

SUDAN CHURCH REVIEW



Autumn 2019

Magazine of the Church Association
for Sudan and South Sudan

supporting the Episcopal Churches of Sudan and South Sudan



CHURCH ASSOCIATION
FOR SUDAN AND
SOUTH SUDAN

PRESIDENTS

The Archbishop of South Sudan (ECSS), The Most Revd Justin Badi Arama
The Archbishop of Sudan (ECS), The Most Revd Ezekiel Kondo

Vice-Presidents

The Bishop of Salisbury, The Rt Revd Nicholas Holtam www.salisbury.anglican.org
The Bishop of Leeds, The Rt Revd Nicholas Baines www.leeds.anglican.org/sudan

Co-Chairs

Revd Ian Wallace 97 Canterbury Close, Yate, Bristol BS37 5TU
Tel: 01454 319228 rector@yateparish.org.uk
Revd Pauline Walker CMS-Africa, Juba Tel: +211 921766435
pjwalker121@gmail.com

Honorary Treasurer

John Poole 23 Leylands Lane, Bradford BD9 5PX Tel: 01274 401679
scaaccnts@gmail.com

Secretary

Joanna Hunt 76 Warminster Road, Bathampton, Bath BA2 6RU
secretary.casss@gmail.com

'Review' and Website Editors

John & Sue Inglis-Jones 28-30 Main St, Felton. NE65 9PN info@casss.org.uk

[***www.casss.org.uk***](http://www.casss.org.uk)

MEMBERSHIP

For membership and donations (regular or one-off) see the form on the inside back page of this Review or the donate page of the website above.

FRONT COVER PHOTO

Anglicans worshipping in South Sudan.

Credit: Rev Dr Jesse Zink, Montreal Diocesan Theological College

Co-Chairs' introduction

We must apologise that this edition of The Review is a few weeks later than scheduled, but it seemed right to postpone publication until after our visit to Juba in mid-November. Much of the content of this edition is informed by that visit and we were able to get a much better sense of the role that CASSS (SCA) plays in supporting and encouraging the Episcopal Church in pursuing its new vision.

The visit was at the invitation of Archbishop Justin Badi and coincided with a meeting of the Provincial Standing Committee (House of Bishops). All except four of the bishops were in Juba for training from key figures in the Anglican Communion Office. Archbishop Justin Badi used the occasion to deliver a charge to his fellow bishops focusing on the importance of mission, evangelism and intentional discipleship. Meeting so many bishops together enabled us to gather stories of how the work of the gospel is advancing across South Sudan despite the instability of recent years, and I hope that you will enjoy reading some of those stories in both this and the next edition of The Review.



From left to right: Mrs Jo Hunt, Archbishop Justin, Rev Pauline Walker & Rev Ian Wallace

The over-riding sense that we gained is of a new era dawning for ECSS, with a renewed sense of vision and purpose. It is true that many of the difficulties that have weighed on the church in the past have yet to be fully resolved, not least the political situation. While we were in Juba there was supposed to be a hand-over to a transitional government of national unity – this has been delayed by 100 days to allow for a proper integration of the two armed forces. putting in place security arrangements and agreement on the number of new States.

However, there seems to be a determination within the Episcopal Church to move towards a better future in which the ECSS functions as a mature church reflecting the light of Christ into South Sudanese society.

The same also seems to be true for the Episcopal Church in Sudan. The new political landscape offers new opportunities for the church which suffered repression from the former regime, and the capacity building work that we have

been involved in appears to be bearing positive fruit. Again, the clarity of vision of Archbishop Ezekiel Kondo is a key factor in the sense of new purpose. One example is the new vision for the Shokai Bible Institute to become a leading centre of ministerial training for the country. The challenges in realising the new vision are not insignificant but we feel encouraged within CASSS that both Archbishops are taking a clear lead in moving the life and work of the Episcopal Churches forward and that we are well placed to support them in this new era of optimism.

In His service,

Revd Ian Wallace

Revd Pauline Walker

South Sudan's new service book begins to be used in churches

As we reported in the last *Review*, a key aim of Archbishop Justin Badi on coming into office was to introduce a new prayer book for the country, replacing the Book of Common Prayer. This was mainly to enable clergy and lay readers to have access to liturgy not previously available, to help them in conducting services & prayers with creativity, making their worship time enriching and with 'deep spirituality.'

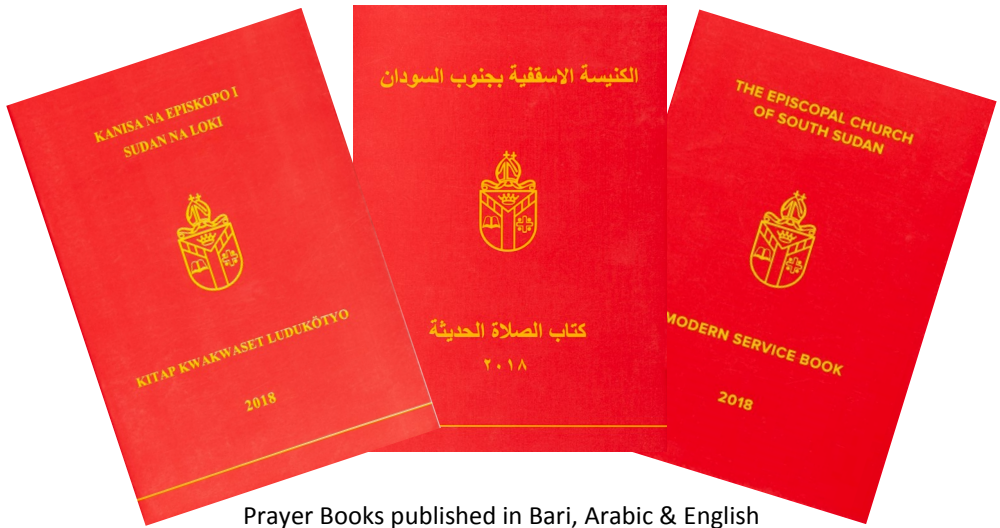


*ECSS Prayer books on sale outside
All Saints Cathedral, Juba*

To create, translate, publish and distribute the new prayer book in a number of different languages was a huge undertaking for the church. However, recognising the strategic importance of this work, the Church Association for Sudan and South Sudan made a significant grant towards this.

In the event, what has been achieved has far outstripped what was initially thought possible. A new prayer book, called the 'Modern Service Book', has been produced to a high quality in paperback form and translated from English into Arabic, Bari, Baka and Dinka. This contains liturgy for daily services & Holy Communion, along with the collects to be used throughout the year. Translations into Zande and Moru are also being carried out and these will be available shortly. There is also a larger print version available, both for celebrants and those with poor sight.

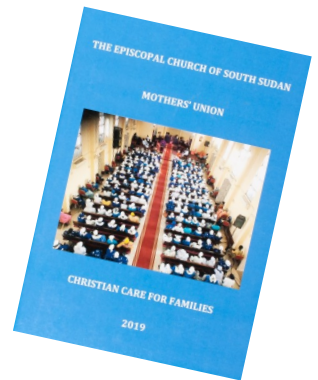
In all, 23,000 new Modern Service Books have already been printed and are widely on sale in many churches for 500 South Sudan Pounds (around £1.30).



Prayer Books published in Bari, Arabic & English

In addition to the Modern Service Book, the Mothers' Union of the ECSS has published a short book in the same format called, 'Christian Care for Families.' This includes liturgy for a Mothers' Union Worship Service, as well as prayers for families, children and the youth of South Sudan.

However, this is only the first step of the journey. The ultimate aim is to have a more comprehensive, hardback service book which contains liturgy for a wide range of services, including baptisms, weddings and funerals. This already exists in draft form and will be submitted for a large-scale print run once minor errors are identified & corrected.



Archbishop Justin Badi has personally written a preface to the Modern Service Book. In it, he writes the following:

'In this book, we have incorporated the best liturgical insights from various prayer books within the Anglican Communion and have preserved the Anglican spirituality. Based on this, we believe the Holy Scriptures of the Old & New Testaments to be the Word of God written and to contain all things necessary for salvation. The Bible is to be translated, read, preached, taught and obeyed in its plain and canonical sense, respectful of the Church's historic and consensual reading.'

'We'd like to be civil engineers.'

So said Hala (14) and Christine (16) from one of the Church-supported high schools in Khartoum. This, having both described days that start at dawn with jobs and prayers, long journeys by bus to get to school, and family situations where a father can be in South Sudan and the mother trying to earn money from the job of selling tea out in the street. The girls are hopeful and determined, words a visitor like me can all too often use, when we really want to say the situations we meet in Sudan are desperate. But the girls as you can see in the photo are funny and just a little sassy.



Hala & Christine

Hope and challenge is a fair summary of the situation that I found in the recent visit in early November 2019. But for a visitor the questions also go like this: how are things politically? Are you feeling optimistic for the country and for Christians? And these were the questions I asked everyone.

Rani the director of the Abu Rof Heath Centre in Omdurman, which has a strong Christian ethic and foundation, has been recording a significant rise in cases of malnutrition and of HIV as the economic crisis persists. Yet he noted positive changes and articulates the optimism of many who are involved in health care.

Hearing Archbishop Ezekiel report to his clergy about the recent Global South Church Conference in Egypt was a salutatory reminder of the pressures facing the province. The Archbishop remains a wise and experienced leader when talking about the political changes in the country and he talked in a gently optimistic way, yet with a deep concern for the material poverty of Christians under his care.

During this visit I was able to meet with a number of lawyers representing pastors and others, from different Christian denominations, who have been imprisoned in recent years or whose church buildings are under threat. They remain extremely vulnerable and overall their attitudes were, 'we wait and see,' on whether the changes will be permanent.

I was able to talk to a number of teachers in a variety of schools around Khartoum

and Omdurman. Fiona Beevers is the recently appointed Head Teacher for Unity High School in the very heart of Khartoum, within sniper range of the main demonstrations. Fiona was the Deputy Director of Education for the Leeds Diocese. She talked about the trauma of the violence on both students and parents, and the increasing hopes of students, many of whom are from the educated middle classes.

In contrast, the staff from a newly opened church-based kindergarten feel a long way from the changes. There is no work, only the occasional casual day of employment, no education is free, there is no running water and inflation is affecting the price of bread and of a bus journey. My questions about the political changes were irrelevant.



Lastly, I had the privilege to visit one of the women's prisons. Most of the inmates are Christian, many with young children, imprisoned for selling alcohol from three back street illegal bars. When you have no money there is little choice. We met and sang with many of the prisoners and their children, who crammed into the church chapel built in the prison compound. The small funds given for the pastor through the Sudan Link makes a huge difference to the women. The need for greater economic security and prosperity for Sudan is critical. Here the hope of the gospel message was more welcome than any government changes.

The answers to my questions, I felt, revealed a significant level of powerlessness of the Episcopal Church of Sudan and its leaders where many believers have been displaced through recent conflicts and they live in a country where their faith, language and traditions are outside the mainstream. We pray that the emerging changes will be long-lasting and provide greater security.

Revd Anne Russell, Co-chair of the Sudan Link, Leeds

Sudanese visitors to Leeds Yorkshire

In September, two special visitors from the Episcopal Church of Sudan (ECS) visited the UK, starting in London and Lambeth and then heading to Yorkshire to build stronger links with churches and schools in the area. As part of the Diocese of Leeds Link with Sudan, the Most Revd Ezekiel Kondo, Archbishop of Khartoum was asked to nominate people to make the journey and he chose 2 leading members of the ECS Mothers' Union; Mama Heweya, Sudan's Provincial MU Coordinator and Mama Samira, its provincial MU Leader. Both are key national leaders of work with women and are based in Khartoum.



Mama Samira and Mama Heweya were hosted by Revd Anne Russell, Team Rector of the Ingleborough Team of parishes. Arriving in the UK, they met Archbishop Justin Welby and his wife, Caroline, at Lambeth Palace and had a meeting at the MU headquarters, Mary Sumner House, in Central London before travelling to Leeds diocese where they encountered an abundance of harvest celebrations, schools & Mothers' Union groups, both locally and in the Bradford area.

Towards the end of their visit, Mama Samira and Mama Heweya met with the Sudan Link group in Bradford to review the visit and discuss project proposals and fundraising for the remainder of 2019 and 2020.



Discussions covered a range of exciting proposals, many centred around the central role of women in Sudanese society. Many women play a key role in the church in Khartoum in particular and successful literacy training had been done by MU members.



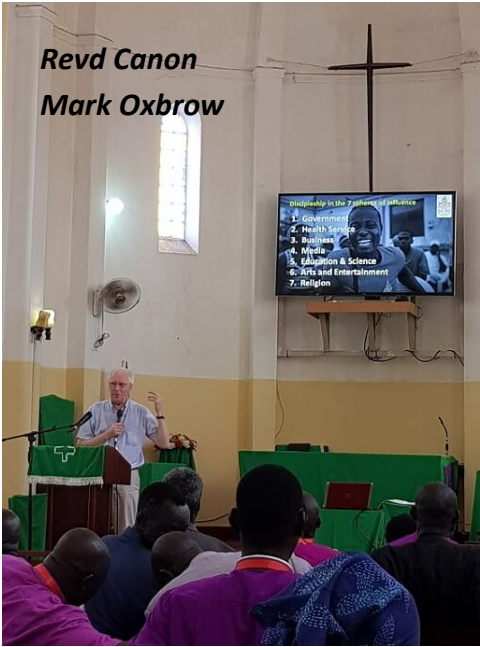
ECSS Standing Committee takes place in Juba

The 11th Provincial Standing Committee was held in Juba from 14th to 15th November 2019. This hugely encouraging occasion was the last event in a full week of activities for the archbishops, bishops, senior clergy and laity of the Episcopal Church of South Sudan. Also in attendance were representatives from the Government of South Sudan, the Anglican Communion office based at Lambeth Palace and the Anglican Church of Kenya.

A training package entitled, 'The Role & Ministry of a Bishop,' took place on 7th & 8th of November. This was led by Archbishop Josiah Idowu Fearon, the Secretary General of the Anglican Consultative Council, and Bishop Anthony Poggo, formerly bishop of Kajo-Keji and now the Archbishop of Canterbury's Adviser on Anglican Communion Affairs.

This was followed by a 2-day consultation on Intentional Discipleship & Disciple-making, led by the Revd Canon Mark Oxbrow, formerly of CMS, and the Revd Canon John Kafwanka, Mission Director at the Anglican Communion Office. This very valuable period of training, conversation & reflection focused on how the church in South Sudan could have a larger part to play in society as a whole within the country. Areas such as government, health and media were considered.

**Revd Canon
Mark Oxbrow**



Also considered were the approaches and resources that could be harnessed to bring about large-scale discipleship, in a session led by John Kafwanka.

In addition to this, the central importance of good Bible teaching & preaching was acknowledged. Bishop Bismark of Mundri, delivering the sermon at the Consultation Eucharist, talked about the conversations between St Paul & the Roman governor Felix in Acts 24 & 25. The contrast between these two men was stark, with Felix inclined to fall victim to political machinations, temptation & procrastination. Paul's preaching and leadership, however, made

Felix feel uncomfortable. The key message, therefore, was to, 'Preach Jesus; do not talk politics!'

On the afternoon of Wednesday 13th November, the small party from the Church Association for Sudan and South Sudan (CASSS) had the opportunity to meet with the majority of ECSS bishops at All Saints Cathedral. This was a useful session and served to underline clearly the desire of CASSS to ensure the sustainability of the church in South Sudan as a whole over the long term. The view of the meeting was that the church in South Sudan had discovered a new sense of mission and a clear sense of strategic vision. Therefore, CASSS was keen to make use of its resources to help the ECSS into the future.



Bishops taking part in group work

The final session of the week was the Standing Committee itself. All except four of the archbishops & bishops of South Sudan attended, along with senior clergy. This was a key opportunity for the ECSS to develop a real unity and purpose. At the outset, Archbishop Justin Badi Arama issued a charge to all present, including the words in the introduction, echoing his desire expressed at his enthronement to focus on the Lord's Prayer:

'At the time of my installation, I did say our focus for the next ten years will be on the Lord's Prayer. To teach our people to understand the Lord's Prayer, sing the Lord's Prayer, do the Lord's Prayer and live the Lord's Prayer in their daily life. The first priority in the Lord's Prayer is to make the name of God be honoured. God has called us for the important task of bringing honour to his name in the Church.'

Archbishop Justin was kind enough to meet with the team from CASSS at the end of the week. This was a chance to reflect on the positivity of the events of the week and, in particular, the enthusiasm with which the training and other meetings were greeted. The new Modern Service Book has given a huge boost to the church as a whole, having been enthusiastically taken up by many communities, and is being widely used.



CASSS team in discussion with ECSS archbishops and bishops

Lastly, at the time of writing, it looks like many South Sudanese bishops will be able to travel to the Lambeth Conference in July 2020. It is hoped that this will present an opportunity to many CASSS supporters to meet those leading the church in South Sudan directly.

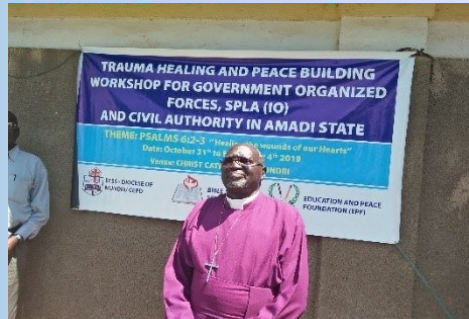
Focus on...

THE DIOCESE OF MUNDRI

‘Peace Catalysts’

Healing the wounds of heart in Amadi State, South Sudan

*By the Rt. Rev. Bismark Monday Avokaya –
Diocesan Bishop, Diocese of Mundri of the
Episcopal Church of South Sudan - Internal
Province of Amadi.*



Conflict in South Sudan and the world over, has never been good and in most cases has stalled development and created ethnic tensions, as is the case in South Sudan. Particularly in a situation when the majority of the population are illiterate. Such is the situation in South Sudan.

South Sudan, was applauded when it got independence in 2011 for its resilience and liberation struggle. But this was short lived when fighting erupted in December 2013 within the members of Sudan People’s Liberation Army (SPLA) splitting their command loyalty between the two Principals. Unfortunately, the said forces mercilessly fought amongst themselves, slaughtered and carried numerous atrocities within a short period in South Sudan. Sadly this barbaric action changed the narrative and face of South Sudan among the nations of the world to date.

It dehumanized the dignity of South Sudanese people immensely creating huge hatred and mistrust amongst the 64 tribes of South Sudan with negative impact on the relationship with the international community as well. The conflict - of unimaginable proportion - forced some individuals to slaughter their own community members and to carry out enormous atrocities. The conflict, made those with guns to never trust one another. The civil authorities have not been respected either and often humiliated and tortured as well. Hence the UN has put a conservative figure of 400,000 people who have died during the conflict since 2013.

However, going by the current events there is hope for peace and stability to

prevail in south Sudan, yet to have sustainable peace there is huge need for genuine change of attitude and paradigm shift on the mindset for the armed forces and the civil population. Given that the conflict had inflicted intense fear in the country's populace. Subsequently, such fear has created wounds in the hearts of many which need healing. Therefore, the only remedy is to turn to the Lord for healing therapy through Trauma Healing, forgiveness, reconciliation and Peace Building processes!



The deputy governor and governor of Amadi attending the workshop

Given its God-given mandate, the Diocese of Mundri, conducted a 'Trauma Healing and Peace Building' workshop for the Government organised forces, Sudan Peoples' Liberation Army In Opposition (SPLA - IO) and the Civil Authority in Mundri town on October 31st to Nov. 4th, 2019. The workshop, which was attended by over 130 participants, was graced by the four Bishops of Internal Province of Amadi, the Governor of Amadi state,

his Deputy, Ministers, Commissioners and Chiefs. The target beneficiaries were the command structure of the Gov. Army, other organized forces, the SPLA - IO and Civil Authority, and it was remarkable and befitting to the purpose of consolidating trust and confidence building amongst these forces in Amadi State.

It is a known fact that South Sudan has never enjoyed peace! But for peace to prevail it may require concerted efforts of everyone to embrace peace. And the intense fear of revenge, trauma and psychological related experiences, as a result of the persistent culture of war, can only be defused by God through the ministry of the Church by teaching the Bible.

Read more of this article at the CASSS website - Our Work—Support to the dioceses - The Diocese of Mundri page.



Student Stories from...



RISALA MORCOS ELBARY

Where was your previous ministry?

My ministry in Sudan was in homes because my church in Sudan (the Brethren Church) does not allow women to serve in the church.

How did you come to Egypt and begin your studies at NBIC ?

I came to Egypt because Sudan was not very safe and I found a chance to study at the institute.

How have your studies affected your life or your way of thinking during the time you have been at NBIC?

Everything I have studied has been very helpful for my life. For example there was a subject about Integrity, which had a huge impact on me because it taught me how to be honest, how to stay on the right path in my public and private life and that wasn't an easy task. Inner Healing was a unique subject, it taught me that there isn't peace without inner healing.

What is your vision or dream for your ministry and how is studying at NBIC helping you to serve God, the church and the Sudanese community better?

I have learned to share with others what I've learned, because I know that the Christian life is about fellowship even without preaching. I also have learned to be a preacher without preaching to people from the pulpit but to let them see your good works, and glorify your Father, which is in heaven. I've learned that this is the main goal.



**WESLEY WILSON
KENDAMAN**

Where was your previous ministry?

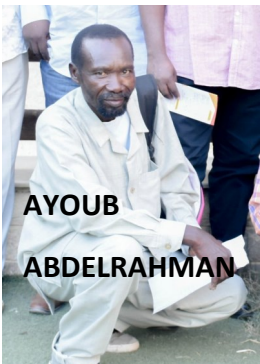
I was serving in the Anglican church in South Kordofan, in Deling, which is in the Diocese of Kadugli. I was responsible for the youth ministry at that time and I was chosen by my church to come to NBIC.

How have your studies affected your life?

The greatest subjects that changed my life were studying the book about guilt and grace (as part of the course on Inner Healing), and the courses on Evangelism, The Early Church, and Salvation.



ELAMEEN HAMAD BRENGY



AYOUB
ABDELRAHMAN

Where was your previous ministry?

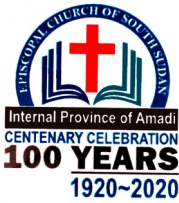
My past ministry was in the mountains of Doby, in the area of Doby Tabo Kody. I was a teacher and manager at the Korkale Bible Institute. I heard about NBIC from Bishop Andudu in 2017.

How did you come to Egypt and start studying at NBIC?

I am a pastor in the Anglican Church responsible for the refugee areas in South Sudan and supervisor of eight churches in Eeda, and Agwantok refugee camps. My diocesan Bishop Andudu has assisted me to come and study in Cairo. My dream for the Church and the ministers in the Nuba Mountains is for them to go deep in the word of God.

What is your vision or dream for your ministry and how is studying at NBIC helping with that?

My vision for my ministry is that I will be able to serve better with new skills and new plans I have gained in the name of Jesus Christ. Also I want to complete a Bachelors degree in Theology. Upon returning to the Institute of Korkale I hope to raise the academic standard there so that we can offer a diploma, God willing.



Amadi gets ready to celebrate 100 years of Christianity!

With so much fragility in the region of South Sudan, both in recent times and over the last 60 years in particular, it is a joy to be about to celebrate an enduring & vibrant Christian presence in Amadi for over 100 years.

Amadi is one of the (current) 28 states in South Sudan and is located in the Equatoria region, formerly being part of Western Equatoria state. Many of its inhabitants comprise the Moru people. The Internal Province of Amadi, which is organising the celebrations, takes in the ECSS dioceses of Lui, Mundri, Yeri & Wandri. While Mundri is the capital of the state, Lui is one of its better-known towns and has arguably the most longstanding links with Christianity. The evangelisation of the Moru people began when Dr. Kenneth and Eileen Fraser of the Church Missionary Society arrived at Lui on 22nd December 1920, about ten years after the area became part of Sudan. This is the date that is being commemorated, with celebrations due to take place in November and December 2020.

Dr Kenneth Grant Fraser O.B.E., M.D. (Edin.) D.P.H., F.R.S.E. or "Dr Fraser" as he is commonly remembered in Lui, was a Scottish missionary doctor and educator in Southern Sudan, specifically working among the Moru people. He was converted to Christianity during the Boer War and then qualified as a doctor in Edinburgh in 1914, with the express aim of becoming a medical missionary. Before this could happen, however, he served in the First World War with the Royal Army Medical Corps in Europe & Turkey, winning the Croix de Guerre.

Eileen Fraser was a nurse who served in France during the First World War with the British Committee of the French Red Cross. However, she had also spent some time as a teacher in Sudan, at Omdurman and Wad Medani.

Kenneth & Eileen married in November 1916 and, on the conclusion of the war, made plans to become missionaries in what was then southern Sudan. They settled



*The Most Rev Stephen Dokolo
Archbishop of Amadi Internal
Province and Diocesan
Bishop of Lui*

in Lui, which was chosen as being close to permanent water but away from fly infested rivers. As a medical doctor, Dr. Fraser began work on the hospital immediately he arrived, so that he managed to complete the first temporary buildings within five months of arrival. Even before the hospital building was completed, the Frasers began to build a small temporary school building and started teaching a few boys. Alongside this, they started preaching the gospel to the local people.

The way the local church developed resulted from the strategy that Dr Fraser applied, interacting with the nature of the culture of the Moru people, and guided by the Holy Spirit. Dr Fraser's strategy reflected his experience as a soldier, together with his skills as a doctor, a teacher and a preacher. The work he was involved in shows an understanding of the completeness of man combined with a clear strategy of reaching out to the people God had given him to work with. Dr Fraser was a strong man with a strong character, and as a keen hunter had important characteristics respected by the Moru people. He was also seen by them as someone who was close to God.

Kenneth & Eileen Fraser's approach was crucial in the way the church spread throughout the Moru people and its effect on the outlook of the whole tribe. Both Kenneth and Fraser are common baptismal names amongst Morus even today. Lui Hospital is still an important church-run hospital in South Sudan, and now also includes a school of nursing & midwifery.

In order to celebrate this extraordinary legacy, extensive activities are planned in Lui in 2020, including a memorial to Dr Kenneth & Eileen Fraser, the construction of a conference hall named after Eileen, a new museum and also a refurbishment of Lui Cathedral. The chair of the organising committee is Mr Scopas Magya Elias, who for many years worked closely with Jo Hunt, the Secretary of CASSS, during the period of her involvement with the Church Missionary Society.

We look forward to providing a full report on the events in our Spring 2021 edition.



Mr Scopas Magya Elias and Mrs Jo Hunt

Diocese of Cuebit Behavioural Change Project

by Sue Claydon, Chair of the Anglican Pacifist Fellowship

The Anglican Pacifist Fellowship, along with another Trust, is funding a three-phase project to promote peace and security in Cuebit Diocese. Under the leadership of Bishop Elijah Matueny, the project is now in its second phase.

The Bishop and a team of women, youth leaders and two pastors visited 10 payams during January and February 2019. They met with payam administrators, chiefs, elders and young people to discuss improving peacebuilding. Issues such as youth violence, tensions between groups, problems with water and general community security all featured. Training was given to pastors and laity on ways to change behaviour to build peace in their communities.

During the current phase, the priorities are:

- Women peace workers training including mitigation
- Training for radio presenters – in this vast rural area communication is difficult and the radio has become a major factor in getting peace messages to distant communities
- Radio programmes twice a month for four months
- Peer education as a means of young people working directly with other young people

It is a 'grass roots' approach to bring harmony at the local level that is crucial to support the wider move to peace and reconciliation in South Sudan.

For more information, please contact: chair@anglicanpeacemaker.org.uk



Bishop Elijah



Young men pledging to give up violence



Children during peace prayers at Pagoor Church

NEWS IN BRIEF

Stamps update

With the new Stamps Team in place as from April 2019, sales of stamps have totalled over £9,900 just in the 7 months until October. Many thanks to our supporters for this – you may also have noticed that your copy of the Review has probably been mailed to you using CASSS stamps. Selling stamps is an important source of revenue for CASSS, supporting our work in Sudan and South Sudan, so please do consider contacting the team via the website, if you can.

Lambeth Conference 2020

The Lambeth Conference is taking place from 22nd July – 3rd August 2020 in Canterbury, under the theme “God’s Church for God’s World: walking, listening and witnessing together”. A hugely significant event in the life of the Anglican Church, it brings together all active bishops and their spouses from across the worldwide Anglican Communion in 165 countries. Ahead of this, there will be a hospitality initiative run by Salisbury Diocese, welcoming all bishops and their spouses for around 6 days to the Salisbury area. A party from Sudan will also visit Leeds Diocese. Plans are still being finalised, but it is hoped that this will be a great opportunity for CASSS members to engage with Bishops from the Sudans directly. Watch our Spring 2020 edition for more details.



Pope Francis and Archbishop Justin Welby plan joint visit to South Sudan

The Vatican and Lambeth Palace have announced that the first joint visit by a Pope and an Archbishop of Canterbury could take place in South Sudan early next year. The news came after a private audience between Pope Francis and Archbishop Justin Welby at the Vatican on 13th November. The Pope and the Archbishop of Canterbury agreed that, if the political situation in the country should allow the establishment of a transitional government of national unity in the next 100 days, at the expiry of the agreement signed in recent days, they intend to visit South Sudan together.

Political Situation update – December 2019

The recent Salisbury Sudan Quarterly Bulletin contained the following comprehensive political update on both Sudan & South Sudan, which we replicate here:

The Sudans are challenging places. Surprisingly the journey towards peace and democracy in Sudan (the North) has been making real progress with an agreed three-year plan in which the new Prime Minister Abdalla Hamdok was appointed by the new Sovereignty Council of Sudan which superseded the Transitional Military Council. PM Hamdok's university studies were Sciences at Khartoum, and a PhD in Economics at Manchester, and he has worked for the UN and international banks in the region. Amongst his passions for revitalizing life for the people of Sudan are agriculture and women's rights. He believes that Africa could be food self-sufficient, but he also recognizes the threat of global warming and he is aware that "300 million Africans are hungry".

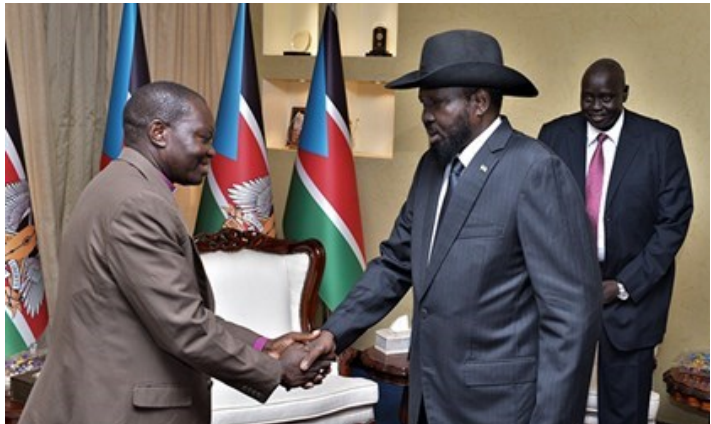
The long conflict with South Sudan and other internal forces and the loss of oil revenues following independence of the South has exacerbated the crisis. Following increasing unrest and a demand for democracy, President Omar al-Bashir, who had been in power since 1989 and had led the independence talks with the South, was removed earlier this year by his own armed forces and charged with inciting and participating in the killing of protesters, and with corruption and money laundering. He had already been indicted by the International Criminal Court (ICC) for genocide in Darfur and still faces trial for those crimes. The 'Forces of Freedom and Change Alliance' (FFC) now holds political power in Sudan during the 39-month transition to democracy and governance and it is encouraging to note that the ruling council includes two women, one of whom is a minister in the Coptic Church. The Primate of the Episcopal Church of Sudan, Archbishop Ezekiel Kondo, is working with the new government to sustain freedom of worship and justice for all in his province.

Ironically, the long-awaited inception of the South Sudan Revitalized Transitional Government of National Unity (RTGoNU) on the 12th November, chaired initially by Omar al-Bashir, was unsurprisingly not delivered. Meeting the demands of the agreement endorsed by the East African group of countries known as the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD) is full of very difficult and deeply interrelated challenges in which the two major parties involved, led by President

Salva Kiir and Vice-President Riek Machar, the leader of the SPLM-IO (the opposition), still do not trust one another.

Whilst it is generally agreed that the ceasefire is just about holding, the challenge for the leadership and the Troika (UK, USA and Norway) as guarantors of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) and IGAD and the UN is how to resolve these major interrelated issues. They centre around the cantonment of armed forces from both sides in suitable locations where they can be taught to work and live and train together and be fed as South Sudanese into a unified force rather than members of tribes and clans holding resentments and grudges for past atrocities.

In parallel, and directly related to this task, is the settlement on the number of internal states within South Sudan, and where their borders should be drawn. Until recently there were ten states and President Kiir is



Archbishop Justin Badi Arama meeting with President Salva Kiir

proposing 28 (and possibly 32) states. This draws into the equation ever more local ancient traditions and issues of identity and loyalty, and aspirations for new local governors to establish independent authority – including basic issues of grazing rights and freedom to roam for example.

It is proving to be very hard to resolve these issues, hence a further 100 days for the parties to reach agreement. The South Sudan Council of Churches have a major role to play in seeking peace across all tribes and people and we continue to support them and the Justice and Peace Committee of the Episcopal Church of South Sudan (ECSS) with the help of Christian Aid and other agencies. The end of February 2020 is not far away.

Please continue to pray for both Sudan and South Sudan.

Samson's Story – A church within a church.

An article written by Jo Hunt, CASSS Secretary

Reverend Samson Pitia is a priest in South Sudan. He was ordained in Khartoum Diocese and served there until around 2013 when he returned to what is now South Sudan, the newest nation on earth. He was assigned to a small church, St Thomas, in the Kugi residential area of Juba. As pastors in South Sudan are not paid a stipend he also found work as a Religious teacher in a secondary school. He found that the church there was too small for the number of people attending and decided that he should do something about it. He called the people together to discuss the issue and suggested that they should build a new church. Despite a shortage of money, Samson encouraged them to try to do something with the skills that they had.



*Reverend Samson standing by his
'church within a church'*

A day was set aside for the start of the project which was gathering stones and aggregate from the nearby mountain. The women of the MU got together to cook a big meal and the men dug out the stone blocks needed for the foundation and the people set to work to build the foundations. The chief of the area was very impressed and pleased that such a large church was being built in his area and so he donated a substantial amount of money to help with the work. This enabled the parish to buy blocks and get to work on the next stage and the church was completed with a fine corrugated iron roof. The inside of the church was beautifully tiled. The Archbishop was asked to consecrate it and he congratulated the pastor and the people on the fine building.

Samson was transferred to a new parish, St Andrew's in Gudele residential area and was made rural dean in charge of 6 parishes. The people here have now built a new church around the old one using the same plot of land. They have completed the foundations and the walls. When the roof is on then the old church will be demolished and the new one stand in its place. Next to St Andrew's church is a school built by the people of local materials. There is a great desire for education and people in South Sudan want progress and will work for it.



THE CHURCH ASSOCIATION FOR SUDAN & SOUTH SUDAN

Registered Charity No 1180881.

MEMBERSHIP

Anyone who wishes to support the purposes of CASSS and shares its Christian convictions is welcome to apply to become a member by signing up on the website or by completing the form below and sending it to the Membership Secretary.

Members will receive the CASSS magazine 'Review' twice per year and may vote at any general meeting of CASSS, including the election of trustees. The current membership subscription is a minimum donation of £20 per year, which may be paid via the website, or by Standing Order, cheque or bank transfer. A Standing Order form will be sent on request.

CASSS Bank details: Barclays Bank 20-76-92 Account: 63265064

For members and those who sign up for the e-mail newsletter CASSS needs to hold limited personal information, such as name and address, for the purposes of communicating with you and confirming legal requirements surrounding Gift Aid. This information is stored securely and is only used for CASSS purposes. It will not be provided to any third party other than a postal delivery agent contracted to send out our publications (e.g. The Review) or an e-mail agent used to send electronic communications (e.g. MailChimp), who will only use the information for CASSS purposes.

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM

Send to: Mr Andrew Persson (CASSS), 1 Rutters Close, Kidlington, OX5 1SN

E-mail: andrew.m.persson@gmail.com

NAME/S: _____

ADDRESS: _____

_____ **POSTCODE:** _____

SIGNATURE/S: _____ **Date** _____

If you would like to receive our e-mail bulletins of church news from Sudan and South Sudan, please provide your e-mail address/es

E-MAIL ADDRESS: _____

E-MAIL ADDRESS: _____

Please tick this box if your donations would be eligible for Gift Aid . We will be in contact with you to ask you to sign a Gift Aid declaration



For contact details for the Provinces and Dioceses for the Episcopal Church of Sudan (ECS) & the Episcopal Church of South Sudan (ECSS) see 'About the churches' on the website.

www.casss.org.uk