

AFRECS E-Blast: June 26, 2013

PRAY. TEACH. PARTNER. URGE. GIVE.

In the church:

Salisbury Sudan 40 – A Time to Remember and Renew: A Message from AFRECS Executive Director Richard Parkins

To be a part of the celebration hosted by the Diocese of Salisbury in observance of its forty years of partnership with the Episcopal Church of Sudan and several of its dioceses meant celebrating the faithful work of the diocese and its deaneries but also saluting the enduring friendship that has survived and thrived over four turbulent decades. These decades have seen war, upheaval, untold suffering as well as a struggle that finally brought into being a new nation. Being together with eleven Sudanese bishops and representatives of the Salisbury deaneries who had partnered with them was to experience what happens when faithful people learn to trust each other and derive spiritual nourishment from that trust. As American guests at this gathering, Bishop David Jones and I were privileged to witness the respect and affection that defines faithful Christian partnerships.

The telling of stories was a key ingredient of the time shared between June 9th and June 14th. We heard about the challenges faced by Christian friends in Khartoum as they confront the difficulty of being an unwanted minority in their country. We were reminded by other church leaders of what it meant to live through years of loss, grief, and unimaginable poverty and desolation. These stories of struggle were balanced by accounts of new beginnings as representatives of deaneries and their ECS counterparts told of developments that were transforming lives where previously untold misery was the norm. It was the power of personal accounts relayed by friends on both sides of the partnerships that made this gathering special. This time of sharing was made richer by the opportunity to worship in a wondrous Cathedral and in a place where both the bishop of the diocese and the Cathedral dean were so invested in making this celebration a special time of remembrance and renewal.

There was no overlooking the unfinished business that remains as South Sudan seeks to become more peaceful, stable and secure and as Salisbury partners examine how best to continue their journey with their Sudanese friends. There was deep concern for those who are victims of unspeakable violence in both Sudan and parts of South Sudan. However, it was abundantly clear that these journeys forward would be fully shared because the 40 years of working together had given witness to the power and endurance of true Christian partnership.

Richard Parkins
Executive Director

P.S. Please remember our sisters and brothers in South Sudan as they gather in prayer for peace and reconciliation on July 7th. Let our prayers be raised with theirs as the momentous task of peace and reconciliation moves forward. It is hoped that worship services throughout our Church might recognize this special opportunity to be a part of a wider praying community.

Special Announcement: Nuba Day, July 5-7

Few parts of the world have experienced as much suffering as the Nuba Mountains; and the bombardment continues in an area that has a tragic history of upheaval and neglect. On July 5-7, Nuban youth, both Muslim and Christian, will meet in Des Moines, Iowa, to express the solidarity of Nubans in this country with their sisters and brothers in Sudan and to examine strategies to become more effective advocates for peace and safety for their people. Please see [the website covering Nuba Day](#).

This interfaith effort organized by Nuban youth is worthy of the support of all those who are dismayed by the relentless suffering of the Nuban people and the lack of worldwide attention being given to this longstanding humanitarian tragedy. I know some of the leaders behind this effort and respect their sincerity and integrity. Obviously, funds are needed to make this gathering possible. Information is provided on the website for making donations. Your prayers, encouragement and contributions may allow important voices to be lifted up in support of those who have only our voices if their plight is to be known.

Richard Parkins
Executive Director
American Friends of the Episcopal Church of Sudan

More on the Fortieth Anniversary

Congratulations to the Diocese of Salisbury and the Episcopal Church of Sudan for forty years as partners in faith. For more about the festivities in which the AFRECS board president and executive director took part (above), see the [Sudan Extra](#), a supplement to Salisbury Diocese's newsletter *Sarum Link*.

In the two Sudans:

What's Happening with the Nile?

Tension between Egypt and Ethiopia over the latter's Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam project on the Blue Nile, said to be 21 percent completed, has been in the news of late, with Egypt citing a colonial-era agreement that grants it much of the Nile's water, and threatening action against Ethiopia. The river flows into Sudan and joins the White Nile at Omdurman. According to the Sudanese minister of information, [Sudan accepts the report](#) of the international committee that found that the dam would have no negative impact on Egypt and Sudan;

Sudan will send engineering and construction assistance to its eastern neighbor. Even President [Bashir](#) himself has spoken in defense of Ethiopia's project. Meanwhile, South Sudan plans to join Ethiopia, Burundi, Rwanda, Uganda, Tanzania, and Kenya in signing the [Cooperative Framework Agreement](#), or Entebbe Agreement, of the Nile Basin countries, which establishes a commission to work out equitable sharing of the river's water. The Egyptian ambassador to South Sudan told Vice President Riek Machar this week that Egypt has no objection to South Sudan's plan to build a dam on the White Nile in Eastern Equatoria State. For more background on the complex issues around Nile water use, check out Voice of America's 2011 [five-part series](#) on the issue, which deeply affects both Sudan and South Sudan.

Human Rights Testimony Before Congress

John Prendergast of the Enough Project joined other government and NGO leaders in [testifying](#) before the Congressional Human Rights Commission on human rights abuses in the Sudans.

In South Sudan:

Peace and Reconciliation: A National Day of Prayer

Archbishop Daniel Deng Bul of the Episcopal Church of Sudan has released a statement detailing the composition and process of the new committee for national peace and reconciliation in South Sudan, which he chairs at the request of President Kiir. Immediate plans include a national day of prayer on the eve of the country's second anniversary of independence. John Ashworth provides the [text of the statement](#).

In Sudan:

US Focus on Sudan

Susan Rice, about to become national security advisor to President Obama, said this week that she plans to keep up US scrutiny of Sudan, making some remarks about the situations in Darfur, Blue Nile, and the Nuba Mountains, as well as the invitation to Sudan's presidential assistant and NCP party vice-chair Nafie Ali Nafie, which the US rescinded after considerable political pressure at home and officially in response to Sudan's announced decision to shut down the oil flow from South Sudan.

A Message from the Editor

Dear Readers,

Many thanks to former AFRECS E-Blast editor, Debra Morris Smith, who has returned to the desk for this issue while I am away taking care of family concerns. I'm very grateful for her timely assistance. Until the next time,

Peace,
Ellen Hanckel
Editor

PRAY: In thanksgiving for 40 years of the Salisbury and Sudan Link for the continued collaboration among the Episcopal Church of Sudan and its worldwide partners. Pray for peace and a just settlement of all disputes in and between the two Sudans, and join in the prayers for South Sudan on July 8th.

PARTNER: Inspired by the example of Salisbury Diocese, perhaps there are TEC entities with an interest in building a relationship with a diocese in the Episcopal Church of Sudan. Please reply to this email if you would like assistance from AFRECS in finding a good match and getting a relationship started.