



Dear Friends,

Around the world, communities have traditions that bring people together to share food, friendship, and gratitude. This year, **St. John's Baptist Church in Charlotte, NC**, chose a special focus for its **Friendsgiving** lunch before Thanksgiving. The event celebrated **relationships that started almost 25 years ago** when 30+ young men born in southern Sudan were invited into the church's community. They were among 3,000+ former "Lost Boys of Sudan" refugees authorized by the US State Department to leave camps where they grew up as orphans of civil war and start new lives.

An Evolving Journey



These connections that began in 2001 show the great power of human kindness in the face of adversity. The former Lost Boys who "re-gathered" at Friendsgiving are men now. They are South Sudanese Americans with wives, children, jobs, and careers. A collection of articles featured proud graduations and "Rations of Hope" lunches that raised funds for UNC Charlotte graduate James Lubo Mijak's dream of supporting education back home.

Friends Stay the Course



Who knew that a long, hard journey would lead to **building schools in South Sudan**? In 2013, generous donors helped construct **Nyarweng Primary School** ("Lubo's" Dream). Similarly, former Lost Boy James Manyror's goal of establishing **Gumriak Primary School** was supported by friends and parishioners at **St. Frances Cabrini Catholic Church in Littleton, CO**. At Mothering Across Continents, we're honored to manage the two schools and Sunlight Primary in Bor, Jonglei State. Former Lost Boy and founder Daniel Majok Gai is Executive Director.

Food Fuels So Much!



The Friendsgiving potluck and memories of Rations of Hope fundraisers got us thinking. **Sharing even the most basic meals builds community**. More than half of the population in South Sudan experiences food insecurity. Our ability to provide lunches motivates students to come to school and learn together.

It costs just a modest **\$12,000 each year to cover essential food items and four hardworking cooks** serving 800+ teachers and students. As Thanksgiving approaches, we hope this story of connections between **people, food, community, education, and peace** resonates...



With gratitude,



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