

AFRECS E-Blast: February 6, 2013

PRAY. TEACH. PARTNER. URGE. GIVE.

In the church:

A Message from AFRECS Executive Director Richard Parkins

A CHALLENGED CHURCH

A colleague recently shared with me a message received from the Primate of the Episcopal Church of Sudan (ECS), Archbishop Daniel Deng Bul, commenting on progress in translating the Bible into the language of the Dinka people, a project which has been underway for some time. When completed, it will give those Sudanese Christians who are literate a chance to read the sacred word in a familiar language. Such a resource might also foster greater literacy in a country where literacy is sorely lacking and impedes national unity and development.

The same message from Archbishop Daniel offered an urgent appeal for greater international attention to the plight of the people of Abyei. Their desire for self-determination as promised by the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) in 2005 has been frustrated and denied. The resulting devastation and displacement is untold.

Found in this message is a glimpse into the special role which the ECS and its leadership play in being 'The Church.' Something as fundamental as having sacred passages conveyed in the language most familiar to a vast swath of the Sudanese people demands the energy and resources of the church. Likewise, addressing the wounds of the people of Abyei and the justice denied this region of Sudan is a priority that begs for ecclesiastical leadership. The ECS has the unique challenge of dealing with something as basic as a readily understandable Bible while also proclaiming the need to give urgent attention to a human rights issue of global proportions where steadfast action has been lacking. The ECS cannot be indifferent to either issue and, in fact, has a paramount responsibility to work on both fronts.

Let our prayers accompany the Archbishop and those who support his leadership as they confront tasks that both build the church and speak for several million disenfranchised people who depend on this voice.

Richard Parkins

Editor's Note: The following gentle appeal is repeated in hopes that you might see your way clear to help support the challenges of the Episcopal Church of Sudan in the way described below. EJH+

Dear Friends of AFRECS,

Several hundred readers now receive our E-Blasts every other week, yet only a few have joined AFRECS as members. The board of AFRECS intentionally established a modest membership fee of \$15 to enable all those concerned about developments in Sudan and South Sudan and the work of the Episcopal Church of Sudan to become AFRECS members. If you appreciate our work in maintaining a network of persons committed to peace and justice for our Sudanese sisters and brothers and our E-Blast broadcasts, please consider becoming an AFRECS member. The membership fee remains at \$15 annually but if you feel inclined to be more generous, a larger contribution would be appreciated. You may send checks to AFRECS, PO Box 12026, 3737 Seminary Road, Alexandria, VA 22304. Note in the memo line of your check AFRECS MEMBERSHIP.

Thanks,
Richard Parkins,
Executive Director

A resolution from the 218th Annual Council of the Diocese of Virginia can be found on the AFRECS [Advocacy](#) page. It may be helpful to others who are crafting similar resolutions to be voted on in the coming months. Please send us others and they will be posted as well.

In politics -- the two Sudans:

This [Sudan Tribune](#) article details the deteriorating relationship between Sudan and South Sudan.

[Together for Sudan](#), an international organization in the UK, announces leadership and developmental changes. It began in 1996 in response to what Sudanese women told founder Lillian Harris about their need for education and healthcare services.

In politics -- South Sudan:

As reported in the Sudan Tribune, [South Sudan initiates](#) consultations on national reconciliation.

"The consultations aim to share ideas and mobilise support for the planned national reconciliation campaign in order to put to rest past differences among South Sudan's tribes and clans and focus on the future."

"...presidential advisor on decentralisation and intergovernmental linkages, Tor Deng Mawien, also told the press that more consultative meetings will take place over the next few days with different stakeholders" including faith-based groups, local NGOs and civil society organisations, as well as political parties. Soon 200 people will be selected as "peace mobilisers" and trained with the assistance of the Initiative of Change International before the scheduled April conference on reconciliation.

"A number of former presidents and prime ministers, as well as prominent religious leaders from Europe, Australia, America and Africa" (including Tony Blair and Desmond Tutu) "have been invited to the conference to deliver speeches on the importance of national reconciliation and good governance.

"The conference is scheduled to convene in April and will be followed by peace and reconciliation campaigns in South Sudan's 10 states in a process which is expected to go on for many years to come."

Also on the same topic, see this report on the [consultative](#) forum between religious leaders and the Government of South Sudan. The meeting, sanctioned by GoSS Vice-President Riek Machar, was attended by several religious leaders affiliated with Sudan Council Churches and with the South Sudan Islamic Council.

On another topic, view this [Op-Doc](#) video, an Opinion Documentary from the New York Times, to see what recognized film makers have gleaned from the first 18 months in the life of the 193rd country in the world. This piece, less than 10 minutes long, is excerpted from a longer video featuring a 12-step program for establishing a 'New Country from Scratch.'

In politics -- Sudan:

"The Future of Sudan, One State or Several?" published by [African Arguments](#) is a thoughtful & thorough article by Seifulaziz Milas, author of [Sharing the Nile: Egypt, Ethiopia, and the Geo-Politics of War](#).

This [Miami Herald](#) article reports on video journalist, Ryan Boyette, a Floridian who lives in Nuba. He has recruited a team of novice Sudanese journalists whose website NubaReports.org tells the story of their homeland's troubles, attempting to be the eyes & ears of Nuba.

"Egypt and Syria and Libya and other places that had an uprising, it was set in motion by citizen journalists," Boyette said. "We are the next level of citizen journalism. We are giving (the citizens) the equipment and training necessary to do accurate and good-quality reporting from the ground."

Pray

Pray for Joseph Taban Lasuba, Principal of Bishop Gwynne College in Juba, South Sudan. He is in Nairobi, recovering from recent brain surgery. Also pray for the BGC students and the on-going operation of the school in these difficult times.

Teach

In your congregation, consider using one of the Lenten study guides offered in the last two issues of this eblast. They originate from [South Sudan](#) and the [United Kingdom](#), giving an opportunity to understand the Gospel, our friends in Africa, and ourselves in deep & meaningful ways.

Partner

For your information and interest, review the list of companion relationships on the [Links](#) page of the AFRECS website. There are now 17 of them. Under your leadership, could it increase to 18?

Urge

Urge one another to do good works, especially in support of our sisters and brothers in South Sudan and Sudan.

Give

Thanksgiving to our former editor, Debbie Morris Smith, for returning to the desk and editing the last issue of this eblast while the current editor was away attending to other matters.

Peace,
Ellen J Hanckel, Editor

This bi-weekly Sudan update is from the American Friends of the Episcopal Church of Sudan. You are receiving it because you are currently on an AFRECS listserv. Feel free to forward this newsflash to others who may find it helpful. To join the list if you received this email as a forward, please send an email to AFRECS_E-Blasts@afrecs.org with "SUBSCRIBE" in the subject line. If you wish to unsubscribe, please send an email to AFRECS_E-Blasts@afrecs.org with "UNSUBSCRIBE" in the subject line. For more information about AFRECS, visit our website <http://www.afrecs.org> or our Facebook page.