involvement. Take laity on exchange visits and give laity leadership responsibilities early on.

Follow friendships first, then consider funding. Most mission relationships of this kind involve transfer of funds from American churches to churches overseas. Such support is important, but the relationship is central. The best

SUSTAINING RELATIONSHIPS IN A CHANGING MISSION PARADIGM, cont'd.

way to keep relationships alive is through mutual visits sharing life together, even if such visits are expensive. A church leader in Central America once advised American church leaders, "If it costs \$1,000 to come see us and you have \$2,000, come see us, and give \$1,000 to local projects. If you only have \$1,000, just come see us."

Use denominational resources. Church institutions still play a vital role. Institutions often have staff to assist local parishes in managing mission companionships. They can help make initial connections and identify those who struggle to find overseas partners. Finally, institutions often support networks of parishes and organizations involved

in the same region. For example, the American Friends of the Episcopal Church of Sudan (AFRECS) is a network of parishes involved in Sudan who meets regularly to share lessons learned and coordinate work.

The changing mission paradigm carries extensive possibilities for deepening friendships with fellow Christians overseas. The enduring challenge is to sustain these relationships so that all can benefit from new opportunities of Christian fellowship.

(Excerpted from Faith & Leadership, An Offering of Leadership Education at Duke Divinity, November 9, 2010) ❖

DIOCESE OF NEBRASKA--DIOCESE OF TWIC EAST GLOBAL COMPANIONS

FROM THE NEBRASKA EPISCOPALIAN, DEC. 2, 2010



Unanimous approval of a resolution creating a Global Companion Relationship between the Diocese of Nebraska, the Diocese of Twic East, and the Diocese of Dominican Republic was followed by a standing ovation from delegates to the 143rd Annual Council held in Kearney, Nov. 11-13. The tri-diocesan relationship will begin in January 2011 and continue until January 2016 and may be renewed or ended by mutual consent.

In remarks prior to the signing ceremony, Bishop Ezekiel Diing expressed his thanks for the tri-diocese agreement and detailed priorities for the development of Twic East. They include use of more advanced agriculture techniques to provide a sustainable food supply; the completion of a school for girls being built by the Diocese of Nebraska; construction and staffing of a health clinic for newborns and mothers; clergy training for pastors; and construction of a guesthouse for visiting missionaries.

The Diocese of Nebraska's Sower's Fund is directing financial support toward student scholarships.

Four engraved pens were used in the signing ceremony. Bishops Burnett, Diing and Holquin each kept a pen. The fourth pen was purchased in a silent auction with the funds designated for the Global Partnership Agreement. ❖

INNOVATIVE STORYTELLING RETREAT FOR MISSIONERS OF THE DIOCESE OF MISSOURI

BY BETH FELICE, DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS, DIOCESE OF MISSOURI

Ed. Note: The Dioceses of Missouri and Lui, ECS, are Companion Dioceses, and have been since April 2006. The overnight retreat brought together almost half of those who have traveled to Lui over 8+ years of relationship, laity and clergy. This article highlights the storytelling retreat. To learn more, contact Beth Felice, bfelice@DioceseMo.org.

The snow-covered river bluffs of MaryCliff, a Marianist retreat center outside St. Louis, were the backdrop of a storytelling workshop for missionaries from the Diocese of Missouri who have traveled to Lui Diocese in southern Sudan. Their homework assignment was to remember their story at three specific points: initial awareness of Lui or Sudan; a point of challenge or difficulty; and a point of transformation. And, they were encouraged to bring a few artifacts or photos from their time in Sudan to illustrate not only their stories, but to spark the memories of each other.

The Rev. Emily Bloemker, Associate Rector of St. Timothy's Church, Creve Coeur, MO, and Chair of the diocesan Companion Relationship Committee, designed and facilitated the retreat. Her hope was two-fold -- first, that as participants began to tell their individual stories, the larger narrative of the relationship would come into focus for all, and, second that the retreat would help develop a corpus of story, a level of comfort with telling that story, and give wings to the stories to fly out into the imagination of the diocese.

"We all need to piece our individual stories together because we don't have a larger narrative. Only a few from the diocese will ever be able to travel to Sudan, yet there is such a hunger for hearing the stories of this relationship, to travel alongside the missionaries to learn about the people of Lui, their life and their faith, to learn what the missionaries experience while in Sudan and as they continue to process the experience back home", Emily explained.

The retreat began with Evening Prayer, followed by dinner - a gentle start to a weekend of intense recollection. At dinner, the missionaries began piecing together who had been on which trips. The storytelling had already begun.

The workshop was divided into three sections, fleshing out the homework questions. Friday evening's session was



Emily Bloemker listening to the women of Lui.

devoted to stories of first encounters or conversions.

When was the moment you first became aware of Lui?

How did you decide to go to Lui?

What was it like to arrive in Lui?

The second session began Saturday morning, telling the story of the "rough places" - times of difficulty or challenge in self, a situation or with the relationship.

What are the moments of conflict or difficulty that remain clearly in your memory?

When has our relationship with Lui provoked feelings of sadness, frustration or anger?

The third session, following a much-needed decompression break, began at 11 AM -

Stories of hope and transformation. It's not just about how we've been transformed...

How has our diocese been transformed by this relationship?

Each session included a group activity, designed by Emily. The first session gathered everyone at a large table covered with butcher paper, with markers and pens abundant. The task was to draw an aerial map of Lui, the larger paper for Lui township, and a smaller paper was to be the Diocese of Lui. "Start with putting in the road." "Is everything in relationship to the road?" "The market is here, cathedral there..." "Where are the bore holes? Put those in, too." "And, the tombs, were they here?" Remember the goats

INNOVATIVE STORYTELLING RETREAT FOR MISSIONERS OF THE DIOCESE OF MISSOURI, cont'd.

climbing on them?”

As details were added with each activity, kernels of story expanded, weaving threads of remembrance, reflection, connection. One missionary remarked that if you drew the connections between each missionary with the people in Sudan and in the US that had been touched or influenced by this shared experience, you'd hardly be able to see the paper.

The schedule called for time for small groups, but the missionaries acknowledged their own hunger to hear “all the stories” and at least one time, decided to continue with stories in the large group. Each participant shared how their parish communities reacted and responded to stories they had brought back with them, from selling hot cross buns to benefit a church that had burned to a fundraiser for

bicycles, “Bikes for Bikes” (a short bike ride) to an annual walk/run to raise money for drilling wells.

The three sessions of intensive story sharing lasted just six hours. Partial sentence notes from each session yielded over 12,000 words! As the workshop was winding down, the group began to imagine the next steps for re-telling these stories. Video cameras brought to the workshop went unused; even the third group activity didn't make it to paper, so great was the need for that step of talking through the shared stories. “What can we do now, how can the diocese participate in what we have just done?”

The retreat closed with prayers: prayers for Lui; for the relationship; for the missionaries; and for the Diocese of Missouri. “We pray for continued peace, for continued relationship, and that we can continue to tell this story.” ❖

A PHOTOGRAPHER'S EYEVIEW AND OBSERVATIONS OF LIFE AT ST. ANDREW'S, WADAKONA

BY CHARLIE SIMOKAITIS, MEMBER OF ALL SAINTS' CHURCH, CHICAGO, IL - PHOTOGRAPHER FOR “VOICES OF FAITH/”PARTNERS IN FAITH” DOCUMENTARY OF RENK DIOCESE



We took a boat from Renk Town, across and down the White Nile, accompanied by many soldiers, as well as Bishop Jeffrey Lee, Chicago, and Bishop Joseph Garang Atem, Renk. As with all our day trips, there was an entourage of priests, teachers, youth leaders and laypersons.

At one point, an older soldier made a request that we make an unscheduled stop just north, a mile or so, of Wadakona. Here we were shown where thousands of people were killed. This was visually evident by the mass grave of remains. This definitely became a filter of gravitas through which we viewed the day that would follow. Speaking personally, this would become one of the most intense days of our trip (and my life).

We proceeded south to Wadakona. There is a military base there, and we were taken in various trucks to an Arabic-looking village or compound. This was a former northern military base that had been reclaimed by the people of the South. We drove out to St. Andrew, which sits remotely, alone in a field with not much else around. We would see

A PHOTOGRAPHER'S EYEVUE AND OBSERVATIONS OF LIFE AT ST. ANDREW'S, WADAKONA, cont'd.

the actual village later on through some shrub, maybe one-quarter of a mile away. It was very quiet and rural there, just a few kids walking by with herds of goats.

As with all the churches we visited, congregants carried their own chairs, of ubiquitous plastic, stackable variety, to the church. Once there, we were treated to chanting, singing and celebration -- the traditional welcome on our trip. The lead singer used a portable microphone and speaker to amplify his voice. The drummers, two young boys, had clearly practiced.

The Renk Media Team had developed an organized approach to these visits. Kevin Goodman, Videographer, would scout the locations for the interviews, while Connie Wilson, Producer, would identify those to be interviewed and often tailor questions for them working through at least one, but sometimes two, translators. There was always a ceremonial aspect to the proceedings due to the presence of two bishops. In the meantime, I would be taking pictures or helping with the video shoot. Kevin would shoot several interviews utilizing various backgrounds.

Each church had its own energy, its own character. For instance, in Jamom, the people were primarily of the Nuer tribe, which had its own distinctive type of clothing and scarification. They had clearly not seen many white people, for we presented quite a novelty. There was also a somber tone as Jamom was suffering from a serious drought.

In Wadakona, however, there was a joyfulness. Despite having so many military people with guns surrounding the proceedings (we were used to this by now), there was a definite sense of ownership and pride about the people of St. Andrew. Clearly, there was excitement about the new church structure. It was a well-organized and welcoming congregation. The music was to be taken seriously here -- very spirited and precise. The people seemed to have newer clothes, so the newness of the facility, as well as the cleanliness that abounded there definitely gave a sense that St. Andrew was "on the up". Sadly, that was not the case with some of the other places we visited.

It definitely was a complex few hours to sort out. The energy level was very high. It seemed that this congregation was pleased with the opportunity to gather for our visit. The soldiers who escorted us back to our boat waved like children as the boat pushed back from the banks. One of them said, through a translator, "Don't forget us."

In January 2010, the Renk Media Team traveled to Renk Diocese to film a documentary of its Companion Diocese. St. Mark's, Evanston, IL, is partnered with St. Andrew, Wadakona. For information about the 2-part documentary, "Voices of Faith/Partners in Faith", go to Renk Media Team Facebook page. There is an accompanying study guide available. Also, Fr. Kevin Goodman's sermon, "A Tree in Wadakona" - a meditation from Renk, Sudan, can be found there. ❖



DIOCESE OF ROKON, ECS, AFTER 21 YEARS OF CIVIL WAR

BY FRANCIS LOYO, BISHOP

ECS COUNCIL SECRETARY & CHAIRMAN OF THE EDUCATION COMMISSION

The Diocese of Rokon (DOR) was established in 1987, and is located 54 miles west of Juba. Rokon is a village with an equatorial climate and a population of over 9,000 people. It began with 15 parishes, led by clergy with only local training. The Mothers Union has been in the forefront helping the young families.

I was elected the second bishop of DOR in 1995 and enthroned in February 1997. The diocese was not operational between 1987 and 1993 since Bishop Matthias Lemi Rianga, the first bishop, was confined to Juba town due to restrictions in movement by the Government of Sudan (GOS) forces and the Sudan People's Liberation Army/Movement (SPLA/M). Pastoral responsibilities were handled by archdeacons in the area.

During the civil war, in 1999, through support of Tearfund, UK and assistance of Christian Organizations Research & Advisory Trust of Africa (CORAT), an Africa NGO based in Nairobi, Kenya, the diocese went through a capacity building process and developed the vision and mission statements, which hold to this day.

Vision Statement - *The community in the Diocese of Rokon knows Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior. It is an informed, educated person who lives a healthy, wholesome, and prosperous life that glorifies God in an environment of love, justice, peace and unity.*

Mission Statement - *To glorify God through worship and proclamation of the Good News. The Diocese is committed to building a strong united community that lives in peace and relates well with others. The Diocese endeavors to enable the community to live wholesome and sustainable lives through fellowship, social services and development activities based on Biblical principles.*

The diocese grew to 25 parishes, but all were destroyed during the 21-year civil war. Since the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) of 2005, the diocese has started reconstruction of churches with the help of friends and their prayers.

St. John's Town parish is one of the churches being rebuilt. It is already roofed. St. John's was established as a mission-center in 1932. In 1955, it was deserted and burned



down during the first civil war. In 1965, it was burned down again, and the people fled to the bush, and again in 1985, it was destroyed. It is now time to rebuild it for the 4th time. We need your prayers and support of our efforts.

Our priority is construction of a Pro-Cathedral within the DOR. This is a new initiative, building a small cathedral where big church functions can be held. The local community managed to finish the roofing with their contributions, but what remains are windows, doors and plastering, as well as pews.

The Diocese of Rokon is prepared and ready to share with companions on a personal and spiritual level within life situations of the partners. Face-to-face encounters are particularly important -- sharing of bible study and theological reflections; intercessions and worship; exchange of information and strategies on issues of common concerns; exchange of ecumenical experiences; exchange of experience in Christian witness; pastoral visits to demonstrate solidarity.

I think that with the coming of peace and the creation of the new nation in South Sudan, the churches will be able to worship in a good atmosphere without further destruction. We, therefore, appeal to our friends and churches, and to those who have a heart for the people of South Sudan, to support us as we set forth to accomplish such great needs and challenges. May God bless you, and remember us in your thoughts and prayers in all our endeavors.

(Contact Bishop Francis Loyo, DOR, at bployo@yahoo.co.uk or AFRECS President, Bishop David Jones, 703-824-1325 or email him at djones@thediocese.net) ❖

LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE OF NEW SUDAN DELIVERS LEADERSHIP COURSE IN JUBA

BY ANITA SANBORN, PRESIDENT OF COLORADO EPISCOPAL FOUNDATION
PAST AFRECS BOARD MEMBER & A FOUNDING MEMBER OF LIONS



Executive Director of LIONS, is now on assignment with the Office of Post-Referendum for the Government of Southern Sudan (GOSS). His new role is a positive sign that the service of Sudanese in Diaspora is being welcomed.

Dr. Ballard Pritchett served as Juba Course Coordinator. Faculty also included Dr. Peter van Arsdale, University of Denver-Korbel School of International Studies, Paul Boyle, international trainer for victims of trauma with significant background from years of living in Sudan, Anita Sanborn, CEP Foundation, certified organizational development trainer, and founding member of LIONS. In addition, University of Juba faculty, Sudanese elected officials and other presenters delivered part of the course curriculum.



LIONS was formed to create learning opportunities for men and women from Sudan and the Diaspora. Its graduates will contribute to successful elections in the upcoming years and to long-term economic development projects, as they go out to work in schools, clinics, faith-based projects and agricultural enterprises throughout Sudan.

Humanitarian aid is not enough to produce transformative progress in Sudan. Investing in leaders with capabilities and character, and supporting them over years to come, is necessary to shift the course of the country and bring real peace, security, democracy and prosperity. The core problems affecting social progress bring additional burdens to Sudanese leaders -- militarism, corruption, interrupted education, tribalism, the divide between the Diaspora and the residents, and discrimination based on gender, ethnicity, religion or other factors. LIONS participants will be selected for their capacity for "servant leadership", their character, their willingness to learn and collaborate. LIONS' goal is to build a network of credibility and accountability among its participants, and between alumni and the organization. LIONS also strives to include women at a minimum of 25% for each course.

The Board of Directors of the Leadership Institute of New Sudan (LIONS) led a 7-day Leadership Course in Juba, Nov. 14-20, for twenty-seven participants representing a diverse group of geographic regions and backgrounds. The course attracted Sudanese men and women from all walks of life committed to serving their communities. Among them was Rev. Philip Athiong, Episcopal priest serving a congregation in Juba. A key component of the program is to integrate Sudanese from the Diaspora with those who remained in Sudan. The faculty stayed at the Episcopal Church of Sudan (ECS) guesthouse, which afforded many informal opportunities to talk with those church leaders traveling to and through Juba during preparation for the referendum.

Planning for future courses in various locations throughout southern Sudan is now underway. LIONS is committed to maintaining the network of graduates so that in the months and years ahead, young leaders from the Diaspora and regions throughout Sudan will be able to keep in

Manger Gordon Marital Amerdid, the Founder and

LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE OF NEW SUDAN DELIVERS LEADERSHIP COURSE IN JUBA, cont'd.

and regions throughout Sudan will be able to keep in touch. A permanent office with Sudanese staff in Juba is a major component of goals for the future. It is our hope

that the ECS will nominate individuals to apply for future courses. ✠

The Leadership Institute of New Sudan (LIONS) is a 501c(3) organization with offices in Denver, CO, and a representative in Juba, Sudan. Its purpose is to develop and train leaders from all parts of the Sudanese context so the people of Sudan experience the virtues of prosperity, civil rights and social equality. LIONS focuses on leadership, democracy and economic development. Participants will be prepared to lead in local communities, small businesses, NGO's, as well as government positions and institutions. LIONS is supported by individual donations, foundation grants and corporate sponsors. To become involved, or lend your support, send an email to info@sudanlions.org. Contacts: Isaac Gang, Communications Officer, 601-329-1399, Isaac@isaacgang.com, and Anita Sanborn, Board of Directors, 303-884-6080, anita@coef.org.

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.

OCTOBER 29-30, 2010

The 158th Annual Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Iowa adopted a resolution to establish a Companion Exploratory Committee (as provided in the *Guidelines for Companion Relationships* of TEC) for exploration of a relationship between the Diocese of Iowa and the Diocese of Nzara, Western Equatoria State, Episcopal Church of Sudan, Samuel Peni, Bishop. (Fr. Bob and Karen North serve as TEC missionaries to Nzara.)

JANUARY 29-FEBRUARY 21, 2011

Mr. Cleous Bwambale Tinkasimire, Deputy Headmaster of Hope and Resurrection Secondary School, Atiaba, Sudan, is visiting the US at the invitation of Jennifer and Darryl Ernst and Hope for Humanity, Inc., which funded construction and operation of the school. Cleous comes with greetings from teachers and students and updates to churches and schools in the Diocese of VA which support the school. The Board of Directors is planning for future expansion of Hope and Resurrection Secondary School.

SPRING/SUMMER 2011

A team from Christ Church, Glen Ellen, VA, Diocese of

VA, to visit Hope and Resurrection Secondary School, Atiaba, Sudan. The school is funded by Hope for Humanity, Inc., based in Richmond, VA. The team will be teaching and planning for future programs at the school. (www.hopeforhumanityinc.org)

A team from St. James Church, Richmond, VA, to visit Hope and Resurrection Secondary School. Members of the team with medical skills will serve alongside the American missionary doctor at Akot Medical Clinic in Akot, Sudan. ✠

SAVE THE DATE...SAVE THE DATE...SAVE THE DATE...SAVE THE DATE

6th Annual AFRECS Conference
Friday-Sunday, June 17-19, 2011
Christ Episcopal Church, Glen Allen, VA (*outside Richmond*)
Diocese of Virginia
The Most Rev. Dr. Daniel Deng Bul, ECS Archbishop
The Most Rev. Katharine Jefforts Schori,
TEC Presiding Bishop