

After 49 years of civil war in Sudan the peace process is growing and the people of Southern Sudan are trying to re-organise themselves for the challenges that peace will bring. Likewise the Christian youth are wanting to plan their destiny for a post-war period.

Now SOMA is taking a team for what UK National Director, Don Brewin describes as "one of the most strategic Sudan missions SOMA has been asked to undertake."

He will be leading a six-person team from the UK and Uganda for SOMA's "Sudan Provincial Youth Conference," December 6-12th at Bishop Gwynne College, Mundri. About 100 people are expected from the various dioceses of Southern Sudan and from those living in exile in Uganda and Kenya.

Rosemary Zaina, one of the organisers says: "Previously, death in Southern Sudan came through war or famine; but now the AIDS pandemic is robbing innocent lives unnoticed.

"As the youth, who are the future leaders of Sudan, we have come together in search of answers to our problems, because many of the younger people of Southern Sudan are spiritually dead.

"For this reason this conference will seek to articulate our Christian faith as youth, so that we can bring new spiritual life to our friends and families in Sudan, and our witness have an impact on our communities as a whole."

"One of the most strategic Sudan missions SOMA has been asked to undertake"

The conference has the endorsement of Archbishop Joseph Marona. The Rt Rev Bishop Eluzai Munde, Bishop of Mundri will be guest of honour and one of the teachers.

An earlier UK appeal has helped raise £1,500 towards the overall cost of £17,000, half of which is for the very high costs of transport. Thanks to other generous gifts there is now only £6,000 to find.

Anybody wishing to help, please make a cheque payable to SOMA UK and send it to SOMA UK, PO Box 6002, Heath & Reach, Leighton Buzzard, Beds, LU7 OZA, marked Sudan Youth Conference.

Latest On Team Plans

KOREA: This month - October - John and Jenny Symons, together with Soh Chye Ann are leading a joint SOMA/CMS team to Pusan.

KENYA: Simon Brignall is leading a team to Maseno South, Nov 10-29.

KENYA: David Munby is leading a team to Bungoma, December 2-14.

Further teams are being planned for the following: **S. Nyanza, Kenya;** Kagera, **Tanzania;** Ruaha, **Tanzania;** Jos, **Nigeria;** Damaturu, **Nigeria;** Kajo-Keji, **Sudan;** Kenya Province Youth Leadership Conference; Orlu, **Nigeria;** Recife, **Brazil.**

'A Lot To Do' For Prayer

In early October Elizabeth Utugi Kamau, together with Jane Kinyua led a series of teaching seminars in the UK, organised by Libby Mather.

Utugi, who has set up the Vanguard Trust in Kenya, as a nationwide initiative for intercessory prayer based in Nairobi, was teaching on spiritual warfare and cleansing the land through prayer.

A major focus was the South Yorkshire Coalfield based in Stainforth, Doncaster, hosted by the vicar, Andrew Allington. This was helping build on earlier work by Russ Parker of the Acorn Healing Trust.

The itinerary included Brightside and Wincobank in Sheffield organised by Mike Gilbert; a Prayer Concert in Luton with Malcolm Pritchard and a weekend at Holy Trinity, Leicester, with Alison Morgan, meeting with university students, intercessors and other church groups. Utugi said: "You have a lot to do here. There are many Christians in the UK who are very excited about the Holy Spirit but if you want to see real transformation of communities, you need to learn how to do the hard work of intercession. I will be happy to help you do that."

Found

A bunch of keys was found after the Silver Jubilee Conference, Canterbury which include a plastic strap printed with a blood donor group number. There is also a small wooden handle penknife. Please claim from the SOMA office.

About Sharing

Sharing is produced by SOMA UK to "share" news and views relating to SOMA ministry in the UK and overseas. It is edited by William Mather who welcomes any articles, stories, testimonies, art work and photographs, however brief. Credit will be given. It is a great help if they can be sent electronically. We regret we cannot guarantee using all submissions, nor can we afford to pay you for them! Please keep them coming and keep reading and sharing Sharing!

About SOMA

SOMA, (Sharing of Ministries Abroad)
PO Box 6002, Heath & Reach,
Leighton Buzzard, LU7 OZA, UK.
Tel: (+44) (0) 1525 237953;
Fax: (+44) (0) 1525 237954;
Email: info@somauk.org;
Website: www.somauk.org.
UK Registered Charity No: 279759

SHARING SOMA

The Newsletter of SOMA UK

October 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."

Faith Mission to Slums

Anticipation was high in the mini-bus. We thought we were going to a nice football stadium for a big rally. We did pass one stadium. But it looked closed.

On we went into the heart of Nairobi and then into an area that looked neglected and desolate. Finally we were bumping over some rough ground that looked as if it had once been grass.

We climbed out feeling very out of place to view a scene of devastation. Decaying litter was everywhere. There were people lying around on the ground. There was the smell of burning rubber and thick smoke.

Beggars converged. One had no hands. A small boy explained he was like that because he was a thief.

In the background was a sea of rusty corrugated iron rooves, tilting at every conceivable angle, with an appallingly polluted river curving round the edge of this emaciated scene.

Unbelievably in the middle of it all was a rough stage with a bright purple covering and a white banner with the words "Anglican Crusade."

This was the Kamukunji Ground in the slums of Nairobi and this was where we were going to spend most of the next two days.

It was the first time that the Anglican Church had stepped out in faith with an event like this, which was part of the nation-wide SOMA mission in August this year at the invitation of the Archbishop of Kenya, Most Rev Benjamin Nzimbi.

It was the biggest SOMA mission ever done, with 56 team members from SOMA-sending countries around the world, who split up into 12 teams visiting almost every diocese in the country.

The theme was "Repent And Return to Your First love," from Revelation 2 and came out of the Archbishop's concern to see SOMA helping bring a revitalisation to the Anglican Church in Kenya.

The Anglican Crusade at Kamukunji was the climax to missions which had had a very mixed response. Attendance varied from 280 in one diocese to 12 in another, with in most cases very positive response, even where numbers were small.

The logistics were extensive, beginning with a week of preparatory training near Nairobi where the overseas teams were joined by Kenyans who would share in the teaching and help take it further. As a result each team doubled in size.

After this, all fanned out to the different dioceses to give teaching to parish leaders who would in turn take it back to their parishes. For



Sarah - a young girl in the Kamukunji slums of Nairobi. How can SOMA help create a better future for her?

everybody this involved rigorous schedules with intensive teaching, wonderful times of worship and powerful times of ministry. There were also many evangelistic opportunities.

The final push at Kamukunji took this further with the Archbishop and other bishops present. The preaching was loud and strident but people stayed and many responded to invitations for fresh commitment to Christ.

The SOMA members were kept busy praying, chatting to people, helping with ministry and even playing football with local children.

A lasting tribute was the founding of a youth church thanks to the ministry of some of the younger SOMA team members. About 30 young

people made "commitments" and the vicar of a nearby church was contacted to help them continue as a mini "church".

The establishing of this little gospel church in such an unlikely setting was a sign to the team of how bible-based ministry in the power of the Holy Spirit is able to take root even in the roughest areas.

Plans are now afoot for further SOMA ministry in Kenya to build on the many positive relationships created.

Archbishop To Commission Initiative In Renewal ReSourcing

The Archbishop of Canterbury will officially commission the leaders of ReSource on 18th November.

The Most Rev Rowan Williams is to commission Martin Cavender as the Director in a private ceremony at Burford Priory, Oxfordshire. The Trustees will also be commissioned. Martin Cavender formerly directed Springboard, the Archbishop's Nationwide Initiative in Evangelism.

York Minster will be the venue for the official public launch of the new venture on 30th November.

The staff and Trustees of SOMA are delighted to welcome ReSource as a fresh initiative in renewal for the UK, building on the many achievements of its parent body, the former Anglican Renewal Ministries (ARM).



During the Machakos SOMA visit, Kenya, delegates create a circle of chairs in the shade as they get ready for a seminar. Photo: Matthew Grayshon

Challenged by the Christians of Yei, Sudan

Margaret Kiswiriri from Kampala, Uganda was a team member on the SOMA team to Yei, S. Sudan and writes: "I want to thank God for SOMA giving me an opportunity to share Christ abroad, most especially SOMA UK for including me on this team.

"I was challenged by the Christians of Yei. It is a very remote area but we were fed and housed properly and shown love. The jubilation of dancing and praising gave God the glory. They were all attentive when we were teaching.

"In this team everybody was given a chance to share and we were encouraged. This gave us a chance to want to do better and pray sincerely for each other."

David Rowe from Twickenham said: "I sense spiritually that the major achievement in Yei was with the leadership and seeing the deep repentance and forgiveness among them."

Mary MacDonell writes: "I have wonderful memories of men and women praying under the mango trees and God moving in power among them. It was a privilege to have been on this very special mission to Yei and to be able to come alongside people who have suffered so much.

"It was so good to spend time with Bishop Hilary Luete Adebba as he shared his heart for Renewal in his diocese and for peace in his nation."

Blessings Healing and Forgiveness, Through Obedience

A Kenya Mission Report, from one of the young people on the team: Rose Kanyunyuzi, Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC)

I'm delighted to have this God-given opportunity to talk about the work of God in Kenya and am so grateful to Him for all his love and care in the mission.

When I received your invitation two things crossed my mind:

Firstly, I asked: "Who am I to be part of this team?"

Secondly, fear hit me concerning the theme of the mission: "Repent and Return to your first love Rev.2:1-7. I thought: "How will I stand before these people and talk about this when my own country, DRC, is in such need of it!

God's answer was, "Rose, I have chosen you, as you are, to proclaim my message. Go and stand before these people, because through you I will talk to them."

I was obedient to his voice.

During our team teaching and preparation time in Limuru I received much blessing and healing from my past. Our team then went to Eldoret Diocese. I am grateful to God for the love he provided us as a team and for the people of Eldoret.

In Eldoret, my first mission was in St. Matthews Cathedral in a youth service. I preached about "Not a thing without Jesus"



Exuberant dancing during some of the lively worship at Limuru, Kenya



Coming to the Cross: after confessing sins and writing them down, delegates place them on a small fire at the foot of the cross to be burned. Delegates at Mt Kenya Central and West then joined in worship and thankfulness for the forgiveness of Jesus.

from John 21:1-14. I shared with them my testimony of how I met Jesus as my personal saviour and how God protected my life during the war in DRC.

To God be the glory! Since I came back here, I have received more than ten emails where youths are testifying how Christ touched their lives that day.

I also had the chance in the mission to talk about forgiveness which is such a powerful tool in transforming peoples lives. I shared with them about my own personal transformation, after forgiving those who caused harm in my life. We saw God blessing us with gifts from

the Holy Spirit for the growth of the church of Christ. There was an unexpected result when three-quarters of the congregation stood and asked for special prayers. To God be the glory!

As a team, God used us mightily in Eldoret. Our prayer is that God may water the seed that we have sown in the Anglican church of Kenya so that it may grow for the transformation of Kenya, East-Africa, Africa and the whole world.

To him be the glory, power, honour for ever and ever. Amen.

Corrugated Iron Wall In Church

A wall of 10ft tall rusty corrugated iron sheets, holed by shrapnel, was built down the centre of a church in Lainya, Southern Sudan to illustrate the walls of hostility separating people from people and people from God (Ephesians 2: 14).

Leader of the team, Andy Wheeler of St Saviours, Guildford and also a CMS Mission Partner said "these were held in place, as are our human barriers, by human beings.

"This proved a powerful and provocative experience beyond anything we could have anticipated. You could feel a rising tension and edginess."

These were then replaced by the cross demonstrating the victory of Christ over all such barriers.

Andy added: "Everyone erupted in relief, rushing across the aisle and embracing, dancing and singing. It would have been difficult to give a more graphic demonstration of the healing and reconciling power of the gospel."

This was a central part of the mission to Lainya Diocese, May 3-7, on the theme "Coming Home", at the invitation of

Bishop Peter Amidi. Other team members included David and Heather Sharland, CMS Mission Partners in Sudan.

The team worked closely with and under the guidance of Bishop Peter and with a local team that he had chosen to work with them. A key verse was Eph 2: 13: "You who used to be far away have been brought near by the blood of Christ."

Blessings in Supermarket

Many delegates from overseas stayed in UK parishes in the two weeks before this summers SOMA conference. Here Roy Hannell from Derby describes the experience of having Onesimus Asiimwe from Uganda staying with him in St Peters, Littleover parish.

"How blessed I have been. We instantly related and we became extremely close as 'Ndugus (brothers) as we each shared personal experiences, joys and sorrows. What a depth of prayer ministry Onney has; how humble he is and how fluent are his words as he speaks out for Christ.

"To visit very checkout in ASDA and pray and talk with the cashiers takes remarkable faith and courage and yet that is what he did between visiting churches, schools, lunch clubs and groups. The schoolkids adored him."

Stirring Stuff In The Anglican Communion

Many people, including myself, have been waiting anxiously for the publication of the report of the Eames Commission, just 4 days away as I write this article.

Rumour has it that the report will be firm in suggesting some form of discipline for the leaders of the Episcopal Church of the USA, who took part in the consecration of Bishop Gene Robinson. Rumour also has it that these leaders will not change their attitudes, whatever the leadership of the Anglican Communion says. By the time you read this, you will know whether these rumours are true!

An urgent matter for prayer is the meeting in Lagos from 26th-31st October, to which all African Anglican Bishops have been invited, and to which SOMA has the privilege of sending observers. Although the draft programme does not mention the Anglican Communion, the Eames Commission, or the Archbishop of Canterbury, it is clear what the sub-text of this Conference will be.

My purpose in writing this article is not to prophesy what will happen in these next two weeks, but briefly to reflect on two key words from the Ephesians text above.

Truth

We live in a world where truth has become negotiable. Everything has its price, everything is relative, everything else takes second place, by comparison with the need to please the present audience - even if I say the opposite tomorrow for a different one. If that is a cynical reflection of what I see taking place in politics, my concern is that the Church is so often no longer the counter-cultural prophetic voice for truth that it once was. Instead, the Church has relativised truth just like everyone else.

For believers, the ultimate source of truth must be within the character of the God we worship. Truth may not be easy to discern in many situations, but it is surely crucial (in the literal sense of that word) to hold on to the conviction that it matters - that there is a real difference between truth and its opposite.

The belief that it is valid to consecrate an openly gay man as bishop is either right, or it is wrong. It cannot be right for some, and wrong for others. Until this, and other equally contentious issues (such as lay

"Speaking the truth in love, we will in all things grow up into him who is the Head, that is Christ..." (Ephesians 4:15)

By Rev Don Brewin,
National Director of
SOMA UK

presidency) are resolved (which may never lead to consensus), then I would suggest that those who wish to dissent from the existing collective will of the Church, should either refrain from acting in this way, or accept the disciplinary consequences.

Love

And this brings me to the second word - love. I am appalled that dialogue across these controversial divides has all but broken down - for to me one of the marks of a mature person or community is how they deal with those with whom they sincerely disagree. Where are the arenas where genuine and respectful discussion can take place?

This breakdown of relationships, this erosion of love, is now beginning to fragment the coalition of traditional believers, as people jockey for position and influence. If we cannot love our "friends" - with whom we fundamentally agree - how can we pretend to love those with whom we sincerely differ?

No wonder the real enemy is enjoying this...

Insight into Prejudice?

Many of you were involved, in the months before the Silver Jubilee Conference, in applying for visas to come to UK, or praying for others who were applying.

You will therefore be aware of the number of Christian leaders whose applications were refused - many of them on totally inadequate grounds - causing great distress and expense to them and us. On behalf of the organisers of the Conference, I want to apologise to you for the way you were treated. You did your best, and so did we - but we feel deeply the pain of your rejection.

After the Conference was over, I gathered evidence from the letters of refusal, and sent it to the Visa Departments at the British High Commissions concerned, as well as members of the UK Parliament and others.

A copy of the letter, and the accompanying article (but not the Appendices) is now on the SOMA UK website www.somauk.org so that you can read them for yourselves. To this date I have not had a single acknowledgement from any of the British High Commissions, in spite of their motto "we treat all our customers with courtesy and respect ...". In contrast, I have received through our local MP a very detailed letter from the Foreign Office Minister responsible. Although I do not agree with him, I am grateful for the effort that this response demonstrates.

Don Brewin 14/10/04

Thanks for the vision for the SOMA Silver Jubilee!

John Isaiah from Sri Lanka writes: "I was happy to be at SOMA Canterbury and I was blessed and encouraged.

Thank God for the vision He has given us for the next 25 years of our ministry in the Anglican Church.

It was a joy to be with the believers of the Anglican Church all over the world.

I wish the Spirit and mission of SOMA would infect the whole Anglican Church and deliver people from good-for-nothing traditions and other man-made systems.



Libby Mather during the Kenya mission - with a Silver Jubilee T.Shirt hanging up to dry! She was in Marang'a, Mt Kenya Central Diocese

SOMA PRAYER CONFERENCE 2005
10th-12th May, High Leigh Conference Centre, Hoddesdon, Herts

THEME:
"Mission in a Multi-Cultural World"

MAIN SPEAKER:
Revd Canon George Kovoov,
Presently Principal of Crowther Hall, Birmingham
the CMS Training College

Brochures and application forms now available!