



Caring for the nervous system of the body of Christ

Issue No: 23/3

What's inside: **Greetings from new National Director**

Doesn't the season of Pentecost inspire you to step out in mission, wherever the Lord has placed you?

New Committee

Who's who on the committee – both old members continuing and newly welcomed!

New hospitality formed with Diocese of Bendigo

The Bendigo Diocese have gladly offered to host SOMA's insurance needs, and safe ministry training requirements ...

Special General Meeting to ratify changes to the SOMA Constitution



Greetings

to all SOMA Missioners,

Please allow me to start by introducing myself, as many may not know who I am, or where I'm from. My name is Melinda

McMahon and I am the Rector of the Anglican parish of

Southlakes which is located in the Lake Macquarie district of

New South Wales. So I'm part of the Newcastle Diocese. For the past four years I've been in parish ministry, after ministering as a chaplain and a Scripture teacher for many years, as well as ministering as family worker in Tea Gardens and Bulahdelah.

But, most of all, I am passionate about fulfilling God's mission in the power of the Spirit. Shortly after returning home from participating in my first SOMA mission to Northern Ireland, I was delighted to be invited to be the new National Director.

I would like to start our newsletters with a devotional, keeping our focus on the great commission which our Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ called us to fulfil.

In our parish, during the season of Pentecost, we have been following a devotional which journeys through the book of Acts, teaching us how to minister in the power of the Holy Spirit. I'd like to share the devotional of Day 14, entitled, "The Spirit of Pentecost is the Spirit of Mission".

When Jesus promised His disciples the power they needed to accomplish the work He had given them. He said, "You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth" (Acts 1:8). There are at least five ways the Spirit empowers us to fulfill God's mission.

The Spirit Compels Us to Witness | *With the baptism in the Holy Spirit comes an inner compulsion to tell others about Jesus and His salvation.*

When Peter and John were ordered to stop preaching and teaching in Jesus'

Meeting scheduled
Thursday, 28th
September, at 7pm

Inspired by International mission to Northern Ireland

Hear from the team
who participated in the
June mission to
Northern Ireland ...

Regulars:

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seen or heard
in the Spirit?

name, they replied, "We cannot help speaking about what we have seen and heard" (Acts 4:20). The Holy Spirit was in them compelling them to talk about their Lord. In the same way, the Spirit compels us to tell others about Jesus.

The Spirit Enables Us to Speak | Once the disciples were filled with the Spirit, they spoke with unexpected ability. The people were astonished that these ordinary men spoke with such authority. We can have that same "great grace" upon our lives if we will be empowered by the Holy Spirit as they were.

The Spirit Equips Us to Defeat Demons | Paul wrote, "The god of this age [Satan] has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ" (2 Cor. 4:4). Jesus overcame demons in the Spirit's power, and so must we. This is another reason we must be filled with—and remain full of—the Holy Spirit.

The Spirit Empowers Us to Work Miracles | In Acts, signs and wonders were a key element in advancing the gospel. Following the Spirit's outpouring at Pentecost, "awe came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles" (2:43). The same can be true today. If we will be filled with the Spirit and remain committed to God's mission, the Spirit will work through us to perform miracles to the glory of God.

The Spirit Gives Us Boldness | The Spirit who empowers us for mission is who gives us courage to witness for Christ in the face of danger and threats. We know that Stephen was stoned, James was beheaded, Peter was imprisoned, and Paul was once stoned and left for dead. When we face hostility and threat today, we must be like those first Christians. We must be filled with the Spirit and continue to boldly proclaim the message of salvation.

You and I are called to fulfill Jesus' mission. So let us 'Go in love and serve the Lord, in the power of the Spirit' wherever the Lord has placed us, wherever our missionfield is.

Yours in the power of the Spirit, *Rev Mel*



Special General Mtg

to ratify SOMA Constitution

Put this date in your diary now! *** Thursday, 28th September @ 7pm ***

Some important proposed changes have been made to the SOMA constitution, which are in the process of being finalised for general distribution and review.

However, any changes to the Constitution require a Special General Meeting for all members to ratify and approve. Notice of this meeting is required thirty days prior.

Accordingly, a zoom meeting has been organised on Thursday, 28th September at 7pm. A link will be forwarded to you, together with a copy of the constitution when the final alternations have been made. Most of the alternations revolve around changes to the membership requirements, the role of the Episcopal Visitor, our new relationship with the Diocese of Bendigo, and our relationship with the SOMA International forum.



Revamped website



For the tech savvy amongst us, you may have noticed that the SOMA Australia website has been updated. This has also included updating the names and bios of the new committee. I'm in the process of updating the blog and mission reports and would welcome any comments or recommendations.

In the near future, I'd like to offer some more resources on the SOMA store. So, please let me know if there are some resources you feel would be beneficial for SOMA members.



The new committee



Current Chair

Bishop Ian Lambert | Retired, Bishop of the Australian Defence Forces

Thankfully Bishop Ian has decided to stay on as Chair of the SOMA Committee. We see the importance of having Bishop Ian's experience and wisdom as SOMA Australia relates with our International body.

Deputy Chair – Currently vacant



New National Director

Rev Melinda McMahon | Rector, Southlakes Anglican, NSW

Passionate about mission and evangelism, Melinda is keen to raise an awareness of SOMA within Australia and meet all our missional partners in the Anglican Communion.



Treasurer

Stephen Borserio | North Geelong, VIV

Stephen will stay on as Treasurer. Stephen is a great team player who works with Geelong food relief and does missionary work in Mallacoota Victoria.



Secretary

Rev Susan Liersch | Deacon, Parish of Wonthaggi/Inverloch, VIC

After attending the SOMA International Mission to Northern Ireland, Susan has decided to step into the Secretary role. Welcome aboard Susan!



Committee Member

Rev John Davies | Retired, Diocese of Sydney

With a vision extending beyond the local church, John has extensive experience ministering on short-term Mission trips with SOMA to Rwanda, Madagascar, Mauritius, Seychelles, Uganda and here in Australia.



Committee Member

Rev Capt Graeme Liersch | Rector, Wonthaggi/Inverloch Anglican, VIC

After attending the SOMA International Mission to Northern Ireland, Graeme will now be an important member of the new committee, helping solidify SOMA's ministry in the future.



Committee Member

Rev Kimberlee Hodges | Rector, Dungog Anglican, NSW

Kimberlee is passionate about mission. Having recently returned from a training program for the newly ordained at Cambridge, she is keen to support the new committee, helping solidify SOMA's ministry in the future.

New hospitality formed the Diocese of Bendigo

We are happy to announce that new arrangements have been made with the Diocese of Bendigo for SOMA's insurance needs to be managed by them. While this does relieve us of much of the administrative management of our safe ministry training requirements, it means that all volunteers and those attending a SOMA mission will need to undertake whatever training requirements are stipulated by the Diocese of Bendigo. There will be more details about these new arrangements when they have been finalised.

soma international to Northern Ireland

In the first two weeks of June, a team from 13+ nations arrived in the Northern Ireland Diocese of Down and Dromore to bless 30 parishes through receiving evangelistic and parish renewal teams for a range of activities from prayer walking to door-to-door mission. Teams were made up of all ages from 19-80s and it has been a huge joy to see God at work in rural areas, housing estates, market towns and Belfast City itself. Members from our Australian SOMA team participated in the mission. Let's hear what impact this mission had on their lives. We've only included the first paragraph of their report. Full reports may be read on SOMA's website. Just follow the link to read the entire article.

Rev Melinda | Rector from Southlakes Anglican, Newcastle, NSW |

I was allocated to visit three parishes over the two and half week period: Rathfriland, Kilkeel and Seagoe. In each parish we were so encouraged by the sense of passion towards mission and evangelism and an openness to stepping into new places in the Spirit. We organised a spiritual gifts exploration evening in one, offered prayer ministry and door-to-door evangelism in another. Each parish were overjoyed to welcome the team, with members from the United Kingdom, United States, India, Ireland, Kenya and Nigeria. I was so inspired to see the

Anglican Communion working at its best, ministering side-by-side so as to bring blessing and encouragement to the parishes in Northern Ireland. [Read more >>](#)

Rev Peter Malone | Rector, Charnwood Anglican Parish, VIC |

I visited two parishes in Newry and Bangor. One story really touched me. While at Newry, sitting outside St Mary's church with a sign: "Are you in need of prayer?" I sat for 2 hours greeting people as they came along but with no-one taking up the offer. Just as I was about to pack up, a woman walked by and cautiously looked at the sign. She began to walk on but turned back and looked at me. I asked if she would like prayer and she said: Yes. The story she told before I prayed for her revealed she was in a very difficult place and had been walking the streets desperately asking God for help. Such a privilege that he used me from 17,000km away, to show His love and support for His daughter.

Rev Graeme and Susan Liersch | Rector, Parish of Wanthaggi/Inverloch, VIC |

Susan and I were released to minister in Kilmood, an evangelical parish who was new to the operation of the Holy Spirit, although opportunities to share did open. Susan was able to offer prayer ministry to some of the mums, and we did some door-to-door visiting which blossomed into many interesting conversations. We then visited Donaghcloney/Waringstown parish and worked to inspire further interest in the moving of the Spirit, and the need for the Spiritual gifts today. We then moved onto Newtownards and enjoyed a shared meal, communion and prayer, visiting the men's shed and finally finished with the team closing at the sign of St Patrick's first church in Ireland. Finally, at the Diocesan Synod we had opportunity to raise the awareness of SOMA amongst the clergy.

Francis Grimes | no report received.

Barbara Bates-Brown | Parishioner

Although this was my 5th SOMA mission, they are all different and this one was amazing! When at Willowfield we did some street work, which resulted in lots of testimonies, prayer, and as the church had an amazing kitchen, many morning teas. For me it was a journey of trusting God, to look after my loved ones back home, and for me to have the energy to keep up as I knew the hours involved when on mission! God is faithful and He sustained me throughout. I hope SOMA will inspire my Parish Councillors in my home parish, giving them new vision in the future.



Please Pray:

- ➊ Reverend Bulli Wooley, SOMA South African National Director, who is leading a mission trip to Cambodia has asked for us to pray for God's guidance and interceding for the specific needs that arise during the mission trip. The team is trusting in His faithfulness and relying on the power of prayer as they step out in faith to serve the people of Cambodia.

International News

- ➊ SOMA International will be joining in a mega mission in South Rwenzori Diocese from
10th Nov through to 21st November 2023,
with opportunities for visiting other areas and dioceses around the same time.
- ➋ More information on this mission can be obtained from SOMA UK's website at this link:

What have you seen or heard from God?

Shortly after being given the go ahead to step into the National Director role, I received an open vision, in the early hours of the morning. I was asleep but awoke because I could hear the sound of bees buzzing. When I opened my eyes I saw on the wall of my bedroom a red beehive in the shape of Australia, with bees buzzing all over it and flying around. I was so alarmed, I had to get

<https://somaauk.org/uganda2023>

- ➔ SOMA Ireland has launched its new website under the directorship of Rev Henry Blair. Visit the website here: www.somaie.org
- ➔ SOMA South Africa, under the leadership of National Director, Rev Buli Woolley is leading a mission in Cambodia in a school supported by the Anglican Church called the Cambodia Children Embracing God. Read more on this mission at: <https://somasa.org/mission-to-cambodia/>
- ➔ SOMA USA is supporting the Clergy/Spouse Mission Conference in the Diocese of West Lango, Uganda in late August. Read more: <https://www.somausa.org/upcoming-events-list>

up out of bed to turn the light on (to check whether it was really there!).

I knew immediately what the vision represented. The Lord was confirming that SOMA Australia will be a 'hive of activity' bringing the sweet honey of His anointing all over Australia and abroad. It was a very encouraging vision.

Have you seen or heard from the Spirit of God?

If so, please email me on contact@sommaau.org and we may include it in the next newsletter – may the Spirit of mission continue to guide our coming season of Pentecost!



www.sommaau.org



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Thanks and God bless you,



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soma

SHARING OF MINISTRIES ABROAD

*You shall receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you,
And you will be my witnesses, telling people about me everywhere,*