

A call to prayer for Sudan

Sudan has endured years of civil war. Now, as the country moves toward a landmark referendum on Jan. 9, MCC urges families and churches to join people across the globe in praying for peace in Sudan.

The referendum, part of a negotiated peace agreement in 2005, allows people in southern Sudan to determine if they want to secede from Sudan and form a new nation, which they are widely expected to do. No matter the outcome of the vote, the potential for conflict and violence before and after the referendum is real, according to MCC Sudan representative Leroy Willems, a member of Trinity Mennonite Church in Glendale, Ariz.

MCC adds its call to prayer to the U.S. Episcopal Church's "A Season of Prayer for Sudan" and Catholic Relief Services' "101 Days of Prayer for a Peaceful Referendum in Sudan," which will continue through Jan. 1, 2011.

MCC partners with the Catholic Diocese in Rumbek, Sudan, where MCC workers Heather Peters and her husband, Joel Kroeker, members of Hanley Mennonite Church, Hanley, Sask., serve as peace and justice coordinators for the diocese. The week the prayer campaign was launched, Peters wrote in her blog that the Vicar General, Father Andrea, called people to prepare for prayer, not war. "... war should never be an option because prayer is powerful enough, he said, 'We need to hold prayer in our hands.'"

MCC in southern Sudan

A 22-year civil war shattered communities in southern Sudan, which is one of the most impoverished regions in the world. About 1.5 million people have returned to southern Sudan since the 2005 peace agreement. Millions of others, ready to return, wait to see how the efforts to rebuild are progressing.

MCC, working with long-time Sudanese church partners, is responding through *Sudan: Coming Home*, a multiyear program that grows out of more than 35 years of partnership. During the civil war, MCC worked with Sudanese church organizations to distribute food aid and support peacemaking efforts. Now the churches have asked MCC to help with recovery and rebuilding as people are returning to their homes in southern Sudan. Through the Diocese of Rumbek, MCC workers have held workshops to educate people about voting rights, human rights and how to take an active role in rebuilding their communities. In Rumbek and Juba, vocational and leadership training programs are helping empower women to change their communities. Other MCC-supported work in the region includes trauma healing, peacebuilding, food relief, agriculture projects and HIV and AIDS education and care.



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Through the Diocese of Rumbek, MCC supports peacebuilding workshops such as this one.
(Photo by Heather Peters)

You can help

Join the call to prayer

In addition to praying for the people of Sudan, please pray for leaders guiding the referendum process. Pray for peace in an atmosphere of political uncertainty and potential unrest. Learn more about MCC's work in Sudan and find daily prayer resources at mcc.org/sudancominghome.

Give to MCC's work in southern Sudan

Go to donate.mcc.org or mail your contribution, marked *Sudan: Coming Home*, to the MCC office nearest you.

Advocate to your government

MCC invites you to write to Prime Minister Stephen Harper or President Barack Obama, asking him to urge the Sudan government and leaders of southern Sudan to hold the referendum on time and to peacefully respect the results. See washington.mcc.org/sudan or ottawa.mcc.org/advocate-change-sudan for more information on how to advocate for change.



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