

SUDAN CONNECTIONS

SPRING 2018



VOLUME 12, NUMBER 1



STRENGTHENING THE PEACEMAKERS: SOUTH SUDAN AND DIASPORA

MAY 4-6, 2018

12TH AFRECS National Conference

DENVER, COLORADO



We urgently invite pastors and women leaders in the North American Sudanese Diaspora (from Sudan as well as South Sudan) to join with American friends to practice the means of moving from trauma towards reconciliation and the goal of a just peace in South Sudan. The careful listening and outspoken participation of leaders from all denominations and language groups in South Sudan is vital. Discussion will be frank and confidential.

FACILITATORS:

Canon Phil Groves, Jane Basa Namurye (Mrs. Anthony Poggo)

TEACHERS:

David Anderson Hooker on Trauma Awareness and Healing

Dane F. Smith, Jr. on Non-violent Direct Action for Peace

Kenneth R. Scott on Human Rights in South Sudan

Samuel Enosa Peni on Justice, Peace, and Reconciliation

CHAPLAINS:

Frederick Houghton, Oja Gafour, Thon Moses Chol, Joseph Z. Bilal

CONFERENCE SITE:

Doubletree Hotel Denver-Stapleton North, 4040 Quebec Street, Denver, CO 80216, Telephone 303-321-6666.

Request the AFRECS conference group rate: \$105 per night (1 or 2 persons), \$115 (3 persons), \$125 (4 persons). This AFRECS group rate available only until April 15.

CONFERENCE REGISTRATION (includes coffee service, 2 buffet lunches, 1 buffet supper, 1 banquet): Sudanese Diaspora: US\$25. All others: US\$150.

Mail check (payable to AFRECS) by April 15 to: AFRECS, Box 12026, 3737 Seminary Road, Alexandria, VA 22304 USA or register online at <http://www.afrecs.org/annualConference.htm>. Questions? Program details will be posted at www.afrecs.org. Telephone 703-823-3186, Rev. Richard J. Jones, Conference Planning Committee



SUDAN CONNECTIONS

CONNECTING HOPES AND GIFTS

SPRING 2018

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American Friends of the Episcopal Church of the Sudans (AFRECS) is an organization of U.S. churches, non-governmental organizations, and individuals who care deeply about the struggles of the Sudanese people.

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www.afrecs.org

CONTACT INFORMATION

AFRECS

3737 Seminary Road

Alexandria, VA 22304

info@afrecs.org

PROVINCE OF THE EPISCOPAL
CHURCH OF SOUTH SUDAN (ECSS)
Provincial Headquarters - Juba

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COVER:

Photos from war torn
South Sudan -
reconciliation and
seeking forgiveness.



FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

C. RICHARD PARKINS

Dear Friends,

In a source of devotional readings which I followed this Lenten season, was a collection of reflections of a well-known Anglican writer, Evelyn Underhill. One of her daily reflections seemed especially poignant to our work with church companions in South Sudan. She spoke of our sharing in God's creative work. It is this notion that came to mind as I spent time with Bishop John Zawo, Diocese of Ezo, South Sudan. I was privileged to accompany the Bishop on various visits to public policy folks in the D.C. area, and listen to his testimony as he told his host family, the good folks of St Francis Parish in Great Falls, VA, about his experience as a church leader who responded to the unimaginable violence plaguing his people. The Bishop presides over a diocese in a remote part of South Sudan and in proximity to the devastating circumstances that have been experienced by the Central African Republic and the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Underhill speaks of a child's early experience with baking as a way of reminding us that we share in God's creative work. She reflects on a child being allowed to actually take a bit of the dough that her mother the expert baker would be kneading as she bakes the family's supply of bread, allowing the child to experience the satisfaction of making a small but delicious loaf of bread with a bit of dough alongside her mother's more ambitious baking project. In testing her own baking skills the child enjoys practicing her own baking skills adding to the family's baking talent. The child could have just watched her mother prepare her loaves, but she went beyond that. She became a baker, albeit at a modest level. She was more than an observer. She became a practitioner. She also had

the guidance and inspiration of her mother who gladly exposed her to the skills needed to be a good baker.

This tale resonated with me, as it speaks to what many are doing in South Sudan. They are not deferring peacemaking or trauma healing to that one grandiose scheme that reaches every nook and cranny of the country.

They are seizing opportunities at peacemaking and healing where the need exists and where commitment and faithfulness to the Gospel message combine to bring deliverance to those affected by conflict or seeking to avoid its onslaught.

Such was the case of Bishop John Zawo whose people in Ezo and adjacent areas were subjected to the horrible incursion of the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA).

After that scourge was subdued, the brutal conflict that began in December 2013 intruded to add to the upheaval and painful divisiveness that came with what is now nearly five years of civil war. By combining forces with other faith leaders, including Muslims, the Bishop was able to bring warring factions together, thus bringing a measure of harmony and stability to an area that had known nothing but displacement and suffering. In relaying the account of what he and his people had endured and the measures taken to make peace possible, the Bishop told of reaching into the bush and encouraging those who were mistrustful of any peace overture to take the risk of reuniting with enemies and seeking forgiveness as faithful Christians from those whom they had severely harmed. A situation, which might have been viewed as a place of inevitable and unremitting conflict, became an example of healing and reconciliation. The



FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, cont'd.

Bishop and his brothers and sisters in faith created a pocket of peace in a country that many have seen as irretrievably lost to tribal conflict and endless war.

The example provided by the Bishop of Ezo and his partners in faith reminds us that church leaders are creating pockets of peace invoking the Gospel imperative of forgiveness and reconciliation as they reach out in faith to affect change. Just like a youngster experiments with a small piece of dough to create a small loaf of bread, so do risk-taking, God-fearing leaders like John Zawo and others in South Sudan attempt with very little but courage and faith to bring healing and peace to conflict-ridden areas. As grander schemes for peace and reconciliation are debated, some are taking on projects that are advancing modes to which others might aspire and which deserve our prayers and support.

Back to Evelyn Underhill who, in commenting on the child who, under the tutelage of a wonderful cook experiences the joy of making bread, speaks of making something real. Underhill knows that there is a temptation to think only in lofty terms and limit one's efforts to those sometimes difficult to achieve outcomes. While some would relegate South Sudan to the failed state category because ambitious peace plans have gotten no traction, others like John Zawo are heeding God's call to be a peacemaker. In so doing he and others are "sharing in the creative work of God", following the guidance that the Master provides.

Faithfully, in Christ,



AFRECS CONFERENCE 2007

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THE CHURCH AS RECONCILER IN SOUTH SUDAN

LESLIE SIEGMUND, PARISHIONER, ST. FRANCIS EPISCOPAL CHURCH, GREAT FALLS, VA

The Rt. Rev. John Zawo, Episcopal Bishop of the Ezo Diocese in South Sudan, recently visited the United States as a guest of St. Francis Episcopal Church, Great Falls, Virginia. St. Francis has had a 20-year relationship with the Ezo Diocese, although the wars and strife there have often cut off communications for long periods of time.

During his 19-day visit, Bishop John was able to meet with U.S. AID, congressional offices, the U.S. Institute of Peace, Bishop Shannon Johnston of the Diocese of Virginia, the Dean of the National Cathedral, and local clergy and congregations. Many of these meetings were made possible by AFRECS. On each occasion, Bishop John told his story of the people of Ezo, of their suffering, their resilience, and their faithfulness.

THE BISHOP'S STORY

The province of Ezo is in a remote part of far-western South Sudan, on the border of both the Democratic Republic of Congo and the Central African Republic. The Bishop likes to say that you can stand in all three countries in a matter of seconds when you are in Ezo. But sharing borders with other unstable countries has often brought additional strife to Ezo, even as it has occasionally offered refuge from the indigenous problems of South Sudan.

Bishop John tells about three waves of violence that the people have endured. The first was the 21-year civil war with Khartoum that eventually ended with a peace settlement in 2005 and the creation of the new country of South Sudan in 2011. The predominance of Christianity in the new nation was a boon for the church, which provided community, services, and a place to worship God to the residents of Ezo as they recovered from the many years of war.



*Bishop John Zawo at St. Francis, Great Falls, VA.
All photos © Carol Harrison.*

In 2008, after less than three years of peace, Ezo began to experience the brutality of the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), a terrorist group that conducted weekly raids on residents. The LRA stole food and possessions, raped women and girls, murdered citizens, and abducted young boys and forced them to serve with the LRA. The residents of Ezo eventually fled, some across the borders. The LRA raids lasted for three years and had a devastating impact. Families were torn apart, children were not able to attend school, crops could not be planted, and many people suffered not only from homelessness and brutality, but also from disease and sickness. Eventually, the Ugandan army drove the LRA—for the most part—into the jungles of the Central African Republic. The residents of Ezo returned to their lands but found that they had to begin again with building and planting.

The church was a strong factor in helping the people with a fresh start. Bishop John's Episcopal Diocese of Ezo, which oversaw a number of churches, was a source of aid and comfort, and Bishop John was one of the first to return. The diocesan schools were able to start up

THE CHURCH AS RECONCILER IN SOUTH SUDAN, cont'd.

again to educate children. People turned to the church for help with finding seeds for planting and with rebuilding their homes. The church not only offered what concrete help it had, but it also nourished the people of Ezo spiritually.

In 2013, the third wave of violence began for Ezo. This time it was caused by the warring factions within South Sudan. Trouble in the capital of Juba spread to Ezo, and the rebels set up nearby training camps, with some even drafting young men from the area. The government represented the other faction, with tribal rivalries feeding much of the violence. The people of Ezo were once again caught in the middle.

By 2015, many people had fled and were living in camps for displaced persons, either in South Sudan or across the borders. In December of that year, St. Francis received news from Bishop John that he and several other bishops were organizing church leaders to bring about reconciliation between the two warring factions

in the area. It was an impressive narrative.

The bishops had called together leaders from other churches, including Muslims, and had approached the government to get permission to visit the rebel camps and try to talk with the rebels about laying down their weapons. Both the United Nations and the government gave their support to these peace efforts led by the church. Armed with only their message of reconciliation and God's abiding love, Bishop John and the other church leaders entered the rebel training camps and talked with the young men, listening to their concerns. Eventually, the church leaders were able to convince the rebels to give up their fight and seek forgiveness from their families and communities. This resulted in a local peace agreement, which has held for the last couple of years.

Peace in Ezo has led to hope and to the return of many residents. But Ezo is far from recovered. There are no

THE COVENANT BETWEEN ST. FRANCIS CHURCH AND THE DIOCESE OF EZO

The first covenant between St. Francis and the Diocese of Ezo was signed in 1998. As the 20th anniversary of that document approached, the Outreach Committee of St. Francis began exploring the idea of inviting Bishop John to Great Falls, Virginia, to sign a new covenant. The Bishop was gracious in his acceptance, and he undertook the arduous trip, which involved traveling to Kampala, Uganda, to apply for a U.S. visa (since the U.S. embassy in Juba does not have consular staff because of the danger). Bishop John arrived in Great Falls on March 1, 2018, and stayed until March 19. On March 18, he and the rector, the Rev. David Lucey, and the Senior Warden, Robert MacKichan, signed the new covenant. In the new document, St. Francis and the Ezo Diocese pledge to pray for each other and communicate regularly. Additionally, St. Francis pledges to assist in the work of the church in the Ezo Diocese.



THE CHURCH AS RECONCILER IN SOUTH SUDAN, cont'd.

good roads to get to Ezo, and the Bishop rides a small motorbike for five hours through the bush to reach the nearest large town of Yambio, where there is an airport. The people who have come back need to rebuild their homes and acquire seeds and farming implements. The schools have reopened, but they need many supplies, including desks. People need clothing and medicine, electricity and clean water. And the remote location makes it difficult for outside aid to reach Ezo.

But Bishop John and his 38 pastors—including one woman pastor—continue to be faithful evangelists of God's love and salvation. The cathedral may not be built, but the congregation celebrates the gift of peace and holds out hope for a return to sustainability and, perhaps, prosperity.



*Bishop John Zawo and the Rev. David Lucey signing the covenant.
All photos © Carol Harrison.*

THE NEEDS OF EZO

Ezo is one of the poorest places in the world. The isolation and lack of roads make it difficult to deliver aid—or to even get the message out that aid and supplies are needed.

Some of the biggest needs mentioned by Bishop John are these:

- A Landcruiser vehicle (the only kind that could last in the terrain) that could be used to ferry supplies, take goods to market, and take sick people to clinics
- Work on the one water well in the area, which is currently not functioning
- Solar panels and batteries that could be used to provide at least temporary power for the schools, clinics, and church offices
- Seeds and farming implements so that the people can take advantage of the good soil and favorable climate for growing crops
- Clothes, shoes, cooking pots, and other items for daily living
- Books, desks, paper, maps, etc. for the schools
- Medicines and trained medical personnel for the health clinics

St. Francis is a church of about 150 families—not big enough to provide the sizeable help that Ezo needs. The Outreach Committee currently plans to explore the possibility of grants and funding from other NGOs. St. Francis welcomes other churches that would like to work in partnership to help Bishop John and the parishioners of the Ezo Diocese. Contact Leslie Siegmund at lesiegmund@aol.com.

THE RT. REV. DR. DANIEL DENG BUL YAK RETIRES

SOUTHSUDAN.ANGLICAN.ORG

Archbishop Daniel Deng Bul Yak, first Bishop of Renk Diocese, elected Primate of the Episcopal Church of Sudan (ECS) Feb. 14, 2008, enthroned April, 20, has retired effective Apr. 22, 2018, date of the consecration of Archbishop-elect Justin Badi Arama, of Maridi Diocese.

Archbishop, Daniel Deng, was elected on February 14th 2008 and was enthroned on 20th April 2008 in Juba. Daniel Deng Bul Yak, born in 1950 in the Tuic area of Bor County, State of Jongelei, Sudan, was evangelist to Dinka congregations in Khartoum in 1967, received a theological degree from Bishop Gwynne College, Mundri, in 1977, ordained priest in 1978, and served in Port Sudan for 10 years. In Port Sudan, he built up several parishes, teaching, preaching and ministering among people of all tribes and ethnicities, and began evangelism and training programs. He worked in prisons and arm barracks, started chaplaincy programs, opened prayer centers and schools and taught evening classes.

In 1988, he began working in Renk area to evangelize the people; he built the first church in Renk, with the Roman Catholic and Presbyterian churches, and later built the first Episcopal church in Renk Town. In 1995, His Grace became first Diocesan Bishop of Renk, when the area diocese was upgraded to full diocesan status. He came to Virginia Theological Seminary, Alexandria, VA, in 1996-1997, where he received a Diploma in Theology.

When His Grace returned to his Diocese in 1997, he led the Diocese in the development of Renk Basic School, Renk Senior Secondary School, Renk Bible School (now Renk Theological College), four other Basic Schools in the Diocese, and Renk Clinic. He began numerous income-generating projects, including an agriculture scheme and Guesthouse and a restaurant operated by the women of Renk Diocese. He worked with overseas partners for the development of the Diocese, and on February 28, 2006, St. Matthew Cathedral, built with gifts from the Diocese of Virginia, was consecrated by the Most Rev. Dr. Rowan Williams, Archbishop of Canterbury, with partners from VA, Chicago and the UK present.



Archbishop Daniel Deng Bul Yak. © Constance Wilson.

On January 14, 1998, the Diocese of Renk and St. Michael's Episcopal Church, Barrington, IL (Diocese of Chicago), entered into a Covenant of Relationship, which was reaffirmed March 2, 2006, and continues through support of Renk Theological College. That relationship led to a formal Companion Diocese Relationship with the Diocese of Chicago in 2001. The

CDR between Renk and Chicago was extended for a period of five years in November 2006 by resolution of the Diocesan Convention in Chicago, "believing that we are called to be one in the Body of Jesus Christ and recognizing that the love of God in Christ is our common bond, we thank Almighty God for bringing us together as brothers and sisters and commit ourselves to nurturing and sustaining our relationship through prayer, mutual encouragement, and support of one another".

THE RT. REV. DR. DANIEL DENG BUL YAK RETIRES, cont'd.

He served the ECS in many capacities, including Secretary of the House of Bishops, and Chairman of the Peace, Justice and Reconciliation Commission, traveling throughout the Province conducting training workshops.

His Grace, Daniel Deng Bul, is married to Mama Deborah Abuk Atem. They have five children and three grandchildren. Mama Deborah leads the Women Aglow International chapter in Sudan, and has always played a supportive role in her husband's ministry.

BISHOP OF MARIDI ELECTED NEXT PRIMATE & ARCHBISHOP OF THE PROVINCE OF THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF SOUTH SUDAN

On January 22, 2018, Bishop Justin Badi Arama, Diocese of Maridi, was elected next Primate and Archbishop of the Province of the Episcopal Church of South Sudan (ECSS), and the next Bishop of Juba.

"The lesson I learned from the election is that tribalism is not in the Church", he told ACNS. The Archbishop-elect is Western Equatorian. He said he was surprised he won the election.

"I would ask my brothers and sisters around the Communion to pray for me: for God's guidance for me; to pray for a 'soft ground' for the message of peace and reconciliation as we hope for peace in this country to end the suffering; and also the resources that enable me to preach the Gospel to the people within the Province."

Archbishop-elect Justin Badi succeeds Primate and Archbishop Daniel Deng Bul Yak, who retired after almost ten years leading the 39th Province of the

Anglican Communion, the ECSS. He and his wife, Modi Joyce, have four children, two boys and two girls.





Date: 5th February 2018

Divine Warning and Message to the Parties to the Conflict in South Sudan to Stop War!

"So we are Christ's ambassadors; God is making his appeal through us. We speak for Christ when we plead, 'come back to God!'" (2 Corinthian 5:20).

To our dear brothers and Sisters from the Transitional Government of National Unity (TGoNU), SPLM/A in Opposition and other armed and political groups, Distinguished Members and friends of the IGAD, the African Union (AU), the United Nations (UN), Members of the International Community, Your Excellencies and Honourable Delegates, greetings and peace of God in the name of our Saviour and Lord Jesus Christ.

We the CHURCH and the People of God in South Sudan wish to appreciate IGAD, the African Union (AU), the United Nations (UN) and the Members of the International Community for their extensive efforts to constantly engage the South Sudan warring parties towards a compromise peaceful resolution of the conflict in South Sudan.

We have consistently stated that this is a senseless war which should and must immediately stop. There is no moral justification to continue war and killings, regardless of any legitimate political issues with government or opposition feel they may have. The Cessation of Hostilities (CoH) agreement must be implemented, and we therefore urge you all once again to prioritize peace and not war, for the love of God and His suffering people in South Sudan.

The God given Christmas gift to the People of South Sudan when you signed the Cessation of Hostilities (CoH) was accepted by all with jubilation and hope. Our people in the cities and towns, in the refugee camps and Protection of Civilian sites, in the Countryside and Diaspora are desperate to feel and experience true peace.

To you the parties, we strongly appeal to respect, honor and abide by the agreement which you committed yourselves to. It is no longer acceptable to negotiate posts and positions in the middle of violence and killings. The needs of the people must be met! The voice of the voiceless cannot be ignored! Let not pride, greed, struggle for political power become greater than the need for Peace and Reconciliation in South Sudan! Let not Regional and Bilateral interests be served at the expense of the People of South Sudan!

We recognize, based on historic experience, that there is no quick and easy way to resolve these difficult issues. The People of South Sudan deserve a political compromise and Peace!

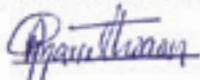
Your Excellencies, honourable delegates, we are the CHURCH, we are your PASTORS, we call upon all to consider the suffering and pains of the People of South Sudan. We call upon the warring parties to exercise restraint, tolerance, forgiveness, love and reconciliation. We want all hostilities to cease immediately and for honest and truthful negotiations to begin henceforth.



SOUTH SUDAN COUNCIL OF CHURCHES WARNING, cont'd.

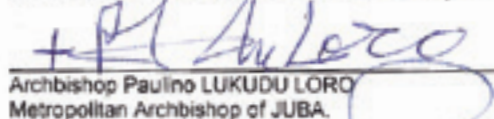
We reiterate our commitment to the IGAD High Level Revitalization Forum and appeals directly to IGAD, AU and UN to ensure that the reports and recommendations of JMEC are followed by action that holds parties accountable. Blanket blame is not good enough; you need to name, shame and hold the violators accountable.

We will continue to stand with and serve the People of South Sudan, and we are present morally and spiritually to walk with all of you and to remind you to place our People first. We urge you not to squander this last chance for Peace! We are very hopeful that permanent Peace can be realised in our beloved country.



Oh God bless South Sudan!

Rt. Rev. Moderator Peter GAI LUAL MARROW
Chairman, South Sudan Council of Churches (SSCC).

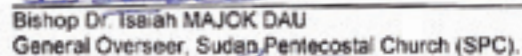


Archbishop Paulino LUKUDU LORD
Metropolitan Archbishop of JUBA.

Archbishop Peter MUNDE YACOB
Dean of the Province of the ECSS
And Archbishop of the Internal Province of Western Equatoria.



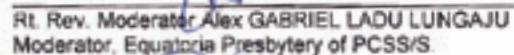
Bishop Dr. Arkanjo WANI LEMI JEBERI
Presiding Bishop, Africa Inland Church (AIC).



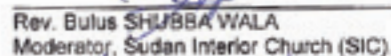
Bishop Dr. Tseiah MAJOK DAU
General Overseer, Sudan Pentecostal Church (SPC).



Rt. Rev. Moderator James PAR TAP
Moderator, South Sudan Presbyterian Evangelical Church (SSPEC).



Rt. Rev. Moderator Alex GABRIEL LADU LUNGAJU
Moderator, Equatoria Presbytery of PCSS/S.



Rev. Bulus SHUBBA WALA
Moderator, Sudan Interior Church (SIC)



Fr. James OYOT LATANSIO
General Secretary, South Sudan Council of Churches (SSCC)



WHEN THERE IS PEACE, THERE IS FOOD

Local Churches Leading Peacebuilding Efforts and Providing Social Services

BREAD FOR THE WORLD'S 2018

OFFERING OF LETTERS:
FOR SUCH A
TIME AS THIS

Since its 2011 independence, South Sudan has never truly known peace. Despite its oil wealth, South Sudan is among the world's poorest countries where 8 out of 10 people live on less than \$1 a day.

Although it has fertile regions, landlocked South Sudan is among four countries that are suffering from historic near famine conditions. Nearly 20 million people in Yemen, Somalia, northeastern Nigeria, and South Sudan are facing famine due to drought and war.

"Bullets and guns will not restore South Sudan," said Bishop Joseph Garang Atem, Episcopal bishop of the Diocese of Renk. "We have thousands of acres of fertile land, but we need help to cultivate them and grow our own food."

The county of Renk, located on the banks of the White Nile River, has been largely spared from much of the famine and violence that are ongoing in other parts of South Sudan. It is a multi-ethnic region and is home to thousands of internally displaced persons who have fled fighting and famine. Despite this, it remains one of the most productive agricultural regions of South Sudan.

"Our farmers are growing sorghum, millet, sesame, and sunflower and are exporting them," Atem said. He added that Renk could feed the whole country—if access to quality seeds, extension services, training, and irrigation were supported.

The World Food Program and the Food and Agriculture Organization report that South Sudan's 2015 net cereal production of 921,000 tons was 16 percent higher than the average production in the previous five years.

Helping traditional farmers and others in South Sudan is difficult. South Sudan is the world's most dangerous country for humanitarian aid workers. Yet, foreign aid remains critical to South Sudan's future. The United States, through the

U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), is the biggest foreign assistance donor. In 2017, American taxpayers provided more than \$740 million worth of projects, most of it to ease the near famine conditions and provide food.

But we know that efforts to boost food production and improve nutrition must go hand-in-hand with peace building and reconciliation.

In the largely Christian South Sudan, which is about the size of Texas, local churches are leading peacebuilding and

social services efforts with support from USAID, other country donors and some U.S. churches. The Episcopal Diocese of Renk, for example, has a formal partnership with the Episcopal Diocese of Chicago and the Diocese of Virginia, which includes the historic Christ Church in Alexandria, Va.

Women are critical to South Sudan's future and they are being trained to be

peacemakers and to start small businesses.

"One woman approached me one day and told me, 'Bishop I now have money, and if you need help, just come to me for a loan,'" Atem said. "They also conduct reconciliation meetings with soldiers in local villages or in their barracks because mothers are traditionally greatly respected in South Sudan. They can 'command' their rebel sons to drop their guns."

Local solutions led by church leaders and women will make the difference in South Sudan.

"Bullets and guns will not restore South Sudan. We have thousands of acres of fertile land, but we need help to cultivate them and grow our own food."

—Bishop Joseph Garang Atem,
Episcopal bishop
of the Diocese of Renk.

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PERSONAL HISTORY OF AFRECS

RICHARD J. JONES, FOUNDER AND BOARD MEMBER

American Friends of the Episcopal Church of the Sudans is a latecomer. AFRECS was incorporated in 2005 as a network with a little megaphone stuck on top. We were aware that the Episcopal Church of the Sudan had acquired an array of American church friends during the terrible years of the 1983-2004 civil war.

Some American friends were dioceses, starting with Southwestern Virginia, led by Bishop Heath Light, who ordained Marc Nikkel, the author of the of the letters *Why Haven't You Left?* Other dioceses came to know and care about the church in Sudan when Sudanese refugees from the war showed up and knocked on their doors – San Diego, Chicago, Missouri, Mississippi, Bethlehem, and Long Island. Some friends were drawn to small-scale development programs. Fr. David Bako encouraged parishioners at his field-education parish in Great Falls, Virginia, to purchase baby goats for his work back in Ezo. Serious non-profit organizations arose, combining refugees' passion and local knowledge with American organization and fundraising, produced water wells and schools in Bor and Wau. New organizations like Five Talents, the microenterprise incubator, arose alongside churchwide grant makers like Episcopal Relief and Development and Trinity Grants.

AFRECS sought to make these disparate American friends aware of each other. We networked. My own personal goal was that we should not hear again a visiting American say, "I'm sure I was the first white woman those people had ever seen." We invited American friends to share their experiences – their successes, and their learnings from mistakes. You could say, in theological terms, AFRECS was acting on the post-colonial, pan-Anglican understanding that mission means Mutual Responsibility and Interdependence in the Body of Christ (MRI).

We understood, with St. Paul, that if the Church is the



Richard J. Jones © Constance Wilson.

Body of Christ, then when one member suffers, the whole body suffers. We also understood that the Holy Spirit has endowed various members of the body with differing gifts, all useful for building up the body. We might have capital. They might have faith.

So AFRECS sought to foster a network of humble friends who would temper our helpfulness by listening to our partners. We practiced by listening to visiting bishops like Bullen Dolli of Lui and the Mothers' Union head Harriet Baka. We practiced listening to senior Sudanese clergy who were temporarily humbling themselves to become students in our seminaries, like the heroic fighter of the Ebola plague, now drafted to head a Sudanese seminary, Dr. Oliver Duku. The Comprehensive Peace Agreement of 2005 made us believe the time had come for networking and humble help.

I mentioned that we envisioned a little megaphone atop our network. We had knowledgeable Board members concentrated in the Washington area. We enjoyed support from the national staff of The Episcopal Church in New York. We saw ourselves as well placed to open doors for visiting leaders of the Episcopal Church of Sudan at

PERSONAL HISTORY OF AFRECS, con't.

the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), in the State Department, and at some congressional offices.

AFRECS' slogan in these first few years was "Connecting Hopes and Gifts"-- Americans' hopes, Sudanese Episcopalians' hopes, and God's hope for humanity.

Some gifts were instructive, like the ebony cross joined with brass hammered from spent shells of rocket-propelled grenades. Bishop Daniel Deng Bul, a brave resister of northern aggression in Renk Diocese, presented one to my bishop in Southwestern Virginia, Neff Powell, on the eve of Neff's consecration. Other gifts were practical: donations for capital investments and teachers' salaries. Still other gifts were undeniably spiritual: gifts of healing prayer, the gift of administration, the gift of joy.



Conference attendees 2007. ©Constance Wilson.

So the network began by bringing American friends together, then brought Sudanese leaders to American audiences who would listen. In St. Louis in 2007, we encouraged young Sudanese to make look-see visits to see whether they might find a place in their homeland where they could fit in and take their acquired-in-America skills home with them.

The year 2008 found AFRECS reassessing itself. The

hard-won, equitable Comprehensive Peace Agreement between the Sudan People's Liberation Movement and the Government of Sudan was halfway into its implementation period, but implementation was limping. Salva Kiir had succeeded the visionary Southern leader, Dr. John Garang, and I recall hearing Kiir tell an audience in Washington, "The southern region of Sudan doesn't require reconstruction. We require construction. We never had roads."

Daniel Deng Bul, elected Archbishop in 2008, named Frank Gray, retired Bishop of Northern Indiana, as his U.S. Commissary. Bishop Gray was a vigorous beggar for God and willing to join in lobbying and demonstrations in Washington, D.C. AFRECS helped arrange for Archbishop Daniel Deng Bul to address the triennial convention of The Episcopal Church in Anaheim, CA, in 2009. He beseeched the U.S. to recognize the Sudanese churches as key partners in building a nation and building peace. AFRECS celebrated diocese-to-diocese relationships sustained between Missouri and Lui, Bethlehem and Kajo-Keji, Indianapolis and Bor, Chicago and Renk.

The financial needs of the postwar Episcopal Church of the Sudan were immense. Its Provincial office lacked staff and funds to operate. Requests poured in to American friends, as they did to Anglican churches and international agencies elsewhere – requests to fund economic development projects, salaries for teachers, vehicles for the proliferating bishops, and appeals for basic supplies of medicine, food, and supplies of all kinds. AFRECS, though a network, could not begin to locate the resources requested. AFRECS did create a listing on its website of 44 economic development project proposals received from ECS dioceses for consideration by donors.

One had to wonder how often Sudanese visitors to TEC in the U.S. returned home wearied, not just by the pace of their public appearances, but also by the cautiousness

PERSONAL HISTORY OF AFRECS, con't.

of the responses we had to give to their appeals. I recall AFRECS Board member Russ Randle, summarizing a 2010 meeting with Joseph Garang Atem, former Principal of Renk Theological College and current Bishop of Renk: “Am I correct in hearing you say the three things you are asking of us are to pray for peace in Renk, to seek steady funding for Renk Clinic, and to help support an assistant for Dr. Paul in that clinic?”

“That is correct”, said Bishop Joseph Garang.

“Bishop, it will help us greatly if we could receive from you a monthly report of services performed by your clinic – the number of malaria pills dispensed, the number of babies delivered, the number of patients seen by Dr. Paul. Then, we can keep this good work in the minds of our parishioners.”

“Starting next year,” said the bishop, “I will see that a new ledger book is kept.”



Nancy Mott Frank. ©Constance Wilson.

In 2008, Richard Parkins succeeded our first Executive Director, Nancy Mott Frank of Rochester, New York. Richard brought to AFRECS his years of experience with international philanthropy, as well as refugee resettlement. When Bishop David Jones of Virginia succeeded

me as President in 2010, we believed that his personal friendship with the new Archbishop and his national standing in The Episcopal Church would help AFRECS meet more of the demands being placed on a generous friend. This was the high point in the usefulness of AFRECS.

AFRECS made significant contributions both before and after the southern region voted overwhelmingly in 2011 to become South Sudan. We helped recruit Larry Duffy from Virginia to assist with administration of the Provincial Office in Juba. Board member Phil Darrow led an effort to clear a debt of unpaid salaries that had put the Provincial Office of the church under a court order. We applauded the work of Robin Denney as Agriculture Advisor to dioceses that wanted to earn income from forest and agricultural land, as well as improve the output of small gardens. Board member Ellen Hanckel traveled twice to teach sociology at Bishop Gwynne Theological College. But, direct assistance was never enough. New friends for the ECS became harder to find, especially as armed conflict in disputed border areas and the integrating national Sudanese army faltered in Sudan.

Then, the violent breakdown of national government in December 2013 led to a metastasis of disorder and ethnic revenge.

What could AFRECS do now? To some degree we have accepted the role of urgent responder.

Seeing the capital city of Juba and the downstream city of Malakal become battlefields, seeing the students of Renk Theological College displaced to Juba by fighting, seeing numerous bishops and hundreds of thousands of villagers herded into secure camps and crossing international borders for refuge, we have felt compelled over the past four years to contribute something to relieve this new suffering and slaughter.

PERSONAL HISTORY OF AFRECS, con't.



The visit of Richard Parkins and Board member Steve Miles to Juba in 2015 prompted AFRECS to make its first appeal for financial support for emergency relief – clothing and Nuer language Bibles for a population valuable in the sight of God but barely subsisting on meager rations behind a fenced U.N. compound in the capital city. We were pleased to find in Bishop John Gattek a leader who accounts carefully for funds received.

We also heard the urgent appeal in 2015 from Peter Gai, the Presbyterian Chairman of the South Sudan Council of Churches, to the Sudanese diaspora. Peter Gai shined a spotlight on a contributing factor in the proliferating interethnic violence across South Sudan, namely that some friends and relatives of people who have been raped, killed, or had their houses burned respond telephonically from North America by saying to their friends and relatives, “What are you going to do about it?”

AFRECS found modest funds to assist Episcopal leaders in South Sudan to travel to Rwanda and learn lessons from the survivors of the ethnic hatred and massacres there. AFRECS supported initiatives to teach peacebuilding in Episcopal seminaries and sent deputations sent to regions in South Sudan. We have had less contact or engagement with the now separate Anglican province which continues in northern Sudan, but we are aware that war continues to cause suffering in Nuba Mountains and has driven refugees out of violent northern areas in South Sudan back into Sudan.

What is new for AFRECS in these recent years is the

urgent need to get to know better the Sudanese diaspora here in North America to whom Peter Gai issued his appeal. The urgency of the appeal to the diaspora is causing AFRECS to do more than applaud continuing organizations like Project Education South Sudan, Water for South Sudan, and other Sudanese-initiated providers of constructive assistance in their homeland. Now, we are finding it necessary to pay closer attention to the ethnic makeup and the difficult adaptations Sudanese communities in North America have made to survive here. Sudanese bishops and women leaders visiting Canada or the U.S. from South Sudan and Sudan, as well as Sudanese political leaders visiting or in exile here, have always caused the scattered Sudanese communities to gather and be briefly visible to AFRECS. If AFRECS is now to fulfill wisely its apparent new role as urgent responder, it will have to seek out these Sudanese settlers in the U.S. with even more diligence than our parishes and The Episcopal Church Office of Black Ministry have done in past decades.

AFRECS has been used by God to help ensure that His church in Sudan did not die out. We began as a network of existing American friends of the Episcopal Church of Sudan. Then, we added the megaphone, helping that Church make its voice heard in the U.S.

Led, I believe, by the Spirit of God, we became a friend in our own right, a friend who tried to deliver as well as co-ordinate. But, we proved to be a friend who could not fully satisfy the requests of the church in South Sudan and Sudan.

Most recently we seem to have sensed a fresh calling, different from network and different from generous friend. We have shifted towards urgent response. We are urgently trying to approach the Sudanese diaspora in North America as their friendly coach. We will need to listen hard to the Holy Spirit if AFRECS, as urgent responder, is to succeed in doing no harm.

STATEMENT OF THE SOUTH SUDAN CIVIL SOCIETY FORUM

ON THE SPECIAL ENVOY'S REPORT ON THE HLRF

For Immediate Release: 26th March 2018, Juba

We, members of the South Sudan Civil Society Forum (SSCSF), a coalition of over 200 civil society organizations, Women's coalition, Youth coalition and Academia, have conducted debrief and engagement meetings with citizens in which our representatives to the HLRF have participated. These meetings have been aimed at ensuring that citizens understand the process better and the progress made.

We welcome and applaud the progress report of the IGAD Special Envoy for South Sudan on the High Level Revitalization Forum of the Agreement on the Resolution of conflict in the Republic of South Sudan, that will be presented to the IGAD Council of Minister's 61st extraordinary session to be held in Addis Ababa; Ethiopia, on 26th March 2018. It is a truthful and objective „summary that captures everything that has happened since commencement of the process and does not in any way contradict our updates to citizens on the same. The report is also not biased towards any party. We endorse its recommendations and believe that once adopted by the Council of Ministers, immense success will be registered at the next phase of the HLRF.

We however note with profound dismay that there have been continued violations of the Agreement on Cessation of Hostilities, Humanitarian Access and Protection of Civilians (ACOH) by some parties who are signatories to the same. They without remorse continue to pursue military victory at the expense of innocent civilians lives who continue to perish in a senseless war; an undertaking of unprincipled politicians who refuse to implement what they agree on. It is with this continuing scenario that we are also deeply concerned about the reduced, inadequate and unexplained untimeliness in reporting by CTSAMM on parties' efforts to implement the ACOH. This seem-

ing complacency by CTSAMM in relation its work should be avoided ahead of the next phase of the HLRF.

We therefore recommend and urge for the following ahead of the 61st extraordinary meeting of the IGAD Council of Ministers:

1. The IGAD Council of Ministers' 61st extraordinary session unreservedly and unquestionably appreciates the progress report of the Special Envoy of South Sudan on progress of the HLRF on the ARCSS and adopt all the recommendations made therein,
2. CTSAMM releases reliable reports on implementation of the ACOH by parties with clear reflection of all events that have taken place since the adjournment of the second phase of the HLRF, and make concrete recommendations to the IGAD Council of Ministers on the same,
3. The IGAD draws up and enforces a number of punitive measures against individual violators and spoilers of peace and entities that have failed to submit names of individual responsible for violations of the ACOH,
4. The IGAD holds accountable its members and their representatives who have negative bearing on progress of the peace process. This would be a demonstration of intolerance to impunity and afford IGAD high moral ground to spearhead accountability as a regional bloc,
5. The Parties be urged to refrain from threatening and intimidating the civil society who are essential partners in the peace process,
6. The IGAD demands that all parties ensure that there is meaningful representation of youth in their delegations as negotiators and not just protocol or secretariat staff. We continue to appreciate the unswerving resolve of the African Union, TROIKA, China, IGAD Partners' Forum and the wider International community to support the HLRF including civil society's participation in it. We are unwaveringly committed to continuing our participation in and support to the HLRF as a key political process that is a major pathway to peace in South Sudan,

STATEMENT OF THE SOUTH SUDAN CIVIL SOCIETY FORUM, con't.

We remain transfixed on all proceedings, progress and preparations on the HLRF and beyond and in relation to peace making in South Sudan. We continue to solemnly watch all parties' commitment to bringing peace to South Sudan.

To review the complete communiqué, go to: <https://www.igad.int/programs/115-south-sudan-office/1786-communique-of-the-61st-extra-ordinary-session-of-igad-council-of-ministers-on-the-situation-in-south-sudan>

#SouthSudanIsWatching

Spokespeople are available for interview in both English and Arabic. Additional members of the Civil Society, Women's and Youth's Coalition are available for interviews in Nairobi, Kampala and Addis Ababa.

To arrange interviews contact:

1. Manasseh Mathiang via fananmanasseb@gmail.com/

Tel: +211955722713 or

1. Geoffrey L. Duke via DukeGeff@gmail.com/

Tel: +211955166606

AFRECS CONFERENCE 2010

AKEC KHOC, FIRST CHARGE' D'AFFAIRES OF THE EMBASSY OF SOUTH SUDAN
ATTENDING THE ANNUAL CONFERENCE



EASTER SUNDAY SERVICES PROTECTION OF CIVILIANS 1, JUBA

BISHOP JOHN GATTEK

Dear brother in Christ, Richard,

This was a lively service that I attended with Mama Anna and Bishop Gatbel on Easter Sunday at the Nuer United Churches in Juba at Protection of Civilians 1 (POC1). I am sending you a video. We are going to attend the Easter service in POC 3 next Sunday. These are the first people to receive bibles after your visit in 2014.

Church leaders in POC1 and 3 need social and spiritual

empowerment through seminars and workshops. My hope is that you will return to conduct leadership and trauma training workshops in the future.

Please continue praying for us, especially the children. They will be happy to receive you in POC3 in Juba.

Bishop John Gattek
Diocese of Malakal, ECSS



COMINGS & GOINGS, ETC.

O God, surround those who travel in Your service, with Your loving care; protect them from every danger; bring them safely to their journey's end, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

JANUARY 18 – MARCH 6, 2017

Bishop Moses Anur Ayom, Diocese of Athhooch, S. Sudan, visited several donor churches and others interested in meeting him to learn of the new Diocese. He was hosted by Church of the Holy Family, Chapel Hill, NC, All Saints, Chevy Chase, MD, and Diocese of Indianapolis. He also traveled to four states where he was welcomed by hundreds of South Sudanese in diaspora.

JULY 2017

Bishop Bismark Avokaya, Diocese of Mundri, was on sabbatical in Richmond, VA.

OCTOBER 2017

Bishop Joseph Garang Atem, Diocese of Renk, made his annual visits to St. Michael's, Barrington, IL, companion Diocese of Chicago, and Virginia, where he ordained Rev. Thon Moses Chol to the priesthood at St. Paul's, Alexandria, VA.

OCTOBER 10, 2017

The Rev. Robin Denney was ordained to the priesthood for the Diocese of El Camino Real, CA. Robin served as Volunteer in Mission in South Sudan.

OCTOBER 24, 2017

The Rev. Trevor Stubbs and wife, Tiffany, were guests of AFRECS and friends of Virginia Theological Seminary (VTS), where Trevor spoke of the work to date on development of The Episcopal University (TEU) in Juba and activities of Bishop Gwynne College (BGC).

APRIL 22, 2018

Richard Parkins, AFRECS Exec. Dir., Phil Darrow, Pres. and Ambassador Dane Smith, Board member will travel to Juba to attend the consecration of Bishop Justin

Badi Arama (Maridi) as Primate and Archbishop of the Province of the Episcopal Church of South Sudan (ECSS) and installation as Bishop of Juba.

MAY 1-8, 2018

Bishop Moses Anur Ayom, Diocese of Athhooch, will visit and tour the Diocese of Indianapolis.

MAY 4-6, 2018

12th National AFRECS Conference, "Strengthening the Peacemakers: South Sudan & Diaspora", St. John's Cathedral, Denver, CO.

U.S. VISIT OF BISHOP JOHN ZAWO, EZO DIOCESE

Rt. Rev. John Zawo, Bishop of Ezo Diocese in the Episcopal Church of South Sudan (ECSS) since 2009, visited Washington, D.C. in March, after a lengthy wait in Kampala for a U.S. visa. His host in the U.S. was St. Francis Episcopal Church, Great Falls, VA, arranged by Mr. Jack Mathias.

Over lunch at the residence of AFRECS Board member Frederick Houghton, Bishop Zawo described some of the human trauma of the past three years. While walking in Juba, he was stopped three times by women begging for help. On his way to purchase a flashlight and drinking water, one insisted, "My son, if you know God, you must help me get food for my children. We have not eaten for three days". The bishop said, "I dug into my pocket and gave her something."

Four hundred miles west of Juba, the prosperous western Equatorial towns of Mundri, Maridi, and Yambio lost population when soldiers disenchanted with their conditions regrouped as rebels in the bush. Raids by the Lord's

COMINGS AND GOINGS, ETC., con't.

Resistance Army (LRA) and other marauders moving between Republic of Congo and Central African Republic caused people to abandon their gardens and farms in towns like Yubo and Tambura. Wildfire and rain emptied unprotected granaries, forcing families to regroup in camps overseen by guards. Delivery of food relief was hindered by armed violence and looting. Robbers, high on hate and drugs, make roads, including the paved road to Uganda through Morobo, unsafe for travel.

In the face of this disorder, leaders from various Christian denominations, along with Muslims, over the past year have stepped into the breach between armed forces of the Government of South Sudan and armed rebels. To approach rebel encampment in the bush, it was necessary to inform government authorities. Mediators had to present themselves as vulnerable and neutral. Such initiatives were led by Bishop Peter Munde Yacoub, Yambio, and Bishop Samuel Enosa Peni, Nzara, as well as Bishop Zawo. After public prayer and fasting, they sought out rebels in undisclosed locations. On one occasion, the U.N. Mission to South Sudan provided helicopter transportation to a meeting site. On another occasion, when a meeting was held at a church in town, a government of Sudan tank

brought some bishops safely to the rendezvous. On another occasion, vehicles belonging to foreign aid agencies, with gasoline supplied by the government, made meetings possible.

“We posed some questions to elicit the views of the rebels. Then we listened. We heard: ‘We were never paid for our service resisting the LRA. In the regular army, we were never promoted. Our family members have been murdered.’ Without approving or condemning, we agreed to report their demands with our recommendations. Sometimes we arranged to escort government representatives to meet face to face with rebels. At one point we arranged for negotiations in the neutral space of a church in town, leading to a proposal which the County Commissioner could carry to the President of the Republic for his acceptance.”

By such efforts, leaders, who themselves were made homeless and suffered bodily harm, have helped to create pockets of peace. They could not wait for contending factions at the national level to reach agreements in Juba or Addis Ababa.

Account written by Richard J. Jones, AFRECS Board

Dear God, our Heavenly Father,

We give you thanks for your church that you have established in this world for the purpose of salvation of mankind. Lord, may you graciously give your wisdom to those who are concerned with the growth and development of your church so that they may work hard and tirelessly for the purpose of your church's expansion and growth. Amen. ✠

From Prayers for South Sudan by South Sudan Writers

AFRECS - AMERICAN FRIENDS OF THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF THE SUDANS



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PRAY

TEACH

PARTNER

URGE

GIVE

LEARN



MAP OF SOUTH SUDAN AND SUDAN

