



The Sudans Day 2019

The Revd Ron Hart reflects on this year's Sudan's Day:

This year's Sudans Day held at Shaftesbury School attracted over 80 people.

The day started with Morning Prayer and we went on to listen to a range of speakers, including a report on the new Episcopal University from Revd Dr Stephen Spencer, Director for Theological Education at the Anglican Communion, who thanked the Diocese of Salisbury for our support of Shoki Bible College and the Episcopal University in South Sudan. We were especially humbled to hear his words, "the Diocese of Salisbury link gives us life and hope in so many ways".

We heard of Revd Dr Stephen's work serving the Anglican Communion Office, with advocacy for theological education, as hope (ref 1 Peter). He spoke passionately of the need for up to date and contextually relevant study and training resources which will equip students for ministry. With much support across the globe for the Episcopal University and the philosophy of higher education in terms of servant leadership, overall we hold on to the hope that this new Christian HE institution is set to become a key player in the future of education.

It was good also to hear Revd Stephen Dinsmore, Director of SOMA UK, speaking of the SOMA vision to be alongside clergy and leaders in mutual fellowship and encouragement through intercession and prayer, and with a philosophy of cross-cultural teamwork. It was interesting to hear of his recent visit to Sudan and the conference for clergy, the 'chair of the beloved' and tree planting. Stephen asked for our prayers for SOMA, "from here we get strength and joy". We were delighted also to hear of the youth conferences and workshops.

We went on to hear about the Deanery Links and among many, the vibrant Poole Deanery Link with Wau Diocese, South Sudan. It was helpful to look at the in-depth material they shared, which has seemed such an effective model for sustaining a flourishing partnership over many years. Do feel welcome to get in touch if you would to hear more of this, if considering starting a link.

It was helpful to hear up to date information on the situation in Sudan and South Sudan from Revd Canon Ian Woodward and Robert Hayward. In particular, Robert spoke of support for schools, including a secondary school in the Sudan, with whom we are hopeful of making a long term link.

Canon Ian updated us with provisional plans for hosting prior to Lambeth conference, 2020, thanking deaneries and parishes who have generously offered hospitality.

Moving to overall general news, through the day we also listened to reports and detailed information from the Medical Link, the Education Sub-Committee, latest updates from other Deanery Links and an up to date report from CRESS. As in previous years, there were also many stalls from organisations who generously support the Sudan and South Sudan. This year we were delighted to have a new stall from the Mother's Union, inviting people to make stoles for the South Sudan. If you are interested, please do pop in to the Salisbury MU office or telephone them.

As ever, we are immensely grateful to Shaftesbury School who provided their school hall and premises free of charge. We are also thankful to all who help in the set up and arrangements on the day. We have been running the Sudan's Day in its present form for 15 years, and feel it is a wonderful opportunity to learn about the many things happening in the Sudan and South Sudan and to make contacts.

Please do consider bringing a group from your church next year, 2020. The date will appear in the Grapevine publication, and we always always plan for early October. Thank you to all those who attended this year's Sudan's Day. We are enormously thankful for your support.

With prayers and every blessing,
Revd Ron Hart (Sudans Committee) October 2019