



Sharing

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Re-connecting

Twelve years ago I was on a SOMA mission to Honduras where we prayed for individuals to receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

Upon arriving this year, a woman came running up to me and asked if I remembered her. She said that she was at that conference in 1996 and that I and two ladies from that team had prayed for her and her husband; they had been baptized in the Holy Spirit. She remembered me as if it were yesterday. After that blessing from God, she decided to study to become a priest. She was ordained last year.

Jim Coburn

God Always Equips

I felt called to go on this mission from the moment I first heard about it, but I had no idea what I could possibly offer to clergy. I prayed and God clearly indicated that I was to go and that I shouldn't worry about what I was to "do." If God calls, He does the equipping. Nothing we do for the Lord is in our strength. He just asks us to obey. He takes care of the rest.

Kelli Brazzel

Rain from Heaven

"The Lord truly opened the flood gates of heaven and rained upon all of us His presence and His Holy Spirit like I have never experienced on any previous SOMA mission," wrote the Rev. José Poch.

Bishop Lloyd Allen of Honduras invited SOMA to lead a clergy conference in February about prayer and the Holy Spirit. Everyone contributed on the team as 'one body,' using their specific gifts. It was awesome to witness the workings of God's people as He intended it from the beginning of time.

When Fr. Lawrence gave the invitation for the baptism of the Holy Spirit, every single priest, deacon and seminarian (about 75) came forward to receive this empowerment. The Spirit was poured out as on the day of Pentecost. This was truly holy and anointed ground. The Holy Spirit came time and time again. There was no denying His presence and His workings.

On Friday morning, during the Eucharist, the Bishop gave a powerful sermon that led to repentance and reconciliation by clergy who had been rebelling against him; there was great restoration. Bishop Allen stood and ripped up two letters of inhibition as two clergy humbly came forward and asked his forgiveness for their actions.

It seems that God began the transformation process for an entire diocese. Canon to the Ordinary, E. Albert Brooks, writes: "Hola! Thanks to you and the team, the entire Diocese of Honduras is about to be infected with a disease called 'The Holy Spirit'. It is no coincidence

that the team came at the beginning of our 'Year of Evangelism.'"

Bishop Allen reports, "The people in Honduras are really on fire—they are all burning up for the Lord. After these encounters with the SOMA team we are better equipped for the spiritual warfare that goes on."

Team list: The Rev. Lawrence Harrison, team leader, Joe Beggs and Shirley Sharp, Christ the Redeemer, Garland, TX; Kelli Brazzel, St. Andrew's, Fort Worth, TX; James Coburn and the Rev. José Poch, St. David's, North Hollywood, CA.



As the team ministers the participants witness God touching lives. Their faith grows and they learn to pray for one another.

SOMA USA

is a Christian mission agency in the Anglican Communion dedicated to fostering renewal in the Holy Spirit throughout the world.



Basking in the freedom that forgiveness brings.

God's Tools

At the conference for wives of the clergy of the Diocese of Masindi-Kitara in Uganda, the SOMA team had the opportunity to hear the concerns and challenges that these women face in their ministries. In response the group learned about forgiveness [see "Toolbox"] and about keeping their hearts full so that they have something to give away to others. They learned to pray the Psalms and to use the Word for spiritual warfare. Together they applied these lessons to a current situation.

In 2007, women in Kigali, Rwanda, rallied around their beloved "Mama," Freda Kolini (wife of the Archbishop), as she dealt with a medical crisis in her extended family: ultimately a paralyzed young person was healed through their prayers, deliverance, and spiritual warfare. In March 2008, Edwina Thomas was invited to teach about spiritual warfare to some of these women. What she was able to do was provide witness that God the Holy Spirit had instructed them well. From this Westerner they were affirmed in what they understood and how they prayed. All were encouraged that God's truths and understandings of spiritual things transcend cultural and national boundaries.

SOMA's Toolbox

This illustration has been in SOMA's repertoire for many years.

Using four identical size pieces of plain paper, we ask people to imagine that these are from a receipt book. When we sin against another person, our action or sin, is written in the book—four copies exist.

Who has a copy of our sin? 1) God knows; so we invite someone to hold one paper representing God's copy. 2) The person we sin against knows, so we ask someone in the audience to hold a "receipt" representing the person sinned against. 3) The sinner knows, so that person tucks a "receipt" in their pocket. 4) Satan also knows, so someone receives his copy.

When the Holy Spirit convicts us of sin, how should we respond? 1) First, the sinner asks God to forgive him or her. Ps.51:3-4 clearly teaches that all sin is against God. Scripture also teaches that when we confess our sin, God is able and willing to forgive us (Ps.103:3; Col. 2:13-14; Acts 10:43); therefore, we ask the person holding God's "receipt" to destroy it. 2) The sinner must go and ask forgiveness of the person who has been sinned against: we demonstrate this. Then the group discusses the options that the sinned-against person has. They can forgive or not forgive—either keep the "receipt" or destroy it. 3) We discuss the consequences to the sinner of not letting go of the sin. Although we have repented to God and our neighbor, sometimes we

still hold on to guilt and respond inwardly with shame and regret. When we can forgive ourselves, we destroy our copy. 4) Yet, Satan has knowledge of our sin. We ask the person holding the fourth "receipt" to come and arrogantly wave it in front of the person who committed the sin. What is the Godly response to being reminded of our forgiven sin? We stand on the Word and speak this declaration: "Because of Jesus' shed blood on the cross, I am forgiven! This sin is under the blood! Stop harassing me!"

The clergy wives in Masindi-Kitara eagerly entered into this little drama and spoke again and again of what they learned through it.

The African Pastor's Wife

The pastor's wife is the de facto "Mama" of the parish—"the wise elder woman," no matter her age or experience. She is expected to be a ready resource for economic emergencies in the parish, for spiritual guidance, and for exemplary home management.

Most young clergy wives were not recruited for this: perhaps she married a man who was originally a teacher, businessman or student. She most likely is not theologically trained, is struggling to secure economic survival for her own household, and perhaps is not, by gifting, a leader. Yet, she is a "Mama" by virtue of being married to a clergyman. By God's grace, these women grow and learn how to lead through experience with endurance—real on-the-job training.

When SOMA programs include pastor's wives, they are eager to learn and develop. The difficulties and challenges faced by these "Mamas" are gargantuan; yet, SOMA team members are always built up as they encounter the ways the "Mamas" rely on God through prayer.



Sharing about SOMA/SAMS

SOMA USA and SAMS-USA (www.SAMS-USA.org) work together to provide the opportunity for long-term missionaries to serve in Africa and other locations around the world where SAMS does not work. In the power of the Holy Spirit these missionaries engage in evangelizing, discipling, equipping, encouraging, fostering spiritual renewal, serving social concerns and promoting community transformation.

Recipe for One Missionary Retreat

Choose a container (Murchison Falls National Park in northwest Uganda) with abundant wildlife, water, birds, good food and comfort. Mix together equal parts of recreation, teaching, quiet time, and worship. Add opportunity to problem solve, such as a tire puncture and a car overheating. Provide great people for good conversation. Assure time for relationships with God and each other to grow. Spice with touches of pampering.

Results that last: "We are not alone!" "This renewed our marriage." "It provided

a space, time and freedom so that I could focus entirely on Him without feeling guilt." "This was time of renewal and spiritual feeding... somehow I was really dry." "We are grateful that you opened the retreat to missionaries from other agencies."

Team: Edwina Thomas, team leader; the Rev. Lynne Ashmead, Church of the Redeemer, Jacksonville, FL; the Rev. Derek and Dorothy Washington, Barnabus International, Addie Washington, St. Paul's, Hudson, WI.

SAMS is the expert in sending long-term missionaries while SOMA provides placement and pastoral care for non-Spanish speaking missionaries. We currently have three SOMA/SAMS missionaries in Uganda with several more in the pipeline.



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I want to thank you and the SOMA/SAMS team for taking the time and investing so much of your resources and energy to come to Uganda to encourage us in the mission field that God has enabled us to serve.

In the nearly ten years we have been working to build God's Kingdom in Uganda, we have never had this encouragement and refreshment. I have never taken the opportunity to step outside the forest of our ministry here to observe what God is doing from above – the rain, the sun, the life He is pouring on to make it all possible, and to realize that He is the one with the master plan for it all. I have been so caught up in caring for the trees – weeding and pruning, running among them to do the "work" – that I had lost the wonderful sense of God's perspective on what I am doing.

I am so deeply appreciative of the message you have brought, and the refreshing dip in the cool, nourishing water of His Spirit. Thank you for helping me out of the forest for a crucial look at the big picture that God has painted of our lives.

We love you and are blessed by your ministry of care and support.

Paul Heber



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Call To Intercessors

SOMA USA is seeking to increase prayer support for its ministry. If God is calling you to intercede for SOMA and you would like to be on our e-mail distribution list for prayer updates, please send a message to office@somausa.org.

Director's Corner by Edwina Thomas

“The leg bone is connected to the knee bone, the knee bone is connected to the thigh bone...” A simple song with a simple truth: Connections. One part is linked to another. Every part is connected to form the body; the body is connected to the head. So it is with a different body. SOMA, “body” in Greek, makes connections. SOMA [the organization] links people together, and helps connect them with the Head.” - The Rev. Drew Schmotzer

Jeanne Harper, wife of Father Michael Harper who founded SOMA in 1979, received a vision while praying in the mid-eighties. She saw a net stretching around a globe. At every intersection, there were knots, but these knots were shining and golden.

One of SOMA's “Callings” is to encourage, lift up, and strengthen Godly relationships among leaders around the world. Because we move leaders

from everywhere to everywhere, and on occasion gather the SOMA family for conferences, retreats or consultations, we continually create opportunities for Kingdom connections.

Schmotzer writes further: “My first connection with SOMA was at its Silver Jubilee in Canterbury (2004). My latest occurred recently as I spent the weekend on retreat with the US National Director and two other young seminarians, also from Trinity School for Ministry and who just happen to be sons of African Archbishops. We were making connections to the nations, as the body of Christ grows together. We were in prayer and petition, seeking direction from the Head. Jesus is the Head of the body and the Head of SOMA. This is the most important connection we can make.”

You, too, can apply a little gold leaf to these Kingdom connections: Pray with me for these young leaders and others like

them that they walk in holiness and righteousness all of their days, and “that they will accomplish every good work that God has planned for them to walk in” (paraphrased from Eph. 2:10).



Left to right: Drew Schmotzer, Emmanuel Akinola, Shady Annis