

The Gospel is carried on the backs of the lay readers of the Church of Uganda. Serving the Soroti Diocese of more than 360,000 Christians, there are 49 parish priests, several dozen deacons, and more than 700 lay readers. With geographic parishes as large as 10,000 people, there are numerous congregations meeting in different villages — some meeting in buildings, but many meeting in schools or in the open air. Lay readers are responsible for leading services, preaching, preparing the confirmands, caring for the people day to day, and shepherding the congregations spiritually. Bishop George Erwau requested a SOMA mission to focus on teaching these lay readers about the working of the Holy Spirit, and SOMA responded, holding conferences in five different Archdeaconries, providing two teams to serve in the month-long mission. What did we witness?

*Eager Students* — Clergy and laity came with open hearts, took many notes, and entered joyously into worship and ministry. In Kaberamaido some of them said, “We think we are in theological studies!”

*The Power of the Holy Spirit* — The Lord offered a fresh infilling of His Spirit for many, as evidenced by physical and inner healings, deliverance, new understand of His grace and mercy, conviction, revelations, prophecy, witness, testimonies, faith and unity. As participants ministered to one another, the Lord ministered to them.

*The Power of Testimony* — Many in Uganda have suffered greatly as a result of years of terror, war, violence, abuse, abandonment, loss of homes and family, famine, and unrest. Many have suffered silently, trusting the Lord but not understanding His amazing power of inner healing – the healing of the heart. When one of our American team members gave his personal testimony of the Lord’s healing of inner wounds after his suffering 20 years of abuse, abandonment, betrayal, and physical and psychological distress, this became a powerful tool used by God for people to understand His ability to make all things new. No amount of teaching or preaching can witness to the power of God like the radiant example of a transformed life in Christ! Praise God for His amazing ability to heal from the inside out!

*The Power of the Word* — Ugandans know and trust God’s Word; they often know scripture by heart. Every teaching on the Holy Spirit was grounded in Bible passages and Bible stories. When fresh insights are applied to a passage that is well known, it has a tremendous power. The Word is a living, breathing guide for our lives!

*The Power of Spiritual Authority* — When this mission was planned last fall, Bishop George was seeking to develop for the entire diocese a much-needed plan for instruction and greater order in prayer ministry; by summer he had a complete plan. This mission trained 550 clergy, lay readers, and laity throughout the diocese in the ministry of the Holy Spirit. Over and over we heard, “This is what we have prayed for! It is coming at just the right time – surely this is God’s timing!”

It seemed that each day the Lord provided instruction, ministry and connections necessary to meet the needs of Christians in each location. Archdeacons provided leadership that was Kingdom-building. The presence of the Holy Spirit was very evident. At one point, just before a teaching, an older woman rose to offer a song, witnessing to the healing she had received during the ministry time. Her once stiff neck now allowed her head to turn freely in any direction. Translated, the lovely song she sang in Kuman reads, “Lord, prepare our hearts for your second coming.” She could not have known that the very next teaching was ministry from the heart! How thrilling it was to experience the perfect, intimate guidance of the Spirit and to know how very much the Lord wants to prepare us to serve Him in our corner of His Kingdom.

*Team List:* Clark Smith, TL, Christ Church Anglican, Savannah, GA; Carol Rogers Smith, Christ Church Anglican, Savannah, GA; *Team Members for Kaberamaido, Amuria and Uzuk Archdeaconries:* The Rev. Joel Atong, Mombasa, Kenya; The Rev. Hannah Mudge, Oaks of Righteousness, Troy, NY; Brooke Brenthon, Christ the King Spiritual Life Center, Greenwich, NY; *Team Member for Serere and Soroti Archdeaconries:* The Rev. Jessica Hughes, SAMS Missionary -Uganda Christian University



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### Director’s Corner by Glen Petta

Do you expect God to do something when you pray?

I am constantly challenged by this question, and especially upon returning from a mission where we have experienced people who “came for prayer and expected God to do something,” as Fr. Roger Grist noted after returning from a SOMA mission.



At this particular conference, people waited over three hours to receive individual prayer. During that time, some received miraculous healings, a word from the Lord, healing of past hurts, or experiences of the love and presence of God in a very personal way. I returned, as I most often do, with my heart full of awe and gratitude to God as He meets us through prayer in so many unique ways.

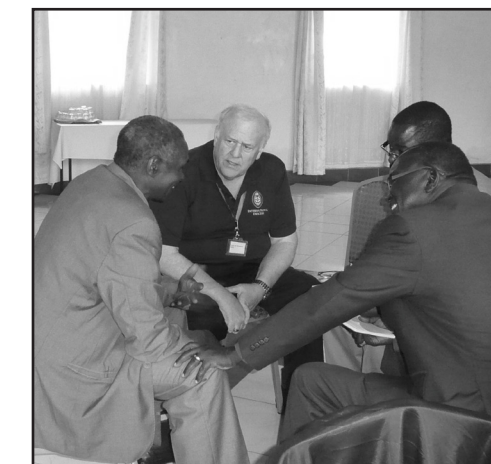
As a part of mission team building, team members pray and share expectations for the mission. The team develops unity and an anticipation to see God manifest His presence in the team and in those attending the conference. The team members enter the conference in a spirit of His grace and are encouraged in the use of their spiritual gifts.

While out on mission, we seem to be more sensitive to the promptings of the Holy Spirit and expect God to do something when we pray for someone or receive prayer ourselves. We find we are more focused in listening and acting as the Holy Spirit prompts us. When we return home, we often struggle to have that same vibrant expectation of God to do something in the same way as when we are on mission. Varying demands and routines of daily life can cause a loss of focus. This may be true for you also once you’ve returned to your day-to-day routine following ministry experiences that were filled with God’s presence and power.

Certainly all of us desire the faith to expect God to do something when we pray! One recent team member shared that making an appointment with Jesus in his calendar keeps his relationship fresh and focused. Others find His presence in listening to worship music, having a time of solitude with the Lord, or spending quiet moments in His creation. Join me in finding ways to enter into His presence and expect God to do something when you pray!



### God’s Perfect Timing: Ministry to Bishops in Kenya



In November, a mission to Kenya for the House of Bishops of the Anglican Church of Kenya was held in Nakuru. A SOMA team consisting of Bishop John Guernsey of the Diocese of the Mid-Atlantic and Chairman of SOMA USA, Bishop Foley Beach of the Diocese of the South, Dr. Glen Petta, National Director of SOMA USA, and his wife Debbie comprised the team. SOMA was invited by Archbishop Eliud Wabukala who knew of the ministry of SOMA having participated in a conference as a diocesan bishop. While attending the Anglican Church in North America’s Provincial Assembly in North Carolina in June 2012, he was so encouraged by it that he asked SOMA to bring a team to help give his bishops and Provincial leaders a similar experience.

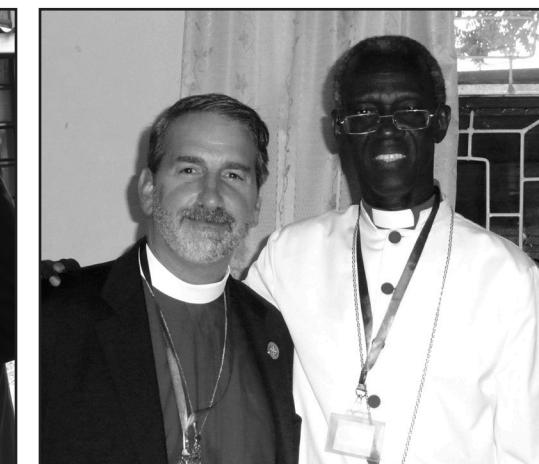
Bishop Guernsey describes the mission experience, “The Lord’s plan for our time with the House of Bishops was quite simple: we taught the Scriptures about holiness, about our own personal devotional lives and about ministry in the power of the Holy Spirit; we invited the bishops to examine their hearts and to come in fresh repentance and fresh surrender before the Lord; and we led them



to spend much of their time in small groups, sharing and praying for one another... The Lord was so gracious and He moved in gentle and powerful ways in many lives.”

Bishops prayed for each other and spoke life giving words to each other. Bishop Joseph Kanuku, shared of his thanksgiving of having a time to receive ministry because they have so many responsibilities that often prevent time for themselves. “This conference brought us together where we could share our problems and there has been a spiritual lifting. God has been good, the Spirit of the Lord has moved and now bishops seem very much closer, I see it even in our fellowship, we are more together.”

One thing is for sure; the Lord’s timing is always perfect. He knows the times and seasons. He refreshes as well as prepares His people. Just a few days following this conference, a bomb went off in St. Polycarp Church in Nairobi. Bishop Bill Atwood, General Secretary of Eklesia Society and a member of the House of Bishops in the Province of Kenya who partnered with SOMA for the conference, explains his reaction to the terrorist attack:



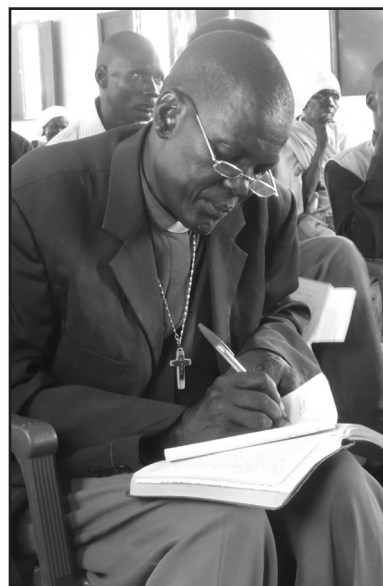
“A bomb went off while Sunday School children were memorizing Bible verses and learning a new chorus. Police confirmed that the IED was placed there earlier and then detonated remotely. Security forces have said that there is evidence that the attack is linked to al Shabaab, a radical group out of Somalia that is linked with al Qaeda. ...A few minutes after I got word of the attack, I received text messages from both Joel Waweru Mwangi, the Bishop of Nairobi, and Archbishop Wabukala. Both said that they were heartbroken. But both, along with the people they lead in the Anglican Church in Kenya, are resolute. The Gospel stands firm.”

It was an honor for our SOMA team to walk with the bishops of the Anglican Church of Kenya in commitment to advancing the Kingdom of God.

*Team List:* Dr. Glen Petta, TL; the Rt. Rev. Foley Beach, Anglican Diocese of the South; the Rt. Rev. John Guernsey, Diocese of the Mid-Atlantic; Debbie Petta, Christ the Redeemer, Fort Worth, TX.

## A Living Witness to God's Love in Sudan

*"By this we know love, that he laid down his life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for the brothers." 1 John 3:16*



The words of John seem to be words by which Bishop Abraham Nhial and the priests of Diocese of Aweil have chosen to live. To understand the SOMA mission to Aweil, South Sudan, it is helpful to know something of the bishop who serves in this nation established only 18 months ago.

Bishop Abraham, a "lost boy of Sudan," came to know Jesus in a refugee camp after his long journey by foot to Ethiopia. Lack of resources in Ethiopia caused the refugees to be transported to United Nations camps in Kenya. During these years of hardship, he grew in his faith and began to pastor and pray for others. He was later given the opportunity for education in the United States and said, "We were here physically, but our minds and spirits were at home." His heart ached for a "new Sudan, governed by God." He questioned, "How can I help them, God?" He desired to return to his people someday.

God answered that cry of his heart. He now serves in his home village very near the border of Darfur region where, as Bishop, he oversees 70 clergy and leaders in the diocese. It was an honor to be the first mission team to minister in the diocese. Our team provided a conference for these priests and leaders, none of whom are paid by the diocese. All have given their lives to the Lord to love, teach and train those living here who have suffered so much. During our conference, Bishop Abraham held his clergy in the palm of his hand with his dynamic teaching. Although our team did not understand the native Dinka language as he spoke to them, the laughter and attentiveness of his leaders indicated that he was a remarkable communicator and revered leader.

Bishop Trevor Walters speaks of his experience as a team member:



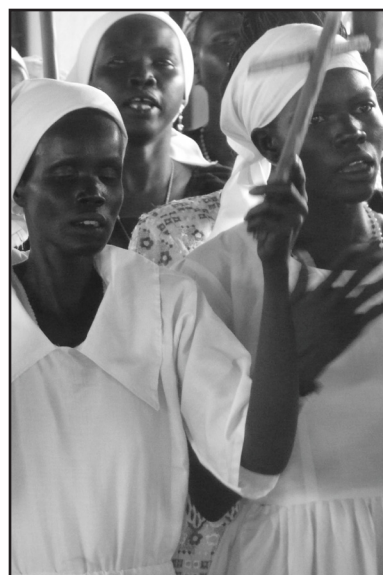
"Africa has a magical draw to it, but the blessings of being in Sudan had nothing to do with my past experience of great sunrises and sunsets and the exotic wildlife. Indeed surviving the challenges of living on the edge of a war zone in a remote part of Sudan had moment by moment challenges. But the blessings were connected to living with self-sacrificing leaders who have given everything for the opportunity to make Christ known. The leaders who gathered for our teaching and healing mission were like sponges that soaked up every concept and inspiration that we humbly offered.

"One of the highlights for me came in the form of a challenge from Bishop Abraham when he said I want you to teach about reconciliation and peace making. My heart sank as I weighed the possible land mines ahead of me if I were to teach about peacemaking where 2 million Sudanese have died in the last 18 years. Given that most of the priests also served in the army, would I be perceived as undermining their years of fighting for a homeland separate from the north? On the other hand, would I fail to teach the scriptural imperative to love one's enemies? I felt led to teach from the Parable of the Good Samaritan. When I came to the verses in the parable of the Samaritan coming to the wounded man, I replaced the Samaritan with a man from Darfur (the region of Sudan that had fiercely attacked and murdered the people of Aweil). After the session, the town war hero, an army tank driver, said that when he heard that the "Good Samaritan" was a man from Darfur, he felt compassion for the first time for his enemy in the north. What a blessing to see the power of God's love to soften the heart with love!

"The day after we left Aweil, Bishop Abraham put out a powerful plea to the leaders of South Sudan to let go of the disputed Mile 39, from the July 2011 division of North and South Sudan. In his words, 'let us put an end to the bickering over Mile 39.'

"I have returned from Sudan humbled by the simplicity of Bishop Abraham's life style. He lives in a mud hut with 6 orphans, having just one room for himself, which includes his office and bed. He showers in the village shower and eats the same food as everyone else. His wife and children live in Nairobi so that they can get a good education, and he sees them only every month or two. He draws no salary. The cost of discipleship in Sudan is immense. I am humbled and inspired by this highly educated, brilliant leader giving his life for a renewed Sudan."

*Team List:* Glen Petta, TL; the Rt. Rev. Trevor Walters, Suffragen Bishop (Western Canada); the Rev. James Hende, Diocese of North Ankole, Uganda; Debbie Petta, Christ the Redeemer, Fort Worth, TX.



## "The Work of SOMA Makes the World a Better Place"

The Rev. Raul Rubiano and Diego Millan had been seeking God in ways to encourage and strengthen the people of Jesus of Nazareth Episcopal Church in Orlando, Florida when they became aware of the ministry of SOMA. A healing conference was planned not only for his own congregation, but also inviting other churches and ministries in the culturally diverse Hispanic community.

"A high point for me was one that transcended any linguistic barrier as the team heard the cry of a shepherd's heart for his sheep during orientation. A priest who dearly loves his congregation, Fr. Raul prayed with his whole heart. God heard his prayer. During the mission, people were reconciled, rededicated their lives to God, confirmed in their ministries, and healed. There was joy. There was love. It was the purely the love of God," shared team member Candy Rehfeldt. "God uses the ministry of SOMA to restore, heal and renew the Body of Christ, encouraging and answering the cries of those who are called to be leaders of our faith. Team members pray, they listen to God, they submit to authority, and they act in His name."

*Team List:* Dr. Glen Petta, TL; the Rev. Fred Hotz, Diocese of Quincy; the Rev. Sergio Diaz, San Miguel, Fort Worth, TX; Candy Rehfeldt, St. Andrew's Episcopal Church, Fort Worth, TX; Debbie Petta, Christ the Redeemer, Fort Worth, TX.

## SOMA International: All Corners of the Globe

SOMA USA participated this fall in the International Meetings and Conference held in Johannesburg, South Africa, from September 27th to October 6th. Every year, SOMA National Directors from all over the world come together to share vision, unity, mission concerns and struggles. It is a time to minister to each other and to seek the Lord's guidance for SOMA.

During one of our times of prayer together, the group received the scripture passage of Jeremiah 6:16, "Stand at the crossroads and look; ask for the ancient paths, ask where the good way is, and walk in it, and you will find rest for your souls." We received these words both personally for individual SOMA bodies and corporately as SOMA International. We committed to help each other to "ask where the good way is and walk in it" for SOMA missions.

The International Conference, "Anglicans Ablaze," followed our SOMA meetings. The Rev. Trevor Pierce and Bishop Martin Breytenbach led the conference, and over 1400 people, including archbishops, bishops, priests, and laity, took part in plenary sessions and workshops of discipleship, church growth, and evangelism.

The conference provided wonderful times of worship and sharing, but there were two events in particular where God's presence was felt throughout the congregation. The first event was a time of worship, in singing "It is well with my soul." Tears of joy flowed from many faces as the Holy Spirit moved among the people. And, after Miles Giljam shared of God's redemptive hope and healing, over half of the participants knelt in prayer asking God to redeem their countries, leaders, and churches.

Following the conference, SOMA National Directors led and participated in teams for mission. Team members from eleven countries ministered throughout the Province of South Africa. They were refreshed and renewed in passion for mission.



## Milestones in Mission: SOMA celebrates mission seeds of growth and partnership

### Singapore

We rejoiced with the Diocese of Singapore as Bishop Rennis Ponniah, who once served as National Director of SOMA Singapore, was installed as the ninth Bishop of Singapore in October, 2012, at Singapore's oldest church, St. Andrew's Cathedral. Following the installation, Bishop Rennis set aside the first two days of his episcopacy for a "Global Antioch Missions Conference." SOMA National Directors from all over the world spent time in prayer and discussion with individuals and agencies of mission outreach who know Bishop Rennis' passion for mission. Please pray for Bishop Rennis who says, "I put my trust in Him to enable me to lead His Church to know Him more and to make known among the nations the wonders of His salvation in Christ Jesus," as he leads the Diocese of Singapore serving six deaneries in Southeast Asia.

### Cambodia

It was a joy to visit Cambodia and SAMS-SOMA missionary Summer (Twyman) Benton, who was placed in long-term mission there with SOMA's assistance. Summer felt a call to foreign mission when participating in a short-term mission as a teenager. After graduating from college, she spent four years in Boston working with child protective services before she began her work in Phnom Penh to rescue victims of human trafficking through an American organization called Transitions. Summer understands the value of short-term mission apart from the experience that led her to full time ministry. She was recently married to Guy Benton, whom she met two years ago at a SOMA mission conference in Guy's home of New Zealand. One never knows what God has planned when we are out in mission!

### Uganda

In December, people from all over the world converged on Kampala for the enthronement and installation of Bishop Stanley Ntagali as the eighth Archbishop of the Church of Uganda. SOMA was pleased to celebrate with our friend who has been a blessing to SOMA by participating as a team member in missions, as well as hosting teams in his

former diocese of Masindi-Kitara. We look forward to continuing our long-standing relationship with our friends in the Province of Uganda by working together in mission in both Uganda and the US.

### Brazil

Nine months after the tragic death of their bishop, the Rt. Rev. Robinson Cavalcanti, the people of the Diocese of Recife joyfully welcomed the consecration on December eighth of the Rev. Miguel Uchoa as their new bishop. Bishop Uchoa was a layman when he attended SOMA's first mission in Recife in 1991 and its follow-up in 1993. As a newly ordained priest two years later he planted the Church of the Holy Spirit, which soon became the largest Anglican church in Latin America. Bishop Cavalcanti had begun his episcopacy in 1998 and quickly invited a SOMA team to a three-day clergy conference to build unity in his diocese and to strengthen its ministry in the power of the Holy Spirit. Visits to the diocese from SOMA continued in 2002 and 2005.

Seven bishops co-consecrated Bishop Uchoa: one from the Province of Nigeria, four from the Anglican Church of North America, and the two suffragan bishops of Recife. SOMA was the only organization represented in the ceremonies. Former SOMA Board officer (and team leader on missions to Recife) Richard Hines was invited to be one of those presenting then-Reverend Uchoa for consecration and to present SOMA's gift to him. As one of the principal leaders of spiritual renewal in Latin America and beyond, Bishop Uchoa will be an ever more vibrant force in church affairs and in the souls of men and women everywhere.



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