

SHARING

The Newsletter of SOMA UK

SOMA
SHARING OF
MINISTRIES ABROAD

WINTER 2005

"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."

The Second Half of Renewal

Revd Don Brewin

- Read in full on website

Years ago I was hit by a verse in John's Gospel: where Jesus says "I have come that they may have life, and have it abundantly" (10:10 RSV). I realised that my Christian life up to then consisted of things which I was not allowed to do. I was ruled by fear, not by love.

Recently I have been impacted by a verse from Galatians: "The law was ... a tutor in charge of us until Christ should come ..." (3:24 NEB). "The rules" were superseded by the coming of Jesus Christ. Paul criticises the Galatians for living "by law" even though they have been saved through Christ. I have realised recently that many of us are doing the same.

Spirituality

Richard Rohr, leader of a Christian community in the USA, speaks of "A spirituality for the two halves of life".

certainty, for what he calls "the container".

and erect a personal fortress to protect ourselves, because our interior relationship with Christ cannot otherwise survive.

We need this stage in our development - but if we are to come to maturity, we must move on to the second stage - from "the container" to "the content". Having discovered the light of our salvation in Christ, and the security of this relationship, we need to reach out into

compassion.

I am convinced that in our thinking about renewal, we need to move from the



Jennifer Leber with a delegate in Kitgum

Key concepts

"The one who fears is not made perfect in love ... perfect love drives out fear" (1John 4:18)

"The law of the Spirit of life set me free from the law of sin and death" (Romans 8:2)

"Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom" (2 Corinthians 3:17)

"The fruit of the Spirit is love ..." (Galatians 5:22)

need to move on. Life in the Spirit is based,

external constraints, but on self-control, leading to freedom. We need to consider the following:

Do strong charismatic leaders, and large renewal gatherings, lead people to maturity?

SOMA ON THE FRONT LINE

"The Diocese of Kitgum has been an area of unending insecurity caused by the Lords Resistance Army. Many people have lost their lives, others have lost all their property. Many others were maimed. Young children became child soldiers and sex slaves as they became targets of rape, mutilation and abductions. 89% of the population are in internally Displaced Camps". explained Bishop Benjamin ... who was himself abducted about a year ago. Not a very promising introduction for a team of 4 (2 of whom had never been to Africa before) to head off from St Michael-le-Belfrey York to Uganda to share teaching to lay readers and their wives.

But we went. On arrival we were greeted by the team leader, a local American missionary, Jennifer Leber, who works for the Archbishop Kampala. She has worked with the diocese before. We preached in the local churches on two Sundays. Nowhere in England have I see a full church at 6.30 in the morning waiting for the 7 a.m. service to commence! Part of the week's workshops

Old men in Wau

Revd Dr Stuart Burns who led the team to the Diocese of Wau, gives some feedback ...

Lack of space prevents the full article appearing - read it on the website!



Kennedy Wando returning from a visit to a local church - 3 hours away from Akon, the home base

War has robbed the nation of Southern Sudan of three generations of experience and leadership. Church, and national leadership is very young, and looking for guidance. The delegates reverentially referred to Jim Soulsby and to Lew Webb as the 'Old Men', and it was humbling to have their gifts of age and experience so much appreciated. The average age of the population of Southern Sudan is just under 18 and the people we were working with were mainly in their early twenties. Life expectancy is 57 - so meeting two (fairly) active 'Old Men' in their late 50's and 60's who were prepared to travel such a long way to encourage them in faith and life was powerful. As delegates kept saying, with wonder in their voices, 'The old men are doing very well!'

The primary purpose of the visit was to bring foundational teaching in the Christian faith, as well as to develop leadership skills within the diocese. We were also able to show solidarity with a church and community emerging tentatively from a period

their capacity to grow as a church and to determine what SOMA's future role might be. The team visited local churches and became quickly aware that what the Dinkas call "near by" is usually 3½ hours by bike or 6 hours on foot! Churches can be buildings but most often are set under a tree. Taking communion is very rare. Of the 60 delegates to the conference very few had taken communion in the last 8 months. However song and dance in worship is seen as very important and is embraced enthusiastically as well as spiritually and meaningfully.

The high point of the week was the dedication service with Holy Communion on the last day. This started under a tree in the compound but a massive thunderstorm during the sermon led to a quick move indoors

In the present situation in the Anglican Communion, are renewal groups building fortresses or bridges?

Do we take seriously Paul's teaching in 2 Corinthians 4:10: "We always carry around in our body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be revealed in our body"?

Where do we see epitomised in the renewal movement the servant attitude of "the Lamb"?

Have we forgotten that the purpose of the gifts of the Spirit is to bring forth "the fruit" of a Christ-like character (Ephesians 4:12-16)?

"the internal logic of renewal"

We now incorporate in our regular teaching a version of "Community Transformation" - which (based loosely on the research of George Otis) seeks to help people understand why the

another. There are two essential factors in this transformation - Leadership and Intercession. We need leaders who will stay, being willing to go through the pain barrier, for the sake of their people. In

addition, there is a vital need for intercessors, who weep God's tears for their community - tears which water spiritual deserts and make them fertile again. It saddens me that many of the movements which claim to follow the renewal leading of the Holy Spirit do not take seriously either community transformation, nor the deep, united intercession which is an essential component of it.

We need to move out from our comfortable certainties into genuine questioning, of prophetic and compassionate engagement in the struggles of sincere people to make sense of their lives, at home, at work, and in the world at large. This is going to be costly. We are moving into an era in the life of the Christian Church where persecution is going to become normal: not just in countries ruled by fundamentalist Islamic or Hindu governments, but in our own, so-called "Christian" nations, where truth has given way to short-term "spin".

The temptation is to retreat into the fortress of unchallengeable conviction. In psychological language it is called "regression", associated with childhood, not maturity. May we have the courage to stand in the centre of this uncertain open space, dependent only upon the vulnerability of our Saviour, the "Lamb".

included Bible teaching on the basics of the Christian faith, the person and work of Jesus and on the Holy Spirit and renewal. The other part included teaching on family life. The Mission Co-ordinator said, "Many are facing deep problems with their families as people are living herded together in displaced person camps. Children often have to go into the town at night for safety and that creates its own problems." The week ended with a service led by the Bishop at which the delegates renewed their marriage

determined not to beat his wife again. Another who had a disobedient son determined to love and pray for him and not reject him. All said that they were going back to share with others what they had learned.

Bishop Ben said, "The workshops have given the lay readers the knowledge which they could not easily have got from elsewhere. Thank you for coming and please, come back to conduct more workshops for at least 200 lay readers who have not come this time". The Holy Spirit has answered prayers in far greater abundance than we dared hope for - for the delegates to be renewed and refreshed and to be able to share Jesus and for the team to be able to help others in great need.

Phil Smith

SOMA WORKING PARTY progress ...

In the last issue of SHARING Richard Hay mentioned that "we have created a small group to take a radical look at our procedures, to explore the way ahead, and to come up with a plan for the next few years". The other members of the group (which he is chairing) are: Merisa MacInnes, Alison Morgan, John Watson and Don Brewin.

This group has now met twice, an agreed model of understanding (not surprising in a group of 5 creative thinkers!), we are well on the way to formulating a Report to be shared at the next meeting of the SOMA UK Trustees and Council in November.

Please pray for the group as we hold
th November.



Bishop Sadock Makaya, new Bishop of the Diocese of Tabora, Tanzania, preparing to greet the SOMA team in September 2005

without the child being with him. The couple sat quietly throughout the day and would walk home about three and a half miles each day in boy led his grandfather to the front of the cathedral. The man gave his testimony. He said as a young boy while looking after the cattle his eyes became infected but because of the lack of water he was unable to keep his eyes clear of infection and became totally blind. He was not bitter or angry but thanked God that despite the fact he could not work, God knew his needs and everyday without begging people would come up to them and give food or money. Immediately the man returned to his seat the Bishop called for a love offering to be made for him. People started singing and came forward to put their gift into the basket. When everyone had contributed the money was turned the Lord can use what we are willing to bring to Him and with others use it to glorify His name and also help others. What a wonderful,

By God's power, we will live with him to serve you

Alison Morgan shares a few thoughts on the recent SOMA team to the diocese of Luapula, Zambia

and resources in a practical way". Through three conference: at Mansa, Chipili and Munsonda and using the "Rooted in Jesus" discipleship material, we explained the principles of ministry in small groups, ran workshops on pastoral care, prayer in the power of the Holy Spirit and the practicalities of group leadership. Each leader was

ministry and a Bemba bible. We also gave each leader a double mosquito net - the mortality rate from cerebral malaria is very high in this part of Zambia.

We felt it an enormous privilege to be invited and trusted to work so closely with the clergy of the diocese in planning its future ministry. There were some remarkable times of prayer and worship and we were made to feel so welcome, wherever we went. It was great to have Michael Samuel from the diocese of Mount Kilimanjaro, Tanzania on the team.

Jeremy Collingwood shares his thoughts

"God provided us with a great team and with all the resources that we needed for our mission. He kept us well and answered so many prayers. Time and time again I felt upheld by those intercessions in the heavenly places.

complemented one another with our diverse gifts and personalities. The toughest part of the mission was undoubtedly the time in the deaneries, but again the Lord had his good hand upon the way that our team divided so well into three smaller teams who seemed to operate so well together."

"It feels like an inadequate army doing its job: Luke 17:10" says Jean Kirk, one of the team ...

"Over the years on different missions to Africa, we have witnessed people from different tribes come before their bishop and God to ask forgiveness for past atrocities committed to one another and to witness reconciliation. We have seen Bishops make public penitence before their pastors. We have seen women healed after twenty years of disability, dancing the next day free of pain. We have prayed in the dark without lights under the stars with people who have been queuing for two and a half hours. We have seen the jubilation of a wife and her friend as they witnessed her husband come forward to give his life to Jesus after thirteen years of praying for him.

100 people in garden

When was the last time you went to church with a hundred people or so in the front garden of someone's single storey house where the food was being cooked outside on a into another community with such love and warmth.

God's Provision

One of my lasting images is of a grandfather and grandson who came early to every seminar. The boy aged about seven or eight, was the man's eyes. He never moved

Please pray for Alison as she leads a team to the diocese of Mt Kilimanjaro at the end of October.

SOMA TEAMS 2006

Where do you want to go in

details of teams next year:
Kenya, Sudan, Tanzania,
Malawi -
discussions are in hand at
present to secure dates

SOUL NAIROBI 2006

summer, SOMA is teaming up with the Church Army in Kenya to work in four practical way through different community projects. Teams of young people sports camp for teenagers, the list is growing Please support this project in

programme are still be worked out but do register your interest with

come and we will send you a brochure. There are only limited places and the last three conferences that Ruth has led in this country have always been sold out early. The gathering is open to everyone but be particularly helpful to those in leadership and who have passion to see renewal in this country.

"COME AWAY WITH ME"

Ruth Fazal will lead a prayer gathering at the Hayes Conference Centre, Swanwick 21st rd June 2006. Prayer is central to the vision and work of SOMA, and for ReSource who are our partners in organising this Conference. Ruth was born in the UK and currently resides in Canada where she has a developed an internationally acclaimed music and prayer ministry. Costs and

"Where people pray, things happen" and this event will be no exception. Prayer underpins all that SOMA does and we are delighted that Ruth is able to be with us to help explore the conjunction of Word and Spirit in a focussed and inspiring three days.

COMINGS AND GOINGS AT SOMA ...

It is strange being in the

miss William's infectious laughter, and many other things about his presence! However, SOMA was represented by Peter & Ann Swales, Hilary Steynor, and Don & Sandra Brewin at William's Institution as Team Rector of Drypool on Saturday 15th October. He and Libby were given a great deal of encouragement by what was said at the service - but it is clear that they have a huge job to do there - please pray for them.

Tony Price has also left us, after being very helpful in preparing his "desk" for Danielle's arrival. We are very grateful to him for all he has done for SOMA over 11 years of service. Please pray for him and Mary, as he seeks to develop his other business interests.

Finance Administrator appointed

Danielle Howard is settling in to the role of extending the work that Tony has been doing

keeping better in touch with our supporters



We need your prayers to smooth the

To further compliment the financial standing of SOMA UK, we are pleased to introduce the new Treasurer, Andrew Cooke. Andrew says, " I am delighted to take on the role of treasurer and

Having worked with Grant Thornton for

own accountancy business. Andrew is currently Treasurer of the PCC at Holy Trinity, Leicester.

"It takes time to save time; and it takes money to save money" - but we are working on it!!

Pam's passing

It is with great regret that we have to announce the death of Pam Winnett, one of SOMA's intercessors from Gravesend. Pam joined the SOMA family six years ago after attending an Anglo-Catholic Renewal Conference, at which Don Brewin was the speaker. She held SOMA very dear to her heart and was part of our intercession team..

Please detach along this line and send to: SOMA UK, PO Box 6002, Heath and Reach, Leighton Buzzard, Beds LU7 0ZA, UK

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