

## ***Sudanese Ministry in Mankato, MN***

Sudanese Ministry at Our Savior's in Mankato, MN was started in 2001 as immigrants enrolled at the State University here. Previously, most Sudanese Christian immigrants had been concentrated in Des Moines, Iowa. You may remember reading about "The Lost Boys of Sudan" in the *Lutheran Witness* (Nov. 2003). Today they're growing up, becoming American citizens, having families, and remaining in their Christian life and worship.

Under the leadership of James Ruey (pronounced: "Ray"), Sudanese Lutheran immigrants in Mankato worship every Sunday in their own location at the Midtown Square building in downtown Mankato or with other Sudanese Lutherans in the Midwest (Des Moines, Albert Lea, Columbia Heights, Omaha/Lincoln, NE, for example.)

Most Sudanese Immigrants have been Christian their entire lives; many spending years in refugee camps in Southern Sudan or Northern Ethiopia. The country of Sudan is prevalent in world news today because of ongoing and religious conflict. The United Nations is hearing about genocide among "Black Africans" who are predominately Christian and Democratic as opposed to Muslims who seek totalitarian religious rule.

The Sudanese congregation at Our Savior's now consists of nearly 100 souls. Average weekly attendance for 2007 is 48. James Ruey, himself an immigrant who spent 10 years in Sudanese refugee camps, serves these families part-time in their native Nuer language. He receives a weekly stipend and works about 20 hours/week as Pastor of this congregation. Mr. Ruey is a graduate of the Ethnic Immigrant Institute of Theology (EIIT) at Concordia Seminary in St. Louis and will be Called and Ordained after this congregation is accepted into the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod.

Mankato area congregations and a handful of dedicated supporters worked together to support and guide the work of the Gospel among the Sudanese immigrants through the "Sudanese Mission Advisory Committee." Their work is now nearly completed as the Sudanese group begins its own congregation. Our Savior's Lutheran in Mankato and Pastor Paul Lauer continue to provide administrative and pastoral guidance as this new congregation navigates the course toward congregational membership in the LC-MS.

Seven men have now formed the "Sudanese Evangelical Lutheran Mission Church of Southern Minnesota", have adopted a Constitution and Bylaws, and have applied for membership in the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod. Once accepted into the Synod, other members will be invited to join this official congregation. At that time, it is expected that they will extend a Call to Candidate Ruey to be their Pastor.

In addition to providing weekly worship and education for Sudanese immigrants in Mankato, the Sudanese formed and participate in the Sudanese Lutheran Mission Society which seeks to support Lutheran Christians back in Sudan. A campus is being built to house a Lutheran congregation and to eventually form a Sudanese Lutheran Synod.

Contributions can be made to **Sudanese Lutheran Church** and mailed to 1103 N. Broad Street, Mankato, MN 56001 or the address above or made directly from their website at [slcmankato.org](http://slcmankato.org) using Credit Card or PayPal. Contributions are tax deductible through Our Savior's, Mankato until the congregations obtains its own non-profit status..

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