

Mothers' UNION

Christian care for families

DIOCESE OF GLASGOW AND GALLOWAY



NEWSLINK SPRING 2015

Scottish Charity SC023885

A LETTER FROM OUR DIOCESAN PRESIDENT

February 2015

Dear Friends,

I hope you have come through the winter unscathed and are now able to enjoy and witness the emergence of the snowdrops and crocuses reminding us of the wonders of God's creation!

The year 2015 is an important and exciting year for us as members of Mothers' Union because we will be making friends and praying with members in our new overseas links. Our new link partners are from Malakal (South Sudan and Sudan), Nairobi (Kenya), Kontagora and Osun North (Nigeria) and Pune (North India). Information about our new and former links can be found further on in this edition of Newlink.

You will have read in Families Worldwide that the theme for 2015 is United in Prayer. During Lent let us remember that our lives, our health, healing and salvation are not ours by possession, but rather are ours by the grace of God. Let us give thanks to God the Father at all times and for everything in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Ephesians 5:20

The work of Mothers' Union continues, prayer is our bedrock and mission. MU helped Kurdish churches in Iraq to bring refuge and safety to people displaced by IS aggression. Money donated by members to the Relief Fund has also helped the humanitarian response to the thousands of people in South Sudan and Sudan, one of our new links. Every penny raised by members through the various fund raising initiatives can and does make a difference to people's lives – on behalf of trustees I thank you all.

Within the diocese, prayer, knitting, sewing and a variety of missions including prisons, refuges, nursing homes, hospitals as well as campaigning to protect children and families through Bye Buy Childhood, Domestic Abuse, Trafficking and Displaced People are things of which we can all be proud. It is a joy to work with others who share the same values and vision. An added bonus is that whatever we do, we gain more than we give!

We have a good story to tell, please encourage others to come and



join us. We operate as a community of faith where each member is valued, of equal worth and where each member's main inspiration comes from God.

With love and my prayers

Ann x

PS On behalf of my family I thank you for your condolences, prayers and kind thoughts following the death of Elliott's Mum, on St Valentine's Day. Sara whose health had deteriorated over the last months died peacefully at home surrounded by her family.

FORMER LINKS

For many years we as members in Glasgow & Galloway have been linked in prayer with members in:

The North Eastern Caribbean & Aruba (West Indies)

The Rift Valley (Tanzania)

Byumba (Rwanda)

Upper Shire (Malawi)

Diocese of Lagos Mainland (Nigeria)

Chester (Province of York)

St Asaph (Province of Wales)

While direct communications with some of our links have proved difficult, the knowledge that so many have been praying for us has been wonderful, encouraging and spiritually nourishing. Equally knowing that all of us in Glasgow & Galloway have been holding our sisters and brothers in Christ in prayer strengthens us as a community of faith.

The fellowship we have had the privilege of enjoying with Angela (Chester), Carol (St Asaph), Agnes (Malawi) and Olu (Nigeria) and all the members has been a wonderful joy and blessing for us all in Glasgow & Galloway.

I include part of the most recent communications with Olu; G&G ' On behalf of all the members of Mothers' Union G&G I send sincere, heartfelt thanks to you for being our link with members in Lagos Mainland. Your faithfulness to God's teaching, your commitment to spread the good news, your commitment to the vision of Mary Sumner has been a source of inspiration to us all. Links may change, but friendship sanctioned by God will never end.'

Olu 'Mary Sumner's purpose and objectives were displayed with unity and love in families across the globe. I am most grateful to God for the privilege granted me, my President in the Diocese of Lagos Mainland to be linked to such wonderful, loving and caring family of MU Diocese of Glasgow & Galloway. Your warmth and fellowship every time we meet will remain in my memory for life.' (NB Agnes (Malawi) continues with her mission, though no longer with Mothers' Union – I include her most recent communication and ask for prayers for Agnes)

Agnes ' We have experienced very heavy rains which has caused some floods, a lot of things have been destroyed, and also loss of life, over 200 people have died, and property destroyed. We have also been affected as two of our small houses have been damaged. I was renting them out, they were part of our source of income, and the money was used in paying school fees for nieces and nephews and help some needy people, but now these houses are not habitable, until they are repaired or rebuild, and cost of building materials have gone so high. Anyway I think these are the effects of Climate Change. May you please remember us in prayer'.

Margaret from Uganda whom we met during the Commonwealth Games asks for our prayers for her wedding on 16th May 2015.

Thank you

Ann x

WELCOME TO OUR NEW LINKS!

Wave of Prayer Group 85: 26-28th October
(Families Worldwide)

Malakal South Sudan
All Saints Cathedral, Kenya
Kontagora, Nigeria
Osun North East, Nigeria
Pune, North India

Members in each of our new links ask for our prayers. They have each sent us a bible verse:-

Members in Malakal, South Sudan

Genesis 12:3 I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you.

Members in All Saints Cathedral, Kenya

Favourite saying Educate a man and you educate an individual, educate a woman and you educate a community

Members in Kontagora, Nigeria

Judges 18:6 The priest answered them, 'Go in peace. Your journey has the Lord's approval.

Members in Osun North East, Nigeria

Romans 10:9 That if you confess with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord,' and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved',

Members in Pune, North India

Genesis 28:14 Your descendants will be like the dust of the earth, and you will spread out to the west and to the east, to the north and to the south. All peoples on earth will be blessed through you and your offspring.

This verse was sent from Glasgow & Galloway to our new links

Hebrews 13:1-3.5 Let mutual love continue. Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by doing that some have entertained angels without knowing it. Remember those who are in prison as though you were in prison with themGod will never leave you or forsake you.

Our journey with our new partners has started with prayers. As we journey together we will learn and share how God's love inspires, empowers and sustains us all. This is reason for great thanksgiving.

Ann x

FAMILIES WORLDWIDE

Staff at Mary Sumner House (MSH) prepare many excellent resources for members – some hard copies can be purchased while most are available free on-line. The most accessible resource for all members is Families Worldwide (FW) which members either receive with an edition of Families First or from a branch or diocesan representative. Families Worldwide is for me the most cherished of all the MSH resources.

FW with its daily prayers reminds us that God is at the centre of all we do and it is by listening to God we are sustained and empowered. Families Worldwide for this year is more inward looking than normal – prayers being focused on members with bible texts being reserved for Sundays only. Concerns from this diocese and several others have been raised; however, ensuring every diocese receives prayers has necessitated this change. It is envisaged FW will return to its previous format in 2016.

Each week FW will focus on a number of countries. It is interesting to read about the issues that members face and it seems that no matter where members are in the world similar issues are experienced. Already in the first few weeks we have read about members in Mauritius, Lesotho, Swaziland, Nigeria, Seychelles, Burundi. Members are active in visiting old age homes, helping families in need with food and clothing, helping prisoners and their families, sewing, engaging in White Ribbon Campaign and the 16 days of Activism Against Gender Violence. Although issues are similar the depth of poverty and illness particularly HIV represent a major challenge to members across the globe.

I pray that we all continue learning from one another reading FW. Most of all I pray we continue thanking God for the delights we enjoy and for the common everyday miracles that never fail to astound us on our journey.

Ann x
Diocesan President

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND CHILDREN (VAWC)

16 Days of Activism



We held a short ecumenical service in Largs on the International day of elimination of violence against women. Our minister Gordon was very supportive of this service. I had put together a fact sheet about violence against women both here and overseas, this seemed to be interesting reading for those attending. The congregation were all happy to wear their white ribbons which I also gave out at the Sunday service, where we had a retiring collection for North Ayrshire Women's Aid. The 'silks' drama was acted out as a short homily, which proved to be very moving, (we borrowed the material used from Ann Glenesk), the drama is available on our website. By just holding this small but moving service, 3 people spoke to me, and thanked me and asked if there was anything they could do to help as they had experience domestic abuse. One person in particular wanted to tell me the terrible story of her childhood, and she now wants to share her story with the Mothers' Union if it will help just one person. Her story is on the Mothers' Union website under Domestic Abuse and ours.

Hilary Moran,
Communication and Fundraising.
(Photo on front cover)

In Helensburgh our branch decided to do what we could to support the 16 Days of Activism Against Violence to Women and Children.

An action pack was acquired from Mary Sumner House and we sent for White Ribbon Badges. Each badge comes with the words 'End Male Violence to Women' by wearing the badge, I pledge never to Commit, Condone or remain silent about violence against women. I asked the Rector's permission to sell the badges at church and we sold them in the church hall after a morning service. Naturally we were asked about them and were

able to raise awareness by telling the purchasers about Domestic Abuse and the destructive affect it has on families. I had to be in London in November and made an appointment to speak to my MP the Liberal Democrat Alan Reid, he was extremely shocked to hear that more than two women a week are killed by Domestic Abuse and promised to do what he could to let his colleagues know about the scale of the problem. I had already made contact with a local journalist and asked her to write about Mothers' Union's support for the 16 days of Activism and the Women's Aid worker also joined in providing material. Helensburgh town centre has been undergoing an upgrade to the town square and the Chamber of Commerce held a Winter Festival to promote local activities. We were fortunate to acquire funding for the stall and over two days collected 300 signatures from men, local councillors, our MSP and sold more badges. We had a sign picked out in red artificial roses with the number of women killed up to that date, 125, which subsequently climbed to 131 by the end of the 16 days. It was amazing to have so much support for a mostly



hidden problem and I was very humbled by the number of people who thanked us for highlighting the issue. Several women confessed that they had suffered in the past and wished that they had not remained silent. (*see photos on back page*)
Margaret Horrell,
Branch Leader.

Risk Assessment for Events **held by Mothers' Union Branches**

We all know that now it is incumbent on everyone to ensure that we make sure that everything we undertake is enjoyable and safe for all participants. Because of the current trend towards litigation when something goes wrong we, as Mothers' Union, must do our best to adhere to guidelines which will not put people at risk of injury or fall foul of insurance companies. The Trustees have devised a form which if filled in and followed should mean we will all be safe from unfortunate and unforeseen consequences. It has to be seen to be done. Advise your Diocesan President before the event and have the form filled in and sent back in good time.

Most problems will arise when we undertake a new project or activity. Some branches take over shops to have a 'pop-up' Christmas sale or charity shop selling handed in goods. Try taking advice from people who have already done this. St Andrew's Diocese, I believe do it every year. Are the premises safe? Are there any drawbacks? Who is responsible for opening and closing? Who is the key holder? Most owners of premises should have already done a risk assessment and made sure that there are no loose tiles, wrinkled carpets or items stored unsafely. If you follow their guidelines and make sure any one working there knows to follow these you should be quite safe. Make sure you know where fire extinguishers, first aid box and telephone are kept and have a competent person ready to use them. A list of phone numbers for emergency should be readily available. Taking money to bank, make sure this is done discretely, two people being ideal and not leaving

money on the premises. It cannot be stressed too much the danger of selling on electrical goods. Do not do it unless the items have been checked and certified by a qualified electrician.

If you are holding an event in your church halls your vestry should already have done a survey of the premises and highlighted any problems. Most now have disabled access and adequate lights. Make sure that entrances and exits are trip free and not slippery. We have all slid on wet leaves, try to sweep them up before the event. Steps should have clear markings.

Please ensure that people catering on your premises have had a good grounding in Food Handling Hygiene. If any food preparation is undertaken there must be running hot water, a separate sink for hand washing besides the sink for food preparation and dish washing. Simple requirements which sadly not all churches have. Very simple precautions, like making sure teapots have secure lids can save scalding accidents. Knives stored out of reach of children, kettle flexes not liable to be pulled down all common sense but sadly not always carried out.

Toddler groups must have adequate supervision, preferably agile parents, suitable numbers holding disclosure.

Further help and advice can be obtained from Ecclesiastical Insurance website ecclesiastical.com, Charities Safety Group www.csg.org.uk and the Health and Safety Executive www.hse.gov.uk

Finally, think ahead, have fun and fundraise safely.

Margaret Horrell,

Vice President, Glasgow & Galloway.

“I WILL LIFT UP MINE EYES UNTO THE HILLS”.

“That’ll do” were the words – as my former neighbour has reminded me – as we drove back to my cottage home in Haugh of Urr. The car was that of my solicitor’s wife and, owing to my fragile condition having come out of hospital four days before, my good neighbour, Joan, had accompanied me to support me if I needed her.

We had looked at five bungalows and I have decided that the sixth one must “do” as I was getting so tired. We were shown round and I asked no questions but when the owners offered to show me the garden I said “No thank you”, Joan said firmly that she thought Mrs. Elliott should go home now. I reached my cottage, made a cup of coffee, phoned my solicitor and told him “I’ll have the last one we saw” – as if I was choosing a pair of shoes! I then went to bed and slept. And that was how I come to live in a modern bungalow backing on to woods on top of a hill; just over a year ago, in the Artists’ town of Kirkcudbright! My good daughter came from Essex to help me move but I was ill again and could do very little. We were saved by the team of removal men who were wonderful. They assessed my condition, took charge, and when we reach the bungalow, put the furniture where they thought it should go – and there it has stayed! On the following day I was back in hospital for the third time where I remained for three weeks. Readers will be thinking by this time that all, so far, has been doom and gloom. Happily I am able to assure them that I am now in excellent health and beginning a new life in this remarkable town.

I had no intention of coming here, I didn’t really know it, I only thought of it, literally overnight when my plans to move to South Dorset had fallen through. I can only believe that God chose where I was to live.

When I was asked to write an article for the Diocesan Newslink, the text from Psalm 121 came to my mind as, every day I look out of my windows to the little town in the valley, the Harbour, with the tides from the Solway Firth flowing in and out - and the hills of Bengaim and Screel beyond. I have such comfort in looking at those hills, subtly changing from day to day, wooded, green, dark, misty, even snow covered and feel affection for my hills, as David did for his.

I am writing in the week of Prayer for Christian Unity – and can testify that in Kirkcudbright – unity works! Churches Together is very important here, the clergy and the congregations of the three churches work in pleasant harmony with one another and, in the support.

I mainly attend the Episcopal Church of Greyfriars which stands by the harbour side, and although our priest retired in September, a rota of devoted clergy in the area, takes our services on Sunday and Thursday. I feel affection for the little church, it seems easy to feel at peace there – and, as I walk up the aisle to receive Communion, I always glance at the stained glass windows of Saint Cuthbert and Saint Francis and have the feeling that they are quietly glad I have come to join them!

However, I am strongly ecumenical and attend some services in the Parish Church, so large it reminds me of a cathedral! The Minister has been very good to me, has guided me, and introduced me to many people – though I'm still confused as to who they all are – and their names have become a blur! I attend his Bible Study Group in the Manse every Monday morning which has given me a comfortable feeling of belonging. I am truly blessed by this happy Church life.

My doctor has look after me with care, and physiotherapists have worked hard in building up my strength. In the wider area of Kirkcudbright town, all the people in the shops are friendly and helpful; I have nothing but praise for them. This really is a special place.

So, as I look up to the hills, I can thankfully say, now, they have become the hills of home.

Sylvia Elliott,

Diocesan Correspondent

MARY RUSSELL.

We all knew, and loved, Mary.

Her parents were married at Holy Trinity, Mary was baptized, confirmed, married here. She was one of the founder members of our Branch of Mothers Union, a valued member of the Fellowship, Knit and Natter Group and a stalward of the Wednesday 11 a.m service and the Church was packed for the Funeral Service.

Mary had a great sense of humour and enlived any group – She also the best tea ever – and I would not like to try to count any

many cups of tea she made for us all.

Above all Mary was a loyal friend of Holy Trinity all her life – a generous friend. Nearly everyone in Ayr knew her and never let her pass without speaking to her.

My life is so much poorer without her – and I miss her so much as do all her friends. Still, I knew that the quality of tea being served in Heaven has never been so good!

Rest in peace, Mary, and Rise in Glory.

2014 - A Very Busy Year!

I am beginning to feel as though I could write a book about all the different and amazing events I have to attend and participate in; however to prevent the onset of tedium I think it would be easier (for the editors sake) if I were to resort to a “**calendar summary**” - so please excuse the brevity!

February – a week at Swanwick in Derbyshire for 3 days of **Worldwide Trustee Board** followed by 2 days with all the **MU Diocesan Presidents from the UK and N-Ireland**

April - the **Annual Provincial Retreat was held again in Perth** – lead by Rev Celia Matthews on “Praying Through the Senses” and organised by Pat and Paul Hindle. A thoroughly relaxing but thought-provoking two days.

- **The Provincial Council met in Perth** for a day (all the MU office bearers from across Scotland attend)

May – **London to the B&I meeting** (Britain and Ireland Trustees only), with an **Audit committee meeting** the day before.

- Two days later off to **Dumfries** to the celebration of 65 years since the inauguration of the Dumfries and Galloway District. The **Worldwide President**, Lynne Tembey came and it was a wonderful, happy event, with Lynne preaching and then tree-planting.

- Three days later I was in **Glasgow for the Forum meeting** – interdemominational as all heads of Christian Women's

Organisations attend.

- At the **end of the month we held the “ Reaching Out Day”** which was a great success for many reasons; not just the format of the day or the content but the fact that we all left with the knowledge of how to advocate successfully.

A bonus was the chance to meet all the staff from one Unit (ie Department) at MSH (the MU head office in London) – in fact this aspect was a great success with most people because usually they do not have that opportunity. It was a demanding day but people left feeling empowered, enthusiastic and happy and was so successful that it is being repeated in Ireland when the staff visit later this year.

June - The Queens' Garden Party at Buckingham Palace with a member of staff, two Diocesan Presidents, a Unit Committee Chair and a Trustee. We had a wonderful day and we felt very proud to represent the MU.

- Later in June there was the annual **General Meeting** in the **Belfast Waterfront**. There was a great friendly atmosphere throughout the two days, with a good hotel for the Scottish contingent (and Trustees!) to enjoy. I hope that the good experiences will be shared with others so that next year, more members will go to Nottingham this June.

September – Off to London again to attend a Provincial President's meeting with the Worldwide President followed the next day the **B&I meeting**

- Then the **Worldwide President** came to three Scottish dioceses:- We “did a Diocese a day” – **St Andrews, Edinburgh and Aberdeen**. She was overwhelmed by the welcome she received and was impressed by our enthusiasm and passion. Adding this years' two visits together, , I reckon she has met between 270 – 300 members, which is amazing considering that we are below 800 now. So a good turn-out!

October - a 6- yearly Worldwide Provincial President's week (Monday – Sunday), overlapping with the arrival of the

Worldwide Board of Trustees when we had a week's meetings. (Followed by total exhaustion!).

The most memorable experiences of the year have to be sharing the fellowship and friendship of members when the Worldwide President came to Scotland, and the visits to Buckingham Palace and Lambeth Palace with the other Provincial Presidents. This latter was an experience of a lifetime; to be a VIP visitor to the heart of the Anglican Communion where we had a special conducted tour, celebrated the lunchtime Eucharist in the 1000 year old crypt and saw the jewel embellished Bible given to the Archbishop of Canterbury by the Pope when he visited Rome – the first by an English Archbishop for 400 years. Meanwhile we are looking forward to the all-Scotland Conference (open to all) in September this year and hope that as many people as possible will be able to come. Once again we will have two members of staff from Mary Sumner House to lead and inspire us, together with some home-grown experts to help us with communication throughout MU Scotland. It promises to be a day to remember.

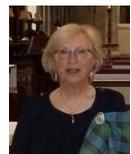
To finish, here is the prayer which is being shared by all the Christian Womens' organisations in Scotland:- made up at the Interdenominational Forum :-

Ecumenical Prayer

**Thank you living God who loves and speaks through us
Unite us as Christian friends as we walk and work together
in faith. Open our eyes, ears and hearts as you challenge
us to love, encourage and support others.**

Amen.

With love and prayers to you all,
Jean McPherson – Richardson
(MU Provincial President)



Mothers' UNION

Christian care for families

Province of Scotland

You are invited to go

ON THE WAY SCOTTISH PROVINCIAL CONFERENCE 2015



Thursday 24th September 2015

9.30 for 10am to 3.45pm
at the

National Christian Outreach Centre

Riggs Road, Perth PH2 0NX

In 2012, we gathered to seek the road we should take.
Now we gather again to follow-up on what we learned
then and travel further

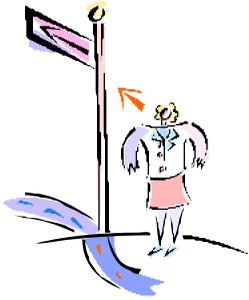
On the Way

Come and join us – all welcome

The day is free

*Apart from a willingness to learn and be engaged in the event, all we ask is
a small contribution of £5 per person towards travel costs*

Scottish Charity SC036459



**ON THE WAY
SCOTTISH PROVINCIAL
CONFERENCE 2015
Thursday 24th September 2015**

9.30 for 10am to 3.45pm
Applications to be received by 31st July 2015

BOOKING FORM

Name _____

Address _____

Post Code _____

Telephone _____

Email _____

MU Branch/Diocese _____

Dietary Requirements _____

Disabled Requirements _____

I would like to offer accommodation/I would be grateful to accept accommodation:

(please delete the option above that does not apply)

Night before _____ Night after _____ Number of delegates _____

Further information for the organisers _____

Please send the completed form along with a cheque payable to
'MU Provincial Account' for £5 to:

Mrs. Sarah Gammell, Whins of Laguna, Murthly, Perth PH1 4HE

Save postage by booking online at:
muscotland.org.uk/ontheway.html or
by group booking through your
branch/diocese.



Further Information

The Conference

The day has been designed to meet some of the needs identified by participants in The Gathering. There will be opportunities in each session to share your own experiences and discuss what is relevant to your own situation (e.g. branch or diocese). We are blessed to have two members of the Mothers' Union team from Mary Sumner House as well as Bishop Mark of Moray, Ross and Caithness, our liaising bishop from the Scottish Episcopal Church, making major contributions to the day. Hilary Moran and Paul Hindle will also be running an interactive session on the subject of Communication. We also intend the day to be spiritually uplifting with prayer and worship enfolding the day.

What's Included

We'll be serving tea and coffee from 9.30am and again at the end of the day. A substantial lunch will also be provided. Please make sure you specify any dietary requirements in your application.

The Cost

We want to encourage maximum participation so there is no charge for the event itself. All we ask is a small contribution of £5 per head so we can meet the cost of travel for those who would find that a barrier to coming.

Accommodation

While it is possible to travel from most parts of Central and Southern Scotland on the day itself, we are hoping to arrange overnight accommodation with fellow Mothers' Union members for those for whom it would be a struggle to travel on the day. If you would like either to offer overnight accommodation or to take up an offer of accommodation nearer the venue, please indicate this on the form

National Christian Outreach Centre, Riggs Road, Perth PH2 0NX tel: 01738 639792, website: www.ncocentre.co.uk. We enter at the side door on the left of the building.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY—2015

14-16th April	Provincial Retreat Netherurd House, Near Blyth
16th May	Festival Service - Holy Trinity Portland Road, Kilmarnock KA1 1EQ
25th June	MU General Meeting Service, Southwell
26th June	MU General Meeting, Nottingham
24th September	Provincial Conference National Christian Outreach Centre, Perth
3rd October	Autumn Council - Holy Name Fleming Road, Cumbernauld G67 1LJ

Prayer Chain March 2015



Dear Friends,

The countryside is bright with swathes of snowdrops, tiny white flowers, each a promise of the renewal of life that awaits us at the end of Lent. May these nature's candles of light and hope lighten our journey through Lent. To accompany our travels some words from Psalm 146.

Praise the Lord. Praise the Lord, my soul.

2 I will praise the Lord all my life;

I will sing praise to my God as long as I live.

5. Blessed are those whose help is the God of Jacob,
whose hope is in the Lord their God.

6 He is the Maker of heaven and earth,
the sea, and everything in them—
he remains faithful forever.

7 He upholds the cause of the oppressed
and gives food to the hungry. The Lord sets prisoners free,

8 the Lord gives sight to the blind,
the Lord lifts up those who are bowed down,
the Lord loves the righteous.

9 The Lord watches over the foreigner
and sustains the fatherless and the widow,
but he frustrates the ways of the wicked.

10 The Lord reigns forever,
your God, O Zion, for all generations. Praise the Lord.
Glory to the Father and the Son and to the Holy Spirit,
As it was in the beginning, is now and shall be for ever. Amen.

May we ponder these words as we pray for our link dioceses of
Malaka (South Sudan) All Saints Cathedral (Kenya) Kontagora
(Nigeria) Osun North East (Nigeria) Prune (India) and our
friends here.

From Ayr; Jenni W, From Bishopbriggs; Maime, Betty, Alex,
Grace, Yvonne, Joyce. And for the soul of Sara Glenesk and
for her family, Elliot, Ann, Fiona and Robert. From Dumfries;
Mary W and Rachel. From Helensburgh; Robbie, Jeanette,
George, Liz, Jenny, Margaret L, Susan L, Eileen, Gordon &
Vicki. From Kilmanrock; Ann, Margaret M, Ishbel and Helen.
Yours in Christ,
Sue Brough
Faith and Policy

The Seasons.

My thanks go to Caryl Haglington for producing this booklet of
poems. It has been a joint venture between Caryl and myself to
raise funds for the Overseas Fund. The production was by
Caryl and the poems by myself. We hope that members will
have opportunities to purchase one, either at Diocesan meet-
ings or at Branches.

Sue Brough

MU trip to VARLDENS FEST **Karlstad, Sweden, May 2014**

Every now and again the women of the Church of Sweden in-
vite members of the MU in Glasgow and Galloway to join them

for their festival aimed at discussing global issues. Lesley Lucas (St Ninian's Pollockshields) and I arrived in Gothenberg with great anticipation on the 30th May and were met at the airport by Renata Andersson who took us to the train station where we got the train to Karlstad, the venue of the Varldfest. At the train station we were met by Christina Bernerus, Katarina Evenseth & Gunilla Fastling who all looked after us for the duration of the stay. After checking in our nice hotel in the centre of the town we sat down for lunch with the ladies.

We then went for the opening ceremony at Karlstad Conference Centre where different speakers welcomed all the delegates. The general welcome message was on how we, as the Christian community should extend our hands to welcome everyone with whom we come in contact with including asylum seekers and refugees. According to the Mayor of the city "we need to extend a hand to those who are forced to leave their country - not because they want to but because they must". He also reminded us that "People are rights holders, not needy objects for someone's charity". This challenges us to confirm and strengthen people's own abilities, responsibilities and opportunities. This certainly made me to think of my own work at the Scottish Refugee Council where I help asylum seekers and refugees. As my rector always say, God works in mysterious ways!

We ended the day by attending a wonderful concert where we enjoyed a wonderful orchestra as well as joined in singing Swedish, English and Swahili songs!

On the second day we attended a variety of workshops which explored various themes like; Relationships between different faiths; How to draw strength from God when disaster strikes; Challenges faced by the church in Tanzania; Climate change, The complexity of Christian – Muslim relations in Africa, The churches say no to violence against women - from words to action to ensure equity between sexes (Psalm 55), Safe space - can the church be a voice against rape, gender based violence

and sexual abuse and Plays to meet violence-Claves working in Latin America.

In the afternoon we attended an Open air concert which was very uplifting where we sang songs from all over the world.

Day three saw us attending a morning seminar/workshop based on the topic "on the Road to Emmaus". We were challenged to explore: How can we help people make the journey?

We then attended the closing ceremony which was held in the open with the sun shining brightly on all the people of different nationalities who were present. Before we knew it, it was time to leave the city we had grown to love for the past two days and its great statues (see picture below). What an experience we had!

We took the train to Gothenburg and we all went to Christina's house where her husband and daughter had prepared a sumptuous meal for us all.

The following morning we visited the diocesan offices in Gothenburg where we met a number of bishops who happened to be there for a meeting including the bishop of Gothenburg. We had a walk in the city and visited the cathedral before Renata took us back to the airport to catch the plane back home.

What a lovely trip we had. I would really recommend everyone to consider going for the trip if another opportunity arises. Not only do visits like this strengthen our bonds as fellow Christians, they also remind us that we are all one body in Christ who strengthens us all.

Esther Muchena
(St James The Less, Bishopbriggs)

Thanks to all the contributors.

All articles for the Autumn edition of Newslink should be sent by 5th September 2015 to me:

Wendy Petrie, 120 Meadowburn, Bishopbriggs, G64 3LX
petriecw@virginmedia.com





Rev. Mrs. Rhoda Wabukala:
Province of Kenya

