

# SHARING

The Newsletter of SOMA UK



July 2004

*"We work for the transformation of individuals and churches and the healing of communities and their lands through the renewing power of the Holy Spirit. We send and receive teams worldwide on short-term mission within the Anglican Communion."*



## Everywhere To Everywhere!

Despite massive problems such as many overseas delegates being refused UK visas, a total of 395 delegates from 42 countries made it to SOMA's Silver Jubilee Celebrations at Canterbury, 5-8<sup>th</sup> July.

There was a whirl of international speakers in main sessions with 20 workshops and dynamic worship led by the Anglican Youth Fellowship band from Uganda.

Many were also delighted by the response and contribution of young people to the conference, with its title "2029 - Writing Our Future Now".

One of the key phrases that emerged was that SOMA is now involved in ministry "From everywhere to everywhere."

As part of this, Nigerian delegates, led by Bishop Ben Kwashi of the International Board, announced that they were now forming a "SOMA Nigeria" to join the nine other "SOMA-sending countries" around the world. Many overseas delegates found that "everywhere" meant ministry in the

As part of a conference sponsorship deal they took part in parishes to help bring the blessings from their countries to the UK. The conference also followed two weeks' of intensive meetings by SOMA National Directors and the SOMA International Board, out of which came unanimous approval of SOMA's "Calling statement". This was shared with the conference by Rev David Harper, Chairman of SOMA International. We publish extracts in this issue.

Major focal points included a Service of Dedication in Canterbury Cathedral and a Final Eucharist with 24 bishops from round the world sharing the elements.

# Astonishing Vitality!

In his keynote address, with over 30 bishops and nearly 170 clergy present, Lord George Carey, Former Archbishop of Canterbury addressed "The Work of the Holy Spirit in the 21st Century".

During his 11 years as Archbishop he visited over 80 countries and witnessed "the astonishing vitality of the Christian faith," in the developing world.

"Make no mistake about it," he said, "Western Christianity is being challenged as never before by the vibrant faith of emerging churches."

In a powerful message he challenged Western churches to look away from self-preservation, reliance on structure and trying to make faith agreeable to our culture. He said: "Our survival is not important - what is crucial is that we awake to the excitement of being Christians today in a world that offers no lasting hope and no real joy."

Citing many areas of the world where the Holy Spirit is releasing growth and new life, despite poverty and persecution, he said: "The Church is only safe when it nestles under the cross and is only truly secure when it is prepared to die. That is one of the most vital lessons Third World churches are teaching us today."

He urged churches in the more developed world to let go of their reliance on structure "and all the awkward furniture that gets in the way of the Holy Spirit".

## Amazing Implications!

The impact of globalisation and the developing world was trumpeted by Revd Prof Alistair McGrath from Oxford who told the Canterbury conference: "We are seeing a transition: the leadership and spiritual and numerical vibrancy of Christianity is shifting inexorably from the West to the developing world. This has amazing implications."

The Western Church he says: "has become enfeebled by a form of cultural captivity."

Dr McGrath, the new Director of the Oxford Centre of Evangelism and Apologetics, was speaking on "Global shifts impacting the 21st century Church."

He said Western Christianity has lost dynamism and confidence because it has adjusted too much to Western culture.

"The result is that unless it rediscovers its sense of identity, purpose and confidence, its future is very much open to question. What God is teaching us through the rise of Christianity in its very dynamic forms in Asia, Africa and Latin America is that this may be the means by which the Church in the West may be renewed."

Dr McGrath shared some of the "Global Shifts Impacting the 21st Century Church"

In Nigeria there are more Anglican Christians worshipping than in the UK, the USA, Canada, Australia and New Zealand put together.

**The "Golden Age of Atheism" began with the Fall of the Bastille in 1789 and ended with the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989.**

In Western Europe religion is in decline as an institutional force. But in 2002 in the UK Census, 71% of the population identified themselves as Christian.

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All of this was undergirded by a team of Intercessors covering every event in prayer.

Active support was also given by Prayer Ministry Teams available during and after events to pray for individuals, with the laying on of hands, to receive more of God's blessing and healing presence.

Youth Panel

In response to the question "Who will be there in 2029?" - 25 years from now - a Youth Panel won enormous acclaim as they shared numerous insights and many questions.

Rev Don Brewin, SOMA UK National Director said: "Many of these young people will be there, if as we pray, their infectious energy and enthusiasm is sustained, not least through the prayers of us all."

Delegates were challenged by excellent speakers, including Lord George Carey, former Archbishop of Canterbury and Revd Prof Alistair McGrath from Oxford. We print some extracts in this issue.



**Praying to bless what God was doing or for inner or physical healing was an integral part of the Jubilee conference. Here, Mary namutebe, from Uganda, one of the Youth Panel members, prays for another delegate.**

### Onzima's Journey

Travel problems took on demonic proportions for one Northern Ugandan delegate as he attempted to reach the UK and share ministry in a parish.

Among the obstacles faced by Rev Gard Onzima from Arua to reach the UK, via Kampala and Nairobi were:

Break-down of local communications for three weeks so no email contact;

Missed two buses;

Bus travel for two days without stop, rest or proper food;

Running out of money;

Unable to find a contact, whom he had never met at Nairobi Airport;

Unable to telephone because it was a different phone network;

Having no money to use a different phone.

A "Good Samaritan" loaned him his phone and when after many further frustrations he finally got through, he said: "I felt like dancing without music."

He said this proved to him "the power of God over forged demonic powers of Satan. Prayer can move mountains. All my mountains were removed by God through prayer."

He eventually spent two fruitful weeks with Rev Trevor Hatton, Rector of St Nicholas Church, Nottingham.

### Who Came From Where?

There were 395 delegates at the conference representing 42 nations, with 187 delegates from the Global South. The following is a breakdown

119 from sub-Saharan Africa.

(Including 78 from East Africa and 22 from Nigeria)

16 from North Africa and West Asia

26 from Asia (17 from South Asia.)

17 from Latin America

148 from Europe (137 from UK)

49 from USA

22 from Australia and New Zealand

## Wet! Wet! Wet!



**Torrential rain greeted conference delegates as they came out of Canterbury Cathedral following the Silver Jubilee Dedication Service. Here, Utugi Elizabeth Kamau (L) and other delegates struggle with umbrellas and makeshift plastic hats in the Cathedral grounds**

# SOMA - SILVER TO GOLD

## Following the Silver Jubilee Conference, SOMA UK National Director Rev Don Brewin speculates on the way forwards to 2029 - 25 years from now

Without a transformation of lifestyle, global warming will become irreversible, with future conflicts over religion and resources (especially oil & water). Christians are likely to be persecuted as a matter of course.

Our failure to reduce poverty in the "Developing World" will lead to a deepening cynicism about the materialism of the West - and give an opportunity for the Churches to present a radical alternative lifestyle.

The major political philosophies in the West are incapable of "delivery" in the area of family life. Unfortunately, Christians have failed to give a better example. There is an increasing cynicism about the existing "western democratic" styles of government - with leaders using their position for short-term political gain. As truth declines in value, injustice is increasing all over the world.

Global warming will lead to extremes of weather, resulting in wide spread famine. This in turn will be used for political ends - as in Sudan at the present time. Aviation fuel will become more and more expensive. SOMA will have to re-evaluate the economics of sending teams across the world - and need to re-focus on teams moving shorter distances.

### THE CHURCH OF THIS FUTURE

**Model on the future, not on the past** - the pattern set out in Revelation 7:9ff: international (v.9); vulnerable & power-less (v.9b); a fellowship of the redeemed, not the good (v.14); marked by a willingness to suffer (v.14); guided by the Spirit (ch 2-3).

**Travelling light** - slimmer, and more committed; simpler lifestyle, reflecting an "exile" mindset; flexible, focussing less on buildings than on the Body of Christ.

**Caesarea Philippi** - only when the small group of apostles had affirmed Jesus as Messiah, could Jesus tell them that following Him would involve them in persecution. Christians will have to choose between an "all-out faith", open to the Spirit, and the mindset of the establishment, bound by tradition.

**Religious polarisation** - as fundamentalist beliefs increase, serious Christians will return to the lifestyle of the apostolic era - a willingness to speak out; and an expectation of physical persecution.

### AREAS OF WORK FOR SOMA

**SOMA will move to new regions** - mainland Europe, Asia, North & West Africa.

**Community Transformation** - we welcome the initiatives that have spread out from South Africa - but many areas of the UK are not yet desperate - a necessary pre-requisite to CT.

**New team patterns** - to impact the radical non-Christian youth culture: drama, testimony, story-telling; prophetic social interaction (eg "Soul in the City").

**Multiplication** - setting up "store-front SOMA's" - consistent with the Calling Statement, but culturally varied, simple, and high risk; regionally tasked, but



Relaxing over a meal during the Silver Jubilee at the Kent College University campus are Rev Don Brewin (Centre) with former Archbishop George Carey and his wife Eileen

supported from outside, working in partnership wherever possible; going "from everywhere to everywhere."

**SOMA as "a gift to the Anglican Communion"** - holding out our hands, and willing to bear the pain; but willing to work with other Christian Churches.

**Young people** - challenge the mentality "walking backwards into the future" by forming the present in relation to the future; high-risk "Extreme Disciples", from different countries, over 3 years.

**Prepare Christians for persecution** - develop acute spiritual discernment; be willing to "take up our cross daily ...".

### TWO KEY QUESTIONS

"Are you ready to die ...?"  
"How is what you are doing affecting that child?"

May the Lord give us grace to respond positively to this challenge ...



During the conference there were many heart-warming moments of powerful worship. Here one of the Asian delegates raises her hand to the Lord in adoration

### Audios Videos and Web

Audio recordings were made of all the major talks and some of the workshops and are available from Jim Harris, Anchor Recordings, 72 The Street, Ashford, Kent TN249HS; Tel: 012233 620958

email: [info@anchorrecordings.com](mailto:info@anchorrecordings.com)

A three-hour commemorative conference video with major talks and worship is being produced by Nick Hamer and Merisa MacInnes price £10, available from September. Many orders have been made. Contact the SOMA office if you would like to order one.

A five-minute promotion video or DVD was produced in time for the conference, available from the SOMA office. A more detailed 20minute promotional video or DVD is being planned.

There will also be further material from the conference posted on our website: [www.somauk.org](http://www.somauk.org).

### Thankyou For All Your Gifts

The SOMA staff, Trustees and Council are all immensely grateful for the generosity of all who contributed so generously to our Spring Financial Appeal. Rejoice with us that over £6,000 was raised. Please continue to pray for the financing of this vital work. We need all the help we can get! Thankyou to all who have written following the conference. We are just sorry we cannot include everything in Sharing.

# SOMA "Calling Statement" Totally Agreed

For two years SOMA trustees and board members round the world have been battling to put together an agreed statement of values, aims and strategy. They have done this under the guidance of Garry Schnelzer, a retired US Air Force General, and at the conference the International Board agreed unanimously to endorse the work.

It was agreed that today's Church, particularly in the West is "impotent and often powerless and sterile, lacking in power, hope and vision". There is therefore a critical need to "revitalise the Anglican Communion and worldwide Church" and that for this to happen a "worldwide move of the Holy Spirit is indispensable."

It was felt that "SOMA has the call, experience, relationships and motivation to support this task. The following were seen as central to the future of SOMA and are written in full:

## SOMA's Calling Statement

- ! "SOMA is a mission agency called by God to serve the Anglican Communion and the worldwide Church:
- ! by building up and equipping the Body of Jesus Christ;
- ! through the renewing power of the Holy Spirit;
- ! Principally through short-term, cross-cultural missions;
- ! for the transformation of individuals, churches and communities

## SOMA's Core Values

- ! (Undergirding our ministry)
- ! Jesus Christ is the Lord, Redeemer and Saviour of the world.
- ! The Bible is the final authority in all matters of faith and practice.
- ! Intercessory prayer is essential for releasing God's power.
- ! Baptism in the Holy Spirit renews, heals and transforms lives and churches.
- ! The Holy Spirit enables repentance and growth in holiness.
- ! Renewal leads to reconciliation, care and unity in the body.
- ! Renewal empowers the Church for evangelism and mission.
- ! Renewal seeks the transformation of communities as a sign of the coming Kingdom of God.
- ! Giving and receiving across cultures is part of God's precious resource in renewal and mission.
- ! Effective ministry flows from a servant heart and through loving relationships.

## SOMA's Strategic Goals

- ! (For the next 3 to 5 years)
  - ! Increase the number of intercessory prayer members and teams Grow ministry to the 'home' Church through inviting and sending mission teams
  - ! Continue to build strategic relationships within the Anglican Communion
  - ! Greatly increase participation by younger generations
  - ! Conduct more collaborative team missions
  - ! Conduct more frequent, world-wide renewal conferences
  - ! Look for, and conduct, missions aimed at community transformation
- (The full text of SOMA's Calling can be obtained from the SOMA office.)



Members of SOMA's National Directors, International Board and team intercessors pause for a group photograph during their meetings a discussions on future policy. These took place at the University of KE prior to the Silver Jubilee on the Campus.

## Mission Across Kenya

The Archbishop of Kenya has invited SOMA teams from around the world share in a mission across the whole Province of Kenya. On August 5, ten teams will be heading for Kenya for team training prior to 1 mission starting on Monday, August 9. The Most Revd Benjamin Nzimbi has asked for teaching on the theme "Repi And Return To Your First Love."

The aims are:

- ! Becoming aware of the need for the Holy Spirit.
- ! Willingness to forgive, to be reconciled and transparent.
- ! Discernment of a joint vision for the future, for church and nation.

Each team will be joined by Kenya clergy and leaders to receive training a assist with teaching and ministry.

## George To Prayer Conference

Rev George Kooror, Principal of Crowther Hall Mission Training College in Birmingham is to be the speaker at the May 11-12 SOMA Prayer Conference at High Leigh, Hoddesden in 2005.

George who has his roots in India will be sharing insights on "Mission in a Multi-Cultural Age". Further details will be announced.

## Henry is First Non-Mugandan

Apologies to Archbishop Henry Orombi in Uganda. In our last Sharing we wrote that Henry was the first "non-Buganda archbishop" of Uganda. In fact there have been two others: Archbishops Silivano Wani and Janani Luwum. Also the tribe is Baganda, the place is Buganda and the person is Muganda, so technically we should have said first "non-Muganda archbishop Thankyou Barbara Cottier from East Grinstead for pointing this out.

## Ideas For Promoting SOMA

- ~~ Ask for a gift aid form
- ~~ Go on a team
- ~~ Fill in a legacy form
- ~~ Tell your friends about our work
- ~~ Help with mailing of 'SHARING'
- ~~ Speak to Hilary Steynor about regular intercession
- ~~ Encourage your church or group to invite a SOMA speaker

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