

A COMPANION CONNECTION

(Saturday, June 18, 12:30-2 PM)

DEBRA MORRIS SMITH

Debra Morris Smith has been interested in Sudan since 2000, when she began teaching English to a group of Sudanese refugee women in Des Moines, Iowa. After moving to St. Louis, she was on the first mission (in 2003) from the Diocese of Missouri to the Diocese of Lui. Currently Missouri's mission coordinator and liaison to the Diocese of Lui, she has just returned from a visit there, during which she regularly posted reports and photos on the diocesan website.

A member of the AFRECS board, she prepares the weekly AFRECS e-blasts that contain a wide range of information about Sudan, the Episcopal Church of Sudan, and many supporting partners. She brings to the work not only a passion for the people of Sudan, but also a lifetime of experience in the church (her husband Wayne is the Bishop of Missouri). She earned a Ph.D. in English, knows the Arabic language, has many years' experience as a teacher at various levels, and is now an administrator in adult education.

SUSAN NAYLOR

The Rev. Susan Naylor, a deacon at St. Martin's Church in the Diocese of Missouri and a registered nurse, has been an active participant in the Missouri-Lui companion diocese relationship. On trips to Lui she has used her medical training for work related to health, and her ministry training for pastoral conferences and other team projects.

The companion diocese committee coordinates regular mission trips to Lui, allowing Missouri Episcopalians to encounter and serve Christ in new ways. Also, the committee communicates news and stories between Lui and Missouri rapidly and effectively. Finally, the committee also helps to coordinate fundraising, advocacy and (most importantly) prayers for the people of Lui.

Since 2005, dozens have traveled to and from Lui, more than \$300,000 has been raised to improve the quality of life in Lui, and countless prayers have been lifted up.

(Please turn over)