

AFRECS E-Blast: July 27, 2016

PRAY. TEACH. PARTNER. URGE. GIVE.

Dear Friends,

As a result of the recent eruption of violence and the further suffering being inflicted on our friends in South Sudan, another appeal is being made to feed those who risk starvation as food security becomes more serious. A generous response to this urgent appeal is needed if starvation is not to be the lot of those whose suffering has already been more than we can possibly imagine.

It is, however, important to realize that urgent appeals for humanitarian relief will continue to be the norm if conflicts continue to be the norm. If peace and the stability that comes with peace remain remote and seemingly unobtainable, the cries of hunger will be ever more prevalent.

But peace must and can become a reality. We as Christians must vigorously embrace this belief because of who we are and what we believe. We also know that the Church is the purveyor of the message of peace that must resonate throughout South Sudan if peace is to become more than a plea. Empowering the Church as peacemaker is a compelling need that should not be neglected even as we respond magnanimously to appeals for humanitarian aid.

We hear repeatedly about the Church's essential role in changing the culture of South Sudan to one of peace and reconciliation. Repeating that notion as mantra is not sufficient if the role of peace maker is to mean anything. It was abundantly clear from a recent visit to South Sudan where we met many church leaders, that the role being assigned to the Church requires the development of competence in peace making and its precursor, trauma healing. Exhortation is not enough if peace is to become embedded in the fabric of South Sudanese society. Training and more training with experts and practitioners being present throughout the country will hopefully become the grist that allows the message of peace to take hold. Funds must be expended to create this expertise and to underwrite those gatherings of folks at all levels if South Sudan is to heal and move forward as a safe and peaceful nation. The Church can live into this role if we as partners and friends invest in the competence building that must accompany the rhetoric of peace building. To do less is to condemn South Sudan to endless strife and suffering.

Our delegation left South Sudan determined to share with others the urgency of equipping the Church as an effective, powerful instrument of peace making. You will hear more about our plea in the coming weeks. In the meantime, pray for peace and for the resources needed to allow the Church to be a convincing agent of peace and reconciliation.

Faithfully,

Richard

Recent News from South Sudan

[The New York Times](#): Is There Any Hope for Peace in South Sudan? Article published Friday, July 22nd.

SAVE THE DATE for the [2016 AFRECS CONFERENCE](#) October 21 - 23. Location: St. Timothy's Episcopal Church, 1020-24th St., West Des Moines, IA.

Under the theme of 'Building Bridges of Reconciliation' the conference will

- 1) Explore opportunities for the Sudanese diaspora to contribute to peacemaking in the Sudans and
- 2) Explore ways the friendship of North Americans can contribute to peacemaking in the Sudans.

Distinguished Guest Speakers and workshop leaders: (Tentative)

- 1) Archbishop Daniel Deng Bul; The Episcopal Church in South Sudan and Sudan.
- 2) Bishop Samuel Enosa Peni; Diocese of Nzara, South Sudan and Chairperson of the Joint Peace and Reconciliation Commission of The Episcopal Church in South Sudan and Sudan.
- 3) Congressman Jim Leach; Congressman from Iowa, 1977-2007, and Retired Chairman of the National Endowment for the Humanities.
- 4) Dr. Dane Smith; Adjunct Professor, School of International Service, American University, Washington DC and Former Senior Advisor in the Office of the US Special Envoy for Darfur and Deputy Chief of Mission in Sudan as well as Ambassador to Guinea and Senegal.
- 5) The Rev. Canon Angela S. Ifill, Missioner, Black Ministries, The Episcopal Church (U.S.)

If you are interested in working on or contributing to this conference which is developing now, please contact Rich Jones, Chair of the Conference Planning Committee by replying to this email or by using our main contact email address: info@afreecs.org.

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Ellen J. Hanckel

Editor

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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.afrecs.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@afrecs.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.