

us, that this church was very lively. There would be loud singing and even a lot of dancing. And for sure he was correct. About 9 singers and musicians led us in song and about 10 liturgical dancers lead us all in glorious worship. The sound studio had two young men who controlled the sound levels and the plasma TVs and video projectors so that all could see the words for song and liturgy. During the announcements we saw the statistics of where they were financially. Something I heard at this church of young people and many times while in Sabah, was a desire that each Christian believer reach out to non-Christians and introduce them to our

Saviour and then spend a few years discipling the new believer. WOW! What a way to grow the church! The churches have a strategic plan to advance into their world communities with the positive relationship that



A children's ministry. Christ Church, Likas, a district of KK.

they have with Jesus Christ. "The Kingdom of God is At Hand." They are part of God's Kingdom and they are serious about being obedient to Jesus' Commission to teach and make disciples. And of course those disciples of Jesus who have been taught the faith

get baptised. In the West we often baptise without teaching or discipleship. We see people as babies and then as we bury them. Is that the mission of the church? I think not! But for two and a half weeks in Kota Kinabalu I saw a church with a mission, a church alive, a church that is the most Anglican that I have ever seen.

This morning in Canada I see a very red sky. But my prayer is that God's warning will turn into delight.

Photo Credits

Photos provided by David Parsons Rev. David Oliver and Rt Rev. Len Whitten. Picture of Sabah sunset provided by Alexdigital through the webshots community.

Please Pray for SOMA

We gladly accept and value your donations

Mission Adventures

It's never too late to get involved with a SOMA mission! Here are some of the invitations and missions we are working on:

- The mission to Western Kenya, Diocese of Masen for a mission to the city of Kisumu, Bp. Francis Muai Abiro, postponed until response from the Bishop is received.
- May 2010 (tentative) Muhabura Diocese, Uganda. Bp. Cranmer Muqisha has requested a mission for perhaps May 2010. The theme of the mission will be 'training clergy in evangelism and ministering in the Holy Spirit.
- July 2010 (tentative) Kigali, Rwanda. Bp. Peter Kamuzizi of Faith Centre Ministries has requested another mission to Kigali in 2010. Due to the school breaks, it will probably be in July.
- Feb 27 to Mar 7 2010 Inuvik, NWT. The Rev. Captain David Parsons priest at Inuvik, N.W.T. says his Bishop will also approve a request for a SOMA Canada mission to Inuvik, tentatively Feb 27 to March 7, 2010.

For information on these missions, or if you would like SOMA missionaries to come speak to your church, please contact The National Director via the Soma Canada Office by post, email, phone or links on the web site.

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SOMA Canada is an Anglican Mission Agency serving the Church transculturally, dedicated to fostering renewal and unity in the Holy Spirit

Mission to the Diocese of Sabah, East Malaysia

Red Sky At Night

Kota Kinabalu, East Malaysia by David Parsons

In August my wife Rita and I joined Bishop Len Whitten, director of SOMA Canada, and his wife June on a mission to the diocese of Sabah in East Malaysia, located in northeast Borneo. Our Canadian team was blessed as we witnessed the work of our brothers and sisters in Sabah, we were also blessed to have the Rt. Rev Ken Okeke, bishop of Niger Diocese in Nigeria, and his wife, Dr. Mrs Ngozi Okeke, join our Canadian team. And you know God is all about relationships. It just so happened that Bishop Ken and Ngozie are close friends of our friends Dr. Abe and Ada Onuora of Rothesay NB.

The Right Reverend Datuk Albert Vun, Bishop of Sabah, had a plan. First, to invite all SOMA Agencies to attend the consecration of the Venerable Melter Jiki Tais as suffragan bishop. Archdeacon Melter would be the first Kadazan-Dusun to be consecrated as bishop, so this would be a great celebration. Second, to

have an international SOMA conference titled "Ready For Action" prior to the consecration. Lastly, to send 24 or more mission teams to various part of Malaysia, Indonesia and Thailand. The Canadian team was to stay in the host city of Kota Kinabalu to teach evangelistic mission to its churches.

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However it was a mutual learning experience.

I'm reminded of the saying "red sky at night, sailors delight, red sky in morning, sailors warning." All my Anglican experience has been in Canada and I feel most of it has been Red Sky in Morning. As a child when I started going to church over 1.2 million Canadian Anglicans joined me each Sunday. The "Praise of God", was glorious.

Today 55 years later barely 120 thousand join us and I hear more who talk and glory about Anglicanism than those who enthusiastically talk about God. Churches are strategising on how to close, amalgamate, or simply survive. Our church has dwindled in size maybe because fewer people are interested in a confused faith filled with religious political strife. Many have either moved to other Christian denominations or withered away like most of the baptized who do not have a practice of attending church or of learning what the faith is. They may return for burial, but not for what we are presently into. In Canada the Anglican morning (mourning) sky is getting redder as we wait for the approaching darkness.

But in South East Asia I heard stories of Red Sky At Night. The Light of the Gospel of Jesus Christ is invading the darkness. Stories of hope, life and expectation were filled with Glorious Praise to God. The Cathedral was a center of Life. Eight services each Sunday, volunteers returning in the afternoon for Sunday Schools. I saw no age groups missing and all fully represented. The focus was on Jesus who is still saving people out of



At All Saints Cathedral, Some of the Cathedral staff and team. Back row L-R, (first three not identified, June Whitten, Bp Len Whitten, Pasadena, NFLD & Lab. Canada, Cathedral Dean - John Young, A.B. Ben Kawashi of JOS, Nigeria, Rev. Captain David Parsons, Inuvik, NWT, Canada, and Mrs. Rita Parsons. The rest are not known.

darkness and on the Holy Spirit who still empowers shy people to be bold to be compassionate. Every modern form of technology is employed to assist the gospel proclamation. In today's world with an explosion of information and multicultural realities the Diocese of Sabah uses intellectual reasoning and articulation of the gospel to engage the searching minds of seekers and invite individuals to encounter a real personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

Each church has worship teams to encourage people to set aside the distractions of life, so that we could focus our minds on loving God. The services were so typically Anglican in that they were what I was used to, with an added touch; that of touching more than my mind but my heart as well. The prayer was different. After saying we

wish to pray for ...say an individual or an event. They didn't just say, "let us pray" and we all say, "amen". They would instead lift their voices in prayer. Imagine hundreds of voices raised all at once praying for that person or event. Sure, I couldn't hear what they were are praying for because it was loud and went on for a minute or two or more, but then again they weren't praying to me and I'm sure that God can hear hundreds of prayers at once... can't he?

We were taken to many different churches. One was a church plant and there are a lot of church plants. One church was now so full, that a large group would be asked if they would mind leaving to start a new church for us? And with excitement they would go to start a new church. The red sky at night would invade the darkness and the light of dawn was shining brightly. Christ the King was a church plant. Their mandate: to engage university and college students; build relationships with them and to introduce them to Christ. They were not just to be a chaplaincy for those

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The SOMA Team



Supper for the Canadian Team at the Cathedral Dean's home. L-R: Dr Mrs. Ukeke Ngozi, Bp. Ken Ngozi of Nigeria, Bp Len Whitten, Mrs John Young, Dean John Young, June Whitten, Rev. Capt. David Parsons, Mrs Rita Parsons. (Bishop Ken and his wife were assigned to the Canadian team for the missions following the ND meeting.)

who may be Christians. They bought a number of stores in a shopping complex and converted it into an Anglican worship centre. They went looking for a church, inviting the students to join them in a relationship with Jesus Christ, where then Christ would be King of their lives. That church was filling up.

Another church had a congregation of 150-180 12-20 year olds. Imagine a church filled with the very people who we, in Canada



Kalsanan Literacy Centre, run by the Anglican Diocese for illegal Filipino children.

can't get to step foot in a church. We were brought to this church by two male senior citizens. As was the custom when we were being brought to a church we were picked up and brought for a meal and then to church. At the supper meal I asked one of the gentlemen who was mid 70's how he became a Christian. He said that 13 years ago his supervisor who was a Christian led him to Christ. Many of the Malaysians are Muslims or Buddhists. He said that he now goes to this church of young people because they keep him young. The other man added, to prepare and warn

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Len: Thank You for Everything!

by Dudley Baker

At the end of December 2009, The Right Reverend Leonard Whitten will retire as SOMA Canada's National Director. I suppose it is difficult to retire from a position that does not involve being an employee. Len has volunteered his service and leadership to SOMA Canada since September 1, 2004. SOMA has benefited from Len's experience as an Anglican Bishop in western Newfoundland and his involvement with Anglican Renewal Ministries. A person needs to acquire wisdom, patience and considerable skills, and use the gifts from our Lord to be able

to minister as effectively as Len has to the Church and SOMA over the years. His representing SOMA Canada

at the annual National Director's meetings, Annual General meetings and participating in and leading missions, often accompanied by his wife June, and encouraging the Board at the Board meetings has been done joyfully, usually singing hymns to Jesus. Having seen Len at work over the years convinces me that he takes the whole of scripture as the word of God and when he lifts up his eyes to the hills he knows exactly where his strength comes from. The good news is that he is not running away to those hills and will still be involved with SOMA Canada.

Our thanks and God's blessings to Len, and to June who loaned him to us. We know that the people of western Newfoundland will still be able to enjoy Len's ministry.



The Right Reverend Len Whitten on his installation as National Director, surrounded by (clockwise): preaching in Shyogwe, with his wife June in front of the Iqaluit cathedral, with a taxi driver in Iqaluit, and in Mexico on his first SOMA mission.