

AFRECS E-Blast: July 8, 2015

PRAY. TEACH. PARTNER. URGE. GIVE.

Message from AFRECS President, Bishop David C. Jones

We are a Missionary Society

In his remarks to the Province III Synod prior to the 78th General Convention of the Episcopal Church, Bishop Stacy Sauls, the Chief Operating officer of the Episcopal Church, reminded bishops and deputies that the Episcopal Church is a **Missionary Society**. Over and over again, he spoke of the “**Missionary Society**” not as something out there, but rather as a significant mark of our mission. Sauls linked the identity of the Church to our reason for being – mission. We are the **Missionary Society**.

The mission we share as Friends of the Episcopal Church in Sudan and South Sudan is none other than a continuation of the Saving Action of Jesus on the Cross. We serve because we have been sent. We are living out the final words of the Eucharist, “*Go in Peace to Love and Serve the Lord.*” Our mission is to demonstrate the same love shown to us by Jesus on the cross. Ours is a ministry grounded in prayer and friendship. We pray and then we act. We pray and then we wait. We pray and then we give and pray again.

The leadership of AFRECS is well aware that relations have been strained between the Episcopal Church and the Episcopal Church in South Sudan and Sudan due to actions of our General Convention. We accept that. But our commitment to mission is single-minded. We are a **Missionary Society**. We are focusing our attention on the mission of Christ – on evangelism – on peace – on peacemaking - on the desperate needs of our friends. We are doing what we can do and accepting what we cannot. This is a time for the American Friends to be steadfast – even when discouraged. We cannot abandon our friends, especially in their time of need.

It is important, therefore, for all of us to stay in touch with our friends – to encourage them and stand by them and support them. I encourage you to maintain your friendships and to be friends indeed.

AFRECS will continue to focus on supporting our Friends as Friends. We invite you to join us in that missionary endeavor.

Faithfully,

+ *David*

David Colin Jones
President of AFRECS

Bishop Jones submitted this [Resolution B018 at the 78th General Convention of The Episcopal Church \(TEC\)](#) held recently in Salt Lake City, Utah. It includes the following:

Resolved, the 78th General Convention heartily commend the Episcopal Church of Sudan and South Sudan (ECSSS) for its steadfast efforts to end the civil war which broke out in South Sudan in December 2013, and to help resolve older and continuing conflicts in the border areas of Abyei, and in Darfur, Blue Nile and the Nuba Mountains in Sudan; and be it further

Resolved, the 78th General Convention strongly urge TEC dioceses and parishes to consider prayer partnerships and joint work with bishops, dioceses, and church organizations in ECSSS to support them to reduce and resolve the current conflicts, help refugees, hold war criminals accountable, and improve people's living conditions; and be it further

Resolved, the 78th General Convention request the Presiding Bishop, in cooperation with other denominations and other provinces of the Anglican Communion to set aside several weeks in 2016 for prayer for peace in South Sudan and Sudan; and be it further

Resolved, that the 78th General Convention of The Episcopal Church direct the offices and agencies of the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society to utilize all measures at their disposal to advocate for the protection of refugees, conflict resolution and sustainable development in South Sudan and Sudan with appropriate governmental and international agencies and offices.

Mark your calendars

In October, we will gather in the Washington D.C. area for our annual conference. This year we will pay particular attention to the establishment and maintenance of partnerships as well as providing up to date information about the ongoing crisis in the South. **Please mark your calendars for Friday and Saturday, October 23 and 24, 2015.**

More details will follow.

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South Sudan

Fourth Anniversary of Independence for South Sudan:

In the face of severe difficulties, the **Committee for National Healing, Peace and Reconciliation (CNHPR)** continues to strengthen peace building efforts at the grassroots level:

After the launch of the grassroots consultation process on the 19th May 2015 in Juba, CNHPR has now conducted 39 grassroots consultations in 39 Payams out of 42 in Warrap State. The Consultations on peace and reconciliation were facilitated by 55 Peace Mobilizers in six counties of Warrap State. [Please see this link to the press release](#) distributed by Peter Kuot, Communications and Information Manager for CNHPR, located in Juba.

[South Sudan's Fourth Anniversary Offers Little to Celebrate](#) - This New York Times article by Marc Santora posted on July 7th captures the following picture of life in Juba: The laborers, hundreds of them, were hard at work, busily fixing roads, painting buildings and making the parade grounds sparkle. At first glance, it might appear that the economy of this nation, one of the world's poorest, is humming back to life. It is not. The work was being done in preparation for Thursday, when the governing party led by President Salva Kiir will celebrate the fourth anniversary of [South Sudan's independence](#). The day after the festivities, residents say, the work will stop. It is a Potemkin celebration, they say, marking an occasion that was greeted with such great hope in 2011 but that now rings hollow for many as the country descends further into division and misery.

The following four articles detail the difficult situation that is reality in South Sudan:

-[Hundreds more child soldiers recruited in South Sudan: monitors](#) - Originally posted on Agence France-Presse (AFP), an international news agency based in Paris, France on June 24th - Now posted on Yahoo.

-[South Sudan rebels battle over key town as talks collapse](#) - Originally AFP/ June 28th - Now posted on Yahoo.

-[South Sudan's rival leaders meet as fighting continues](#) - Originally AFP/ June 29th - Now posted on Yahoo.

-[In new strategy, S. Sudan army strikes rebels where it hurts: their livelihood](#) - Christian Science Monitor/ July 7th - by Jason Patinkin, correspondent.

On the topic of Sanctions:

-[Reuters: U.S. proposes 6 rival South Sudan leaders for first UN Sanctions](#) - June 26th

[-No Sanctions without a Strategy: International Crisis Group: Working to Prevent Crisis Worldwide](#) - June 29th

[-Enough Project Statement: UN Security Council Must Act Now to Check Impunity in South Sudan](#) - June 30th

[-U.S. Department of the Treasury: South Sudan Designations and Update](#) - July 2nd

Both South Sudan and Sudan

For a glimpse of how our neighbors in the UK are supporting the people of South Sudan and Sudan, see this link from the Salisbury/Sudan quarterly bulletin.

An International Perspective

Follow this [link to IRIN, humanitarian news and analysis](#). The article presents information graphically and opens discussion about reform in humanitarian funding. It's well worth reading this expanded view of 'following the money' for humanitarian aid. Posted from Dubai recently, it poses the question of "Who holds the purse strings in the humanitarian economy?"

A brief excerpt follows:

There are plenty of gripes about the humanitarian system, but most of them boil down to money. According to the UN's emergency aid coordination body, [OCHA](#), less than one-fifth of the US\$19.44 billion required for humanitarian response this year has been funded, creating frontline cash shortages and spending cutbacks across the board. With protracted conflicts in Syria, Iraq and **South Sudan** driving record levels of displacement, migrant crises in Europe and Southeast Asia, and a string of natural disasters, most recently the earthquake in Nepal, demand has never been greater.

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

We invite you to visit our [Website: http://www.afrecs.org/](http://www.afrecs.org/)

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.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.
