

SUDAN CHURCH REVIEW



Summer 2026

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-President

The Rt Revd Nicholas Baines

Co-Chairs

Revd Ian Wallace 38 Denzil Road, Guildford, GU2 7NQ
Tel: 07799 076697 ianwallace2057@icloud.com
Revd Pauline Walker pjwalker121@gmail.com

Honorary Treasurer

John Poole 23 Leylands Lane, Bradford BD9 5PX Tel: 01274 401679
treasurer@casss.org.uk

Secretary

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

Membership Secretary

Andrew Persson 1 Hardwick Avenue, Kidlington, OX5 1BH
andrew.m.persson@gmail.com

Sudan Church Review and Website Editors

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

www.casss.org.uk

DONATIONS

For donations (regular or one-off) and subscription to the Sudan Church Review see the form on the inside back page, or the donate page of the website.

FRONT COVER PHOTO

*The Bishop of Kadugli leads a service under mango trees in Tobo county, Sudan.
Credit: John Inglis-Jones*

Chair's introduction

Revd Pauline Walker, Co-chair

First I would like to pay tribute to our former Chairman Michael Paget-Wilkes who, as his family put it, has now “changed location”. Michael did a tremendous amount for our organisation when we were still the SCA and then when we became CASSS. (See Sara Taffinder’s obituary for him on p.29ff.) He was not well in his last few years and by the end, in his own words, he was ready to go – although the Lord did detain him a little bit longer (see pg. 31)! We continue to pray for Michael’s family as they miss him greatly. Michael loved the Church of Sudan and South Sudan enormously and he was keen to hear news from them right up to the end.

Despite the awful things going on in each country, there are many good things currently happening in the church in both Sudan and South Sudan. In the midst of the widespread horrors of fighting, death, the impact of sexual violence being used as a weapon of war, displacements, shortages of basic commodities, and all the other horrors, the church itself struggles yet moves powerfully and with huge love and compassion. Most church leaders have stayed with their people even when many of them could have fled to a safer and more comfortable place themselves. The reports in the following pages highlight some of the church’s constant and faithful work and activities and also some of the ways in which we have the privilege of being able to help and can encourage them as they do this.

It is a further privilege to be able to get glimpses of these activities going on on the ground and seeing some of how the church leaders encourage their people through the difficulties and even manage to bring God’s joy and celebration into the midst of them all. In January this year Ian Wallace and I, as Co-chairs of CASSS, were able to visit the ECSS in Juba and were really impressed with what we saw. We stayed in the ECSS Guest house, where we were able to meet a number of Church leaders and members as they passed through and/or came for meetings. We were extremely encouraged by what the Church is doing throughout South Sudan, even in the more remote places. Archbishop Justin Badi has reorganised the Church structure so it works more efficiently and effectively, starting with the Provincial offices and departments and including regular twice-weekly Provincial staff prayer meetings. As we talked with the staff we noted how they are greatly encouraged by their Archbishop and think very highly of him.

Over the following days Archbishop Justin took us on a tour of Juba and its immediate surroundings, enabling us to see how Juba has changed in the last 6 years since I left there. It has grown enormously, yet the poverty in most areas is very obvious.



Pauline with Archbishop Justin in front of the new Cathedral being built alongside the current Cathedral, in order to accommodate the increasing number of attendees. It will seat 2000 people. He is trying to finish the building before his term ends in 3 years' time.

Inflation in South Sudan is astronomical and market prices are far beyond what most people can pay. Homes are randomly broken into and people are attacked and even killed. Funerals are taking place all the time. Many wages have not been paid for some years. Medical supplies are hard to get, if at all. Partly because of all this, and more, it is dangerous to walk alone in many areas as thieving and violence is rife.

Yet into this situation the church reaches out and brings care, comfort, and even hope and joy. One day Archbishop Justin told us that the next day he was taking us to a place where the local St. Philips's parish church was holding a Christmas celebration. We were a bit surprised to be going to a Christmas celebration as this was now the 26th January! But Justin explained that this was the last of the 23 "Christmas celebrations" they had held throughout this period, each in a different area of Juba, to bring the good news of God's hope into Juba's scattered communities. It became a highlight of our visit. Between 4000 and 6000 people gathered from other parishes and from areas around. Many parishes brought their own choirs to take part in the abundant singing and dancing, and the fear, suffering, and hunger were pushed to one side as everyone joined in the incredible atmosphere of joy and celebration that only Jesus can bring in such dire situations as those they are living in. Through this a clear Gospel message was communicated in a really effective and joyful way. And this is just one example of how the local churches have become havens for many local people. And the churches are growing, in discipleship as well as numbers.

So thank you for all your continued support as we stand alongside and help support the Church in Sudan and South Sudan, as they do what they can to alleviate the current suffering and bring God's compassion, life and love into the dire situations in the nations around them.



Keeping Hope Alive

Picture: Bishop Elsir & students at Korkel Theological College, ECS Diocese of Heiban

By John Poole, CASSS Trustee & Hon. Treasurer

The war in Sudan entered its fourth year last month. In the grounds of the burnt-out Church of the Saviour in Omdurman, 5,000 people gathered with Archbishop Ezekiel for a great celebration of the Risen Christ under the theme “Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever.”

In the past the church was an annual meeting point just for Episcopal Church of Sudan (ECS) Christians. This year it was for all Christians, a united service, a colourful ceremony with many tent shelters erected to shade the congregation. The State Director of Religious Affairs represented the Governor of Khartoum, showing national acceptance of the Christian community.

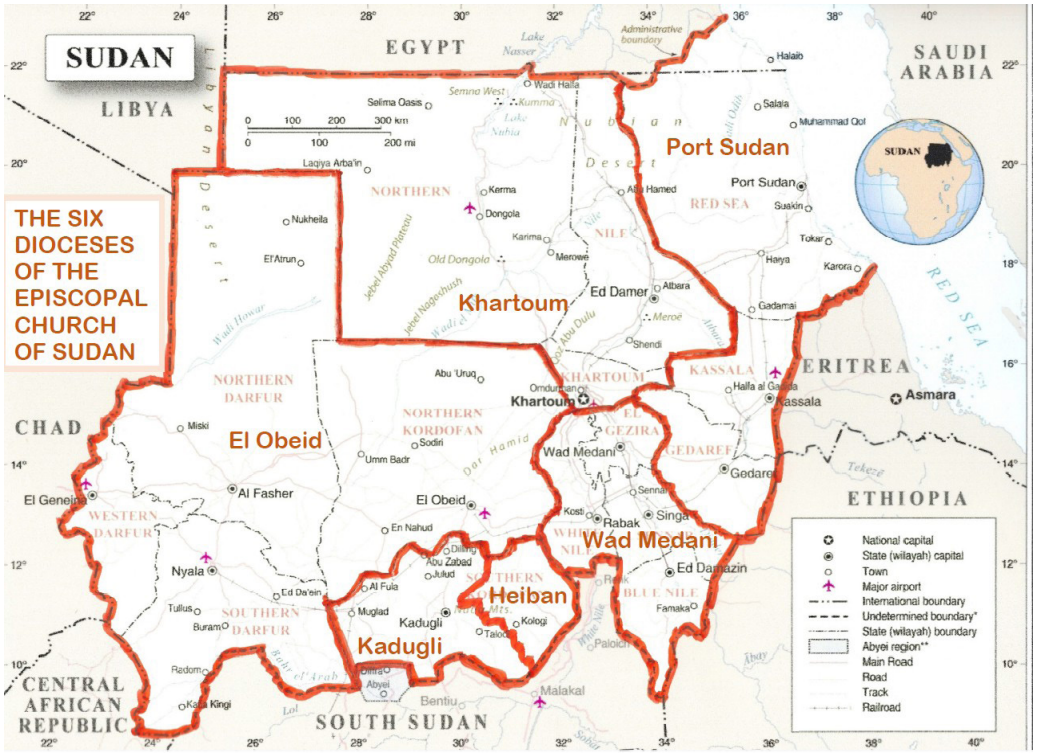
Archbishop Ezekiel also held services in Khartoum Cathedral on Good Friday and Easter Day - the first time in 3 years! It was a time of praise, and thanksgiving for God’s protection, despite the looting of many valuable and historical items from the building. “The congregation was much smaller than in the past, but I praise God that the cathedral has fully resumed its activities,” reports the Archbishop. He considers the congregation is an indication that life is returning to Khartoum, and hopes this

spreads across Sudan. Basic services are inadequate in some areas in Khartoum, but the government is working to restore security, water, electricity, health care and schools. "I have observed that NGOs and the U.N. are now returning to Khartoum," he said, "and daily flights from Port Sudan to Khartoum, including humanitarian services, which is a good sign of progress."

In the lead up to Easter, Assistant Bishop Fajak confirmed 150 people at St. Matthew's, Dar Salam, and St. Philip's, Mayo. 220 people were confirmed in Shendi and Atbara, River Nile State. "Thanks to all those who have supported us. Thank you for the many intercessors around the globe who are praying for the people of Sudan and for peace with justice."

SAYING YES TO LIFE

One pastor described the toll of the war: "If you go to the streets and hospitals, you see children suffering. No medicine, no schools, no life. Houses once full of joy are empty and destroyed. But despite the fighting, people are being drawn to the hope of Jesus. As a church, we are praying how we can be salt and light," he continued. "We learn from our Lord. They killed us, but we forgive them. We see new believers from many tribes. This is not because we are good: it is His work."





In other regions, the situation is much more violent. Escalating aerial attacks have caused civilian casualties and damaged health facilities and schools in Kadugli, Darfur, White Nile, and Blue Nile States. In North Darfur, in Tawila, the Revd Daramali Abudigin who was the last pastor in the besieged city of El-Fasher, called for increased efforts to end

the war. “We are seeing immense suffering. The people need food, medicines, and proper shelter. Food aid is distributed in the camp, but not everyone can access it.”

“Picture the mothers searching for food, children robbed of education, families forced from their homes and mourning loved ones. It has strained the resilience of our churches, traditional leaders, humanitarian agencies, and communities struggling to keep hope alive. The violence shows no sign of stopping. The war zone shifts day by day. Every day we hear of people dying – not by bullets, but sickness, diseases, and by being conscripted.”

LIGHT AND DARK IN THE MOUNTAINS

Recently, conflict has intensified in the area stretching toward Kadugli and the Nuba Mountains. Assistant Bishop Hassan reported that at least 100 civilians have been killed in Dilling (which is under Army control) since February by indiscriminate shelling and air strikes. Over 50,000 civilians are at severe risk: the city is encircled and repeatedly attacked by the paramilitary RSF and the Sudan People’s Liberation Movement North (SPLM-N).

In the Nuba Mountains, drone threats force the Church to gather beneath trees, away from buildings. In February, Bishops Andudu and Elsir led two to three hundred believers in a three-hour service under the trees. This act of worship captures the resilience, faith, and determination of the local church.

However, a recent conflict between the Otoro and Shwaia tribes near Korkel led to about 200 deaths and many burned homes. The Otoro tribe is majority Muslim with a

significant Christian minority, while the smaller Shwaia tribe is almost entirely Muslim. SPLM-N leadership asked Bishops Elsir and Andudu to support mediation. Bishop Elsir travelled into the area to engage with the tribal leaders. While official justice will follow, the bishops are leading mediation talks now, and Sudan Church Partners in America are funding peace meetings and larger, reconciliation conferences (see Sudan Church Partners article on page 21).



Bishop Andudu

SALT AND LIGHT

Outside the conflict, normal church work continues. The Kadugli Diocesan Evangelism Department runs a successful football league to engage youth, reach non-believers, and connect with Muslim lads. In the recent final, the Umgroban Archdeaconry Mountain Church of Zion defeated a team from Dongola Aljuz! The diocese also conducted training for 71 pastors, lay readers, and evangelists on the topic “Fasting and Prayer,” preparing them for an annual August outreach program.

Meanwhile, Korkel Theological College operates a large campus in Heiban Diocese built with funds from Relay Trust. The college has 51 students from various denominations and tribes, including nine women. Thirty-one students study in English and the remainder in Arabic. The campus still needs dormitories, library books, computers, internet, and electricity for evening study. Bishop Elsir of Heiban currently leads this lively work alongside his deputy, Wesley William, and a staff of eight tutors. They use a curriculum from the Nuba Mountains Institute in Cairo. It’s a stark contrast to Shokai Theological College in Omdurman, which remains shut due to the war.

Please continue to pray for the ministry of the Episcopal Church of Sudan.





Graham with members of the Bishop Allison Theological College Community

‘SHINING LIKE STARS’

A visit to South Sudan by Rev. Graham Buttanshaw, CASSS Trustee

27th February – 9th March 2026

What a privilege it is to be meeting old friends and making new ones in South Sudan, and especially in Juba which I’ve now visited 3 times in 3 years. My visit started and finished in Juba, with a 6-day visit to Yei in the middle.

THE EPISCOPAL UNIVERSITY (TEU)

TEU, based in Juba, was founded in 2015, opening its doors to accredited university students in September 2023. The ECSS Archbishop of South Sudan, the Most Rev. Justin Badi is the University Chancellor. TEU offers nationally accredited 4-year degrees in Theology and Law, and a 3-year Diploma in Theology. Evening classes are conducted in both disciplines, and various short courses also take place.

93 students study Theology and 78 study Law. A total of 171 students. TEU is a Christian University developing students holistically for professional leadership and service. Its motto is ‘Faithful Leadership Begins Today’.

The ‘main’ campus is in Juba, at the Bishop Gwynne site which is being expanded and upgraded. However, TEU is a multi-campus university, bringing together existing college sites run by the ECSS in Maridi, Wau, Yei and Kajokeji. It owns a large amount of land in Rokon for future development. Its ambitious vision is to open Schools of Business, Education, Agriculture and Nursing in the next 5 years.

See more at www.teu.edu.ss

A vital development for Church and the nation.

TEU is shaping the future leadership of the church. It brings together the best academically qualified men and women to live and study together for 3-4 years – breaking down barriers across tribal and geographical identities while forming future leaders of the Church. The church leadership that is being formed will shape the future of the nation.

Highlights of my visit

It was wonderful spending quality time with the very impressive staff: Dr Eeva John (Vice Chancellor), Rev Canon Dr Joseph Bilal (Deputy VC for Academic Affairs and Church Relations), the Rev Dr Abraham Maker (Dean of the School of Theology) and Dr James Aruma (Deputy VC for Affiliated Colleges). I also appreciated meeting students, and especially the 6 Bachelor of Theology students whom CASSS have begun to sponsor and 8 of the 14 women admitted to study for the Bachelor of Theology course this year.

There is much to be thankful for for all that been achieved in the fragile and insecure context of South Sudan.

CASSS supports TEU through our Training and Scholarships Fund.

We sponsor 6 Bachelor of Theology students at \$2,000 USD each year and we need to grow the CASSS scholarship and training fund. If you would like to contribute to our Scholarships and Training Fund, donations can be made to CASSS in the usual way (see the back page). An accompanying E-mail to the treasurer, or a note if sending a cheque will ensure we allocate your donation to the Scholarships and Training Fund.

Bachelor of Theology Students



BISHOP ALLISON THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE

BATC has been an itinerant college since starting life as Bishop Allison Bible School in Yei under Bishop Seme Solomona in 1993. It returned to its present site in Yei in 2022.

Janet and I arrived at BATC in 1995 when it was based in Koboko, N Uganda. When we left in 1999, it had relocated to Arua. Following my visits to South Sudan in 2024 and 2025, the Bishop of Yei, the Rt. Rev. Levi Marandulu, asked me to be a special envoy for the college.



BATC Site - Offices to the left, library & classrooms ahead

While I was in Yei in March, I spent time with BATC staff and students and made a decent start on sorting out the library. The Annual Pastors Conference was happening in Yei Cathedral and I spoke at that also.

With the Principal of BATC, we began to plan and write a newsletter to go out to our supporters (available now from batcyei.ecss@gmail.com). Listing the news gave us plenty to celebrate:

- The affiliation to TEU, whereby BATC has become a campus of the Episcopal University. This has already brought benefits such as a new solar system with good internet access, screens and some laptops.
- The Diploma Course created and validated by TEU, which BATC will teach in September. Ongoing support is promised by TEU with training and streaming some teaching.
- BATC has a new Principal – Rev Mark Sebit, formerly a teacher and chaplain at the college.
- A new 2-Year Certificate in Theology, which replaces the former 3-Year course.
- New students. 22 from Yei and other dioceses began the course in January.



Ground breaking ceremony

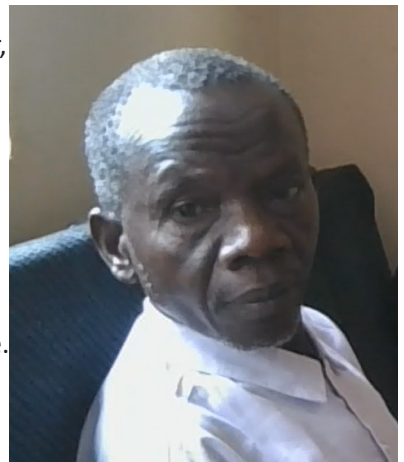
- A new accommodation block. Work has begun on building accommodation for 40 students; the result of a magnificent legacy from the will of Jane Pelly.
- A new water supply. A bore hole well has been drilled on site.
- A new motorcycle has been purchased.
- A large new plot of land (300m x 500m) available to BATC for farming to contribute to sustainability and food security
- A new teacher – Rev Dickson Losuba, a former diploma student and a graduate in IT.

The recent Groundbreaking ceremony

I've just had some pictures from Yei of the Groundbreaking ceremony. Bishop Levi takes a hoe and starts to dig the foundation for the new accommodation block. It is up and running. There are speeches and food. Praise the Lord! I love the way our Sudanese friends make the most of every opportunity to make an occasion, to come together and celebrate.

Franco

I met Franco Kenyi Enosa at BATC. He is a Lay Reader, and one of the new students at BATC. He had only 4 weeks of formal training before his licensing in 2016. He is softly spoken with excellent English. The civil war forced him to cut short his education after 2 years in secondary school. In exile in Uganda, he married Mary Kadi in 1993. They had 8 children: 5 sons and 3 daughters. He now has 3 sons and 2 daughters. 2 died during labour and 1 died aged one. He told me that he survived in Uganda, and paid his children's school fees, by farming land he was allocated.



In many ways his story is unremarkable in South Sudan. Child mortality is high – few families have not suffered the death of a child. What is remarkable to me, is the relationship with God that sustains him and so many in the same circumstances.

When I asked him how he survived as a refugee in Uganda, he began “Because of God’s love I just planted okra ...”. And about his children’s school fees: “I paid my students – that’s the wonderful thing God has done in my life because I have no job ... because of God’s grace I just survived. Little by little by God’s grace.”

To visit most places in Sudan or South Sudan is to meet people who know all about walking in the valley of the shadow of death. It is also to meet people who know that God is with them in that valley, and it is he who comforts and strengthens them as the words of Psalm 23 proclaim. Franco knows this. And through him God lightens our darkness.

Warm greetings to you all,



In late March I took over leadership of Anglican International Development (AID). We partner with churches in a handful of African countries, especially South Sudan, as they preach good news and serve their communities.

Prior to AID most of my overseas experience was in the Balkans, apart from a few months in Malawi and Sierra Leone. My wife, children and I lived in Kosovo for twelve years, working alongside local churches and often among marginalized communities. Just before Christmas, we moved back to the UK: the projects we had worked on were mostly under local leadership, plus a family bereavement brought us home to Tyneside, where I started work in AID’s Newcastle office.

While the cultural context in east Africa is very different from the Balkans, AID’s passion and priorities feel encouragingly familiar. We saw in Kosovo that even in communities stalked by violence, God would use local churches and ordinary believers to bring hope. AID has the same unshakable commitment to supporting local churches as they preach good news, promote peace, and love their neighbour in acts of service. As our Kenyan project officer

put it, “the church is the front person in the community, and the forever person in the community.” Even in my short period at AID, I have been humbled by tales of courageous faith in appalling situations. AID aims to stand alongside such faith-filled believers, providing resources and training to help their projects go even further. These projects range from borehole renovations, to theological education, to microfinance lending groups where women work to lift themselves out of poverty. A key task for me will be facilitating two-way relationships between UK and east African churches: raising financial support for east African projects projects, yes. But also, informing the UK church about developments in the global church, and disseminating wisdom and lessons learned by Christians living their faith in the toughest of places.



Remijo with sorghum in Lumuto IDP camp



Rina - one of the Microfinance clients

The collect for Easter Sunday talks of how Christ “overcame death and opened unto us the gate of everlasting life”. In Kosovo, I often prayed that the church would be a beacon of resurrection hope in the face of ethnic tension, poverty and trauma. In South Sudan, these evils are even more present, and hope seems even more necessary. I am praying that the gate of everlasting life, flung wide on Easter morning, would bring that hope in South Sudan. Please pray for me, and for AID, to play our own small part.

Robin Whaley

www.anglicaninternationaldevelopment.org

DEVELOPING TRAUMA HEALING IN SUDAN

by Rev'd Andy Wheeler,
CASSS trustee

The civil war in Sudan passed the 3rd anniversary of its commencement in April of this year. Following so many terrible reports from that country of everything that has happened since 2023, we are very concerned with developing a response for the Episcopal Church of Sudan (ECS) to the appalling suffering and trauma caused by the war in Sudan between military factions. Archbishop Ezekiel mentioned several times on his visit to UK in November 2025 the need for such programmes to be developed in the ECS for its own scarred and traumatized members, and also for the wider communities where they live. Suitable programmes would both exhibit good therapeutic and counselling practice and a rich encounter with the Bible.

Following Archbishop Ezekiel's visit, samples and resources were gathered of courses and programmes that had been used in various conflict situations in Africa, and elsewhere. In addition, Doug Ingram of Relay Trust and I visited the Archbishop who was in Cairo in January 2026. Two programmes were identified for possible use by the ECS.

The first one is the Emmaus Road Programme. This consists of two courses that are linked. Part 1 is a four- to five-day guided debrief process based on the story of the two disciples on the road to Emmaus. It leads participants through a therapeutic process of sharing and reflecting on their story and its impact, while connecting with the heart of God for healing and hope. Not all participants who complete Part 1 will go on to Part 2.

Part 2 is training to become a debriefer. After completing the first course, individuals participate in a five-day, skill-based training grounded in biblical principles, stress and



trauma awareness and self-care. This is followed by a ‘practicum’, where they are paired with an experienced debriefer to gain confidence and hands-on experience leading others through the process.

“Healing the Wounds of Trauma” (HWT) is a more substantial course held over about 10 weeks with Biblical material and therapy explored in a small group context. This course was originally developed by the Summer Institute of Linguistics / Wycliffe Bible Translators, based on original work done by Rhiannon Lloyd whose pioneering work underlies most subsequent courses. SIL eventually handed their course for management to the American Bible Society who founded the Trauma Healing Institute to manage it.

Encouragingly, it has emerged that various programmes have already started amongst Sudanese Christians, and elsewhere. For example, Rita Haudenschild of Mission am Nil, a Swiss-based organisation, working with Dr Kristine Bresser, has run both parts of the Road to Emmaus Course in Cairo between December 2025 and February 2026, involving members of the Sudanese diaspora there. We also hear that Mothers Union staff in Cairo have experience of a version of the HWT course, perhaps organised by Refuge Egypt and supported by Mary Sumner House, London.

Bearing this journey in mind, the first stage of our development journey was a meeting in Zurich in April 2026 to move things forward, focusing on the debriefing programme now known as “The Road to Emmaus”, and, more provisionally, the “Healing the Wounds of Trauma” course. We were very fortunate to be able to meet with Rita & Kristine. John Inglis-Jones
John, Rita & Christine (with Andy online)

of Relay Trust was also involved.

This was a very positive 2 days and, subject to agreement from all supporting organisations, we are planning a start date later this year. The plan is that, during Autumn 2026, Kristine & Rita would run the 2-part “Road to Emmaus Programme” for a second time, using those involved



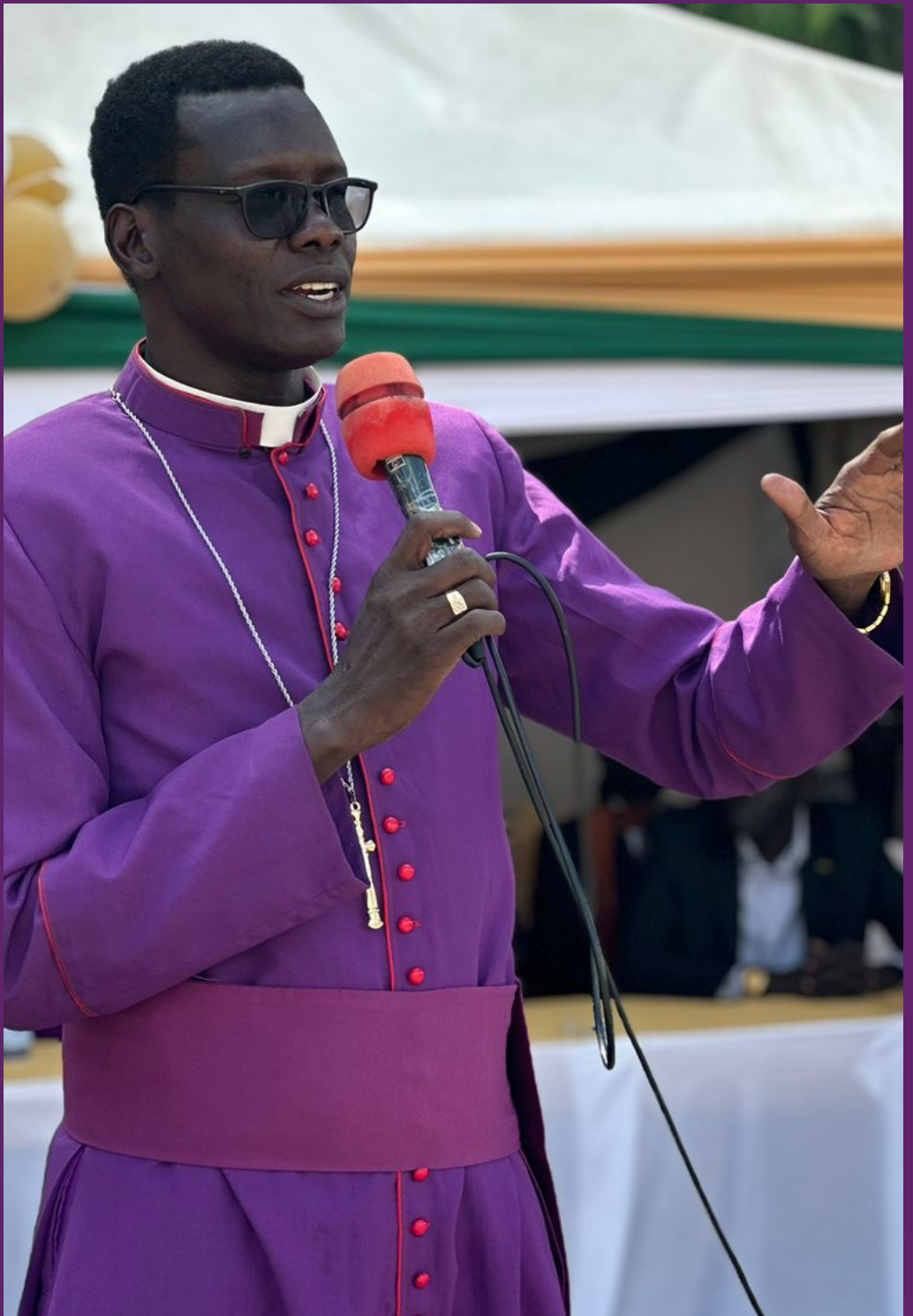


in the first course as a resource. This would begin to build up a pool of Sudanese people in Cairo who are able to debrief others and help them on their healing journey.

Whilst, hopefully, the programme develops in Cairo and in Egypt, the focus in 2027 would be on transferring the programme to Sudan. If the situation continues to stabilise in East and Central Sudan, we hope that some people trained in the programme in Cairo might be able to return to Sudan – perhaps Port Sudan, Khartoum and Omdurman, Wad Medani, Atbara and the Nuba Mountains. The aim would be to start the debriefing process with people settled in the various areas now accessible. Trainers might be able to visit Port Sudan at least in order to get the programme started. In this way the plan is to develop in Sudan the same cycle as in Cairo - providing a deep experience of debriefing for those attending, leading on to an invitation to train and to become a debriefer for future phases of the programme.

We hope a team of people may be willing to transfer from Egypt to Sudan. It would be important to identify and recruit suitable people now resident in Sudan with a vision for this ministry in Sudan to be trained and become leaders in their turn.

Please do pray for this programme as it develops and begins to help those bearing the mental scars of the Sudanese civil war.



- Interview -

Bishop Thomas Tut Gany of Ayod Diocese, Jonglei Internal Province

by the Rev'd Ian Wallace, Co-Chair of CASSS

Bishop Thomas is the first bishop of the Diocese of Ayod, which was created in 2014. It is a large diocese situated in Greater Upper Nile between Malakal, to the north, and Bor to the south. It is the heart of Nuer land and is a vast area with a great many challenges. Bishop Thomas' vision is to see the gospel proclaimed across the Diocese and for the condition of his people to be improved. Since 2014, they have been baptising an average of 1,400 new Christians each year. They now have 36 parishes but only have 27 trained pastors.

The parishes are organised into 18 Deaneries and 8 Archdeaconries. The church membership today is 68,000 out of a total population of 455,000 (15%). One of the biggest challenges is that literacy rates are very, very low. Only 2% of the population are literate, leaving 98% illiterate. There is also very little clean water with many people drinking from open source water.

Each year the Diocese experiences a cholera outbreak. In addition, the area is very difficult to access. The few roads are poor and air tickets are very expensive. MAF have been a God-send and Bishop Thomas really appreciates the support they have given him since 2005. However, it is rare for them to see visitors. Bishop Thomas wants to improve access to clean water and provide schools and hospitals.

However, there is a further problem - the diocese is currently plagued with conflict. There are two conflicts:

1. The cattle raiding that is an on-going problem
2. The conflict between the government forces and the SPLA-IO.

The IO currently control 98% of the area which represents everything outside the garrison towns. The conflict started in March 2025 when Dr. Riek Machar was arrested.

It began in Nasser but has since escalated across the whole of Jonglei. Recent fighting in the neighbouring Akobo Diocese has led to an influx of refugees into Ayod Diocese. It is thought that 37,000 people are displaced.

Bishop Thomas doesn't have any Assistant Bishops in his Diocese and would really welcome support from seasonal missionaries. In 2018, a Kenyan missionary joined him and was a great help. He was with the Diocese for 2 years until he was called back to Kenya. He helped to train the priests that they have in the Diocese but since he left Bishop Thomas is on his own again.

There is a plan to split the Diocese in two by creating a new diocese of Fangak. The plan is to create the new diocesan area within the existing diocese but that is proving very challenging because of serious flooding across the area. Much of the area is submerged with people living on floating islands. Bishop Thomas asks for prayer in 3 particular areas:

1. For peace - this is critical as without peace it is difficult to operate
2. For the training of more pastors. The church is growing rapidly but its foundations are weak. It needs a strong foundation of people who are trained. Even a good TEE programme would help, but eventually Bishop Thomas would like to establish a Bible College
3. For progress in the plan to split the Diocese into two more manageable areas.

Please pray for these areas, as well as for Bishop Thomas and his ministry in Ayod.



www.sudanchurchpartners.org



Sudan Church Partners: Equipping the Formation of Christ-Centered Leaders with the Anglicans of the Nuba Mountains

The Rev'd. Jared Wensyel, Executive Director, Sudan Church Partners

In 2016, Bishop Andudu Adam Elnail and his family settled in Harrisonburg, Virginia. But asylum did not mean resting for this Nuba Mountains bishop who continued to travel back and forth throughout the year to provide leadership to his diocese.

A small group from the Church of the Incarnation came together in 2020 to form a non-profit to support his efforts, but have been surprised to watch this small grassroots project continue to grow into something bigger than they originally imagined: a stable organization with six formal church partnerships and many others throughout the United States contributing to support the work.

Ultimately, the needs of the Christians in Sudan far outweigh anything we can do as one group. This forces the question: what is our primary purpose and impact? We concluded that our mission is to equip the Sudanese church in Sudan in the formation of Christ-centered leaders. For us this is the strongest contribution we can make to the future of the Anglican Church In Sudan.

Each year we work with the staff of the Diocese of Kadugli to look at our budget priorities. Ultimately the work of these initiatives is the work of these indigenous Sudanese leaders and our task as Sudan Church Partners is to support, equip, and develop their leadership. The following initiatives have developed as our top priorities:

Grace Secondary School

Destroyed by the Sudanese government, the church restarted the school in 2020 with our support. Relay Trust and Anglican Aid Australia ended up supporting the building of a new campus, allowing the relaunched Grace Secondary School to move from trees and makeshift shelters to a proper school with the only campus of its kind in the Nuba Mountains. We have continued to support the operations budget and have watched them grow to having 577 students registered this year with 15 trained teachers. As the school grows, now the struggle is to balance growth in numbers while maintaining quality for the existing classes.

Evangelism Department

A significant portion of our funding provides for multiple full-time evangelists tasked with ongoing outreach and training programs. Currently a major priority is the growing churches of Tobo County, a previously unreached area of the Nuba Mountains, now defined by large numbers of new conversions. Additionally, this year the diocese has started a youth football program designed to welcome youth from other tribes and religious backgrounds.

Pictures: (right) Grace Secondary School

Next page: Youth Football programme in action, peace and leadership workshops





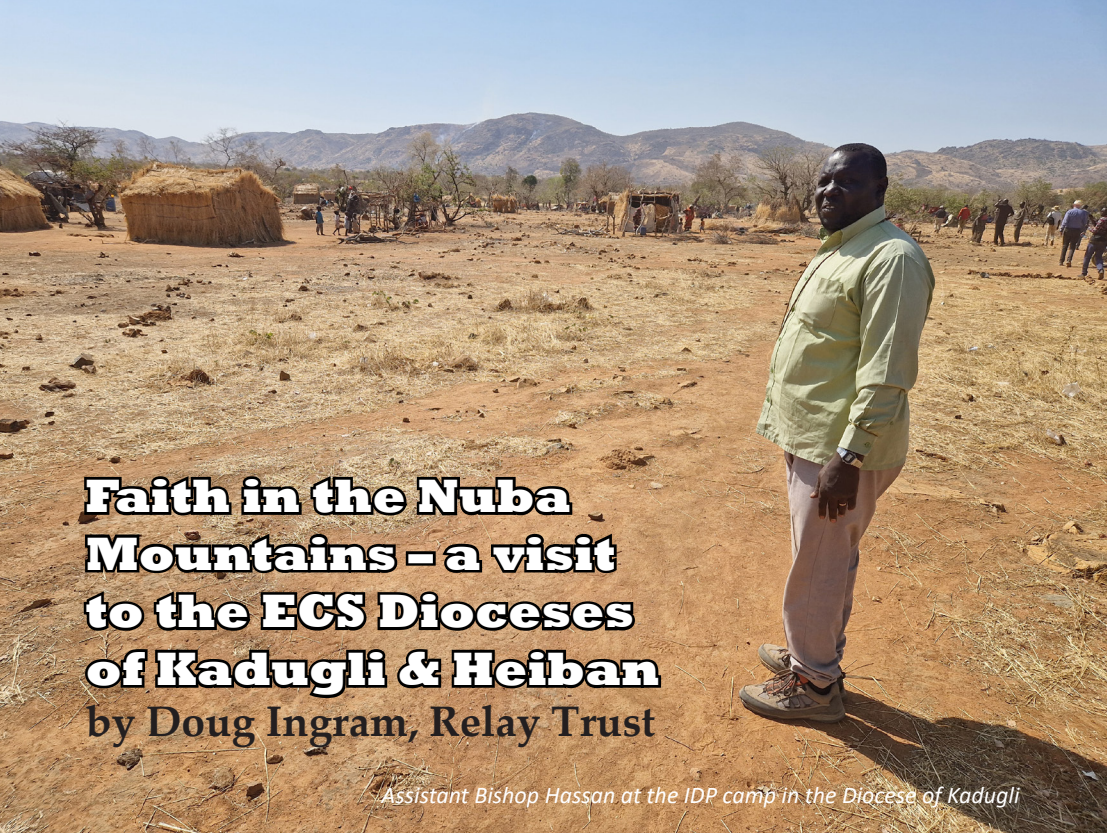
Peace Workshops

In 2022, a major tribal conflict between the Otoro and Tira tribes led to many deaths and significant damage to people's properties and livelihoods. In the aftermath local leaders asked Bishop Andudu to lead mediation efforts. This led Andudu to develop workshops based on his masters and eventually doctoral research to bring together tribal, political, and religious leaders to work towards increased awareness and understanding of how to cultivate peace and reconciliation within their communities. While not an evangelistic project, these workshops have led to increased awareness of the Anglican church. Relationships from these workshops have led to a large number of conversions and new churches in previously unreached areas mostly dominated by Muslim and tribal religious backgrounds.

Diocesan Staff & Leadership Development

In addition to these ongoing programs, we see the development of the ongoing diocesan operations as key to long-term growth. While churches contribute what they can to the diocese, most churches can barely support their own clergy salaries. Since 2020, we have been able to support a growing staff, including the hiring of those coming back from getting an education abroad. The diocese now has 10 departments: Administration, Evangelism, Media, Agriculture, Education, Youth, Projects, Peace & Reconciliation, Mother's Union, and Archdeaconries. A staff made up of strong leaders leading programs that develop Christ-centered leaders will go a long way to establishing a stronger church, even in the midst of civil war and seemingly unending conflict.





Faith in the Nuba Mountains - a visit to the ECS Dioceses of Kadugli & Heiban
by Doug Ingram, Relay Trust

Assistant Bishop Hassan at the IDP camp in the Diocese of Kadugli

In the Nuba Mountains of Sudan, the Church often gathers beneath mango trees. This is not by choice. Years of conflict have damaged buildings and made large gatherings risky. Drone threats mean that worship sometimes has to take place away from visible structures. However, on a recent Sunday, around two hundred believers met together in the shade of the trees to sing, pray, and hear the Word of God.

This quiet act of worship captures something important about the Church in the Nuba Mountains today. There is resilience, faith, and a determination to continue sharing the Gospel even in the midst of hardship.

Earlier this year, John Inglis-Jones, our Regional Relationship Manager for Sudan, and representatives connected to the Relay Trust visited the region as part of a wider journey to meet with leaders of the Episcopal Church of Sudan. The visit provided an opportunity to listen to local church leaders, understand the current situation in the region, and explore how the Trust might continue to support the Church's work.

The Nuba Mountains have long been affected by conflict, and the recent civil war in Sudan has intensified the challenges facing local communities. Millions across the country have been displaced, and many have fled into the mountains for safety. During the visit, the team met families living in an internally displaced persons camp of around 25,000 people, most of whom had fled the nearby town of Kadugli.

Despite these difficult conditions, the Church continues to serve communities across a vast region. The Episcopal Church of Sudan in the Nuba Mountains oversees dozens of congregations spread across an area roughly twice the size of Wales. Priests and lay leaders travel across remote and sometimes insecure areas to care for their churches and share the Gospel.

Relay Trust's work alongside the Church focuses primarily on strengthening leadership. The Trust seeks to support churches by helping train the leaders who will guide congregations in their spiritual life, discipleship, and community service. Rather than directing programmes from outside, the approach is to

Pictures: (clockwise from top left): Clergy at Karakarai, Karakarai church showing gunfire damage, Karakarai service, Students at Grace Secondary school



walk alongside local church leaders and support the training that they believe is most needed.

A key part of this work is theological education. During the visit, the team spent time at Korkel Theological Institute, the only Anglican theological college serving the Nuba Mountains. The institute trains future church leaders who will return to their communities to shepherd congregations across the region.

The buildings are simple and resources are limited, but the commitment of the students is remarkable. Many have come from communities affected by war; however, they are preparing to serve churches that depend on them for teaching, pastoral care, and leadership.

Education is also an important part of the Church's ministry in the region. Grace Secondary School, run by the Diocese of Kadugli, now serves more than 550 pupils from across the Nuba Mountains. The school provides both academic education and Christian formation, helping young people develop the skills and character needed to rebuild their communities in the future.

For those reading from elsewhere in the world, there are several ways to stand alongside the Church in the Nuba Mountains.

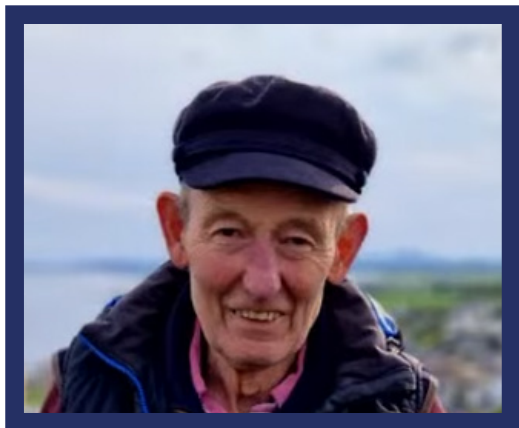
Prayer remains the most important support. Church leaders and communities continue to serve faithfully in a region affected by conflict and displacement. Partnership is also valuable, as churches and institutions around the world share knowledge and experience that can strengthen theological training and leadership development.

The image of believers worshipping beneath mango trees remains a powerful symbol of the Church in the Nuba Mountains. Buildings may be fragile and circumstances uncertain, but faith continues to flourish.

And through prayer, partnership, and generosity, the global Church has the opportunity to stand alongside them.

You may also be interested in a YouTube video of the visit put together by Sudan Church Partners, a US-based Relay Trust partner, at the following link:

<https://youtu.be/2RePA9agjYg?si=NFoo1uHSJgfqliR6>



Michael Paget-Wilkes 1941 - 2026

Sara Taffinder, previous secretary of the SCA, writes:-

I had the good fortune to spend much of my childhood in Sudan, and in 1985, aged 42, I joined the Sudan Church Association Committee. In 1992, I became the SCA Secretary to Brian Carlisle as the Chairman. The following seven years were a great learning and rewarding experience, about a part of Sudan I never knew, and about the running of a charity almost entirely by voluntary supporters of the Church in Sudan.

Brian eventually retired in 1999, after 17 years in the Chair. He was concerned about being able to find the right people to fill spaces on the Committee to continue supporting the Sudanese when “news from the Sudan was bleak and sadly no end to the strife was in sight.” There was, however, “one bright development to report in this country” – the Archdeacon of Warwick Michael Paget-Wilkes had been persuaded to take over as Chairman.

Michael had been involved in ECS affairs over the last two or three years as an agricultural and theological expert. He had been called upon by Christian Aid and Tear Fund to sort out some affairs of the Sudan Relief & Development Agency (SUDRA), visiting Sudan and getting to know the leading ECS personalities. Brian encouraged readers of the Sudan Church Review to come to the Annual Meeting in June 1999 if they hadn’t met Michael before and didn’t yet know how fortunate SCA was.

From reading Michael’s first Chairman’s Report in the Spring 2000 Sudan Church Review until the day I retired 13 years later, I felt totally privileged to work with him. Committee meetings ran well, he liked to hear how things were going with the different branches of work done by Committee members and, if there were problems, he made sure solutions were found.

Michael’s work with the Sudanese, North and South, in good and bad times, was

amazing. With love, concern, encouragement & advice, he knew how to bring out the best. The meetings that took place in Sudan, London, Salisbury, Bradford – wherever – with dignitaries and helpers, all led towards the well-being of those participating. He knew how to get the help that was often needed.

Several enormously complicated situations occurred during those years, attracting world attention. The Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA), signed in Nairobi in 2005, was a great achievement but it needed developing with careful Peace and Reconciliation work. In 2008, the Archbishop of Sudan, the Most Rev'd Daniel Deng Bul, introduced his "dream" to ensure sustainability of the CPA. Michael recognized that the Archbishop's voice was "clear and unequivocal", he was "not one to shy away from difficult decisions" and the oil-rich border area of Abyei had not been settled. In 2010, Archbishop Deng came to London and Salisbury, and Chatham House (The Royal Institute of International Affairs) became involved. This then led to the Referendum to separate the North and South with the final result of the new national state of South Sudan being introduced to the world in 2011.

In Michael's Report in the Autumn 2010 SCA Review, he wrote that a "greater part of Sudan has shown to the world that Christians and Muslims can live in peace together." May that be a witness that we can learn from and take seriously.

The Rev'd Pauline Walker writes:

I would like to add a few words to Sara's, in appreciation of Michael's active passion for supporting the people of Sudan through the ECS church there and his encouragement of others to know and work for the Lord.

Michael kept the SCA, now CASSS, well informed and kept up with all the news, visiting the Sudanese and South Sudanese leaders and encouraging them and finding out how things were going. His active attention to the detail meant that, among other things, he wanted to see their church accounts. This earned him, with a big smile, the name of Michael Budget-Wilkes, and the Church leaders had huge respect for him and appreciation of all that he did for them.

On 5th May, Ian Wallace, Sara and I were privileged to attend the "Call to the Kingdom" service which followed his funeral service, where good and highly appreciative memories of him were shared by the many family and friends attending, often accompanied by laughter alongside the resulting occasional tears. His many deep friendships acquired over many years and the impact of his mentoring skills came to the fore.

Michael's son Rory recounted, amongst other stories, an amazing incident that he had

previously written about to me as he informed me of the funeral arrangements. Rory told us:

“Dad had been struggling with [illness] for some time but had kept going and helping others right to the end. By then, he was too weak to even hold up his head most of the time and it would flop forward onto his chest. Yet he even went to his last Gloucestershire Council monitoring meeting barely able to keep his head up and having to be driven there, such was his commitment!

A few weeks ago, he was so tired that he said to me from his hospital bed that he just wanted to drift off and fall unconscious in his sleep and go that way. I encouraged him to keep going with determination to the end and that he had people to encourage even from his hospital bed. That night he had a sort of very powerful vision. He said he found himself knocking hard on heaven’s door asking to be let in. He said there was a very bright light at the door and he wanted to go in. But God shut the door and told him that he needed to go back as there were people he still needed to speak to and help.

And so at midnight that night he miraculously picked up his phone which he hadn’t been able to use for days and called my sister to start arranging people coming in to see him. I was there the next day and he had renewed vigour and saw or spoke on the phone to 7 people alone that day. He continued like this with meetings for 2 more days and then was moved into a care home. He continued to be weak but still did all he could to communicate and miraculously even got to church on Easter Sunday, bringing a non-Christian friend of his with him who had been visiting him a lot and whom he was determined to get to church on Easter Sunday!

He succeeded and then in the last few days started to wind down. I am so proud of him because he listened to that vision from God that night and kept driving forward for the next 10 days. He then passed away peacefully in his sleep last Thursday (April 9th).”

We thank God for all that Michael was able to do and for all that he put into what is now the Church Association for Sudan and South Sudan.

The family have asked that any donations should go to CASSS to help us to continue Michael’s work. You can use your phone to scan the QR code below to go to Michael’s fundraising page or donate via the CASSS website.



OUR FUNDING IN 2025

John Poole, CASSS Treasurer

At a time of escalating needs across the Sudans, we are humbled to report that donations received from individuals in 2025 increased by a remarkable 80% over the previous year. This surge is testament to the value you place on CASSS's mission to share news and to channel support directly to the church in the Sudans. Thank you for your continued trust and generosity.

The response to our ECS Survival budget appeal has itself been extraordinary. We received over £40,700 from individuals, churches, and trusts, and also handled diocesan funding from our partners, Salisbury.

Of other income, Jill Parry's stamp sales continued to provide steady support, with a 20% profit margin. This is our only fundraising effort now, and members are encouraged to buy their stamps from her.

Despite a drop in income from legacies, we maintained significant grant-giving, including:

- £100,000 in core grants split equally between the ECS and ECSS.
- £62,000 contributed directly to ECS relief work.
- We funded a significant conference in Kampala for all ECS bishops, enabling their leadership to gather and plan for the future.
- Funding a visit to England by Archbishop Ezekiel, Mama Suria and Bishop Hassan, enabling public meetings and consultations with partners.

The high level of grant-giving led to a £44,000 deficit in general funds after investment gains. This was anticipated, as we manage our reserves guided by the situation in the Sudans. There is a continuing need in Sudan for relief funding but towards the end of this year an evaluation will be done as to whether we step strongly towards reconstruction work, equipping the church in freed areas to advance.

Thank you for standing with our brothers and sisters in the Sudans. What we are giving is true support - a real act of fellowship.

Copies of our full accounts will be available at our AGM on Saturday June 15th, or on request now from CASSS Treasurer, and soon from the Charity Commission website.

SUMMARY OF OUR GENERAL FUND
INCOME & EXPENDITURE 2025

INCOME

£36,380	From donations
£2,830	Net income from selling stamps
<u>£24,930</u>	Interest and dividends received
£64,140	<i>total normal income</i>
<u>£8,030</u>	Legacies
£72,170	

EXPENDITURE

£110,750	Grants to ECS & ECSS
£8,630	Our magazine & website
<u>£13,800</u>	Visits to ECSS and Other
£133,180	

The Church Association for Sudan & South Sudan (CASSS)

(formerly The Sudan Church Association-SCA)

NOTICE OF AGM 2026

Notice is given that
the Annual General Meeting of
The Church Association for Sudan & South Sudan
will be held at 12.00noon
on Saturday 20 June
at St Andrew's Church, Short Street, Waterloo London SE1
(off The Cut, near Waterloo station (Northern and Bakerloo tube
line)
and near Southwark tube station (Jubilee line))

The AGM will include a vote on the following Special Resolution:
That the constitution for the charity (CASSS) dated 29th September 2018 be
amended by the deletion of Clause 16.3

There will be an option to view the meeting via Zoom for those unable to
attend in person, but only those attending in person will be able to vote.
(the log-in will be issued to any members who wish to attend upon
registering their intention to attend by e-mailing: info@casss.org.uk
before Wednesday 17 June, 2026)

The agenda, detailing those standing for election, and copies of the
annual accounts, Annual Trustees report and AGM 2025 minutes will be
available on the charity's website at <https://www.casss.org.uk>
or from 01225 938529 / joannahunt1948@gmail.com



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:** _____

Please send me a Standing Order form for regular gifts through my bank

GIFT AID (tick the relevant box):

I would like CASSS to reclaim the tax on this and any eligible donations that I may make in the future or have made in the past 4 years. I understand that I need to pay enough Income Tax or Capital Gains Tax in each tax year to cover the Gift Aid claimed on all my donations. I will notify CASSS if I wish to cancel this declaration.

I am not a UK taxpayer

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.

