

AFRECS E-Blast: January 9, 2013

PRAY. TEACH. PARTNER. URGE. GIVE.

In the church:

A Message from AFRECS Executive Director Richard Parkins

A JOURNEY TO LIGHT

"Arise, shine; for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you." This reading from Isaiah which was offered this past Sunday as the Old Testament reading for Epiphany introduces the theme of this important feast day of the Church. We are called to follow the light of Christ which leads to peace and reconciliation. St Paul's message to the Ephesians, the New Testament reading designated for Epiphany, reminds us that this message is intended for all. What does this mean for the people of Sudan and South Sudan and those of us who have shared the journey of our Sudanese sisters and brothers to a place where the peace of which the Scriptures speak becomes real?

In his Christmas message to the people of the Episcopal Church of Sudan (ECS) which is available on the [AFRECS website](#), Archbishop Daniel Deng Bul notes the suffering and pain that still pervades many parts of the ECS Province which encompasses both Sudans. However, he compellingly lifts up the message of hope that persists, even as the unfinished business of bringing peace and justice to his people is emphatically noted. The Archbishop's message also recognizes that the message of the Prince of Peace has been rejected by many. It is these acts of rejection that are manifested in the tribal violence that continues to erupt in parts of South Sudan, the incessant warfare that rages in Blue Nile and South Kordofan, and the agony of the people of Abyei.

Let us remember that Herod's evil nature intruded into the Christmas and Epiphany messages of peace and joy. The account of the wise men's journey to the Christ child has to account for the evil intent of a devious ruler. But the star shown brightly and its light prevailed.

As we enter 2013, we can hope that the light that seems to only flicker can become more intense and shine more brightly. May the attempts of groups to solidify their opposition to the NCP move forward. May interventions of political and church leaders to end tribal conflicts in South Sudan and Abyei be successful. May the ongoing work of the adjacent African nation to end the devastating warfare that brings untold despair to the people of the Nuba Mountains bear fruit. May we who seek to be partners in helping our Sudanese sisters and brothers follow the star to a place of peace and safety be faithful to our call to share this perilous journey with our Sudanese friends.

Richard Parkins

Editor's Note: The following gentle appeal is repeated in hopes that you might see your way clear to help follow the light in the way described below. EJH+

Dear Friends of AFRECS,

Several hundred readers now receive our E-Blasts every other week, yet only a few have joined AFRECS as members. The board of AFRECS intentionally established a modest membership fee of \$15 to enable all those concerned about developments in Sudan and South Sudan and the work of the Episcopal Church of Sudan to become AFRECS members. If you appreciate our work in maintaining a network of persons committed to peace and justice for our Sudanese sisters and brothers and our E-Blast broadcasts, please consider becoming an AFRECS member. The membership fee remains at \$15 annually but if you feel inclined to be more generous, a larger contribution would be appreciated. You may send checks to AFRECS, 3737 Seminary Road, Alexandria, VA 22304. Note in the memo line of your check AFRECS MEMBERSHIP.

Thanks,
Richard Parkins,
Executive Director

In politics -- the two Sudans:

As Ambassador Princeton Lyman steps down from his post of Special Envoy to Sudan & South Sudan, several items give very different points of view: 1) An open letter by [Eric Reeves](#); 2) A posting on African Arguments by [Aly Verjee](#); 3) A letter of appreciation from [Richard Parkins](#). For your information and interest, follow the links above to read for yourself a full compliment of strong, differing viewpoints.

"[Civil war still rages](#) in Nuba Mountains, thwarting Sudan, South Sudan peace." Published in the Charlotte (NC) Observer, this article is written by Alan Boswell, a McClatchy newspaper special correspondent focusing on human rights issues.

In politics & education -- South Sudan:

[South Sudan asks United Kingdom to provide colonial border maps](#). This Sudan Tribune article reveals the request made by Riek Machar, Vice-President of South Sudan, to former British Prime Minister Tony Blair. The maps would settle the question of boundaries as of 1956 establishing the basis for current demarcation, agreed upon by both sides in the CPA.

The Diocese of Wau proudly presents a 2013 Lent Study Guide that can be adapted for use in many different settings around the world. The six week program includes the topics of: Prejudice & Error; Work & Theology; Love of a Neighbor; Gender & Inequality; Humility &

Education; and Faith & Evangelism. "The course works by discussion and prayer, gives an African outlook on Christianity and focuses on particular issues faced in Eastern Africa. This is the first Lent course created by the ECS and it tries to stimulate participation, discovery and tackle hard issues in **faith.**" In addition, it invites connection & feedback to the [Wau Diocese](#). Follow the link to find out more and to get your copy.

In politics -- Sudan:

[The United Nations warns of humanitarian crisis](#) in Sudan's two southern states - South Kordofan and Blue Nile where there is continued fighting. This BBC article sheds light on the grave impact that this civil war imposes on the civilian population.

PRAY fervently during this Epiphany Season:

Pray for the people of both Sudan and South Sudan that war may cease and give them a chance to live in peace.

Give thanks for the creative efforts in education that are coming forth (such as the 2013 Lent Study) despite the instability of living conditions.

Urge the leaders of both nations and those in the international community to find a way forward that will stop the fighting and give peace a chance.

EJH+, Editor

This bi-weekly Sudan update is from the American Friends of the Episcopal Church of Sudan. You are receiving it because you are currently on an AFRECS listserv. Feel free to forward this newsflash to others who may find it helpful. To join the list if you received this email as a forward, please send an email to AFRECS_E-Blasts@afrecs.org with "SUBSCRIBE" in the subject line. If you wish to unsubscribe, please send an email to AFRECS_E-Blasts@afrecs.org with "UNSUBSCRIBE" in the subject line. For more information about AFRECS, visit our website <http://www.afrecs.org> or our Facebook page.