

WAU SOUTH SUDAN SUPPORT GROUP - Spring 2013 Newsletter



ORIGIN

Wau is a Diocese larger than the island of Ireland being over 300 miles across, situated in the North West of South Sudan, with its northern border of Darfur in Arab Islamic dominated Sudan. Unlike easily accessible Southern Dioceses, Wau has almost no support from the West.

The group began as a support group for Kenneth Hearn, who is UK Commissary for Wau Diocese in South Sudan under Bishop Moses. He has made several visits to the Diocese and is very familiar with the circumstances there. Although there is already support offered by the Poole Deanery, we give what help we can. Bishop Harold Miller readily sanctioned the Official Link with Millisle & Carrowdore Parishes, although Down and Dromore Diocese has a strong link with the Diocese of Maridi, which is well served.

MEMBERS

At present the group comprises Kenneth and Thelma Hearn, James O'Fee, Rev. Colin Davis and Rev. Roy Taylor and 3 Associates. Others are available to offer help if needed. This Group tries to meet quarterly.

STATE OF WAU DIOCESE

Our link is mainly with Bishop Moses, who has twice visited us here in Northern Ireland. He gave up a very lucrative job in order to serve as Bishop, with very little allowance and a house that had been trashed. The clergy have had little training, and there is not enough money to support a family. For this reason, two key figures have moved to other work recently. The Theological College has no books or other equipment, so it is really starting from scratch. The start-up fund has been the generous donation of harvest gifts from Millisle and Carrowdore.

OUR SUPPORT

We have sought to raise money to help the Diocese. There was a Coffee Morning at Hamilton Road, and other events are likely to take place in the future. The Anglican parishes of Millisle and Carrowdore raised much of the money to buy a motor bike for the Bishop's use and the sum of £2,300 raised by ourselves and acknowledge help from Christian Motorcycle Association This funding was also sent out to the Bishop. Subsequently Baroness Cox raised enough for a four wheel drive vehicle, which is now in use. The motor bike is therefore now used by Rev. Joseph Mamer, Principal of St. John's Theological College, who has three diocesan jobs and has to make frequent journeys. We have also raised money for the provision of Africa Bible Commentaries for the Principal and students at the College. Other donations have enabled four men to start training at the College. There is a host of other needs, including making the Bishop's House habitable again (partly supported by Poole Deanery).

VISITORS

There have been visitors to the Diocese. A group from Poole Deanery visited from 24 February to 6th March'13. Jim McAnlis, Christianity Explored East Africa Co-ordinator, of Hamilton Road Presbyterian Church, has been to Juba with a Christianity Explored Consultation. The result of this is that both Bishop Moses and Bp.Abraham immediately requested a launch of Christianity Explored as it is simple and based upon Gospel of Mark, in their Dioceses as essential to teaching and evangelism. A two-year commitment has been made by Jim to implement this. Mid-March sees Langan Partnership set-up a Preaching Teaching Programme. In October a group from the Poole MU with Rev.Carol Langford (School Teacher support) is to go there.

THE FUTURE?

We will try to keep you informed of developments. One need which Joseph likes to remind us about is the need for bursaries for theological students. Although fees are low, these are still way beyond affordability for poor South Sudanese. We are talking of a sum of £ 2,400. Half Bursaries and contributions are always acceptable. It has to be acknowledged that we are a small group with limited scope and we have to rely on the generosity of others. Do feel free to ask for extra copies of this letter to pass on to friends.