

# Mothers' UNION

Christian care for families

Diocese of Glasgow & Galloway



**NEWSLINK**  
**Spring 2018**  
**Scottish Charity SC023885**



**A LETTER  
FROM  
OUR  
DIOCESAN  
PRESIDENT**

Dear Friends,

I hope by the time you read this we have said goodbye to the cold, snow and ice of the past winter. As Mothers Union Members some of us have very sadly had to say goodbye to members who have passed away at the beginning of this year. My own branch bade farewell to Mary, a quiet, supportive member who had joined when our branch was formed. Mary was not an Episcopalian, but a member of the Church of Scotland. She was active in her own church as well as contributing to our Mothers Union. I know from other branches they have lost members who have been active in the MU for many years. On a personal level this causes great sadness but we must also thank God for their contribution to the life of the MU in the diocese and feel blessed for having known them.

In 2018 the MU theme is In Mary Sumner's Footsteps. So

how can we walk in her footsteps? She dreamt of a time when every home would provide a nurturing healthy environment for children with faith as the foundation of family life. She campaigned for the age of marriage for girls to be raised from 12 to 16. She spoke out against condemning and casting out unmarried girls with children and indeed cared and protected her own niece and her illegitimate son. She was active in many areas of social injustice and not afraid to go against the social norm despite resistance from the establishment.

We also try to continue the work she started. Some MU members help in prisons giving positive support to families. Christmas cards are delivered to prisoners to show our care for them. Hilary Moran has also exhibited The Shoe Exhibition which raises awareness of domestic abuse. Some of us have also been trained as spiritual befrienders for the victims of human trafficking. Many branches now take part in the 16 Days of Activism against Gender Violence. We visit Care Homes, collect for Foodbanks, support refugees, donate goods to Maternity Hospitals and support other charities in their work across Africa. All across our diocese there are MU Branches doing amazing work both at home

and abroad. At a branch I visited last year one lady interested but not yet a member said to me , ' I didn't realise MU did so much. It's amazing how small things they do can mean so much to others.' One example of this is where we donate toothpaste and toothbrushes to the Smileawi project in Malawi. I was reminded recently that a tube of toothpaste costs the equivalent of one day's wages there. Such a small thing for us but not for the recipient. At the heart of all our work is of course prayer. We thank Sue Brough for her continuing work on our Prayer Chain. It is so special to be able to pray with members at our meetings and services.

If you are able please take a look at the MU website and resources for 'In Mary Sumner's Footsteps.' They are very useful and have lots of information and ideas for meetings.

With love and Blessings.

Jillx

## **Autumn Council, October 2017**

The Mothers Union, Glasgow and Galloway held its Autumn Church Service and Council in St. Mary's Church, Hamilton.

The theme of the service was 'Hands around the World' and it was led by our MU chaplain the Reverend Lucy Ireland. During the Eucharist, Trustees gave an update on each of our link dioceses, followed by a prayer for them and the lighting of a candle next to their country's flag.

We were blessed to open a new branch at St. Mary's, followed by Bishop Gregor enrolling its new members, including the Dean, the Very Revd. Ian Barcroft. (Photo on front cover.)

The service was beautiful and enjoyed by our members. After lunch we continued with our council meeting. Branches gave an update on their status and projects. As well as the usual business items we heard about the General meeting held in Edinburgh. To conclude we made a prayer banner to leave to our new branch in Hamilton. This consisted of prayer points for the link dioceses and hopefully will be used to remind our new branch of the need for prayer in these links.



## **In Mary Sumner's footsteps: the story of Mary Sumner**

It all started when Mary, married to George, Rector of the Parish of Old Alresford, was passionate about transforming the home-lives of Parish families, by helping the women to support one another in raising their children.

Her husband was very supportive: *"just share your heart – God will do the rest."*

She was so nervous at the first meeting of the parish women, that she refused to speak, and asked George to take her place. In those days, it was very unusual for a woman to be a public speaker. However, George encouraged her to speak from the heart and it went so well that she found the courage to speak at future meetings. Her talks were inspired by her faith – it was practical and down to earth – *"Remember, Ladies, to be yourselves what you would have your children be"*.

After groups with women became well established, she was asked to speak to the men of the Parish. Again, she was apprehensive, but agreed, and helped them to be more aware of what their wives did for them, to show more

respect and love.

The meetings grew, and included women - old and young, rich and poor. Others heard about her work, and started groups in their own areas.

In 1876, she founded "the Union of Mothers" – with a membership card and promise: "to be given up, body and soul, to Jesus Christ in Holy Baptism, and that your duty is to train your children for his service".

In 1885, at a time when it was still unheard of for women to speak to large audiences, Mary Sumner was invited by the Presiding Bishop to speak to a packed church congress session for women in Portsmouth. He anointed her with the authority to speak - he felt that he had no authority to speak to a group of women whose prime concern was to get enough food on the table so that the children would not starve. She overcame her nerves again. *"Together, by the Grace of God... we can calm each other when we are afraid; strengthen one another when we are weak; and work together to raise our children to the glory of God. Unity is strength"*.

The movement grew further, increasingly with the support

of bishops, internationally as well as in England. Some key principles were developed, including:

**That the prosperity of a nation springs from the family life in its homes**

**That family life is the greatest institution in the world for the formation of the character of children**

**That faith is the foundation of family life**

**That the tone of family life depends upon the married life of the parents – and ultimately, that example is stronger than precept**

As the movement continued to grow, Mary Sumner asked herself what its purpose really was, and what it should strive for. She reflected: *"A true home should be a light-house, shedding its quiet beams far and wide"* – her dream was for every home to be filled with the light and love of Jesus, and for the movement to unite many hearts in many lands, nurturing healthy environments for little children.

And she was a living example of what she preached. From 1900 onwards, she and the members started to advocate on issues of key importance to families and children – she campaigned to stop children

collecting alcohol from public houses for their families, and for the age of marriage for girls to be raised from 12 to 16. She was not afraid to speak up on difficult issues, despite resistance from members of the establishment.

She was also not afraid to act outside the social norms, to do what she believed to be right. At a time when unmarried girls with children were condemned and cast out, she cared for and protected her niece and her illegitimate son.

When she died in August, 1921, 4,000 women attended her funeral, which was a service of Thanksgiving. The last memory was one of her, on her feet in the sunlight, praising God.

She could not have conceived how the seeds which she planted would grow into a movement 4 million strong today, of members in 83 countries putting their faith into action to nurture healthy relationships in families and communities and to fight for social justice.



**Mothers' Union has told the United Nations that isolation, poverty and lack of opportunity are some of the issues women living in rural communities face.**

It is calling on member states to recognise and value the vital contribution of women to rural communities, and wider society and to create and implement policies which address the unique challenges they face.

In a document ahead of the 62nd United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (UNCSW), to be held in New York from 12 to 23 March, Mothers' Union outlines the challenges that women in rural communities face globally.

The theme of the forum at this year's UNCSW is "Challenges and opportunities in achieving gender equality and the empowerment of rural women and girls."

Mothers' Union carried out a survey among its members around the world to find out about their experiences of rural life. It found that isolation and loneliness are challenges in both the global north and south and the issues of economic empowerment are even more acute in rural than urban communities.

"We assume that challenges

faced by women in Africa or Asia are unique to them, but our results found that rural women in the UK, Canada and Australia face very similar challenges to women in Kenya, Southern Africa, the West Indies and Papua New Guinea," said Mothers' Union's Chief Executive, Bev Jullien.

Women in both the U.K. and internationally reported the difficulties they face from a lack of transport and access to essential services including healthcare, education and employment. The majority of unpaid care and work still falls on the shoulders of women, and members felt that women who care for children full-time in rural settings can be increasingly isolated due to a lack of transport and affordable childcare.

Older women also felt that isolation was an issue of concern, especially those with poor health or widows living alone. A member in the U.K. said, "There's loneliness among elderly single women and widows living on their own. Women in rural areas also have difficulty in finding suitable employment, distance to the shops and social activities." Another member in Uganda said, "In rural areas widows are excluded. They don't have anyone to fight for them in acquiring ownership of land, for example."

Members felt that attitudes towards women and girls in rural communities were more regressive than in urban areas and that traditional views such as not being allowed to participate in decision-making, or preventing women's voices from being heard and stopping their involvement in leadership. A member in South Africa said, "Patriarchy is still entrenched. Women in rural areas are not included in decision-making, even in family planning. Other challenges girls and young women face are early and forced marriages."

Such attitudes can lead to gender based violence, including domestic violence and abuse, female genital mutilation, child marriage and human trafficking. There is a particular lack of access to support services in rural areas meaning that rural women and girls are less able to receive the essential help, protection and support they need.

A delegation of Mothers' Union members from Ghana, Zambia, Canada and the U.S will be attending the UNCSW this year, including Chief Executive, Bev Jullien, who said, "As a movement with more than four million members globally, we believe our members' voices need to be heard. Many of our members live in rural areas and face many challenges daily. I'm glad that we can

represent them at this international forum and call on governments to make tangible changes in their lives."

Mothers' Union is calling on member states to consider the following recommendations:

- 1.The economic empowerment of rural women
- 2.The universal and gender sensitive implementation of agenda 2030
- 3.Women's meaningful participation and representation in decision-making
- 4.Eradication of Gender based violence and harmful practices
- 5.Access to services and infrastructure
- 6.Addressing attitudes towards women and girls

## **General Meeting 2018**

will be held in Swansea  
on Tuesday 18th September  
at Brangwyn Hall  
with services the evening  
before (Monday 17th  
September).

Tickets are due to go on sale in March.

## St Cyprian's, Lenzie

The 20th January was the 10th Anniversary of our Branch here at St Cyprian's so we discussed how we would celebrate this milestone in our history. We have compiled 10 pledges which we will undertake between now and our next AGM in January 2019.

They are -

1. Have a short celebration after the main Sunday service on 21st January 2018 as it is the nearest Sunday to the actual anniversary.
2. Plant spring bulbs in the grounds - probably in September/October.
3. Have a designated MU garden - possibly the area between the main gate and the lynch gate, so that the entrance to the church is colourful.
4. Hold an afternoon tea possibly to coincide with the Doors Open Day
5. Collect items for the local food bank. Have a collection point at the back of the church. We need to liaise with the food bank to see what they need the most.
6. Hold a Christmas Quiz for our hall users - the answer to which will be found in the building and the grounds.
7. Renovate and repair our church hassocks - including the two special ones used for weddings.
8. Create a recipe/prayer

book, both for our own congregation and possibly for wider distribution.

9. Small Prayer boxes - these will be used in the main Mothers' Day Service at which MU usually takes an active part
10. Toiletries bags - donate items to the ACTs collection. Our pledges are not set in stone so may change a little over the coming year. In the end we managed to have 2 cakes (photos on back page) - one at our regular meeting and one after the main Sunday service nearest to our actual anniversary (Pledge 1). Les - our Rector - included MU in the address on that Sunday and gave everyone in the congregation a copy of Mary Sumner's Prayer.

## Obituary of Margaret Lewin 30<sup>th</sup> April 1919 - 9<sup>th</sup> January 2018

Dear friends, St Michael's and All Angels Mothers' Union has lost a very valued member in Margaret Lewin. She was born in Biddulph in the potteries and worked in a hat-felting factory in Atherstone. She married in 1943 and as it was during the war she worked in a munitions factory in Coventry. Her son was born in 1950 when she became a full time housewife and she joined the WRI and Mothers' Union. She faithfully attended the Church and all

the meetings she could manage. By 1995, having lost her husband, and was already registered blind due to Macular Degeneration she moved to Helensburgh where her son lived. She was delighted to join our Mothers' Union and was a very supportive member despite also losing her hearing latterly.

She was always interested in goings on and willing to contribute anything she could and it was only in the last three years when she moved into a home that she was unable to come to meetings. She loved being visited by members and never complained about her infirmities always cheery and bright. Her funeral was well attended by many MU and church members such was the esteem we held her in. She must have been one of the longest serving members of MU having been a member for over 65 years. May she Rest in Peace and Rise in Glory.

## **Glasgow Children's Holiday Scheme**

Your fundraising raised £805.50 for Glasgow



Children's Holiday Scheme in 2017.

Families said:

"Thank you for the lovely opportunities your organisation offer families who are facing very challenging times. These opportunities give children and their family's memories to treasure."

Family spent a week at caravan in July—eldest child (10) has autism and youngest (2) has a development delay—it was fantastic and the kids had experienced boats, beaches, jellyfish sightings and just enjoyed the safety and freedom to play outside.

"We had a ball, staff were great, nice and quiet break, stayed in our adapted caravan and commented that it was helpful that beds had been raised and equipment met their needs. Feel so much better for the break" (Family of 5 with child and adult disabilities).

## **NEW PROJECT HOLY NAME MOTHERS UNION**

Mothers Union, Cumbernauld have recently started to

support a new project in Malawi. It is called The Mzuzu Girls Project. The Girls are profoundly deaf and after school have no option of further education and no opportunity of employment. At present there are 20 of them. It is hoped to provide resources to enable them to generate an income and thus progress towards financial security. In doing this they will develop and increase their skills as well as improve their confidence and initiative. The girls will undertake a number of craft activities including : knitting and crochet work ( especially baby clothes), embroidery and cross stitch, decoration of greeting cards, dressmaking and sewing of household items.

A workshop is already being prepared. We are collecting the equipment required to start the craft activities : knitting needles, crochet hooks, sewing and darning needles, thimbles, boxes of pins, small and large scissors, measuring tapes, wool, cotton thread, embroidery thread, sequins, white and coloured card, decorative trimmings, jewellery fastenings, patterns and instruction books for crafts. We hope to purchase small sewing kits to get the work started.

Equipment need not be brand new. Resources will be sent via The Banana Box Trust and

delivered directly to Cyprian Mkinga who is overseeing the project. He is hoping to provide regular feedback and photos. Should you require further information please get in touch with me.

Jill Cameron.



## **DATES FOR YOUR DIARY**

### **Festival Service**

**on**

**11th August**

**at**

**11am**

**St Michael and All Angels,  
Helensburgh**

William Street, G84 8BD

Branches please bring your banners to be paraded.

Tea and Coffee will be provided, please bring your own packed lunch, and some home baking for sharing.

**Autumn Council  
on  
6th October 2018  
at  
11am  
St Margaret's,  
Newlands  
353-355 Kilmarnock Road  
Glasgow, G43 2DS**

Triennial elections will held at Autumn council 2018 for the new triennial period 2019 – 2021.

**PRAY FOR OUR LINK  
DIOCESES**



Malaka  
(South Sudan)

All Saints Cathedral  
(Kenya)

Kontagora  
(Nigeria)

Osun North East  
(Nigeria)

Pune (India)

A new prayer book is available

**“Dear Lord”**

A collection of 100+ prayers and reflections contributed by members across the World.

Cost £3.00 and can be ordered through our MUE rep.

Apply to Lesley Lucas,  
0141 423 1989  
[lesleylucas@ymail.com](mailto:lesleylucas@ymail.com) or via  
your branch, or shop online at  
[www.mueshop.org](http://www.mueshop.org)

**Editorial: Contributions**

should be sent to: Email: [petriecw@virginmedia.com](mailto:petriecw@virginmedia.com) or post to Mrs W Petrie, 120 Meadowburn, Bishopbriggs G64 3LX. Thank you to all who have contributed. Since this Newsletter goes to every member as well as past members who have left the Diocese, it is a golden opportunity to show what activities members are taking part in. Items for the **next Newsletter** should be with me by **7th September 2018** to enable distribution at Diocesan Council in order to save on postage. News of branch activities, special birthdays, anniversaries etc. plus photos would be welcome.

