

SOMA works for the transformation of individuals and churches, and the healing of communities and their lands through the renewing power of the Holy Spirit by sending and receiving teams worldwide on short-term mission within the Anglican Communion.

# sharing

2011 No. 1

the newsletter of  
**soma**

SHARING OF MINISTRIES ABROAD



I am very happy. If I was a dog you would see my tail is very busy!

**The new Bentiu Area Diocese sits on the south side of the north-south Sudan demarcation line. We were met enthusiastically by the Bishop, who welcomed us as the first outsiders to come to minister in the new Diocese!**

This was the fourth in the series of SOMA - ECS Provincial Youth Coordinators' Regional Workshops' training Youth Leaders. Partnered by the Diocese of Salisbury Sudan Link, the workshop's aims are to encourage youth leaders and leaders in their ministry, to equip them with resources they can pass on and to promote sustainable peace by creating respect and value for human life.

The Bentiu, Unity State location for the Youth Leaders', Clergy, Pastors', Evangelists' and Lay Leaders' Conference came at the recommendation of Archbishop Daniel Deng, the instigation of Provincial Youth Coordinator Evans Gogonya and the request of the Bishop of Bentiu, John Gattek.

The local atmosphere was one of anticipation for what was then the forthcoming Referendum and also of concern over the proximity of the border to Bentiu. The delegates consisted of Youth Leaders

supplemented by some other church leaders and army chaplains - there are thousands of troops stationed nearby.

The five day conference focused on the power of the Holy Spirit to heal, reconcile, release, forgive and so further equip the delegates for mission and ministry in the future.

The fruits of the ministry? Let the delegates share them in their own words...

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## For such a time as this

I have been immensely encouraged and blessed by the way that the Lord the Holy Spirit has been guiding SOMA's work in Sudan. The country is again at a critical stage in its history.



It is a delight to recall that the church continued to minister through the years of civil war and conflict and, as a consequence, now has earned a voice in building the future of the people and the country.

Since the 1990's SOMA has been privileged to have been called by God to minister here - we have stood with the Sudanese church, both by sending Teams and by the concerted, consistent prayer of our Intercessors. Our commitment continues.

Since the last edition of SHARING, SOMA has had Teams ministering on both sides of the line of demarcation between the North and the South of the country. Those that received us expressed their deep appreciation of this strong, physical statement of solidarity with them in the face of the challenge of historic change, and all the insecurity that could bring.

It is God's blessing to be called to minister in Sudan 'for such a time as this', a privilege we do not count lightly and a terrific encouragement also I pray, to all who are involved in SOMA's call and ministry, be it in prayer, as a Team member, by financial support, your continued interest or active participation in the future.

Stephen Dinsmore SOMA UK National Director

## [intercession@somauk.org](mailto:intercession@somauk.org)

**Called to intercession?** If you are, think you may be, would like to be or are exploring if you are, then do contact us! Intercession is the 'hidden' half of SOMA's ministry. We are always keen to hear from people who would like to pray regularly. SOMA Intercessors take on a vital commitment, are an absolutely indispensable part of SOMA's ministry, and play an invaluable and deeply appreciated role at home whenever SOMA Teams are abroad.

# sharing

## SOMA Parish Mission Partners

*"I thank God for leading SOMA to Africa. The Holy Spirit led the Team here"*

*"Every SOMA Team I've brought back to the UK has had a massive impact on the DNA of mission in my church"*

Being a SOMA Parish Mission Partner builds a live, active and mutually beneficial relationship between your parish and SOMA, envisioning and renewing your church for Holy Spirit ministry and mission at home as well as abroad.

### SOMA Parish Mission Partners receive

- SHARING for each member of the congregation
- a SOMA speaker for a Sunday about once a year
- invitations, information and encouragement for leaders and members of the congregation to participate in SOMA mission teams abroad and for Intercessors to join the SOMA Intercessors Network
- regular communication with the designated SOMA parish contact, as well as the Incumbent & staff team

### In return SOMA Parish Mission Partners

- encourage prayer for SOMA in services, groups and by individuals
- regularly communicate news about SOMA to their congregations
- encourage individuals to get involved by joining Teams, becoming SOMA Intercessors, hosting visitors, attending SOMA activities
- seek to support SOMA financially

For further information or to discuss the scheme contact Stephen Dinsmore at [info@somauk.org](mailto:info@somauk.org) or 01460 279737.



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*We came in on our knees but now we are walking.*

*I am very happy. If I was a dog you would see my tail is very busy!*

*This ministry is of the Holy Spirit - the power to unite us as brothers and sisters... the centre of liberty... makes us know we are one.*

*Nothing else can bring us together except the Holy Spirit. Your presence blessed me so much.*

*We are very happy, thanks to God for His protection and bringing us together. God is with us, who can be against us?*

*God made us learn more through this conference.*

*You have stood with us - God will bless you.'*

Bishop John, our host, at the close of the conference, gave thanksgiving to God for His unfailing love and protection and for those who had organised, ministered, prayed and supported the conference workshop in Bentiu. The Team also added their thanksgiving for those who accommodated us in their own home compound and those who worked hard so that the programme proceeded in the face of many challenges.

SOMA's ministry seeks the transformation of communities. Evans reports that later 'One senior Government official from the Bentiu area came to thank us for what we did in Bentiu, he said the Government of South Sudan appreciated the big effort done in planting the seeds of strong faith, love, forgiveness, unity and reconciliation. He requested me to convey their heart felt gratitude to you all.'

For the Team there was blessing through the challenges too. Naomi: 'He is certainly



able to do 'more than we can ever ask for or even imagine' and is certainly the 'everlasting arms underneath us!' I saw that 'I can do all things through Him who strengthens me'... God's financial provision was amazing prior to me going, I felt God went ahead of me in the way of finance. The trip fed me hugely in every way and has helped my mindset be more secure in the truths and faithfulness of Christ. I have felt an equipping and encouragement of gifts and a renewed stirring for further overseas work in the future. In short empowering and enlightening. The intercessory aspect of SOMA was new to me in that I had not realised how seriously this role is taken on and I have valued it hugely.'

For Kate it was: 'Trusting and drawing on Him to enable me to do things I wouldn't have thought I could do.'

Ron said: 'It was amazing to be alongside those whose faith has been forged in the midst of suffering.'

Royston wrote: 'It was an exciting part of my adventure of faith, full of the power of the Holy Spirit and the real presence of God as I observed Christ at work in others.'

## SOMA Teams for 2011

Tanzania	West Tanganyika
D R Congo	Nord Kivu
Sudan	Ibba Youth Leaders
Uganda	Kinkiizi
D R Congo	Bukavu
New Zealand	Waikanae
Sudan	Kajo Keji
Australia	Canberra Goulburn
West Malaysia	
D R Congo	Boga
Kenya	Kajiado
Sudan	Wonduruba Youth Leaders
Uganda	South Rwenzori
Sudan	Kadugli

Other invitations are in the process of negotiation. Contact the SOMA Office if you would like to be involved with any of these or other emerging teams.



The Bentiu Team - Royston Smith, Evans Gogonya, Naomi Oliver, Lado Lobalang, Kate Brankin, Ron Hart, Justin Lotio, Stephen Dinsmore, Simon Brignall took the photo.

## Envisioned and Blessed

First time SOMA Team member Chris Casey shares his reflections on the SOMA mission to Arua, Diocese of Madi West Nile, Uganda. Diocesan Bishop Joel Obetia had said “Discovering your gifts makes you work closely with others in harmony and as a team to serve a given purpose. People discover how best to fit in their respective positions and how to support each other more effectively.” The Team were invited to help further this vision for the Diocese.

The Team was greeted by Bishop Joel who was overjoyed at seeing the realisation of a dream of his to bring a SOMA Team to his diocese. Following the joyful celebrations for the fifth anniversary of the consecration of Bishop Joel, the SOMA Conference began on Monday 29 November. Our first encounter with the seventy plus clergy delegates quickly alerted us to a group of ministers who seemed weary, hard pressed, in need of encouragement and a fresh touch from God the Holy Spirit. Fortunately for us the Team and conference was being covered by a large number of intercessors back home - and all felt the benefit of it.

When Team leader Kevin Roberts, Archdeacon of Carlisle, invited me to be part of the team of six going on mission to Arua up in the NW of Uganda I experienced a sense of genuine excitement. But as time wore on I experienced a sense of anxiety - could I really be of use to the Bishop and his clergy to whom we were invited to minister? Could I deliver something that would somehow make a difference to these dear people ministering the gospel in such challenging and demanding contexts?

I received my brief and began to make preparations for my teaching responsibilities which included teaching on the person and work of the Holy Spirit, workshops with colleagues on the gifts of the Holy Spirit, preaching and teaching, a session on facing trials and suffering as well as one on receiving the Holy Spirit.

Once we had arrived in Arua the Team's role was to minister to the clergy, all of whom were seeking to serve congregations who often struggled to financially support their minister.

As the week passed by I became increasingly aware of the nature of the task the clergy and Bishop faced.

There are well patronised churches: one pastor told me he had 400 at morning prayer,



Delegates and team leader Kevin Roberts

another mentioned how the most popular service amongst the Youth in Arua Cathedral is the 7am morning service. Yet all are congregations thirst for teaching and discipling.

For the population of this rural area live in the borderlands of The Democratic Republic of Congo and on the southern border of Sudan - Islam is a growing force and I heard many experiences of the challenges of working with Muslim neighbours and evangelistic Muslims within one's community. The church's experience with this in the Diocese can greatly inform we in the UK - because in this regard I feel they are years ahead of us.

Our role was to minister to these Pastors who were seeking to serve often poor congregations who could not afford to financially support their ministers - £15 per month is not an uncommon stipend for clergy in Arua.

Under Kevin's leadership it did not take very long for us to establish a rapport with our brothers and sisters. We worshipped together, worked together and even wept together. Ours was the joy of seeing God speak powerfully into their lives, heal some, offer hope to others, answer prayers in wonderful ways and most of all come graciously amongst us to envision and to bless. Here are a hungry people, thirsty for resources, teaching, models of ministry and inspiration to sustain the challenging work they have faithfully begun. It was a privilege for me to be part of this team and to witness firsthand what God did amongst our Ugandan peers.

Chris Casey is priest of St Andrew's Mirehouse, Whitehaven. Other members of the Team were Kevin & Anne Roberts, Eleanor Hancock, Tim & Sue Montgomery.

## SOMA - Renewal for Mission in the UK

**Team members tell how their participation in SOMA's ministry abroad has positively impacted them, their ministry and their community back home.**

Revd Chris Casey, of St Andrew's Mirehouse, on his first mission with SOMA was part of the Team to the Diocese of Madi & West Nile, Uganda...

*Since returning to UK I have been aware of the need for a greater depth of engagement with the life of the Holy Spirit in my own Parish - I have become more thirsty to see the very things we were teaching about in Africa, and Praise God, there have been some encouraging signs.*

Another recently returned Team member, reflecting on how the experience has changed his ministry and mission writes...

*I have an increased awareness of God's greatness and involvement in our lives and ministries, leading to an increased expectation in prayer. I was challenged and encouraged by the African Christians' view of prayer as a first resort, in contrast with our Western tendency to try to find a technique to fix a problem and turn to prayer as a last resort. I returned with a renewed determination to pray for the country we ministered in.*

A third says...

*I thought I would let you know how our Lord through the work of SOMA has been part of my personal renewal. My wife and I have been attending a new home church. Today it was announced to the congregation that I will be joining the ministry team. It is an exciting appointment for me as I shall have very specific leadership responsibilities, as an NSM, within a large church with a vision for growth, evangelism and church planting.*

## YES I'd like to support SOMA

### Come on a Team

We are constantly looking for new team members to bring fresh impetus to our teams. Team members finance their own travel and costs, trips last between 10 and 20 days. Teams are always exciting, challenging, faith building and life changing!

### Give Financially

We are always in need of financial support for SOMA's missions and ministry abroad. Your financial gifts further this strategic work of the Holy Spirit and make a real and lasting difference to people and communities abroad.

### Pray

Prayer and Intercession are the solid foundation of SOMA's ministry. Partner with SOMA in prayer and intercession in this unique and invaluable ministry.

### Invite

SOMA carefully and prayerfully considers all invitations for teams to minister and responds positively whenever we can.

**Please detach and return to Stephen Dinsmore, SOMA UK, PO Box 69, Merriott. TA18 9AP, UK. Thank you.**

### My response

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

POSTCODE \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

### Please...

- tell me about becoming part of a SOMA Team
- tell me about becoming a SOMA Intercessor
- tell me how to financially support SOMA's ministry
- send me details of giving to SOMA by bank standing order
- send me SOMA's free regular SHARING newsletter and Prayer Diary
- contact me as I would like to invite a SOMA team to my Diocese
- tell me more about my church becoming a SOMA Parish Mission Partner

## "Thanks for a brilliant conference!"

Members of the SOMA community welcomed speakers Bishop Graham Cray and Patrick Whitworth and worship leader Julie Dunn as we gathered for the SOMA UK annual conference in November. The Conference proved to be an excellent opportunity for SOMA intercessors, team members and leaders, supporters, donors, staff and officers to meet, pray and worship together, to hear scripture expounded and reflect, to be challenged by the Holy Spirit and to be inspired by experiences shared by team members, intercessors, staff and trustees.

One intercessor commented 'I was especially good to meet with team members - when they go out on mission Intercessors are better able to pray for them.'

Other delegates said:

- Thanks for a brilliant conference!*
  - Wonderful bible teaching*
  - I sensed the Lord say "Be prepared to change and move out of your rut..."*
  - A helpful and inspiring session on tools for intercession*
  - Worship and teaching - excellent*
  - I was struck by 'the predictable unpredictability of the Holy Spirit'*
  - SOMA Intercessors are a community*
  - I had a deepening sense of God's calling*
- Thanks to all who participated to make an enjoyable, encouraging and inspiring conference.

**STOP PRESS - SOMA UK 2011 Conference**  
 11-13 October, High Leigh, Hoddesdon, Herts.



## For all the saints... recollections of Barbara Tolmie

It is impossible to think of Barbara without also thinking of her friend Mary MacDonnell - two formidable intercessors and spiritual warriors.

Across their later years the two have been inseparable. Countless SOMA Teams while away on mission are indebted to this partnership for faithful intercession. And when Mary was away with SOMA, Barbara mobilised local prayer for her and the Team.

This partnership epitomised the immense value that we in SOMA places on Intercession. Barbara had worked in Malaya as a midwife in her youth, but her unwavering calling over her latter years was to being the intercession partner at home for Mary and the Teams abroad. She faithfully remembered

the people and details of every team for which she prayed.

My first contact with her, writes Hilary Steynor, was the SOMA telephone prayer chain during Lambeth 1998. Our friendship over the phone grew over the years; she was a huge source of wisdom and personal support to me as SOMA Intercessors' Coordinator. When I finally met her on the Black Isle last summer, even though her body was quite unwell, the presence of the Holy Spirit shone from her eyes.

Barbara has led the way to her eternal home. It is with thanksgiving that we celebrate that she now sees face to face the One in whose courts she has so faithfully sought to serve.

Contributions from Hilary Steynor, Stephen Dinsmore, John & Jenny Simmons.



Find out in the next edition of SHARING, out in July...

### SOMA UK

UK Registered Charity No. 279759. UK National Director: Revd Stephen Dinsmore  
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