

# SHARING

The Newsletter of SOMA UK

**SOMA**  
SHARING OF  
MINISTRIES ABROAD

SPRING 2008

"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."

## Reconciliation in Kenya

The recent events in Kenya cause me a very great sadness. For those of us with an involvement in that part of Africa over some time, the pictures and reports of violence and displaced people movements bring back painful memories of the events in Rwanda in the 1990s.

Outside Kenya only a few, it seems, were willing to speculate that such events would occur. Indeed, in the West, Kenya tended to be held up as the example of a modernising, developing East African country – with a bright economic and social future before it.

While international news coverage seems now to have moved on, SOMA's friends, contacts and mission partners in the country continue to be in touch with us making requests for prayer as they seek to cope with and minister to the large people-group movements that are taking place. The Anglican Church in Kenya is highly active in providing refuge in many cathedral compounds.

From one contact...

'This morning we are feeding and providing shelter for more than 5000 displaced people. Another 200 arrived by bus (in two busses so you can imagine how packed they are).

They are coming to the new Cathedral compound where they receive food and shelter, and then teams work with them to find their tribe/family base. They are then given transport to return to their tribal family roots as soon as possible. However there are a considerable number who do not have knowledge of their tribal place, and there are quite a number of orphaned children. They are given help to try to trace their tribes so they can return there for shelter and security. Joshua's role is one of coordination. He is mobilising his church 'youths' to work between the relief organisation and the displaced peoples arriving. He and others are getting up at 3am to begin each day's regime.

... have just received over 1500 displaced people here. It's hectic and with horrible stories.

... We are still receiving many people. It has rained, therefore very cold. Sad news is that one of the buses was burnt, through people were spared.'

It was good, back in January, to hear the voice of Archbishop Ben Nzimbi as I ate my morning cereal. It was at the



Archbishop and Mrs Nzimbi

time of the intervention by Archbishop Tutu, Archbishop Ben Nzimbi was interviewed by Radios Four's Today programme. He spoke of the need for reconciliation, an end to the factional violence and the active role of the church in this. The whole piece gave a very a positive impression to the listener of the part Christians play in community reconciliation, transformation and working for peace.

For me it brought to mind the previous time I had heard Archbishop Ben. It was in Mombassa in April 2007. The SOMA Team I was with had responded to an invitation from the Archbishop to lead a Retreat for the Bishops and wives of the Province of Kenya. The international team, which itself included two Bishops and a Bishop's wife, together with the gathered bishops and wives, sought to identify the different factors that were inhibiting the progress of Renewal in Kenya. As Don wrote of the retreat 'The Lord had a very clear intention for this retreat... ..the Bishops and their wives identified many factors that were inhibiting the progress of renewal in Kenya, which the team addressed in plenary sessions and workshops. It was clear that these were hitting home, as was evident on the last plenary session when Bishops and their wives focused on repentance and reconciliation.'

At the time the team had no inkling of the violent events that were to take place in Kenya at the beginning of this current year, but the Lord of the Church did: through the working and leading of the Holy Spirit in the sharing together of the Bishops, wives and SOMA team at the retreat, the Lord was

able to level a highway, to set a straight pathway for the ministry of reconciliation by the church in Kenya. For me, and for SOMA, it has been a terrific encouragement to see the way that the ministry of SOMA, particularly our commitment to address difficult and sensitive issues, has been used by the Lord the Holy Spirit to be a part of equipping the Kenyan church 'for such a time as this'.

Elsewhere in this edition of Sharing you can read of another timely part of SOMA's ministry. As you will see, the Rooted in Jesus course successfully enables small group members to grow from converts to disciples; disciples whose first allegiance is to Jesus Christ. In other words, when confronted by social, cultural, family, clan, or tribal pressures that conflict with their Christian faith, the disciplined Christian has been empowered and equipped to react and respond in a way that is firmly founded upon their allegiance to Christ, and this as their first priority.

Unforgiveness, broken relationships, harbouring a record of wrongs and disunity bind the effectiveness of God's people, whoever they are, to minister reconciliation in their communities. As we pray for the country and church of Kenya, its leaders and peoples, in all their current need, we can add thanksgiving for the leading and guiding of the Holy Spirit.

Stephen Dinsmore



## Being Rooted in Jesus in Tanzania

In 2003 156 pastors and evangelists began to lead a small group in the Kifeto region of the diocese of Mount Kilimanjaro, using the Rooted in Jesus discipleship course developed specially for them. Four years later, after battling through famine and drought, the groups have completed the course. Alison Morgan, Stephen Dinsmore, Elaine Sutherland and Ben Thorpe went to listen to their experiences and help local coordinator Michael Samuel train a new generation of leaders.

We began by dividing the delegates into groups and asking them lots of questions about how they had found the course. We were deeply encouraged by their answers, which went far beyond anything we had expected.

Almost without exception the group leaders said that they now had great confidence in God, that he was with them and was powerful to work through them. One said 'I have a sense of God being with me, empowering me; and I had constantly prayed for this, and continue to pray for it'. Another said 'it has been an encouragement to me that God is with me as one of the first women leaders'. Many said they used to read the Bible like a newspaper or magazine, but now read it and pray over it daily and find that it speaks to them. Some said that they have lost their fear; that they feel power in preaching; that they feel a love for their group members. When we asked about the memory verses, one after another they rattled off the ones which had changed their lives. Several said their churches are now full; one said the whole village has changed dramatically.

We asked about the group members. What has Rooted in Jesus done for them? One said that on the 4th lesson, 'Who is Jesus?', he had taught them the memory verse John 1.12, which says 'to all who received him he gave power to become children of God'. He said they hadn't known that. They were just churchgoers, and they'd not heard of the Holy Spirit or realised any act of commitment was necessary. He had explained the verse and the whole group was filled with the Holy Spirit. Other leaders said their people had stopped worshipping the wrong God, had developed their own prayer life instead of just saying prayers in church, had been praying for the sick and seeing healings, had stopped drinking, beating their wives, and using drugs and cigarettes. Some had been inspired to learn to read and write so they could read the Bible. Prayer was becoming normal in the villages. People were sharing their faith and others were coming to Christ. They were speaking out against witchcraft. Illiterate people are teaching others from the memory verses. One man used to do everything in the church but now can't get a word in edgeways. A child who used to fall down all the time



was prayed for until he was healed, with the result that the whole family came to Christ and joined the group. A woman with a very small voice was prayed for; she now sings in the choir. In one Masai village the elders now pray over their decisions. In another village a Muslim had come into the church during a group meeting saying his feet were burning, and could he please join in with whatever it was they were doing?



Many of the new group leaders are women – which was particularly encouraging amongst the Masai. This represents a break with tradition, but is being embraced (nervously) as being in line with the pattern of the New Testament church. Five new deanery coordinators have been appointed to support the new groups, of which there will now be 330.

When we began 4 years ago, we stood in a church in a place called Engusero and received a prophecy from God, in the midst of worship, that if his people in this forgotten part of Tanzania continued to pray and seek his face as they were doing that day, he would bless them. Never have I seen such a large

group of people so changed in such a short space of time. He has blessed them indeed.

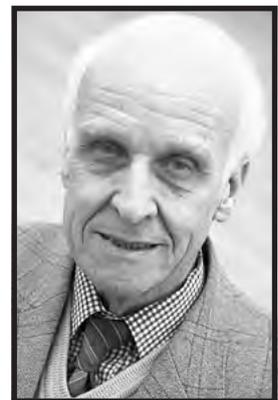
Meanwhile 13 year olds Esther Sutherland and Katy Morgan spent a week in the English primary school, teaching a keen group of 8 year olds to pray. You can read Katy's report in the Autumn edition of ReSource magazine.

We wish to thank the intercessors who have prayed so faithfully for all involved in this ministry.

*Alison Morgan*

## New SOMA Trustee

Doug Greenfield is part of the leadership team at St Michael-le-Belfry, York, and is the founder of the York Christian Heritage Walk. Doug's first passion is mission and missions: the continuing need for us to fulfil the last command of Jesus.



For over thirty years he has been involved in recruiting, training and sending mission teams both in the UK and abroad.

Doug is deeply involved with World Mission at St Michaels, recently returning from leading a mission team of seventeen to Mongolia. Doug has been actively involved with SOMA for many years and was part of the panel that appointed SOMA National Director Stephen Dinsmore in 2006. The following year Doug was appointed to SOMA UK's Board of Trustees.

He has wide-ranging international business experience and at one time writing for Reuters.

With his passion for Mission, overseas experience, business expertise and capacity for strategic mission thinking he is a welcome addition to the SOMA Board of Trustees.

## Growing Disciples in Congo

Simon Brignall writes...

It was a privilege to be back in the Diocese of Nord Kivu in November following my earlier visit to Bunia in April. During my first visit, as reported in Autumn 2007 Sharing, together we worked out a vision for the church for the next five years. The SOMA UK contribution was to focus on discipleship and training. The Rooted in Jesus small group discipleship material, successfully established in Mozambique and Tanzania, was my suggestion for implementing this strategy.

This time, at the invitation of Bishop Muthesela Munzenda, I was leading a SOMA team to establish across the Diocese the programme Rooted in Jesus.

The Diocese runs along the border of Uganda covering an area nearly the size of Rwanda and Burundi combined.

The conference was held at Butembo, in the cathedral church of the Diocese. Butembo has grown from a village some 30 years ago, when the present Bishop established the Diocese, to a city today of nearly 1 million inhabitants. Its primary business appears to be smuggling! Precious metals leave and imported electronic goods come in through the un-policed and porous border.

Joined by assistant Bishop Enoch Kayee, Bishop Munzenda has recently been invited by the Anglican Province to facilitate reconciliation between factions within the diocese. These factions have seriously undermined the work of the church in the last 10 years. Since returning to the UK I have learnt that Bishop Munzenda has suffered a serious stroke

and has been unable to continue his ministry. It is likely that Bishop Enoch will succeed him.

The Diocese has about 150 clergy, all non stipendiary - they receive a grant of land to support themselves and their families. There are ten Archdeacons, and, because of the situation of the last decades, two have secondary and one university education. These Archdeacons



are the primary facilitators in the Rooted in Jesus training programme. Working through their clergy they will encourage new groups to equip themselves to disciple others using the course.

Of the 300 delegates invited, around 150 were able to attend. Many were deterred by the security situation and others by lack of finance to make the journey.

Around half of these were clergy, accompanied by Evangelists, Catechists and some of the women intercessors from around the diocese. We discovered that some 30 had no bibles, and arranged to use some of our funding to supply them.

Language did not prove too serious a barrier. The English members of the Team had to work through Joshua and Jacob as translators. Kenyan Swahili, influenced by English, is different from Tanzanian

Swahili (the original Swahili) which is different from Congo Swahili, influenced by French! However, we seemed to make ourselves understood!



A more serious challenge to the training process was the difficulty we found in encouraging an interactive discussion. Many teaching methods are by rote in Congo and the teacher does not expect any come-back!

Promoting interactive discussion and exploration of issues, the basis of Rooted in Jesus, will require a real change of mindset for clergy and congregations. Do pray for them.

The Rooted in Jesus material is designed to be taught so that those who are equipped with this Gospel overview can train others. The principle is taken directly from St. Paul's words in 2 Timothy 2:2

'And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable men who will also be qualified to teach others'

Bishop Enoch Kayee will be overseeing the implementation of the training programme, working through the Archdeacons. Previous experience has found that a second visit by SOMA is a great help in establishing local groups and encouraging leaders.



SOMA Team to the Diocese of Nord-Kivu, DR Congo, 9 – 19 November 2007. The team, led by Simon Brignall, comprised Geoff Stokes, Holy Trinity Leicester, UK, Joshua Opondo, Youth Chaplain Diocese of Maseno South, Kenya, and Jacob Lehini, Tanzania.

# SOMA Intercessors

We are always keen to hear from people who feel called to pray regularly for the work of SOMA. SOMA Intercessors take on an important commitment, are an indispensable part of SOMA's ministry and play an invaluable role at home whenever SOMA teams are abroad. Please contact Hilary Steynor on 01483 301013 for more details of becoming part of this.

## 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 ten and twenty days. Teams are always challenging, faith building and life changing!

### Give financially

We are always in need of financial support for SOMA's missions, ministry and teams. 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 SOMA in prayer and intercession in this unique and invaluable ministry.

## My response

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Postcode \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

### Please...

tell me about becoming part of a SOMA Team

tell me how to financially support SOMA's ministry

send me SOMA's regular SHARING newsletter

send me SOMA's regular Prayer Diary

Detach and return to SOMA UK, PO Box 69, Merriott. TA18 9AP

# SOMA TEAMS in 2008

Successful SOMA team visits are dependent on many different factors.

Often arrangements are only fully in place right at the last minute.

Among the teams for 2008 the following are in the process of being arranged:

- Stephen will be leading a Youth conference in Sudan in March. For the Dioceses Rumbek, Wau, Yirol and Cuibet. Further details in the Prayer Diary.
- Tabora Diocese, Tanzania, again the first half of May, team leader Matthew Grayshon;
- South Rwenzori Uganda, first half of May, teaching the discipleship course 'Rooted in Jesus';
- East Zambia in June, with team leader Alison Morgan;
- South Malawi in August, a team lead by John McGinley;

There is a great opportunity to work with some of our SOMA international partners in the second half of September in the province of Southern Africa. The 'Growing the Church' initiative starts with a combined training conference in Jo'burg and is then followed by the teams travelling to Dioceses throughout the Province.

Contact the SOMA office if you are interested in being considered for any of these teams.

## SOMA UK

PO Box 69  
Merriott, Somerset  
TA18 9AP

Tel: 01460 279737

E-mail: [info@somauk.org](mailto:info@somauk.org)

Website: [www.somauk.org](http://www.somauk.org)

UK Registered Charity No. 279759