



COMPANION RELATIONSHIPS

Southwestern

Virginia / Bradford / Sudan



Who are we?

DIOCESE OF SOUTHWESTERN VIRGINIA, USA / DIOCESE OF BRADFORD, UK / PROVINCE OF SUDAN A Three Way Link Since 1979

Bishop Heath Light (retired) made the first introductory trip to Sudan just as the Civil War was starting up again. Though the time limit on our relationship expired, Sudan asked us to continue in our link relationship and to be a voice speaking for them in the world. Marc Nikkel, a missionary priest resident in our diocese, became our eyes and ears in Sudan. Sudanese priests studying at Virginia Seminary visited in the diocese and we were able to form relationships with them. Until peace in 2005, prayer and advocacy were our main activities along with financial aid and help funding refugee schools in Kakuma, Kenya.

**Our Father,
it is your
universe,
It is your will,
Let us be
at peace;
Let the souls
of your people
be cool;
You are
our Father.
Remove all evil
from our path.**

Prayer from the Nuer tribe

Projects

Since the peace of 2005, Bishop Neff Powell has focused our relationship on rebuilding. Education of priests and youths and helping support the provincial office have become our focus. We have helped fund renovation of the Juba guesthouse as a source of funding for the Provincial office. This was in response to Canon Enock Tombe's request at the St. Louis AFRECS meeting. We have helped Bradford in upgrading of communication equipment, especially in the Provincial office. We have helped fund several projects in the building and running of the Marc Nikkel School in cooperation with Project Education Sudan. We also underwrote the cost of buying and installing a solar windmill and have provided scholarships for youth and teachers.

Opening ceremony of the Marc Nikkel School in the village of Bor in Bor Diocese of Southern Sudan.



Students at the Marc Nikkel School line the windows to welcome the Bishops and other visitors.



Class of girls with their teachers singing and dancing to welcome the visitors before the ceremony.



The group traveling to Southern Sudan in November 2006 under the leadership of Bishop Cate Waynick of Indianapolis, USA and Bishop Nathaniel Garang of Bor Diocese in Southern Sudan.



The Rev. Dr. Ellen Hanckel and the Rev. Kim Webster.



Three members of the Mother's Union at the Kakuma Refugee Camp in Kenya.

Summary

Our link with Sudan began with an emphasis on education, through the work of Marc Nikkel. During the war years education continued as the focus, both with seminarians coming here to receive further education and with youths in the refugee camps. The Sudanese seminarians strengthened our link and took back with them a sense of appreciation for the link and the American church. After the war we began supporting the rebuilding of elementary, secondary and theological schools. The Marc Nikkel school in Bor has a special claim on our hearts. Other American dioceses have linked with individual dioceses in the South.

We have sought to help on the Provincial level by contributing to a pension fund for Bishops, helping upgrade communications in the Provincial office, and helping rebuild the Juba Guest House as a source for Provincial income. This last was a priority of the Archbishop of Sudan presented to us at the St Louis AFRECS meeting in 2007.

**Come,
everyone,
and receive life
from God.
Rain mixed
with sunbeams
will give us
life.**

From a Dinka prayer