

The Episcopal Church of South Sudan and Sudan

Diocese: Aweil

Reported activity: Welcoming of the New Bishop of Abyei Area
Diocese

Location: Abyei

Date of reporting: Tues 20th Jan 2015

Writer: John Lual Garang

Introduction

Last year in December 2014, a welcoming ceremony of the newly appointed Bishop of Abyei Area Diocese was done. Bishop Michael Deng Kutping, who also hails from Abyei, was ordained Bishop of Abyei in Juba along with other Bishops of new Dioceses. It was until then when he came to his area of jurisdiction, the Abyei Area Diocese. Many people organized a welcoming celebration for the Bishop, the first of its kind in history of Abyei.

As we all know, Abyei has been part of Aweil Diocese which has been overseen by Bishop of Aweil Diocese, Rt. Rev. Abraham Yel Nhial. Bishop Yel is one of the people who made effort to see Abyei become Diocese with its Bishop like today. So, he made sure that Abyei becomes Diocese of its own and headed by the person from within. He did not stop just like that but also organized and mobilized people of Aweil and Abyei for welcoming of new Bishop Michael. Bishop Yel formed a team of high profile from his Aweil Pastors, accompanied by youth to visit Abyei for the purpose of welcoming the New Bishop.

Likewise, all the Pastors, Mother Union, Sunday and youth of Abyei got prepared in order to welcome the New Bishop. Many groups both from Aweil and Abyei presented their gifts to new Bishop even during his arrival in the airport. Many more gifts happened to be given on Saturday during the main occasion. So many youths and Sunday schools from both areas were given ample time to perform on the stage.

There were a lot of speeches delivered also. Many Traditional chiefs and government dignitaries especially Commissioners, Pastors, and Bishops among others gave wonderful speeches.

Arrival at the airport

During his arrival, the New Bishop, Michael Deng Kutpiny accompanied by Bishop of Aweil Diocese, Abraham Yel was welcomed at the Aneet airport of Abyei. Many people including Pastors and youths among others gathered and waited to receive the guests. Immediately after stepping down from the plane, youth from Aweil Diocese received the guests by putting flowers on their shoulders. All the people around were similarly very excited and escorted the two Bishops with their wives into the Church compound.



Aweil Diocese youth and Sunday Schools standing with UNISFA force waiting for the arrival of the New Bishop of Abyei, Michael Deng and Bishop of Aweil Diocese Rt. Rev. Abraham Yel at Aneet airport



Plane carrying Bishops Abraham Yel Nhial and Michael Deng Kutpiny lands at Aneet airport



Rt. Rev. Michael Deng Kutpiny arrives at the airport



Bishop Deng speaks as Bishop Yel looks on at the airport immediately after their arrival



Rt. Rev. Abraham Yel Nhial climbs down from the plane at Aneet airport with his wife Madam Duruka

Welcoming occasion

Saturday 13th December 2013 was when welcoming ceremony for the newly appointed Bishop of Abyei Area Diocese was done. On that joyous day, many churches including from other denominations like Pentecostal Church and Catholic participated in the occasion. It was the first of its kind in Abyei administrative area for different denominations to recognize and accept to be under umbrella of a single Bishop. Bishop Deng was anticipated welcomed by all churches and communities not because he is son of the area but because he is God's representative in the region.

On that day, a lot of chances for speeches from different rank and file as well as performance from different groups were given. Chiefs, Commissioners, Pastors – both Senior and junior and representative from mother union spoke. But before the speeches, youth and Sunday schools from Aweil Diocese opened the occasion with presentation. Other groups followed later after some speeches from one group to another.



Aweil Diocese Youth and Sunday schools dancing during the opening of welcoming ceremony of the new Bishop of Abyei outside Aneet Church



From left to right is Bishop Michael of Abyei area Diocese with his wife and Bishop of Aweil Diocese Abraham Yel with his wife at the welcoming celebration of the New Bishop Michael Deng Kutpiny at Church premises in Aneet



Clergy from Aweil and Abyei sitting at the welcoming ceremony



Abyei Sunday schools dancing during welcoming celebration



Abyei Catholic youth perform drama during welcoming ceremony



Bishop Deng with his wife receives gift from Mother Union of Abyei during welcoming celebration

Closure of the occasion

The occasion was closed by presentation of gifts to the two Bishops and their wives. Groups of mother union of Abyei from different levels ranging from Parish to Archdeaconries presented the presents to the two Bishops. Likewise, representatives of Aweil Diocese mother union pay their tribute to the Bishops by presenting colorful flowers and bed sheets. It was until then, where the occasion was closed all the people- called it a day.

Sunday mass

On Sunday, prayers started early at 8:30 am as youth from Aweil were to leave the same day. For that reason, they did not wait for the closure of the mass but cut it short. During the announcements' period, few people were given chances to speak. Three chances were given to youths alone. I spoke on behalf of Aweil youth since I was a head of delegation. The second chance was given to my Counterpart, Andrea

Diing who spoke on behalf of Wau Diocese and the last chance for Abyei youth leader.

After representatives from youths got finished, other chances were given. As we were on standby for our journey back home, we did not stay for long. Immediately after Bishop Michael's speech, we beat farewell to the congregation and went out to prepare for the journey. After a few photos with Madam Duruka, Bishop Abraham's wife and youths from Abyei, we left.



Sunday schools and youth of Aweil Diocese dance during the Sunday mass in Aneet Church



Bishop Michael's wife Madam Alic in white with her counterpart Madam Duruka in blue dress during Sunday mass in Aneet Church



Bishop Abraham in Aneet church during Sunday mass



Aweil Diocese youth Secretary speaking during Sunday mass in Aneet Church of Abyei area Diocese



Wau Diocese youth leader speaks in the Church at Aneet



Aweil Diocese youth with Madam Duruka at ECS school in Aneet before their departure

The visits to Army Base and Abyei Town

On the following, Monday in the morning, the two Bishops with senior Pastors and some women visited army barracks. They were welcomed by the top military Officers in the barracks and there was exchange of a lot of good words from both sides. The Bishops also prayed for the soldiers and encouraged them to continue do the tough task that has been to them not by the government but by God to protect his own people from fear and death.

In the same way on the same day, this group visited Abyei Town. The visit was meant to meet with the authority of Abyei administrative area which is based there explore the ways it can work together with Church and with the new Bishop in particular to better help the people of Abyei. The Bishops together with their Pastors and some women held small talk with the authority. The Abyei government was very pleased about the visit of the Bishops which they said was timely and pledged to

work together with the new Bishop for peace and development. However, they regretted the conduct of the welcoming occasion of the new Bishop without their presence. They said due to security purpose, the government in Abyei could not make it to send a delegation to participate in the ceremony. But they promised to organize another occasion for the new Bishop of Abyei where all the communities will be mobilized to attend.

Bishops, on the other hand, encouraged the government officials and promised to help the government to mobilize the International community to accept the result of the Abyei's referendum that was conducted three years ago by Dinka Ngok. The Bishops said the Church stands with government and the people of Abyei and, therefore, the Church recognizes the outcome of the referendum and it will continue try all ways in order to be recognized globally. With those few remarks from both government and Bishops, the meeting was closed.

The clergy also headed to one of the churches in Abyei Town whose members were waiting to welcome the new Bishop in their Church. After visit to the Church, Bishop Yel Nhial took the group for a short trip to show all the historical sites which were devastated by Arabs including the school of Episcopal Church. The delegation returned from the trip and back to Aneet area and the visit was concluded.

Lunch with Rum Mamer Commissioner

On Tuesday morning, as Aweil team prepared for the journey back, the message of Rum Mamer Commissioner reached them. They were told to stay until afternoon hours because the Commissioner and all his Officials of the County had prepared lunch for them (Aweil team). Despite the resistance by Aweil team not stay for another day, all they said fell on deaf ears. The Commissioner with all his Officials including Abyei Bishop and Pastors did not allow them to leave.

Exactly 12 PM was when Aweil team together with their Abyei Counterparts was seen in the government building sitting. No sooner did the Commissioner come in than the talk started. Many people from both sides including youth representative delivered speeches. On his behalf and the team, the Bishop of Aweil Diocese, Rt. Rev. Abraham Yel Nhial thanked the Commissioner and his colleagues for the opportunity and welcoming. He continued to announce and showed to them the new Bishop of Abyei area Diocese, Rt. Rev. Michael Deng Kutpiny. Bishop Deng also thanked all County government and promised to work with them for people of Abyei.

In the same way, the County Commissioner welcomed the clergy and appreciated for vital role a Church is playing for the people of Abyei. He, further thanked Aweil commissioner for unconditional help they offer to Ngok Dinka during the time of anarchy like referendum era. He said Abyei will be a friend and continue to be friend of Aweil whatsoever the circumstances might be. After all those few words and

remarks, the talk came to conclusion by the word of prayer from the Bishop and then, lunch was served to all. That happened exactly at 3 PM and the meeting ended roughly by quarter to four, and people departed.

Challenges faced

- The journey from Aweil to Abyei was long and tedious due to long
- Roads were very rough and others with a lot of mud and water and, therefore, vehicles got stuck on the road.
- People from Aweil faced a lot of taxation on the way by some communities who tried by their own accord to repair the road
- The issue of transport was problematic. Only two cars were transporting all the people which made others to remain behind in every journey organized
- Vehicle of Aweil Diocese, developed mechanical problem during its way to Abyei which required a lot of money to bring it back to life.
- Time was very limited and a lot of things needed to be done

The end

Christmas Carol report

Diocese: Aweil

Archdeaconry: Aweil Town

Activity implemented: Christmas Carol

Location: St. Joseph Mathiang

Reporting date: Fri. 2nd Jan 2015

Writer: John Lual Garang

Introduction

This report is a brief account of one of the main occasions done by the youth in the year 2014. It is all talking about the recent Christmas Carol celebration. The celebration took place on Saturday 27th December 2014 at Aweil Town Archdeaconry Headquarters, St. Joseph Mathiang. In fact, it started earlier on Friday 26th with football competition. The competition was between Aweil Town and Yargot Archdeaconry teams.

This event was organized by Aweil Town Archdeaconry youth for the purpose of celebrating the birth of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. The aim was to give message to both believers and non-believers about the birth of Jesus and its importance to mankind. It was a kind of evangelical mobilization to the Town residents to proclaim to them that Messiah has been born and came into the world in form of human flesh to redeem the world from its sins. The aim was to make everyone, whether Christians or non-Christians aware and understand that Jesus came because of them and that they are freed from sins through His blood. For that genuine reason, everyone had to celebrate and appreciate the good Lord for sending His only son because of all of us.

To make this day enjoyable and colorful, Aweil Town youth administration organized some activities for that day. One of them was football competition between Aweil Town and Yargot Archdeaconries. There was also marathon, drama, dances that youth did. Some boys and girls ran and some performed drama and majority dance on the stage. During the celebration, also speeches from different people ranging from Bishop of the Diocese who was the guest of honor to Aweil Town youth leader were delivered. In addition, gifts were presented to those who won the athletics and two football teams by Diocesan youth leader. The celebration was divided into day-one and day-two activities. Here under is how it was divided.

Day one - Fri. 26th December 2014

Day one was planned for football competition only. The competition was scheduled to be played on 26th evening between the two Archdeaconries, Aweil Town and Yargot.

Football competition

As mentioned above, there was soccer match organized between Aweil Town and Yargot. This match took place on 26th in the University area football field. The match was attended by Yargot Archdeacon Isaiah Maduok Deng and the Acting Archdeacon of Aweil Town James Akol Mawien. It was also attended by the Diocesan youth leader Richard Riiny Nyinkuany and two Archdeaconry youth leaders concerned, women and youth alike.

The match was played to compete for trophy that was bought by Aweil Town youth administration some months ago for this purpose. About 400 SSP was contributed as a competition fee to change the trophy from any side that was going to win the match. According to programme schedule, the match could start at 4:45 pm and end at 6:15 pm and, of course by around that time, it started.

That day in the evening, the match ended with Yargot losing to Aweil Town 5 - to - 1. The first football match ever played and won by Aweil Town. No sooner did the match end than Aweil Town youth burst into laughter in a loud voices as they could no longer control their happiness. And immediately, they were going to one

direction singing and following their team Captain as he held high the Cup. However, Aweil Town team did not take whole competition fee but was divided and Yargot was given 100 SSP and those of Town with 300 SSP on 27th during the special occasion of Christmas Carol.

The table below indicates names of players who brought goals and the number of goals each player scored.

Name in full	Number of goals	Archdeaconry
Christo Ngor Atak	2	Aweil Town
Santo Chan Atak	2	Aweil Town
Deng Too Much	1	Aweil Town
William Muot Kenyang	1	Yargot



Aweil Town football team with Sport officials during Christmas Carol celebration



Aweil Town team with youth leaders during Christmas Carol celebration



Aweil Town and Yargot teams in the field during Christmas Carol football competition

Day two - Sat 27th December 2014

In day two, a lot of things were done. It was the actual day of celebration where many people attended including Bishop of the Diocese with his wife who was also guest of honor. The day started with the word of prayer from the Bishop after one song was sung. After all that, the Master of Ceremony, Secretary Daniel Athian read out to the audience the program of the day and how it should be followed.

Below is how the programme of day-two looks like

S/N o	Programme	Responsibl e	Title	Time (mins)
1	Singing of song	Daniel Athian	Aweil Town youth Secretary	3 mins
2	Opening prayer	Rt. Rev. Abraham Yel	Bishop	3 mins

3	Welcoming remarks	Rev. Joseph Mamer	Pastor	5 mins
4	Purpose of celebration	John Lual	Aweil Town youth leader	7 mins
5	Performance/dance	Sunday schools	Sunday	15 mins
6	Speech	Rev. Isaiah Maduok	Yargot Archdeacon	5 mins
7	Speech	Madam Duruka	Mother union leader	3 mins
8	Speech	Ustaz Marko Akoon	Diocesan Council Chairman	10 mins
9	Jokes (greeting with papers)	Daniel Athian	Secretary	20 mins
10	Drama	Group	Youth	8 mins
11	Performance	Mother union group	Women	10 mins
12	Performance	Youth group	Youth	10 mins
13	Athletics	Youth and Sunday Schools	Youth and Sunday schools	15 mins
14	Speech and presentation of gifts	Richard Riiny	Diocesan youth leader	10 mins
15	Speech and closure	Rt. Rev. Abraham Yel	Bishop	15 mins

Performances during the occasion

As indicated in the programme table above, different groups were chance to perform and make some entertainments in the occasion. First, it was Sunday schools from Aweil Town and secondly followed by the Mother union from Aweil Town also. The last performance was from youth. Youth group was combination of Aweil Town and Yargot youths. Each of the group sang not more than three songs but the chances were given intermittently.

Drama and athletics

One drama was performed by Aweil Town youth. It was about three religious leaders who were invited to pray at a certain house. One of these people was from Episcopal Church, another from Catholic while the third was Muslim. They were invited by Dengdit with his wife Abukdit and their little daughter Nyanut to pray in their home so that the family can receive blessing. But the visitors quarreled among themselves because of their different ways of praying to God. The trouble started when they tried to bless the food and each of them was not the way another one was praying and ended up arguing until they left without praying for the family.

Another entertainment was athletics. Some selected youth and Sunday schools from both Yargot and Aweil Town ran for a distance of about 30 meters. One and two girls won from Aweil Town won the race while two boys from Yargot also won. The

winner were given gifts and presented to them by Diocese youth leader Richard Riiny. Two other gifts for football competition were given also. They were received by the two youth leaders of Aweil Town and Yargot Archdeaconries.

The following are the names of the winners in the athletics

1. Thiep Maduok Deng - Yargot
2. Daniel Athian Garang - Aweil Town
3. Esther Ruter Frazer - Aweil Town
4. Julia Akuol Ngor - Aweil Town
5. Monica Aluat Maduok - Yargot

Speeches

A number of people were given chance to have some few remarks on behalf of their groups. Some of these people were representatives of youth, women, Council and pastors. The people who spoke on behalf of their respective groups were: myself as the main organizer of the ceremony narrating to the audience the purpose of the celebration, Rev. Joseph Mamer who made welcoming remarks on behalf of St. Joseph, Rev. Isaiah Maduok Deng on behalf of Yargot and Madam Duruka, Bishop’s wife, on behalf of women, Ustaz Marko Akoon on behalf of Council, Richard Riiny on behalf of youth in general and finally the guest of honor, Rt. Rev. Abraham Yel Nhial. In his speech, the Bishop thanked the youth for organizing that special occasion and urged them to continue do the same in order to bring unity and love among the young people and community at large. He pledged to sit with his administrators and discuss what they could do for youth in order to encourage them in their activities.

Closure

During the closure, the MC made some announcements. When they were finished, the Bishop said some few closing remarks and, then, offered prayers.

Budget used for activities during Christmas Carol

S/N	Item or activity	Amount spent in SSP
1	Logistics	1000
2	Feeding	1593
3	Drinks	457
4	Masira	647
5	Sports and games	250
6	Hiring of Refrees	100
7	Hiring of goal post nets	50
	Total	4097

This table shows the expenditure incurred during Christmas and Christmas Carol – year 2014

Challenges

- Youth were faced by the financial constraint which led to incur debts on them
- Cooking materials were not enough
- Sleeping materials and accommodation for guests was difficult
- Seats and tents for those who attended were also few
- Sound system used was not good enough because its microphone was not clear when speaking
- The celebration started late which led to other programmes left undone.

Wau report

Type of report: Exchange visit report

Location visited: Wau Diocese

Reporting date: Mon. 5th Jan 2015

Writer: John Lual Garang

Introduction

This report is about the exchange visit made by Aweil Diocese youth to Wau Diocese. The visit started on Friday 31st October 2014 and ended on Sunday 2nd November 2014. Eighteen (18) people, a mixture of youth and Sunday schools, both boys and girls were on that mission. This delegation was headed by Diocesan youth leader Richard Riny including myself, the youth Secretary.

The purpose of the visit was to make bilateral cooperation between Aweil and Wau youths. It was a moment of experience and ideas sharing between the two leaders and their groups in order to pave a way forward. Aweil youth had had this plan since 2011 that the two groups come together and work to unite and evangelize the Gospel in their respective Dioceses and beyond. That they would come and preach the message of peace and love to youths all around the region and South Sudan as

a whole. Because of all this, the two youth leaders, Richard and Andrea, committed themselves to coordinate and cooperate to make that day successful.

In Wau, Aweil youth found already workshop programme being organized by Wau Diocesan youth leader, Diing Deng and his group. The training time table was shown to Aweil youth leader, and to our surprise, most of the topics captured our interest. According to training organizers, it was to be conducted on Saturday morning after morning prayers and had to be attended by both Wau and Aweil youths: and it was done so. Sunday was only reserved and organized for the prayers and speeches and a lot of things were to be done that day.

Morning prayers

According to the programme, both youth of Wau and that of Aweil were to attend prayers Saturday morning from 8:00 am to 9:00 am local time. The prayers were to be conducted in Dinka only because majority of the congregation were Dinkas. When the prayers finished, all the people went out to have breakfast and, then, come back for training.

Training/workshop

The training kicked off at 10:00 am and ended roughly at 2:00 pm. It was a consolidated training without break. Three trainers taught on number of issues. And, of course, many of our youth boys and girls learned something they expected from that training. The training widely on faith based issues and unity in Christ. It taught young on how they should refrain from immorality and other vices in the journey of Christian life. It touched also the health protection issues especially about sexual transmitted diseases like HIV/AIDS and others and explained their ways of transmission and effects to young people.

Below are the training contents or issues discussed during the training.

- *HIV/AIDS issues and health in general*
- *Life of young people in Christ*
- *Roles of youth and Sunday schools in the church*
- *Leadership, discipline and respect*

When the training ended, youth departed for lunch. According to training timetable, lunch would be served at 2:00 pm and people rested for one hour. Practices by different groups to prepare for tomorrow's presentation had to be done in their respective places at around 3:00 pm local time. After lunch, different groups, among them Aweil youth and that of Wau including their youth mama were doing their practice. When it ended at 4:00 pm, Aweil youth made a short tour to the Town visiting nearby places like Wau Bridge and Catholic Church.

Sunday service

On Sunday morning, prayers started. The time announced was 8:00 am. People in three categories: a Dinka group in the main Church, the Good shepherd Cathedral, Arabic services was conducted in other second church while English service was conducted in constructed shelter. Both services begin at the same time as indicated by prayer timetable. As you can guess, Aweil youth were all praying in the main Cathedral where majority including Secretary of Wau Diocese and Pastor in charge were praying. Many government dignitaries were also in the church probably coming because it was a special day.

During the service, a number of people were given chances to express their happiness and talk on behalf of their groups. Following are the people who spoke and the groups which made presentations during the service.

Speeches and presentations

1. Wau Diocese Sunday schools presentation
2. Wau youth presentation
3. Aweil youth and Sunday schools presentation
4. Wau Diocese Arabic youth presentation
5. Wau Diocese youth Mama presentation
6. Word of encouragement from church elder
7. Speech from mother union
8. Speech from Aweil Diocese youth leader
9. Speech from Aweil Diocese Rev. Serfino Lado

When all the presentations and speeches finished, the prayers continued until preaching time. The preacher by then was Wau Diocese Secretary who preached for more than 40 minutes without tiredness. It was a nice preaching and it seemed that many people found the message coinciding with the event and the situation South Sudan as a nation is in. when it ended, one of government officials, by name Abraham Matoch was given a last chance and in his speech appreciated Aweil youth for initiative they have started and urged them to continue with it to Rumbek if possible. Abraham, who also hails from Rumbek believes that if it happens for youth to go to Lakes state make the same cooperation, it may help the people of Lakes state and Rumbek in particular to have peace among themselves. He pledged to support the youth if they continue to make that vision reality. His speech marked the end of the mass as pastor in charge closed it with a word of prayer.

Introduction among the youths

After a short while, youths from Wau and Aweil sat together to introduce themselves to each other. It was a friendly moment for them to exchange words of appreciation and cooperation between the two groups. The two youth leaders promised to continue coordinating and doing whatever they could keep youths united. After all, the two groups exchanged the contacts in order to boost coordination among them as they departed.

Challenges

- Financial problem was the major thing since the youth were to get four jerry cans of fuel for going and coming
- Road was rough and distance very long which made many people get tired
- Sleeping materials particularly bed sheets were not enough because some of youth did not have them
- Some youth got sick and needed medicines

Budget used

S/N o	Item	Qty	Amount in SSP
1	Jerry cans of Fuel	4	560
2	Medical and emergency money	-	300
	Total		860

The end