



MEAL FOR PEACE

An intentional gathering to learn more
about and be part of peace-building in
South Sudan.



Hosting a MEAL FOR PEACE

Welcome, friend!

Thank you for being here. I am very excited to share this Meal for Peace with you. The goal of this special meal is to advance the efforts of peace among our South Sudanese sisters and brothers. Seems like too big of a task for one meal? Let me tell you... every conversation, every meal, every heart touched, and every step toward action is one step closer to peace.

In this kit, I, along with the team from RCA Global Mission, provide the tools you need to host a Meal for Peace—all you have to do is provide the space, people, and a heart for refugees (which I know you already have).

As we prepare for World Refugee Day on June 20, and in recognition that we are called to be ambassadors of Christ and Christ's mission of peace and reconciliation, I invite you to get a simple meal (or coffee date or park meet up) on the calendar with your friends, neighbors, or congregation. All you need is included in this packet: a recipe for a simple meal from South Sudan, information on the ongoing conflict, a story, a poem, and discussion questions. At the end of your meal (or even as part of the RSVP!) I invite you to donate the money you would have spent on a night out toward the RCA Global Mission South Sudan Refugee Care Project. This is a great place to start, but feel free to be creative with how you give with your purse through your Meal for Peace.

Together, we can promote peace and reconciliation for a country divided by decades of war and conflict. And today, that peace can begin with you opening your home or church and sharing your table for a Meal for Peace.



Until all experience Shalom,

JJ TenClay
RCA Missionary
Refugee Care Coordinator

Words to share BEFORE THE MEAL

There is something sacred about a good meal. Eating good food, drinking plentiful drinks, and enjoying the company of others...this is the epitome of experiencing the blessings of a meal.

Jesus understood the power of a good meal. Jesus shared some of his most profound teachings while sharing food and drink with others. On the night that Jesus was betrayed, he not only shared a meal with his beloved disciples, but he instituted the sacrament of holy communion. He commanded that we, as Christ-followers, continue to come together around the table to break bread and drink from the cup of blessing in remembrance, communion, and hope.

This was the final meal Jesus participated in before being delivered into the hands of his enemies, giving the ultimate sacrifice of his earthly life so that we could become people of a new covenant: a covenant of peace and reconciliation—with God, with God's created cosmos, and with one another as God's image-bearers.

Ephesians tells us that Jesus is our peace and that he "proclaimed peace to you who were far off and peace to those who were near" (Ephesians 2:17, NRSV). Thanks be to God!

Yet, we live in a world where millions of people experience violent conflict and persecution that threatens their lives and liberties daily. Many have lived their entire lives experiencing the complex and pervasive trauma of the death of loved ones, destruction of their homes and beloved communities, forced displacement, and migration to seek refuge in communities where they continue to be denied access to basic human needs and human rights... and they lament as their children and grandchildren live these same realities.



South Sudan, the world's youngest country, gained its independence from Sudan in 2011 after decades of violent conflict, but independence did not stop the ongoing violence and human rights abuses experienced by its citizens. Since 2013, approximately 400,000 South Sudanese have died and more than 4 million people have been forcibly displaced from their homes as lasting peace and reconciliation continue to be elusive for the people of South Sudan.

RCA Global Mission partner RECONCILE International and RCA missionaries Shelvis and Nancy Smith-Mather are working with South Sudanese refugees in Uganda to:

- Identify and train South Sudanese citizens as Peace Ambassadors to work towards peace and reconciliation within refugee camps and their beloved country of South Sudan
- Improve relationships between South Sudanese refugees and their host communities through social cohesion
- Provide trauma-healing services for South Sudanese refugees. A person's individual healing better prepares them to heal their relationships with others, leading to more peace in a community.

It is our goal to raise \$85,000 to support this vital, life-giving work. Every dollar counts.



Savia Ayia's STORY

“War took everything from us, including my home and my husband’s life. With six children, life became difficult. Horrible. I often sat at home with nothing to do, living with depression. I felt helpless and hopeless. Today, I have forgiven those who caused misery to our family.”

Savia Ayia was a participant at the refugee dialogue for peace and reconciliation in Adjumani Refugee Camp, led by RECONCILE International. Women survivors are extremely strong and continue to prevail, and the support of this international community is partly why. Your encouragement has the power to inspire hope during their darkest moments.

Preparing THE TABLE

African Red Kidney Beans

Prep time: 4 hours | Cook time: 40 minutes

Red beans are popular across all socioeconomic statuses in South Sudan. The best part about this dish is that it is an economical way to give your body the nutrients it needs. Served with rice, these beans are a complete meal that includes essential proteins. For an authentic experience, we encourage you to soak and cook dried light speckled kidney beans, but you can also substitute with canned light red kidney beans to save time. This recipe can be served over rice.

What you need:

- 2.75 cups light speckled dried red kidney beans or 2 cans of light red kidney beans
- 3 Tbsp oil
- 1 small red onion chopped
- 1 small yellow bell pepper chopped
- 2-3 small tomatoes, diced
- Salt to taste
- 1 cup of water, separated
- 1 tsp coriander powder
- 1 tsp black pepper
- 1 tsp cumin powder
- 1 Tbsp tomato paste
- 1 Tbsp minced garlic
- 1 sprig of rosemary
- 1 sprig of sage



For the full recipe (and video!), scan the QR code using the camera on your phone or tablet.

Don't have time to prepare a meal?

No problem. Find a local restaurant owned by an immigrant family and cater in food. Another option is to forego the meal portion and grab coffee, host a tea time, or meet in a park.

Preparing **THE TABLE**, Cont.

Kachumbari Salad

Prep time: 15 minutes | Serves 4

Kachumbari is a Swahili word and is a simple tomato, onion, avocado salad that is popular across East Africa. This fresh dish is made from simple ingredients but will add a lovely compliment to your main dish of rice and beans.

What you need:

- 3 tomatoes
- 1/2 red onion
- 1/2 lemon
- 1 avocado
- 6 Tablespoons cilantro chopped
- 1/2 teaspoon black pepper
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1/2 teaspoon cayenne pepper (optional)



For the full recipe, scan the QR code using the camera on your phone or tablet.

Food Insecure Country

South Sudan is one of the most food insecure countries around the world. Food insecurity is a lack of consistent access to enough food for every person in a household to live an active, healthy life. Conflict, drought, COVID-19, and other factors contribute to the crisis. As you eat your meal, know that what you serve is still likely more than our sisters and brothers in South Sudan have access to.





Let's REFLECT

Here are some reflection questions to guide your meal conversation. You may not cover all of these, and that's okay. Let your time around the table flow in whatever way feels most natural.

Question 1

Peace, as defined in the dictionary, can be described as a state of tranquility or quiet, such as freedom from things like civil disobedience and oppressive thoughts and emotions, and a state or period of harmony in personal relations. What does the word "peace" mean to you?

Question 2

How are you experiencing peace today?

Question 3

Why is it important for us to love the people of South Sudan and support the work of peace and reconciliation for their beloved homeland?

Question 4

Peace is mentioned frequently throughout Scripture. What do you think peace means in the Bible, and why do you think it's mentioned so often?



Additional **ACTIVITIES**

Want to go deeper? Check out these additional resources to help you better understand the vibrant culture of South Sudan and the need that exists. You can also watch a video from RCA missionary Nancy Smith-Mather that explains the peace-building efforts in more detail by scanning the QR code on the right or visiting www.rca.org/smith-mather and clicking on the first video resource.



For Kids

Have kids in attendance? Grab some paper and crayons. Ask the kids to remember a time when they disagreed with someone. Invite them to color their memory using different crayons to represent their different feelings. Example: Orange can represent hurt feelings, purple can represent confused feelings, etc. Then, invite them to use a green crayon to add designs that represent what helped them resolve their problem. Invite them to talk about their drawing with the group. Explain that thinking about and talking about our feelings in new ways can help us work through disagreements in the future. Encourage them to choose peace whenever they can.



Prayer Requests

- Pray for peace in South Sudan, so that starving people get the food they need to live.
- Pray for the church in South Sudan, that it remains a beacon of hope in a broken world.
- Pray for reconciliation training to be fruitful and to shape hearts and minds toward lasting peace.
- Pray for the children in South Sudan to be able to go to school. May they have roofs, desks, books, pencils, paper, and teachers with knowledge and skills to give students' ideas wings to fly.



Poem

Scan the QR code below to hear a poem for peace written and recited by 14-year-old Rita in South Sudan.



Music

Scan the QR code below to listen to a YouTube playlist of gospel music from South Sudan.





Now **WHAT?**

You collected a gift for the peace project, now what? Here's how to get it to the right place:

ONLINE: www.rca.org/give/south-sudan-refugee-care-project

PHONE: Call Terri Boven at 616-541-0835 (U.S. only)

MAIL: Make all checks out to the "Reformed Church in America" and designate "South Sudan Refugee Care Project" on the memo line. Please send your check to Reformed Church in America, Attn: Finance Dept., 4500 60th St. SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49512, or, in Canada, to Regional Synod of Canada, PO Box 1583 STN Main, Woodstock, Ontario, N4S 0A7

Stay **CONNECTED**

If this experience has piqued your interest in working closer with RCA Global Mission to provide compassionate, Christ-like care for refugees and other forcibly displaced people, here's how you can stay connected:

- Sign up for Shelvis and Nancy Smith-Mather's email updates on their work in South Sudan: www.rca.org/smith-mather.
- Sign up for JJ TenClay's email updates on her work with refugees around the world: www.rca.org/tenclay.
- Support the work of the Smith-Mathers and JJ TenClay through a monthly gift by visiting their respective websites above and sign up. If you're representing a church, consider giving at a larger capacity through a Partnership-in-Mission (PIM) share. Learn more at www.rca.org/PIM.



www.rca.org/mission