

UPDATE FROM NANCY MCGAUGHEY

April, 2013

Greetings from South Sudan,

Juba, South Sudan; Cape Town, South Africa; Nairobi, Kenya; Juba and now Yei, South Sudan. This is all of the places I have traveled this month. A lot of travelling, and I haven't made it home to Pibor yet!

April found me on my way to the Africa Gathering of PCUSA mission co-workers in Africa. We came together at a wonderful place called 'The Grail' located outside of Cape Town. It was a week spent with thought-provoking Bible studies, discussions, sharing, renewing of friendships and making new friends. There were many interesting signs around as well – like the one to the right. One day when we were out walking, we found that there were 'slow –moving residents in the area, as we met this little fellow crossing the road.



It was a great week, and along with all the 'business' things to cover, they managed to work in a bit of sightseeing as well. One afternoon we took a trip to the Botanical Gardens and then on to Betty's Bay to watch the penguins. To me, penguins depict God's sense of humor. I not only laughed as I watched them and took photos, I find myself still smiling as I look at the pictures again.



Sunday morning we travelled into Cape Town to worship at a traditional Afrikaans' church. As in most African churches I have attended, the music was outstanding. We then travelled to Table Mountain. For me it



was an act of faith to ride the cable car to the top, I am not overly fond of heights. As we were on top, walking some of the many trails, enjoying the beautiful view and looking down over the city, the clouds moved down. A few hours later as we were preparing to descend, the sight had changed. It was as though the cables disappeared into the clouds. Now it was a real act of faith to continue on. I

thought this was much like my walk with Jesus (the theme

of our week). There are times I have to totally depend upon Him as I cannot see what is next and have no idea where I am going.

How true this turned out to be, as before leaving South Africa stories of increased fighting in Pibor began to reach us. 9 women and children fleeing to Pibor town for safety were killed by soldiers. A U.N. Peacekeeping group was attacked as they were going to an outlying village. 5 soldiers from India along with 4 Kenyans who were travelling with them to drill water wells were killed by rebel forces. Some of the local Murle people were also killed. By the time I had obtained a visa to return to Juba, PCUSA had decided it was not safe to return to Pibor at this time.



Instead I journeyed to Yei to take a two-week course at RECONCILE Peace Institute. Friends from Across and I obtained passage on a land cruiser travelling on Sunday. As we started, my friend said, 'This is the best road in South Sudan outside of Juba'. Three hours later, we were still in Juba county and that was due more to the state of the road than the size of Juba county. At times it felt like we were travelling over a washboard, other times it was like a slow-moving roller coaster as we went up then down into holes of water and out the other side to go down again. And then there was the road sign that said, 'bumps ahead". What was that we had been having??? We wove from side to side, dodging potholes in the road. I appreciated knowing that we had four-wheel drive if needed! 6 jolting hours later, we arrived in Yei and I am now taking a 2 week workshop on Peace Building Interventions. After that, God knows and I trust Him to lead me.

In the meantime, PLEASE pray for my Murle friends – those remaining in Pibor, those who have fled seeking safety in other places, for the rebels, for the army – for safety and that they may all come to know God's Peace.

And, as always, my sincerest gratitude to all of you for your prayers, your words of encouragement, and your support that allows me to be with the Murle in their struggles.

Standing with you in Prayer for the Murle people,

Narc (Thocolech)