

### Report of the Sudan Committee: Diocesan Convention of March 1 and 2, 2013

The Diocese of New Jersey and Bishop Council convened the Sudan-Darfur Committee in the fall of 2008 to implement resolution 2008-1 of the 2008 Diocesan Convention which charged, "The Episcopal Church in the Diocese of New Jersey to join with the government of the United States, the United Nations, and a host of other countries, organizations and individuals around the world to call and work for an end to the violence in Darfur," and which called the Diocese of New Jersey to establish a committee to "study the situation in Darfur and provide information to members parishes and others about the crimes against humanity taking place there along with the recommendations of actions that can be taken by parishes and individuals to bring these violations and actions to and end at the earliest possible opportunity and to provide support for Darfur refugees and other displaced persons."

The Committee has been meeting for approximately four years now, beginning on February 2 of 2009 and consists of the following persons appointed by Bishop Council: The Rev. Hugh E. Brown, III (Chair), the Rev. Canon Martin Oguike, the Rev. Sharon Sutton, the Rev. Jane Brady, Ms. Alicia Graham, the Rev. Nancy Hite Speck, the Rev. Deborah Piggins, and the Mr. Marcus Gales.

In February of 2010, the Bishop approved the expansion of the Committee's advocacy and work to include the whole of Sudan. This deepened and enhanced mission has enabled the Sudan Committee to provide a visible witness for justice and peace in Sudan around issues such as the January, 2011 Referendum for Southern Sudanese independence and the campaign of the Episcopal Church, USA on behalf of Sudan entitled, "A Season of Peace for Sudan."

The Committee's charge has indeed now become that described by our Presiding Bishop, Katharine Jefferts Schori, "to create projects of peace, study, prayer and action on behalf of the people of Sudan."

The people of Sudan, including the Darfur region of Sudan, the largest country in Africa, have experienced decades of slaughter, poverty and utter instability, this even with the implementation of the Comprehensive Peace agreement of 2005. However in the words of Richard J. Jones, the outgoing president of the American Friends of the Episcopal Church of Sudan, "God is still at work in Sudan; God's Church in Sudan walks, sows, and lives in hope."

Indeed over the past year several years, we have good news to celebrate; we celebrate the victory of justice in the creation of the new Republic of South Sudan. We celebrate the birth of a new nation and perseverance of the Sudanese church and people. We celebrate the reality, that, even though the largest nation of South Africa has split, even in a victory for justice and peace, the Episcopal Church of Sudan remains strong and united.

The Sudan-Darfur Committee has focused on the following projects during 2012, our Third full year of advocacy for the people and Church of Sudan:

**\*We have established a Scholarship Fund** for the education of one future indigenous Sudanese priest for the Episcopal Church of Sudan, to be an advocate for peace, justice and an end to the human rights abuses within the nation of Sudan.

The Church of Sudan is unmatched, in terms of resources and credibility, as an organization working on behalf of the people of Sudan and we believe it to be THE key to the work of reconciliation, the building of infrastructure, and the providing of social services and education to further the work of Christ in Sudan.

**\*Beginning with Diocesan Convention in March of 2010, we have raised approximately \$8,000, towards the Scholarship Fund;** our goal is to raise approximately \$24,000 to fully fund the cost of theological education for one priest.

Please prayerfully consider a donation to the Sudan Committee for the Scholarship Fund! Checks should be marked to the Diocese of New Jersey and marked, "Sudan Scholarship Fund," or contact The Rev. Hugh E. Brown, III, D. Min., Chair at [rector@allsaint.org](mailto:rector@allsaint.org) and/or 609-921-2420 at All Saint's Church in Princeton.

**\*We created a "spirit-filled" African Evensong Liturgy at Trinity Cathedral** in Trenton on October 28, 2012, our second festive African Evensong, which drew almost 100 participants, even on a miserable weather weekend just prior to Hurricane Sandy (!), which struck the very next evening-- and raised over \$1,000 towards the work of the scholarship fund.

We thank all who participated in, and, or supported the event. The Rev. Canon Petero A. N. Sabune, the Global Partnership Officer for Africa and the Middle East of the Episcopal Church, gave a powerful sermon. The youth choir of Urban Promise International rocked the Cathedral!

**\*We created a March 10, 2012 Lenten Retreat on African Spirituality, and attained full funding for this retreat with a generous grant through St. Martin's House of the Diocese of New Jersey.** The retreat was held at All Saints' Episcopal Church in Princeton and featured noted African speakers of the Diocese of New Jersey, inspiring worship, and prayerful experience. We had over 60 persons representing dozens of congregations in the Diocese attend!

**We have planned a Third African Spirituality retreat, again, sponsored through St. Martin's House, two weeks hence, on Saturday, March 16<sup>th</sup>, 2013, at All Saint's Church in Princeton.**

**We invite you to attend! You will be blessed!**

**\*We continue to offer forums, workshops and events** at parishes and congregations throughout the Diocese, for example this year at Trinity Church, Princeton, Trinity Cathedral, All Saints' Church, Princeton, St. John's Church, Fords and St. John's Church, Sewaren.

**\*We continue to maintain a visible witness** through our work through our Web site and Blog at: <http://focusondarfur.blogspot.com> and through our space on the Diocesan Web site at [www.newjersey.anglican.org](http://www.newjersey.anglican.org) (click on "Outreach" and it will bring up our Sudan/Darfur work and ministry, including pictures, events, our brochure, our blog, and upcoming projects and notices).

May the work of the Sudan Committee continue to join in solidarity with our brothers and sisters in the Sudan, who suffer and witness to the love of Christ.

Respectfully submitted,  
The Rev. Hugh E. Brown, III, D. Min., Chair,  
Sudan-Darfur Committee of the Episcopal Diocese of New Jersey