

AFRECS E-Blast: August 31, 2016

PRAY. TEACH. PARTNER. URGE. GIVE.

Message from Executive Director, Richard Parkins:

Dear Friends,

From October 21st to the 23rd, AFRECS will host its eleventh national gathering. This time our focus will be on "building bridges of reconciliation" - a theme that speaks to the need to bring peace to a region of the world where peace has struggled to prevail. Sadly it has been shunted aside while the intransigence of national leaders and their commitment to gaining power have carried the day. Those coming together in Des Moines, Iowa will lift up a message of reconciliation that will hopefully embolden those who see themselves as peacemakers in these troubled lands. Hopefully, the space that we create and those who share their experiences and reflections within it, will offer a perspective that persuasively speaks against the idiom of war which has been so boisterously proclaimed these past three years.

We know that there are courageous peacemakers in South Sudan who will relish the safety that our gathering will afford, allowing them to put forth a counter message - one that embraces healing and recovery. Faithful Christians know these important blessings are theirs when they are faithful to the teachings of Christ.

We trust that many of you will join us as an expression of your belief that there is a faithful remnant of the faith community that remains committed to peace and reconciliation. The design of the conference will give the friends of both Sudans a chance to explore avenues of healing and recovery. By listening to church leaders, both lay and clergy, as resources we expect to understand more fully the challenges that face the Church as it takes up the task of restoring peace to this war ravaged land. Joining us will be bishops of the Church of South Sudan as well as the coordinator of the Mothers Union. Others who have worked in critical positions in South Sudan and Sudan will join our conversation. Together they can speak authoritatively to the realities faced by our sisters and brothers in South Sudan and help us, as their friends, to see ways that we can be partners in peacemaking.

This conference comes at a crucial time, especially for South Sudan, as the conflict there continues to take a terrible toll. Peacemaking is urgent business and we ask that you add your voice to those urgent cries for peace. Please join us in our witness for peace.

Faithfully,

Richard

UPDATE on AFRECS Conference

BUILDING BRIDGES OF RECONCILIATION

Sponsored by

American Friends of the Episcopal Church of the Sudans

October 21-23, 2016

West Des Moines, Iowa

“We need constructive support from our Sudanese brothers and sisters outside the country as we seek to restore peace and rebuild trust in South Sudan.”

-- **Rev. Peter Gai, Chairman, South Sudan Council of Churches**

This conference will bring together Sudanese from the Diaspora and from South Sudan with American friends of South Sudan and Sudan to work for peace and reconciliation in the world’s youngest nation.

We will ask ourselves:

- Where are the opportunities to support the Diaspora in the USA in its efforts for peace and reconciliation in South Sudan?
- How can the friendship of Americans contribute to peacemaking in South Sudan and Sudan?

You can expect:

- Inspiring stories of how partnerships of South Sudanese and Americans, even during these last thirty months of conflict, are working together for positive outcomes
- News of South Sudan from African guests
- Opportunities to meet and work for peace with friends dedicated to building a stable nation in South Sudan.
- Workshops led by experts with experience in mediation and peace building
- Learn what the Commission for National Healing, Peace and Reconciliation and the Justice, Peace and Reconciliation Commission are doing to train and enable Peace Mobilizers in South Sudan
- Hear from Sudanese leaders about their challenges, learnings, and successes as they work to build reconciling congregations in the American Diaspora
- Learn ways the US government is seeking to build peace, and what the church is doing to speak for peace to governments

Distinguished Guests:

- Bishop Samuel Enosa Peni: Diocese of Nzara, South Sudan and Chairperson of the Justice, Peace and Reconciliation Commission of The Episcopal Church in South Sudan and Sudan.
- Bishop Joseph Garang Atem: Diocese of Renk, South Sudan
- His Excellency Pa’gan Amum Okiec: former Secretary General of the Sudan Peoples Liberation Movement, signer of the Transitional Peace Agreement, August 2015.
- Dr. James A. Leach: U. S. Representative, Iowa 1st Congressional District, 1977-2007; retired Chairman, National Endowment for the Humanities.

- Dr. Dane F. Smith; former Senior Advisor in the Office of the US Special Envoy for Darfur, Deputy Chief of Mission in Sudan, and Ambassador to Guinea and Senegal.
- Mother Harriet Baka Nathan: Provincial Mothers Union Coordinator, South Sudan
- Rev. Phil Groves, Continuing Indaba Project, Secretariat of the Anglican Communion, London

Additional presenters will be added to this list as they are confirmed.

Logisitcs:

Location: At the Marriott hotel (listed below) and at the Cathedral Church of St. Paul in downtown Des Moines. Transportation will be provided from the hotel and back on Sunday.

Registration: Online at www.afrecs.org or by mail: AFRECS, PO Box 12026, 3737 Seminary Road, Alexandria, VA 22304 USA. The conference is scheduled to begin on Friday at noon and close after 10:00 am Sunday Holy Eucharist.

Cost: \$100 registration fee covers full attendance. Meals are included (Friday lunch and dinner; Saturday breakfast, lunch and banquet; Sunday breakfast.)

Scholarships: Diaspora attendees, seminarians, and students are automatically granted full scholarship. Please register and identify yourself as scholarship-eligible to help us plan the meals. You may make a free-will donation at your discretion. Any surplus funds at the end of the conference will go to the work of the Justice, Peace and Reconciliation Commission in South Sudan.

Air Travel: Fly to Des Moines International Airport (DSM). For best fares you are urged to book air transportation by August 31. If you fly to DSM and stay at the Marriott Hotel the hotel will provide complimentary transportation to and from the airport. For best service call the hotel ahead of time and give them your flight information.

Hotel: West Des Moines Marriott
1250 Jordan Creek Parkway, West Des Moines, Iowa 50266
Telephone 515-267-1500
Conference Rate: \$109 (plus tax) per night
To book at the group rate you may use this link:

[Book your group rate for AFRECS Oct 2016](#)

IMPORTANT: To get the special rate, which applies to nights of Oct. 20, 21, &22, you must book no later than Monday, October 3. You must book on line or by phone directly to the hotel. You WILL NOT get this rate on a travel website.

Logistics Inquiries: AFRECSconference2016@mediacombb.net

Program Inquiries: info@afrecs.org

Work of the Episcopal Church - in America and in South Sudan

[Observance of the Feast Day of Marc Nikkel to be held in Lexington, VA on Sunday, September 4th.](#)

"The legacy of the Rev. Marc Nikkel is remembered at **R.E. Lee Memorial Episcopal Church in Lexington, Virginia, (U.S.A)** each year as we observe the anniversary of his death, and celebrate his life, on the feast day the Episcopal church has dedicated to his memory. But one has to wonder: does his legacy continue in the South Sudan that he loved, so many years after his passing? It does indeed, in ways that manifest the Holy Spirit in the lives of many." (See more from Susan Mead's announcement at the above link.)

["I am back to Ibba..." a brief update from Bp Wilson Kamani](#)

"I stayed in Juba with my family for the last three weeks. Life in Juba is coming back to normal though it is very unspeakable in terms of feeding. Thousands of people in Juba eat once a day. ... Please continue to pray for a sustainable peace in South Sudan. ... In spite of this general situation, your brothers and sisters in Ibba are fine, only pushing on slowly. ... Our focus on primary (e)ducation, ...health services... delivery and the hope for establishing (a) secondary school still remain our priorities. ... This month, we have experienced (a) very high mortality rate of children under years. (I)n a week, 4-5 children die, so we have organized a one day prayer for this situation." (See full update at the above link.)

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Recent News from South Sudan & Sudan

[Daily Maverick](#): Op-Ed: South Sudan needs new ideas and can learn from South Africa, August 15.

[Anglican Communion News Service](#): South Sudanese Christians Unite in Prayer, August 19.

[The New York Times](#): South Sudan Opposition Leader in Khartoum for Treatment, Sudan Says, August 24.

[The New York Times](#): South Sudan Fighting Kills at Least 275, Both Sides Say, August 24.

[The New York Times](#): South Sudan Wants Big Spending Boost to Heal Divisions, August 25.

[The New York Times](#): Top Diplomat Backs New South Sudan Vice President, August 28.

[Enough Project Report](#): "Khartoum's Economic Achilles' Heel: The intersection of war, profit, and greed", August 29.

[Catholic Radio Network](#): Bishop urges youth to refuse following bad politicians, August 29.

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.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.