

AFRECS E-Blast: March 31, 2016

PRAY. TEACH. PARTNER. URGE. GIVE.

Message from Executive Director, Richard Parkins

Easter Tidings for Sudan and South Sudan

Dear Friends,

For those of us who walk with our sisters and brothers in South Sudan and Sudan who are questing for peace, Easter Tide is a season of special meaning. As we celebrate the resurrection of Christ, we embrace the notion that the most horrible of circumstances need not be accepted as inevitable and final. The empty tomb will forever stand for victory of life over death and for God's power over the forces of evil and destruction. This is the message that we most passionately want to hear and spread as we seek an end to the misery that has plagued South Sudan these past two plus years. Our despair has been at times overwhelming; yet we have sought peace and believed in its inevitability because we are always ready to receive the good news of Easter. May we be once again open to receiving that news and investing in its realization.

As we consider the days that followed the resurrection of Christ, we know that what was before His followers was hard work, risky work. but work that could be pursued with an amazing energy and determination because God's power and authority had been made evident on that Easter morn. The barriers to bringing about God's kingdom were not suddenly removed but rather the enemies of the Gospel were seen as less formidable because the mandate set forth by Christ on Maundy Thursday now was real because Christ's sacrifice and victory made it so.

It saddens us to witness the spread of violence in parts of South Sudan, even as we await the emergence of a government of national unity. We nurture the hope that the peace agreement negotiated last August will bear fruit and that a cease fire will hold throughout all of South Sudan. That has not happened. We are encouraged that there are peace makers who remain committed to peace and struggle on, even when adversity seems to have the upper hand. For these peace makers we must pray most fervently. We can use this Easter season as a time when we maintain our vigilance that faith leaders throughout South Sudan and Sudan rekindle the embers of peace and reconciliation. We trust that they will convey the message of hope that will inspire a weary nation to believe that peace and unity will replace discord. We know that there are peace warriors in both Sudan and South Sudan. Let them know that our prayers surround them.

Faithfully,

Richard

Message from Presiding Bishop Michael Curry

Calling for a Season of Prayer

The Public Affairs Office of The Episcopal Church posted this [Media Release](#) on Tuesday 3/29/16:

"Episcopal Church Presiding Bishop Michael Curry has called for a season of prayer for regions of the Anglican Communion which are experiencing violence and civil strife."

These regions include South Sudan as well as Burundi, Central America, Democratic Republic of Congo, Middle East, and Pakistan.

"In this season of Resurrection, I call on everyone to pray for our brothers and sisters in areas where there is much burden and little hope," the Presiding Bishop said.

Citing Galatians 6:2 - *Bear one another's burdens and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ* - Presiding Bishop Curry called for prayer throughout the holy season of Easter beginning on April 3, the Second Sunday of Easter and proceeding through Pentecost, May 15.

More information is available [here](#). Updates will continue throughout the Easter season.

Information from Bishop John Gatteck Wallam of South Sudan

Regarding the March 24th meeting of the Joint Monitoring and Evaluation Commission (JMEC)

Opening Statement and Closing Remarks by Chairperson, Festus G. Mogae, Former President of the Republic of Botswana.

The four topics detailed in the opening statement are:

1) Humanitarian response; 2) Transitional security arrangements for Juba; 3) Report from Ceasefire and Transitional Security Arrangements Monitoring Mechanism (CTSAMM); 4) Economic reform - immediate action.

Closing remarks emphasized that CTSAMM should verify as soon as possible the location and movement of troops, especially in Juba, Equatoria and Bahr el Ghazal and that serious attention is required to the economic situation. "Easter is a time for reconciliation, for turning our minds to questions of forgiveness, tolerance, memorializing those who have lost their lives in this conflict. Reconciliation is part of the promise of the Agreement. ... As we enter the Easter season, we must work actively on all fronts - security, governance, economic, social - so that the Agreement

can succeed."

The Press Release, posted on March 28th, signaled JMEC's welcome to the first flight of SPLM/A - IO troops to Juba. Chairperson Mogae observed: "...(O)bstacles...have been overcome. ...(There are) no remaining difficulties in return of First Vice-President designate and the formation of the new Transitional Government of National Unity." Also, the release noted that transport of troops would be complete in the coming days.

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South Sudan

United Nations Human Rights - Office of the High Commissioner: Human Rights Council establishes Commission on Human Rights in South Sudan.

Ethiopian Ministry of Foreign Affairs: South Sudan: President Kiir sacks foreign affairs minister.

Sudan Tribune: Hundreds ride for peace in Yambio town.

Action Against Hunger: South Sudan: Data is the Difference between Life and Death: Measuring catastrophe in Unity State

Sudan

UN News Centre: UN envoy welcomes Sudan's signing of action plan to end use of child soldiers.

Sudan Tribune: Sudan's Bashir invited to attend inauguration of Niger's president.

Sudan Democracy First Group: Sudan Religious Discrimination and the Quest for National Integration

theguardian: 'Good girls don't protest': report exposes attacks on Sudan's female activists. Human Rights Watch investigation finds rape, violence and arbitrary detention have become common weapons against women.

Radio Tamazuj: Government and rebels clash in Sudan's Nuba Mountain.

Both Sudans

Sudan Tribune: South Sudan accuses Sudan army of bombing its territory.

Thank you to our readers for your interest, your prayers, and your support.

We invite you to visit our Website: <http://www.afrecs.org/>

Ellen J. Hanckel

Editor

PRAY. TEACH. PARTNER. URGE. GIVE. LEARN.

If you'd like to be doing more to help address the crisis in South Sudan, please consider the following:

*Pray for peace and deep healing of the conflicts and rivalries in South Sudan.

*Join AFRECS or renew your annual membership on line at <http://www.afreecs.org/getInvolved.htm>

* If you have contacts in South Sudan and are able to get news of various parts of the country and the church from them, keep AFRECS in the loop by replying to this email or using our main contact email address: info@afreecs.org.

* Be prepared to advocate for peacemaking with the US (or other) government, especially if attention to conflict resolution wanes.

*Donate to support the Episcopal Church in South Sudan and Sudan's efforts to provide solace and encourage reconciliation.

*Urge others to support AFRECS as well.