

SHARING

The Newsletter of SOMA

Fall 2023



Bryansford, Northern Ireland, Diocese of Down and Dromore

Trinity students serve on a historic SOMA mission.

Bishop David McClay of the Diocese of Down and Dromore in Northern Ireland posted a video inviting missionaries to come to his diocese. Sixty people from 13 nations answered the call to serve on what would become the largest SOMA mission in history! Teams evangelized, brought souls to Christ and breathed new life on 30 parishes during the two-week mission. Three of those missionaries were Trinity School for Ministry students.



Brittnee Busse
Middler MDiv

“At each parish, we listened for the Good Shepherd and ran to open the gate at which He arrived...We saw faith renewed, physical pain flee, darkness tremble, and those who know their Shepherd’s voice led out in joy.”



Rev. Canon Promise
Okwuchukwu Umenne

“We prayed for people in shops. We prayed for people who wanted to receive Christ. We saw a person not walking properly, leave the church walking properly, then come back on Sunday and give testimony!”



Melissa McKinney
Middler MDiv

“I asked God to give me insight into how to pray for people. He did so while I was giving away candies and praying for people—once at a bus stop! He reminded me that I should always be on mission and that He can minister through me anywhere.”

Personal Reflections of a Dear Friend

By Edwina Thomas

SOMA USA National Director, 1991-2010

Ron Davis was a man whose prayers changed the world. And whose prayers changed me. Early on, Ron came to understand the Holy Spirit's gifting in his life, and he daily surrendered those gifts to the Lord and his purposes.

He was a Man of Prayer who understood that only by humbly submitting to the Holy Spirit would his intercession align with God's will (Romans 8:27). His habit, whenever I encountered him in any Christian venue, was to listen intently for a word or idea that was God-inspired. He faithfully wrote it in his small, precise handwriting on an ever-present yellow pad. In private, he reflected on the concepts he encountered and then went to God's Word, which he knew so intimately. In the mission field, Ron would sometimes skip sleep altogether, deeming his prayer and Scripture time far more important than sleep. Ron's most powerful prayers were a summation of God's revelation, informed and aligned with the Word.

Professionally, Ron studied engineering and devoted his career to young people as a skilled and admired football coach, basketball coach and high school teacher. He had developed the ability to see the bigger picture, the full potential, of anything he was passionate about: SOMA, for instance. As a leader, he spoke few words. But when he spoke, people stopped and listened.



Ron at New Wineskins



Ron was an African American man born before our culture began to come to grips with racism. For the last 30 years, Ron worshiped in a church that was predominately white but growing in ethnic diversity. When asked, he would share his experiences of pain, forgiveness, and healing, and he was a great influence on my own journey of repentance and reconciliation. He was willing to serve as my personal confessor and coach that I might grow in freedom from the chains of racism.

“He was a Man of Prayer...”

In 1996, Ron and I were ministering together in Rwanda, two years after the genocide. Much of what we did was to listen to the horrific stories: “If every friend and neighbor has equally traumatic memories, to whom can you bear your own heart?” So, we listened. This big tower of strength sat with a stream of tears rolling down his cheeks: my forever “snapshot” of this humble man.

As I remembered and grieved Ron's absence, God gave me a flash of insight: for decades Ron's prayers so powerfully fueled SOMA's work around the world. I wept. SOMA USA's Board of Directors will miss their longest serving member.

Ron Davis passed away on May 12, 2023. He served on the SOMA USA's Board of Director from 2000-2023.

The Iniquity of the Fathers...

By Scott Thompson
SOMA Board Member

I was feeling a bit rusty. It had been over three years since my last mission trip, and a lot had happened in that time: Covid, new responsibilities at work and church, a life-threatening illness in the family, moving into a new house needing improvement work—all of which had me wondering if I was still called to short-term missions. Was I clearly hearing God telling me to go, or was I relying on past patterns of how He had led me? My wife and my intercessor team shared several words they had received as they prayed. Buoyed by those encouragements, I committed to joining the SOMA team in Uganda.



Scott ministering in the Diocese of Northwest Ankole, Uganda, May 2023

A few days after we arrived in Ibanda, the town with the diocesan headquarters for Northwest Ankole, we learned that it had an interesting history. The name “Ibanda” is a derivative of the original town name, which meant “witchcraft is practiced here,” a likely explanation for the disturbing dreams that a couple of team members had experienced.

The night before I was to give a talk on Spiritual Warfare, I felt led to focus on the bondage arising from generational iniquity. The Hebrew words for *sin* and *iniquity* are different, with iniquity almost always referring to sins committed by our ancestors.

God notes that iniquity affects children to the 3rd and 4th generations (Exodus 20:5-6, Exodus 34:4-8), but He also promises to forgive both iniquity and sin. I recounted how, in my own life, I experienced freedom from iniquity when I confessed and renounced the sin of idolatry in the Freemasonry that my great-grandfather had practiced. My great-grandfather is responsible for his sin, and only he could confess and receive forgiveness. But I was set free from the spiritual heritage of his rebellion when I agreed with God that it was sin and confessed it (see Nehemiah 9:2), asking that the blood of Jesus cleanse me from that iniquity.

After this talk, the Bishop led the conference attendees in a confession and renunciation of the witchcraft that had been practiced in the area, with the Bishop exercising his authority over the Diocese and the clergy over their parishes. The next 20 minutes was an intense outpouring of the Holy Spirit akin to what is described at Pentecost in Acts 2. Afterwards, it was a completely different conference: attendees were much more open to sharing ministry challenges and engaging with conference topics and practicums. Something in the spiritual realm had changed, and it was apparent in what was happening in the physical realm.

I ask you to join me in praying that the work the Lord initiated at this conference would spread throughout the Diocese of Northwest Ankole, and that it becomes a regional beacon of the Holy Spirit’s power to heal and be transformed into Jesus’ likeness.



“Something in the spiritual realm had changed”

“Pray for one another, that you may be healed ...”



Will Henry teaching on prayer and intercession

By William Henry Lawrence
SOMA Missioner

I find it difficult to put into words my experience as a team member on the SOMA mission to the Diocese of Aweil, South Sudan. There's always a temptation to describe a mission as a success and list why. But it's impossible to avoid the fact that I got very sick with Typhoid and lay in bed for a day and a half. Looking back though, I see how the Lord used my illness to not only teach me a variety of things, but also teach others.

I gave a talk on intercessory prayer—standing in the gap on behalf of another—a crucial practice that underpins every aspect of SOMA's ministry. My story and my testimony center on the intercessions of others. Because of God's grace and others standing in the gap on my behalf, I have lived through lead poisoning as a toddler, a paralyzing stroke as a 27-year-



old, and many other instances in between. I reminded them that God, through the Holy Spirit, still heals!

After I came down with Typhoid during the mission, many of you around the globe joined the team and participants and lifted me in healing prayer (James 5:16b). WOW, did God hear those prayers!

While my full recovery lasted a few weeks, the rapid start to my comeback was nothing short of miraculous.

I thank the Lord for the opportunity to serve on the SOMA mission. I look forward to how the Lord will continue revealing Himself to me and others through our obedience in His service.

The Director's Corner



After 17 years of calling Jesus my Savior, I had not allowed Him to be in the driver's seat of my life—He was more of a passenger. Before God called me to lead SOMA, He led me to surrender my life.

I have learned that surrender is an ongoing, daily, and even hourly decision. Recently, the Lord convicted me of my coffee intake. I turned it into an idol each morning, noon, and late afternoon. I knowingly resisted the Spirit every time I pressed start on the Keurig. I have since repented and renounced my idol.

I share this facet of my journey because it is obedience to the Spirit that God uses SOMA teams powerfully. SOMA missions have real Kingdom impact not because they are humanly devised through our intellect but because they are divinely inspired.

I pray for us all that when His "Kingdom comes," we obey so that "His will be done."

Love in Christ,
Kyle

