

SUDAN CHURCH REVIEW



Spring 2023

Magazine of the Church Association
for Sudan and South Sudan
supporting the Episcopal Churches of Sudan and South Sudan



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FOR SUDAN AND
SOUTH SUDAN

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FRONT COVER PHOTO

Photo: Day One of the Ecumenical Pilgrimage of Peace in Juba, South Sudan in February.

Credit: Lambeth Palace

Co-Chairs' introduction

by the Revd Pauline Walker

I'm sure all our hearts are in turmoil at what is happening in Sudan, as well as many situations in South Sudan. You may have heard Primate of Sudan Archbishop Ezekiel Kondo being interviewed on BBC radio 4 recently. He and his family, together with many of the people, including children, who had run to the church for safety, had to flee as the cathedral compound was broken into and occupied by the Rapid Support Forces. Even on the radio as he spoke we could hear the sound of guns firing around him as he told the interviewer: "I was born in war; but it was never anything like this!" The fighting continues with no foreseeable let-up, even though cease-fires have been promised.

We have managed to keep in touch sporadically with Archbishop Ezekiel and with others who have intermittent power and internet. But we suspect much damage has been done to the Cathedral buildings and vehicles have been taken, as has happened to many homes, offices and hospitals in the rest of Khartoum and in other places in Sudan. So we continue to pray. We are still hoping we will be able to receive at least a video message from Archbishop Ezekiel at our upcoming AGM on June 17th (see AGM details later in the magazine or on the CASSS website), so we hope he will be able to update us then.

Among other speakers at the AGM we also hope to hear from Archbishop Justin Badi with some of what is going on in South Sudan. There are still areas of sporadic conflict there, mainly from the cattle herders bringing their herds into the agricultural areas. One such event happened on the eve of the otherwise successful and encouraging visit to Juba of the Pope, the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland in February. Conflict broke out in Kajo Keji and 27 people were killed in Kajo-Keji that day. During their visit the Archbishop of Canterbury joined the others in imploring the nation's leaders to bring peace to their country. The Church has a huge role to play in reconciliation, trauma healing and forgiveness.

As CASSS we continue to stand alongside and support the churches of Sudan and South Sudan, together with other partners helping where we

continued on page 6

A Sudanese pastor has said he has never been more afraid for Sudan in his life. Last year we were saying how fragile life felt in Sudan, but now the balance of power has collapsed as the army fights to hold down its own paramilitary arm. Unimaginable urban warfare has broken out as they concentrate their firepower on each other's strategic positions, regardless of the massive destruction inflicted on ordinary citizens.

Up to now, Khartoum is the worst impacted area, but there's also severe fighting in the far west of Sudan. The extraordinary thing is that the battles are fairly compact, and five miles away from them there is relative calm. Roads however are not safe for travel, with armed checkpoints looting from travellers and killing those who resist. Time and again the reports of such atrocities blame the paramilitaries, schooled in merciless, lawless fighting in the long Darfur conflict.

Through this conflict, CASSS has sought to maintain contact with Archbishop Ezekiel and other Episcopal Church leaders in Sudan. Their news has been grim, telling us of no availability of food or water, and days without electricity and internet. In four weeks of fighting, we know of only one ECS person who has been wounded, by shrapnel, but key staff are displaced from their homes in central Khartoum and Omdurman because of the danger. The cathedral and main offices in Khartoum have been taken over by the paramilitaries, and are thought to have sustained much damage. They have also raided the offices in Omdurman, but nobody can visit either location to assess the damage.

CASSS has also kept contact with other partners in England who may help re-establish the ECS when the fighting ends. We had just transferred a £100,000 grant for building works for the Province's income generation scheme when this war started. That's still needed as part of helping ECS on the long road to be self-supporting, but now some staff will need help putting their homes back together and offices will need re-equipping and repairing. It is so sad to hear of such suffering and the destruction of what has taken so much effort to build up.

Leeds Diocese has been sending funding to Port Sudan and Wad Medani, which are flooded with refugees, but we can only wait for a route for funding to reach Khartoum.



Please pray for the Church in Sudan.

*We bring before you Lord the cries for help,
the tears and vulnerability of your people.*

*We bring before you the feeling of powerlessness,
the deep fears and suffering of your people.*

Bless our brothers and sisters in Sudan.

*You know our needs and feel our pain:
hear our cries and heal our wounds.*

In Jesus name.

Pray for Sudan!

نصلي من اجل السودان

Update Message received by Revd Pauline Walker in late May from Archbishop Ezekiel Kondo



"The Church turned into an RSF Station

Episcopal Anglican Church of Sudan, All Saints Cathedral Amarat Khartoum Street one was occupied by the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) and turned it into a Station! The main gate was broken and doors of the offices, Beit Alsalam conference hall, Provincial office and Church vehicles including Archbishop's. RSF have stolen Diocesan vehicle from Diocesan office in Omdurman having threatened the guard at a gun point! Nobody knows what might have happened to the rest of Church property.

The Church Leadership and the entire Episcopalian Christians condemn this disrespectful act that can happen to the House of God.

We demand immediate exit and withdrawal of these forces from the Cathedral compound and that such act doesn't happen again to any worship place."

Co-Chairs' introduction *continued from page 3*

can, and you will see some of this in the articles ahead in the magazine (though please note that a number of the events described took place before the conflict started in Sudan). We thank you all for your continued support, and we do encourage anyone else whose regular standing order was stopped during the mysterious closure of our Barclays account (which is thankfully now fully restored!), to renew the standing order if possible, if you have not managed to do this yet. And of course we welcome any new contributions! We will be looking for ways we can particularly help the people of the Church of Sudan once we can work out ways to get money into Khartoum (which is impossible at present).

Even in the midst of all the problems God is still working and we give him praise, while crying out to him to intervene and bring peace and restoration to these troubled countries. Please continue to pray with us.

Pauline



Bishop Jackson conducting a confirmation service

Diocese of Juba update

The capital city of South Sudan, Juba, is one of the 61 Dioceses of the Episcopal Church of South Sudan and, by most measurements, is amongst the largest of the dioceses.

The diocese has 56 parishes (including several hundred churches in the city and beyond). Archbishop Justin Badi is also the Bishop of Juba and much of the day-to-day leadership and administration of the diocese falls to the Assistant Bishop, the Rt Rev'd Jackson George Gabriel.

The diocese has developed its ministry in various areas, including an Evangelism Department, a particularly strong Mothers' Union, a large Youth ministry and an Education Department, which runs 9 primary schools and a very successful secondary school in South Sudan, the Juba Diocesan Model Secondary School (JDMSS).

The Diocese of Juba is often referred to as the 'Mother Diocese' as it has in the past led the way in setting up both ministry and programmes that other dioceses have then followed. The work of the diocese in nurturing the microfinance and water, sanitation and hygiene development (WaSH) programmes has now spread to other dioceses. Both the Archbishop and the Assistant Bishop are involved in confirmation services, which can involve up to 200 candidates for confirmation.

A particular need that the diocese has is to train more clergy, specifically in preaching & teaching, to minister in the large (and expanding) number of churches. Discipleship and evangelism training is also starting in the diocese, not only directed towards clergy but also involving those in local church congregations & communities. Overall, the diocese leads the way in many areas for other dioceses to follow. Future plans include opening another secondary school as demand for JDMSS is much higher than the school can cope with. Please remember to include the ministry in the Diocese of Juba in your prayers.

A Visit to the Episcopal Church of South Sudan

Between the 22nd and 27th of January 2023, Doug Ingram, Chief Operating Officer of the Relay Trust, visited the Episcopal Church of South Sudan (ECSS) to support the facilitator training of the Anglican Discipleship Program (ADP), to visit The Episcopal University (TEU), and generally to visit and get to know members of the ECSS. Despite the significant challenges across the country, the atmosphere in Juba was calm, and the ECSS welcomed Doug with tremendous kindness.

During my visit, I met with Archbishop Justin Badi, who has declared a "Decade of Discipleship" throughout the church, with the ADP being the first major action to enable this vision. The ADP is currently a five-year project to train clergy and catechists to enable them to disciple their flocks across the ECSS. It has evolved from an ECSS proposal to Relay Trust in August 2022 and has evolved into a programme, which, in the first stages, will incorporate the SEAN International Abundant Life basic discipleship course and a bespoke Anglicanism Course designed by the ECSS for the ECSS. It is an evolving project, which aspires also to incorporate the non-literate basic discipleship formation provided by the Rooted in Jesus courses.

This is set in the context of the need for discipleship across the Church to help transform the lives of its people but also to combat the threats of the Prosperity Gospel, other self-styled 'Anglican' churches in South Sudan, and false gospels that are being preached. They are also concerned about the lack of youth engagement in the church. The church hopes the ADP will help combat some of the causes and has included children's ministry training and children's curriculum development in the grassroots strategy.

I also visited The Episcopal University (TEU), where a number of opportunities for support were identified, including supporting staff salaries, accommodation, lecture space, general renovation and improvements, equipment, the library, and a printing press. We also discussed the provision of internet to TEU, the ECSS Guest House and the Provincial Offices, which will soon be supported through Anglican International Development.

Rev Richard Moy, Director of SOMA UK, and his SOMA South Africa colleagues travelled to South Sudan at the same time as me. We met to discuss the feasibility of also coordinating the Youth Leadership workshops they are undertaking with the ADP. The SOMA team then also travelled to Yambio to deliver the first rotation of this training.

It was a very interesting and productive visit, which we hope will develop the grassroots training across the church in years to come.



Photos: (clockwise from top) Meeting with Archbishop Justin, ADP facilitators, The ADP facilitator training in the ECSS Guest House





Episcopal Church of Sudan Provincial Training Workshop: Building the Future of the Church

Photo: Ladies from the Mother's Union from across the Episcopal Church of Sudan

An article written by Doug Ingram of the Relay Trust, pre-dating the recent outbreak of fighting in Sudan. Photographs courtesy of the ECS.

From 20-23 February 2023, the Provincial Peace Building in Khartoum played host to the Episcopal Church of Sudan (ECS) Provincial Training Workshop. The workshop was a resounding success, with engaging discussions, excellent facilitation and a real sense of the Holy Spirit guiding the work of all in the room.

The Provincial Training Workshop brought together a diverse group of attendees from across the Episcopal Church of Sudan. Along with representatives from the Provincial Headquarters and five for each of the dioceses, the workshop also saw the participation of two members from Shokai Theological College, representatives from Project for Theological Education by Extension (PTEE) in Jordan, the head of theological training from the Anglican Communion Office (ACO), the archbishop leading TEE roll out in South Sudan, members of CASSS, and members from the Relay Trust. The participation of such a diverse group of individuals helped in bringing



different perspectives to the table and facilitated a fruitful discussion.

In addition to the aims of building an understanding of the situation of the ECS and developing a plan to meet its needs, the workshop also aimed to create an environment of wisdom and understanding, where all attendees could come together and share their

The attendees of the Provincial Training Workshop outside All Saints Cathedral

thoughts and ideas in a peaceful and collaborative manner. The workshop encouraged open dialogue and discussions that allowed for different perspectives to be heard and for a collective plan from the people of the church to be developed.

The workshop followed a well-designed format, consisting of worshipping the Lord, devotionals, short presentations, workshop discussions in groups, and plenary feedback sessions. The workshop was expertly facilitated by Canon Andy Wheeler and the fantastic administration (and superb catering) by the ECS contributed to the success of the workshop.

The workshop also saw the introduction of the Five Marks of Mission, which provided a framework to consider training development across the ECS. The Five Marks of Mission include: proclaiming the good news of the kingdom, teaching, baptizing and nurturing new believers, responding to human need by loving service, seeking to transform unjust structures of society, and safeguarding the integrity of creation. The adoption of these marks as a method of categorizing training development is a significant step in the right direction for the ECS and will provide a comprehensive

Canon Andy Wheeler expertly leading the workshop



Photo: Bishop Ismail of El Obeid leading the Workshop in prayer

approach to training development.

The final day of the workshop resulted in an outline action plan, which included a long-term development plan for training within the ECS, the identification and request of funding, the establishment of an ECS Training Commission, the restructuring of STC, the re-tuning of the TEE program, and the establishment of diocesan centres. The workshop provided the outline and input for the development of a ten-year training and development strategy for the future of training within the ECS and set the foundation for training across the church for many years to come.



STILL DANCING, STILL THANKFUL **Extracts from a report of a recent visit made** **by CASSS trustees to Sudan in early 2023**

by John Poole

(This visit was made prior to the recent outbreak of trouble in Sudan.)

Travelling around Khartoum, it's common for visitors to take taxis. Buses are of course much cheaper but they take quite a lot more Arabic, and so visitors are defeated before they start. But this year there weren't as many taxis around as there used to be. Hyperinflation has ground wages down compared with costs, and citizens have shifted to cheaper options.

Lack of cruising taxis is a small, surface sign of deep problems for ordinary people. In Sudan, inflation this January was 84% compared with the previous January. For church staff, wages were already minimal but the explosion of



prices over the last three years has rendered them inadequate. The church simply cannot keep up with the rising tide. Collections are down and income generation schemes constantly lag behind. Parish clergy are paid nothing, either having separate employment or dependant on the offerings of their congregation. From the annual funding that CASSS gives, all the ECS bishops are receiving a small stipend which frees them to concentrate on their work. But faced with life sunk in such difficulty how do the congregations still rejoice when they meet? How is it that they are still dancing and not lost in pain? When praise begins they dance, celebrating Jesus in whom they know their future is assured: "Do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God." (Isa 41:10)

Ahmad Ibrahim is based in Omdurman, from where he leads the Prison & Hospital Chaplaincy service for the Diocese of Khartoum. Ahmad works ecumenically, visiting seven prisons containing men and women and children, and describes his mission as working with Christians who do not go to church. He said he goes out, "to find them, to catch them." Many prisoners are completely cut off from their families and need a friend on the outside to help them. Ahmed is dedicated to being that friend for so many.

In the main women's prison, there are 200 women and 50 children. Ahmad's desire is to supply them with handcraft material, to show them alternative ways of surviving when they are released, to help them follow new paths. Khartoum Diocese has no funding for his work. In recent years, Leeds Diocese has provided help for teaching materials, medicines, Christmas & Easter celebrations, and transport costs for the evangelists as they go to the prisons, visit courts and follow up children in their homes while mothers are in prison. Ahmad said, "In the name of the Lord Jesus, we change the behaviour of prisoners so that they return to God remorseful, and God restores them to his fold, and they leave alcohol, murder, theft, harassing, arson, prostitution, fraud, asking God to find them the best living in their lives as long as they are alive." ***A full copy of the report is available on our 'Support to the Dioceses' page of the CASSS website.***



The Ecumenical Pilgrimage of Peace

3rd – 5th February 2023

Article taken from the Archbishop of Canterbury's website
www.archbishopofcanterbury.org

The Archbishop of Canterbury concluded his joint visit to South Sudan with the Pope and Church of Scotland Moderator by saying their ecumenical pilgrimage was "a sign to the world".

The pilgrimage by the Archbishop, Pope Francis and the Rt Revd Dr Iain Greenshields reflected their united concern for the people of South Sudan. It also expressed their desire to demonstrate the hope of reconciliation and unity after centuries of division between their churches.

Speaking on the last day of the joint visit by leaders of Roman Catholic, Anglican and Reformed traditions - the first of its kind in history - the Archbishop said: "We need constantly to be reminded, and I hope this trip reminds people, that the normal is for the Church to work as one."

"In South Sudan, my cry and prayer is for the human hearts of the leadership to be changed. When I was speaking there, you could hear the shouts from the crowd when any of us mentioned peace, the security of women, and the need for an end to corruption. The people of South Sudan are calling for peace. The leaders must give it."

Archbishop Justin was accompanied on the pilgrimage by his wife, Mrs Caroline Welby, who has made several visits to South Sudan to support women in the Church in their role as peacebuilders, particularly the wives of Anglican bishops and archbishops. The Archbishop was hosted in South Sudan by the Primate of South Sudan, the Most Revd Justin Badi.

The three spiritual leaders made their Pilgrimage for Peace "as servants" to "amplify the cries of the South Sudanese people."

Day One

The three leaders travelled to the Presidential Palace to meet with the President and Vice-Presidents of South Sudan. The Archbishop, Pope and

Moderator later addressed a gathering of political and civil society leaders and the diplomatic corps in the garden of the Presidential Palace.

Each Church leader gave their own address, urging political leaders to recommit to the peace process in South Sudan and respond to the suffering of the South Sudanese people.

Archbishop Justin shared his disappointment at the lack of progress, saying: "We had hoped and prayed for more. We expected more. You promised more," and said he looked forward to a positive impact from the Pilgrimage of Peace.



Day Two

On Saturday morning the Archbishop joined thousands of Anglicans for a Eucharist at All Saints' Cathedral in Juba, where he preached on hope despite ongoing violence and sectarian conflict in the country.

He added: "There is a darkness over South Sudan and many other countries in this world. But the light is not overcome by the darkness. The people of Christ are the light of this nation. If South Sudan finds peace, the world will find hope."

During the service the Archbishop commissioned a group of bishops, clergy and lay people from the Episcopal Church of South Sudan who are involved in grassroots mediation and peacebuilding efforts across the country.

The Archbishop later joined the Pope and Moderator at Freedom Hall in Juba where they met with people displaced by conflict in South Sudan. During the meeting the three leaders heard testimonies from young people growing up in displacement camps.

In his address Pope Francis said: "I see you with empty hands but hearts full of faith. You bear the burden of a painful past, yet you never stop dreaming of a better future."

Ecumenical Prayer for Peace

Over 50,000 people congregated that evening for the open-air service of Ecumenical Prayer for peace in South Sudan. Archbishop Justin called directly to young people as the future of the country, and condemned the sexual violence experienced by so many South Sudanese women. He urged the unity of Christians through the Love of God in Jesus Christ, saying: "Nothing can separate us from one another - because we share that love. My sister, my brother, will never, never be my enemy", passionately saying: "You are not forgotten."



Day Two: Open Air Service of Ecumenical Prayer for peace.

Day Three

The Archbishop and Moderator attended Mass with the Pope and around 70,000 worshippers at John Garang Mausoleum on Sunday morning.

Heralded by a 300-person choir and attended by the majority of political leaders in South Sudan, the Pope directly asked for all to "Leave the time for war behind and let a time of peace dawn!"

During the service the three leaders shared a unified sign of peace for the people of South Sudan. Speaking to reporters at the airport as they departed, Moderator Iain said that "strong words have been spoken. The truth has been spoken. To the heart as well as to the mind. I think the situation now clearly is this: that actions speak louder than words." □

Rooted in Jesus - South Sudan 2022

Rooted in Jesus is a course designed to help Christians grow as disciples of Jesus Christ. Published and supported by the Mathetes Trust, it is a series of study guides that anyone with a Bible and basic reading skills can use to start a small group to learn together about the Christian faith and what it means to be a Christian believer. It is normally introduced to a Diocese by way of a four day conference, with ~100 individuals nominated to receive training. A small team from the UK, working alongside a local co-ordinator(s) brings ministry and training that attendees can then share with family, friends, and neighbours back home. There is often an opportunity for a follow-up conference a year later to reinforce teaching and to encourage wider adoption of Rooted in Jesus small groups.

A recent visit by a team from the UK visited three dioceses within the internal province of Northern Bahr El Ghazal - Nyamlel, Aweil, and Wanyjok. They were joined by the Rooted in Jesus Co-Ordinator of Wanyjok Diocese, Luka Lual.



Street preaching

Nyamlel & Aweil Dioceses

In Nyamlel, there was a 4 day introductory conference held in St Peter's Cathedral. The team were encouraged by a thriving Mother's Union and many young people who were keen to learn more about Jesus. The teaching went well in this very young diocese and there were many encouragements in conversations with



clergy and laity alike. After travelling from rural Nyamlel, the team held a slightly shorter conference in Aweil staying in the newly constructed diocesan guest house there.

Wanyjok Diocese

In Wanyjok diocese, the conference largely took place under a huge tree Christians have been gathering under for many years. Situated next to a local church school, school children regularly came by to see what was happening. The Bishop, as in Nyamlel, was heavily involved in the conference and took many opportunities to speak and to teach all those gathered together.



Highlights and Prayer Points

Many children and young people have very few opportunities. With limited and uncertain resources, many families cannot afford to send their children to school with any consistency year on year. Education can easily become an idol, but it is also such an important tool for the development and growth of individuals and communities. This includes limited opportunities for Christians to learn and grow in their Christian life. Many cannot read or, including church pastors, only have basic literacy. It can be hard to engage with the written Scriptures! For this reason, central to Rooted in Jesus is the teaching of memory verses.

Many Christians, including Pastors all of whom are unpaid, spend the vast majority of their time working to provide for their family's daily needs. In the case of Pastors, the team heard stories of those who did not have money to send their children to school and who were slandered for not properly parenting them. Pray that the Lord would, in His wisdom and might, provide enough for their daily needs.



Education in South Sudan

Report of a visit by Carolyn Murray, MBE.

At the end of 2022, I had opportunity to visit South Sudan for a few weeks and spent time in Rokon, Awerail, Yambio and Yei.

I visited Rokon with the Bishop of the Diocese. The purpose was to look at a small kindergarten they are trying to start to see if I can help to give it a boost. It is important that we don't just 'do things for people,' so ensuring that the responsibility for long term sustainability will sit with the community rather than hoping for continuing grants. To do this I provided a starter pack with things such as a chalk board, stationary, a few balls and other resources as well as money for food for the children's first couple of terms and then will work with the community to make it sustainable long term. Since my visit, there have been community meetings and the parents are willing to pay towards the school fees and children's breakfast each day and 200 children have already started attending. As you can imagine, it's not easy to manage so many children in a small church building so the hope is that they can find funding to build some classrooms.



I also visited the orphanage and met an amazing lady - Kiden - who is looking after 27 children aged from 5-16, mostly orphans as a result of various conflicts. The challenges are many as she looks after the children on an almost non-existent budget.

Next stop was Awerail, which is a Dinka area. The Bishop there is very keen on girls' education. His mantra is 'educate a woman and you educate a whole village'. They have more than 400 girls at secondary level over two sites, but one building is near the river and floods and the other is falling down. The community are keen to build to enable their girls to have an education to benefit themselves and the community and to avoid childhood marriages. The girls are amazing young people who are very articulate and trying to make the most of the opportunities they have. They recited a poem they had written explaining the benefits of education for girls and challenging the adults to listen and act. The teachers are young and committed but not getting salaries so how long that is sustainable is hard to know. Their next challenge is to raise funding to start some small local businesses to support the staff salaries. In the long term they want to build a new school that won't flood.

At Kindergarten level there was no educational provision for the young children, so it was decided that if the large church building is utilised then, as in Rokon, if I helped with start-up needs it would be possible to set up a Kindergarten. The parents have now agreed to take responsibility for teachers' salaries and the children's breakfasts. Already (April 2023) children are being taught in several classes in the church building.

I then visited Yambio which is a place in Western Equatoria which I visited in the 1980s for one night. It was exciting to return and to see how, under the leadership of the Archbishop of Western Equatorial Internal Province and his wife, the people are working hard to develop educational opportunities for the children. There is a school in Yambio



that was started as a kindergarten but has grown into a primary school. They use an old, dilapidated building that isn't large enough and is earmarked for other uses in the near future. It's hard to pay the staff and resources are limited. We decided that one way to help the school survive and eventually thrive was to set up a small tailoring business and the proceeds would top up the school fees to pay the teachers' salaries.

There are many children in Yambio who don't have parental support and as a result many are living in the Bishop's House which is quite a challenge for a Bishop who has an intermittent and small salary, however, they somehow manage to feed, clothe and educate all the children they have become responsible for. I was impressed by their achievements, optimism and enterprise.

My three weeks in Yei were very busy as we prepared for the graduation of 86 children from Immanuel Kindergarten to Primary. It's a special time for the children and families as they celebrate 3 years of education and prepare for their primary years. This time was extra special, as half of these children will be able to move to Primary 1 in our new building, which we opened on the same day. In previous years, only a few of our children could be accommodated in the local school and others have had to go much further afield because of lack of space. Over the next years we will slowly develop the primary section. At the start of the new school year the first Primary class opened. Next year those children will move to Primary 2 and some of our top class Kindergarten children will become Primary 1 and each following year we will add a new class. The challenge will be once the current block is full, but I have challenged the parents to start fundraising now to build extra classrooms!!

The new governors and the school leadership are doing an amazing job in meeting the many challenges the death of the previous headteacher brought for the school. Ferida, our headteacher, had a baby boy in early November and was already back at work when I visited later that month, bringing the baby with her.

A generous donor has supported the development of a bookshop, which is a major income generator to help with the day to day running costs of the kindergarten. We have been renting a small building but the plan is to build our own, as this will reduce overheads. It will include a small cafe area for people to drink tea and take cold juices, so we hope that the contribution to the running costs of the school will increase as there are pressing needs.

Apart from the need for more classrooms in a few years, there is need for additional latrines and the renovation and extension of the existing fence to include all the school land including the school garden. This would keep the crops secure and give the children more room to play as well as secure the land for future development.

Everywhere I went, I was struck by how hard women are working to support, not only education, but also their church and community. A project of special interest to me is to support women to make reusable sanitary pads for the girls (so they don't miss school for a week every month) and the women themselves. Again all they ask for is an initial boost to buy the first sewing machines and fabric and then they will sell the pads at affordable prices and use the profits to buy more fabric and develop their businesses. Already some of the women have taken advantage of these opportunities and the progress made in a few months is impressive.



New Primary 1 building in Yei

Despite many challenges in Yei, Rokon, Awerail and Yambio, progress is being made at all levels of education. The people are amazingly resilient and work hard to create a future for the children. The hope is that these young people will have opportunity to access a good education so giving them the tools to help make South Sudan a safe and prosperous country. □

OUR FUNDING IN 2022

by John Poole, Honorary Treasurer, CASSS

At the beginning of last November, we suffered an enormous shock when our bank, Barclays, closed our bank accounts, leaving us unable to receive income or make payments. After agitation by our trustees and valuably also by our members, they reversed their action two months later. They have been evasive about why they did it, avoiding giving us any explanation. Their action has caused us some loss of income, and we have taken steps to find a second banking relationship to mitigate the risk of such an event happening again.

Nevertheless, our income from donors has held up well due to our supporters' commitment to the church in Sudan and South Sudan. Our fundraised income from stamps is down this year, perhaps mainly affected by the Royal Mail strike action happening at our peak sales time, plus uncertainty caused by the new barcoded stamps. We are grateful for the support of the Barnet team who retired this year, and for Jill Parry who has continued to manage sales for us.

Our grant giving reached new, high levels as we used the opportunity of last year's large legacy to invest in an income generation scheme in Juba. This will be matched in 2023 with funding for a similar scheme in Khartoum. We have thoroughly investigated both schemes, and are putting money in as part of our continuing hope that ECS and ECSS can in some measure be self-supporting.

Not included in the table overleaf, the value of our investments fell in 2022 – though not by as much as it rose in 2021. During the year we had an independent review done of our investments, and plan this year to use the outcome of that to update our holdings.

SUMMARY OF OUR GENERAL FUND 2022

INCOME	
£29,670	From donations
£2,550	Net income from selling stamps
<u>£17,760</u>	Interest and dividends received
£49,980	<i>total normal income</i>
£6,920	Legacies
<u>£56,900</u>	
EXPENDITURE	
£134,400	Grants to ECS & ECSS
£6,870	Our magazine & website
£4,200	Visits to ECSS
<u>£145,470</u>	

In Sudan, inflation this January compared with the year before was 84%. In South Sudan the rate is running at over 20%. Holding reserves here during their difficulties has value for both ECS and ECSS.

In terms of special income, we were pleased to receive £78,400 from the estate of Dennis Olds to provide scholarships. In addition, because of our working relationship with ECS we have continued to manage funding for them from the Archbishop of Canterbury's Anglican Communion Fund. Bursary grants were given for students from Omdurman.

Copies of our full accounts will be available at our AGM on Saturday June 17th, or on request from our Treasurer, and soon also from the Charity Commission website.

STATEMENT BY BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF CASSS

At its April Meeting the Board of Trustees of CASSS spent some time discussing the implications for our work of the recent decision by the General Synod which has caused much upset in the whole Communion, including the leaders of the Episcopal Churches of Sudan and of South Sudan. We are sensitive to the role that Archbishop Justin Badi must play as the Chair of the Global South Forum and of the letter that both he and Archbishop Ezekiel have signed expressing their concern at the proposed change.

The trustees concluded that the issue is of such sensitivity and contention, even within our own church, that we are not in a place or at a time when the issue can be resolved. Instead we believe that there is a journey that we must travel together and that we need to remain in relationship and keep walking together until such time as we reach a place when the disagreement can be resolved. To that end our intention is to continue to support both the Episcopal Churches of South Sudan and of Sudan in the same way as we have done from the time our Association was formed and hope that our Sudanese brothers and sisters will want to continue in fellowship with us. Under the objectives of our charity our role is to support the advancement of the Christian faith in the Provinces of the Episcopal Church of Sudan and the Episcopal Church of South Sudan and to work for the relief of poverty in Sudan and South Sudan. It is not to comment on the theological differences between various parts of the Anglican Communion, and our intention is to remain completely faithful to those objectives.

MAKING THE LOVE OF GOD VISIBLE **Extracts from a report of a visit made by** **CASSS trustees to Sudan in early 2023**

by John Poole

(This visit was made prior to the recent outbreak of trouble in Sudan.)

Visiting Sudan in March was a challenging but uplifting experience. We were severely tested by scorching sunshine and rough roads, but also riveted by the Sudanese Christians irrepressible joy in knowing God. It is hard for us to rise to their compelling level of faith whilst at the same time being stunned by the daily circumstances they have to overcome. Yet repeatedly we saw ways in which the church in Sudan is not just surviving, but reaching into the forgotten corners of their own world, making the love of God visible.

Milano Gibrail is the Chancellor of Wad Medani Diocese. He spoke with quiet wonder about the achievements of an outreach team he had participated in.

Led by Bishop Saman Farjalla, a team of eleven people from Wad Medani travelled to the southern edges of the diocese to visit refugee camps pitched along the White Nile near Al Jabalayn.

In the camps they found some ECSS clergy, but no organized leadership. During the time of their visitation they consecrated four church centres, ordained six deacons and two priests who had papers from Uganda, licensed nine lay readers and 44 Mothers Union workers. 252 people were confirmed amongst the 3,000 who joined the Episcopal Church at that time. Milano said, "The Lord magnified our work: we were filled with joy, and give thanks and glory to the Lord."

Many miles north, on the Blue Nile, are two church centres founded in 2015. The Diocese of Wad Medani established them to carry out its vision of transforming society through the establishment of Christian religious, spiritual, social and moral values.

At Wad Rawah we met with the Church of the Good Shepherd, their building crammed with people including many children. The church centre is at the outer edge of the village on barren ground. The congregation long for a kindergarten and a church school, to help their children. But they have no land registered for the church, and are anxious that their building and even their very homes may be bulldozed with little warning. Everything is so much more established compared with life in the camps, but still there is no abiding place for them. ***A full copy of the report is available on our 'Support to the Dioceses' page of the CASSS website.***



CASSS Communications Review

CASSS communications have evolved in last 5 years and, in addition to a new look Sudan Church Review that is produced every 6 months, the changes have included a more developed website and also regular e-mail newsletters sent to those who have signed up to receive them.

We would like to know what our supporters think of our communications going forward and whether you have any suggestions for improvement that we can incorporate.

Therefore, we would be very grateful if you could take a few minutes to give us your feedback. You can go online and provide your answers electronically via the following SurveyMonkey link:

<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/WWW2G35>

or you can write to us with your comments at **info@casss.org.uk** or, by post, to 28-30 Main Street, Felton, Northumberland. NE65 9PN.

Thank you.

AGM 2023

The Annual General Meeting of
The Church Association for Sudan &
South Sudan (CASSS) will be held at

**ANNUAL
GENERAL
MEETING**

12.00noon on Saturday 17th June

at St Andrew's Church, Short Street, Waterloo, London SE1 8LJ.

All members and subscribers are welcome. There will be a series of updates on the situation in Sudan and South Sudan from those who have recently visited.

We look forward to welcoming you!



THE CHURCH ASSOCIATION FOR SUDAN & SOUTH SUDAN

Registered Charity No 1180881.

DONATIONS

Donations for support of the churches in Sudan and South Sudan are always welcome. If you donate £20 or more per year and let us have your address we will send you the **SUDAN CHURCH REVIEW twice yearly.**

Donations may be made by bank transfer to:

Barclays Bank, sort code 20-76-92, account no. 63265064

If you need a Standing Order form, please complete and send the form below.

For donations by cheque please complete the form below and send it with your cheque, made out to CASSS.

To the Hon. Treasurer, CASSS:

Mr John Poole, 23 Leylands Lane, Bradford, BD9 5PX

(treasurer@casss.org.uk)

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

POSTCODE: _____ **E-MAIL:** _____

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SIGNATURE: _____ **Date :** _____

Your data: For those who receive our communications or who make donations with Gift Aid, CASSS needs to hold limited personal information, such as name and address, in order to keep you informed and confirm legal requirements. We promise to keep your details safe and never to use them, or provide them to any third party, other than for CASSS purposes.



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