

CHRIST CHURCH'S SUDAN MINISTRY – Contact – Russ Randle
rrandle@pattonboggs.com; 202.457.5282; 703.625.8349



This map shows the current boundaries and locations of current and recent fighting – Blue Nile, Nuba Mountains, and Abyei, as well as Darfur. Much of Christ Church's work has been to advocate **US government action for peace in Sudan**, work which continues through the American Friends of the Episcopal Church of Sudan (AFRECS), www.afreecs.org. For weekly information on the church and situation in Sudan, sign up for AFRECS weekly e-blast e-mail alerts at that website.

Christ Church has had a covenant with the Diocese of Renk since 1997 to pray for each other, to work together for peace, to exchange visits and to help each other. This covenant has been reaffirmed by our vestry, clergy and parish repeatedly since 1997, most recently during Bishop Joseph's visit with us. Bishop Joseph lives in Renk which is in Upper Nile near the border between Sudan and South Sudan. Christ Church's work has included:

- visits to the Diocese of Renk (1998, 2005, 2006, 2007), missionary support (2005-09)
- construction of the **health clinic** (2007), **epidemic relief** (1999), clinic support (2000 to present), including purchase of large volumes of medicine for refugees in January 2011 and deployment of Ugandan and Virginia doctors (2002, 2004);
- assistance with **human rights work** (ongoing), including 2004 demonstration at Sudan Embassy
- support for **famine relief** (1998, 2001), **new school** (1998), **supply boat** (1998), **cathedral construction** (2004-06), parish assistance in Renk (periodic), land mine clearance (1999-2001).
- **Bible translation** with Wycliffe Bible Translators in Juba of the Dinka Old Testament for two million people (2000-present)
- receipt of visits from Bishop (now Archbishop) Daniel in 1998, 2001, 2003, 2006, 2008, 2009 and Bishop Joseph in 2004, 2006, 2009, 2010 and now. Our rector is a canon of the Renk Cathedral.

Frequently Asked Questions About Christ Church's Sudan Ministry:

Sudan is 8,000 miles away. Why are we doing ministry with them?

- **Christ Church is uniquely positioned to advocate for peace** in partnership with the Episcopal Church of Sudan which has twice as many Episcopalians as are in the US church.
- This ministry is a **partnership sought by Sudanese Christians**, repeatedly endorsed by our vestry, clergy and congregation and personally requested of Christ Church by their Archbishop, and supported by our bishops, diocese, and The Episcopal Church.
- **This ministry has saved many lives, spread the Gospel, treated thousands of sick people and strongly knit together two disparate parts of the Anglican Communion.**
- **As George Washington's parish, we have a special duty to fight religious persecution.**
- **Partnership with the US church was a vital witness during the war and now in its aftermath** that American Christians had not forgotten their Sudanese church brothers and sisters. Long term relationship matters a great deal – it matters to our spiritual health.

The situation is hopeless in Sudan. Why are we throwing away our money?

The current difficult situation is still far better than it was in 1998, or 2001 when the Archbishop was nearly murdered by the Khartoum government and better than it appeared even a year ago at this time with the successful separation of South Sudan from Sudan. Over the last fifteen years our prayers, our witness, our visits, and our resources have helped our partners boldly proclaim the Gospel and build the church in one of the hardest places in the world to be a faithful Christian. The ministry has been very effective and will remain so if we remain faithful.

The Sudanese Church disagrees with The Episcopal Church in the United States over issues of sexuality. Why should we continue to partner with them?

Despite doctrinal differences, the Episcopal Church of Sudan is one of two African churches to remain in communion with The Episcopal Church, unlike most of the rest of Africa and Asia and unlike many former parishes in Virginia. Our partnership with the Archbishop and Virginia's strong ties with Sudan are a significant part of that continuing relationship. We are modeling unity despite differences, part of our Gospel witness. One sign of convergence is the Episcopal Church of Sudan's women clergy since 1998 including the dean of Renk Cathedral.

Aren't all the problems solved now with the separation of South Sudan from the rest of Sudan?

No. The January referendum July secession occurred mostly peacefully, but that peace is fragile and threatened by serious fighting just north of the border in Abyei, Kadugli (Nuba Mountains), and Blue Nile. Over 200,00 refugees were displaced; many churches were deliberately destroyed and clergy targeted by the Khartoum government. Our peace work remains critically important.

In much of South Sudan, the church is the only viable civil government, making development work a vital part of the church's Gospel witness. Even small amounts of aid go far there. Thus, we make a big difference, one expressly linked to the Gospel. Few other ministries show such a high Gospel return for our investment of time, talent and treasure.