



September 2023

The Summer of Yes! (Part II)

Dear Friends,

Last week, I shared a Dear Friends letter about how God has been doing some amazing things related to my work in caring for refugees and displaced people, and how the people of God have been stepping out in faith to provide compassionate, Christ-like care for those seeking refuge. So much so that I am calling this summer the Summer of Yes!

If you missed last week's letter, you can read it here: <https://www.rca.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/TenClay-August-2023-PDF.docx.pdf>

This week I'd like to share another story from the Summer of Yes.

South Sudan

One commitment I've made since accepting this role as refugee ministries coordinator for RCA Global Mission is to work with trusted mission partners who directly serve forcibly displaced people worldwide who are currently underserved and identify a way we can invite individuals, churches, faith leaders, classes, regional synods, educational institutions, and beyond to: A) learn more about this group of people and the circumstances leading to their displacement, B) pray for them, and C) join RCA Global Mission in raising money to provide compassionate, Christ-like care for them by fulfilling a specific need identified by our mission partners.



In the past, we have invited people to join us in rebuilding a school for Yazidi children in Northern Iraq and to fund eight schools in Myanmar and Bangladesh for Rohingya children.

Would you like to receive these updates digitally? Please email Kelli at kgilmore@rca.org to be added to the email list. You will receive more timely updates from the missionary you support and help us be good stewards of our resources.

In June 2022, we invited people to join us in supporting the work of our mission partner, RECONCILE, Int., and RCA missionaries Shelvis and Nancy Smith-Mather through the RCA Global Mission South Sudan Refugee Care Project. We are raising \$85,000 to train and equip South Sudanese refugees living in Uganda to be peacebuilders and trauma healers within their communities. You can learn more about the South Sudan Refugee Care Project here: <https://www.rca.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/South-Sunday-Refugee-Care.pdf>. The goal was to raise \$85,000 in one year (June 2022-June 2023), but, unfortunately, we raised only \$15,000.

But God loves the people of South Sudan and so does RCA Global Mission, so we decided to extend our fundraising for this project for another year.

Every year at RCA General Synod, a special offering is taken and the General Synod president determines how those funds will be used. This year, President Dwayne Jackson decided to split the General Synod offering between two RCA Global Mission projects—one of them being the South Sudan project. In addition, an anonymous donor offered to give a matching gift of \$7,700 if we raised \$7,700 for the offering. General Synod exceeded that goal, and more than \$16,000 was raised, with half of it going to the South Sudan project! Thank you to Rev. Dwayne Jackson, the anonymous matching gift donor, and all who gave to the 2023 General Synod offering for saying yes to caring for South Sudanese refugees!

We also wanted to invite more people into this space of caring for the people of South Sudan, and my colleague, Kelli Gilmore, came up with a great idea of putting together a toolkit and inviting individuals and congregations to host [A Meal for Peace](http://www.rca.org/meal-for-peace) (www.rca.org/meal-for-peace) for South Sudan. The idea is simple and can be tweaked to work for any setting: simply invite people to gather for food or drinks, share information with guests about South Sudan and her people, and collect money to support the South Sudan Refugee Care Project.



So far, people have participated in A Meal for Peace through hosting coffee time at church and during classis meetings, potlucks, picnics, lemonade stands, and beyond.

I'm so incredibly grateful to share that we have now raised an additional \$45,000 for the South Sudan Refugee Care Project this summer! Only \$25,000 left to go to meet our \$85,000 goal!

Thank you to everyone who has said yes to hosting A Meal for Peace or for supporting the South Sudan Refugee Care Project.

If you haven't participated yet, will you join us by hosting a Meal for Peace, or by raising funds for the South Sudan Refugee Care Project? This would be a great opportunity for Sunday School, youth groups, and small groups to participate as we kick off activities this Fall, or as a focus for World Communion Sunday in October.

Stay tuned for more stories from the Summer of Yes next week!

In Faithful Service,

JJ TenClay

RCA Global Mission does not receive denominational assessments or covenant shares. We depend on the faithful generosity of churches and individuals.