



Monday 20th December 2021

**SOUTH SUDAN COUNCIL OF CHURCHES (SSCC)
CHRISTMAS MESSAGE OF HOPE**

“Nevertheless, that time of darkness and despair will not go on forever... The people who walk in darkness will see a great light. For those who live in a land of deep darkness, a light will shine.” (Isaiah 9:1-2).

With this message from Prophet Isaiah, South Sudan Council of Churches (SSCC) extends ecumenical greetings in the spirit of Christmas of hope in the Messiah who became human and made his home among us. He was full of unflinching love and faithfulness. (cf. John 1:14).

During the Christmas celebrations, we have the opportunity to reflect on this great mystery of the birth of Jesus, the child of Bethlehem, Emmanuel, God-with-us. Indeed, what does it mean for Emmanuel to come and dwell among us during this time of uncertainties, pain, divisions, anxieties, and fear? As the child, Emmanuel-God-with-us gazes on us from the humble crib, with a bright star shining its light in the world, let us come closer to the manger, hold this child wrapped in swaddling clothes in our arms and reflect further on what it means to “have no room in the inn,” no place to call home, to lie helpless among the most vulnerable people, and to be born in a world of indifference?

While the challenges of the implementation of the Revitalized Agreement for the Resolution of the Conflict in South Sudan (R-ARCSS) remains, there are still widespread insecurity that claims lives and threatens the safety of the civil population around the country on daily basis. There is rampant violence in some parts of our country causing harm to civilian population including loss of livelihoods, lives, and human rights abuses. There is rampant intercommunal violence which involves communities attacking neighbors with intentions of revenge. South Sudan needs peace for its citizens; South Sudan needs to resolve the accumulated unresolved intercommunal and community grievances. May the peace of the newborn Saviour remain with the people of South Sudan. May the Child Jesus who became flesh and dwelt in poverty among us appear to the people of South Sudan with the message of hope. May the Child Jesus enhance in us the spirit of true forgiveness, peace, justice, and reconciliation (cf. John 20:23).

While COVID-19 remains a big challenge globally with the new variant *omicron*, it should remind us to rediscover the Good News of God’s grace and love that Jesus Christ is the foundation of Christian joy and hope. As South Sudanese, the Good News is something that we need to hold onto as we have endured so much pain and suffering. The year 2021 is when South Sudan turned ten (10) and has been challenging with several mishaps. As we reflect on the blessings of Christmas with hope, let us remember our brothers and sisters who are in despair from the impact of inter-communal conflict, floods, food insecurity in different parts of the country. We call upon our political leaders to make the decisions that will accelerate implementation of the R-ARCSS to reform the dire conditions of our people.

As we celebrate the birth of our saviour, may we heed to God’s call to seek Christ, the light of the world and dispel the darkness of our hearts. May Jesus, born of Mary, Emmanuel-God-



with-us, heal our country of brokenness and bring us true peace. May Jesus, born of Mary, bless our country South Sudan, our families, and friends this Christmas and New Year 2022. Let us celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ with the urge to collectively follow the guidelines that prevent the spread of COVID-19.

MERRY CHRISTMAS AND JOYFUL NEW YEAR 2022 of HOPE IN THE MESSIAH!

SIGNED:



Rt. Rev. James PAR TAP HON
Chairman, South Sudan Council of Churches (SSCC) &
Moderator, South Sudan Presbyterian Evangelical Church (SSPEC).



The Most Rev. Dr. Stephen AMEYU MARTIN
Vice Chairman, South Sudan Council of Churches (SSCC) &
Metropolitan Archbishop of JUBA & Apostolic Administrator
Catholic Diocese of TORIT.



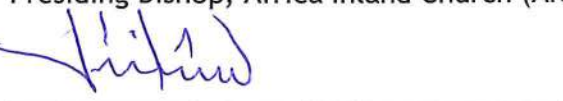
The Most Rev. Dr. Justin BADI ARAMA
Primate and Archbishop, Province of the Episcopal Church of South Sudan (ECSS) &
Metropolitan Archbishop of JUBA Diocese.



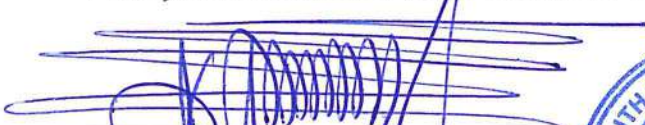
Bishop Dr. Isaiah MAJOK DAU
General Overseer
Sudan Pentecostal Church (SPC).



Bishop James LAGOS ALEXANDER
Presiding Bishop, Africa Inland Church (AIC).



Rt. Rev. James MAKUEI CHUOL
Moderator of the General Assembly
Presbyterian Church of South Sudan and Sudan (PCSS/S).



Fr. James OYET LATANSIO
General Secretary
South Sudan Council of Churches (SSCC).

