

Kadugli Newsletter and Prayer Diary

“Please do not grow tired of praying for Sudan” (Archbishop Ezekiel)

The Visit to Bradford Deanery.

Archbishop Ezekiel Kondo of Sudan, his wife Mama Suria, and Bishop Hassan from the Sudanese diocese of Kadugli came to Bradford Deanery for a meeting at St Katherine's Church Holt on 9 November. This was fitted in to a trip to the United Kingdom to visit (inter alia) the dioceses of Leeds and Salisbury. Bradford Deanery has been linked with Kadugli for many years, and many of us already know Archbishop Ezekiel and Bishop Hassan, and they lunched with friends in the deanery, to our mutual pleasure.

The meeting in St Katherine's was well attended, and we are indebted to Rev. Jennifer Nelson of Holy Trinity Bradford for the following account:

A Time of Fellowship, Prayer, and Solidarity:

The Bradford Deanery were blessed by a deeply moving visit on Remembrance Sunday afternoon from brothers and sisters from Sudan, with The Revd Canon Ian Woodward with his Grace Archbishop Ezekiel, Mama Suria and Bishop Hassan (Diocese of Kadugli), who expressed heartfelt thanks for our ongoing prayers and support.

Archbishop Ezekiel thanked everyone:

“You warm our hearts by spending time with us. Thank you, brothers and sisters, for your love and for standing with Sudan.”

Special thanks were offered to The Revd Canon Ian Woodward, Canon Andrew, and all who have been involved in maintaining the strong links between Salisbury and Kadugli and the Episcopal Church Sudan.

Archbishop Ezekiel spoke powerfully about the dire situation in Sudan since the outbreak of war in 2023, himself now based in Port Sudan, having been displaced from Khartoum for three years.

“People suffer terribly. Yet, in all of this, the Sudanese people remain faithful. We pray things will not get worse.” Archbishop Ezekiel reflected on the causes of war, and called for prayer, peace, and urgent international action to stop the flow of weapons into Sudan.

Despite the suffering, the church endures:

“We have lost everything, but pastors have survived because of your support from Salisbury Diocese and others.”

Mama Suria also shared her testimony and thanks:

“I thank God who has kept us and brought us here. Before the war, the ministry of women was strong, through the Mothers' Union; we met monthly, visiting churches, hospitals, and prisons to encourage and help others. Now, things are very difficult, transport is expensive, and women carry the heavy burden of caring for families. But I know God is able to bring us peace.”

Bishop Hassan thanked Canon Andrew, Canon Ian, Rural Dean Jake Eggertsen, and Archbishop Ezekiel, saying that Bradford-on-Avon feels like home.

He described the destruction in Kadugli and the displacement of families:

“Everywhere we see darkness, no light, and yet during this dark time the church is growing. People who did not know Christ are coming to the church and finding his light.”

He expressed deep gratitude for continued prayer and support:

“Thank you, Deanery of Bradford-on-Avon. When I say this is my home, it is because I feel your prayers every day.”

Archbishop Ezekiel read from Romans 8:18. “I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us.”

The Revd Canon Ian Woodward explained Salisbury Diocese’s four key purposes in supporting Sudan and South Sudan:

Education

Humanitarian Aid

Advocacy

Prayerful Partnership

He emphasised that humanitarian aid and advocacy come first, urging continued engagement with government leaders to do more.

Questions were raised about the first steps toward rebuilding education in Sudan: “many schools have been destroyed and need renovation and funding. Teachers require financial support.”

There is also a critical health crisis; hospitals lack medicines, and disease outbreaks are widespread.

Archbishop Ezekiel noted:

“Where there is peace, there is at least the possibility of care.”

Both leaders shared personal hardships, “but God keeps us and gives us hope.”

Of our questions about Anglican Communion and unity: “We are trying to continue to walk together, even when things are difficult.”

The meeting closed in prayer for peace in Sudan, for an end to violence and the flow of arms; for food, medicine, and education, for protection for all families and clergy, for God’s protection and blessings.

“Thank you, Lord, for your servants who help us understand your love. Bring peace where there is war, unite families, strengthen your Church, and bring restoration and hope.”

Amen

Readers will note references to suffering. Truly it is severe and has been reported many times in this newsletter. Hearing about it second or even third hand blunts its impact compared with learning about it directly from those involved, and words are insufficient to describe what it is like. Bishop Hassan described the situation as “very sad”, and the printed word does not do it justice. The tone of voice, however, spoke volumes. Here was

a man, here is a people, whose suffering is beyond words. And yet the words Archbishop Ezekiel quoted from Romans 8: 18 are proving true: “I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us.” Coming from a suffering church, this was deeply humbling.



Bishop Hassan, Archbishop Ezekiel, Mama Suria and Canon Ian Woodward.

There was another meeting with our friends next day in Salisbury. Much of the ground covered was the same, but some further points emerged:

- Families have been scattered, sometimes to other countries, and in many cases have lost touch with each other. This is naturally distressing to those involved.
- In Kadugli, and no doubt elsewhere, there are many Internally Displaced People (IDPs). They need to be fed and housed. Their presence increases the demand for food, and because education is impractical at the moment, they are being housed in the Peace Primary School (and possibly others).
- A questioner put Archbishop Ezekiel on the spot by asking how much it would cost to feed one person for one day. After a hurried calculation he replied “About \$10”. It has not been possible to check this, but it indicates how desperately important our monthly donation of £1,200 is.
- In all this suffering, the church is growing! This is particularly marked in Kadugli Diocese, and the Nuba Mountains, which lie in the diocese, are a powerhouse of Christianity. (N.B. Someone with long experience of Sudan suggests this may be

because the tribes in Nuba get on well together). What is unexpected, however is that in Darfur, where there has been so much violence and persecution, the church is also growing markedly. Conversions in the different parts of Sudan are drawn from Muslims and followers of witchcraft.

- Mama Suria pointed out that it is the women who take care of the children, and the men who go out to work. Now we are seeing the combatting forces concentrating on killing the men, leaving many widows. What are they to do? How can they support their children? The Mothers Union used to support such women, but present conditions make this very difficult, though the need is greater than ever.



Mama Suria (centre) in Holt.

Recent News on Sudan.

At last the international community is beginning to pay attention to Sudan. One obvious target for them is to halt the supply of arms to the conflicting parties, and this is beginning to receive consideration. Archbishop Ezekiel and Bishop Hassan visited Parliament while they were here, and we hope MPs will pressure the government to use its influence.

The Church Times reports that the UK Foreign Secretary David Lammy has told the House of Commons the Government was “engaging intensively with the Quad countries - the UAE, Saudi Arabia, Egypt and the USA - which have now together called for an immediate humanitarian truce, and an end to external support and arms that are fuelling conflict.”

The most recent news in Sudan is that reports of mass killings in Al Fasher, including of civilians, are increasingly confirmed by reports and filmed evidence. This has sparked

international outrage, and perhaps firm action will be taken to stop these killings by RSF. Disturbingly, however, Archbishop Ezekiel is reported as saying that what was happening in Al Fasher was also happening in the Nuba Mountains (part of Kadugli Diocese) and had happened in Khartoum. Certainly the violence appears to be a normal part of RSF's behaviour, as evidenced when they recently captured Bara in North Kordofan, about 20 miles north of El Obeid. In the Darfur area in the west of the Sudan, Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) have had to withdraw staff from Zalingei hospital in Central Darfur for the second time this year, following a shooting incident at the hospital last week, which left a Ministry of Health stretcher bearer dead, and four people wounded.

In a statement on Tuesday, MSF has called call once again for the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) to guarantee the protection of health facilities and staff, saying that the move is to ensure the safety of the organisation's teams.

The RSF has expressed support for the humanitarian truce proposed by the Quad countries, and has offered to maintain it for three months to allow aid to reach civilians. The SAF, however, has expressed reservations, so the truce doesn't appear to be in force.

What about Kadugli Diocese?

There is little news about Kadugli. We hear that Bishop Andudu has returned to the USA after visiting Kadugli Diocese, and Bishop Hassan, as we have already reported, has been visiting the UK with Archbishop Ezekiel in the hope of generating more UK support for the Sudan peace process.

As Archbishop Ezekiel, Mama Suria, and Bishop Hassan return to Sudan, we pray for their safety and for peace to prevail.

We continue to support the people of Kadugli in their search for desperately needed food and other essentials, and in addition, we have been supporting Hassan's son Yassa with help for his fees for his course at a university in Uganda. Our latest news is that he is doing well. For administrative and other reasons any money given for Hassan's son Yassa would need to be kept distinct from other funds, so anyone wishing to donate for Yassa can use the same payment details as for other funds for Kadugli, but with the reference "Yassa" instead of "Kadugli." However, at present the need for food is more pressing.

Across Bradford Deanery there has been a continuous warm and generous response to this need; thank you all. The church in Kadugli is intensely grateful for our support, both financial and in prayer. Please continue to give via your church if you can, or directly. The account details are:

Bank:	Lloyds Bank Trowbridge
Name of Account:	Bradford Deanery
Sort Code:	30-98-75
Account No.	00710285
Reference	Kadugli. Or, as mentioned above, Yassa. <u>(N.B. This is important)</u>

Please also consider ways of raising funds for Kadugli.

And as always, we ask you to pray.

Prayer Diary

“Please do not grow tired of praying for Sudan” (Archbishop Ezekiel)

Bishop Hassan rightly says the present conflict and its attendant troubles need God’s intervention.

Please pray for:

- Peace and unity, and the laying aside of personal ambitions for power and wealth.
- Freedom to trade, especially in food and medical supplies, and for the international community to provide aid without hindrance.
- For the protection and growth of the church, giving thanks that even under severe suffering the church is growing.
- That the Mothers Union in Sudan will be able to carry out its ministry safely and without hindrance.
- Give thanks that just as we pray for our brothers and sisters in Kadugli, so they in their turn pray for us.
- That this Christmas and New Year will be seasons of rejoicing for our brothers and sisters in Sudan.

January Edition

Please note. As usual, we shall not be publishing a January edition of this newsletter. We shall resume, God willing, in February. May the Prince of Peace bless you and your loved ones this Christmas and in the coming year.