

Mothers' UNION

Christian care for families

DIOCESE OF GLASGOW AND GALLOWAY



NEWSLINK

SPRING 2010

Scottish Charity SCO23885

Diocesan Vice President's Letter

Dear fellow members,

It is my great pleasure to greet you in this Spring newsletter. Our new President, Ann Glenesk, will be commissioned at the Festival Service on 15th May in Ayr and will assume all her duties then.

It was exciting to be part of the commissioning service for the new Provincial President, our own Hilary Moran, who now takes up the role so ably held by Sheila Redwood. Hilary worked very hard for our Diocese in various roles and helped to institute several of our Diocesan Projects. She leaves a big hole but we pray that our Diocesan team will be complete soon and we welcome our new members.

Ann will be taking over from Enid, who was an energetic, cheerful and prayerful President. We wish her and Geoff fulfilment and happiness in their retirement. Other faces that we will miss at the Trustees meeting are Jeanette Jenkins, our hard working Secretary, Hilary Fraser our efficient Treasurer, Ethel Shaw, a vice President with a wealth of knowledge and a fund of good ideas and Doreen Esnol who has been serving both our Diocese and the Province as the Finance and Central Services co-ordinator.

Margaret Sherwood who was passionate about Social policy and Iris Jubber, who served in various roles and latterly as Prayer Leaflet co-ordinator also step down.

The triennial elections, which are a cornerstone of the Mothers' Union, mean that we have a regular change of faces in our Branches as well as our Trustee Board. I thank God for all the willing members who step forward, volunteer and take on the various roles within this wonderful organisation. A warm welcome to all new faces and a big thank you to all those whose task is done.

A happy Easter to you all.

Carolynne

Reflection – from our MU Chaplain, Revd Dr Scott Robertson

As we wander in the wilderness time of Lent, one of the things that we can become aware of is how fragile we are at so many levels. Each of us in our own unique way has to come to terms with that. I say come to terms with it, and not overcome it. There is a temptation in some Christian circles to promote a kind of Nietzschean spirituality where the Christian ought to become some kind of superman, able to deal with every crisis that comes his or her way. We are encouraged (usually with the application of a few well-chosen biblical platitudes) to stand strong, to resist and to keep the faith. I remember singing hymns like *Will you anchor hold in the storms of life* when I was a BB (that's Boys Brigade and not Baby Boomer!) Now of course there's nothing wrong with a decent dose of robust encouragement to strengthen the feeble knees, but if one is left feeling that one is not meeting the standard that is set by those who appear to know about these things, then I think that can leave people weaker rather than making them stronger. Indeed, I would go as far as to say that, in some cases, it can become a deliberate strategy on the part of some insecure leaders to keep people that way. No, as Paul says, it is when we are weak, that we are strong. It is that paradox which lies at the heart of not just what it means to be a Christian, but what it means to be human.

And I suppose in that sense Lent becomes a microcosm of our whole life experience. How we respond in Lent to our fragility can say a lot about how we live the other 320 or so days of the year. Do we actively engage with the Lenten experience? In other words, do we reflect on our lives as a means to developing who we are as men and women, or do we simply trundle on under the assumption that we've got nothing much to learn and not a lot more to give. Because that is the great temptation – to equate weakness with apathy. 'I'm weak so what difference can I possibly make?' The greatest threat to the church doesn't come from neo-Darwinists like Richard Dawkins, or from fundamentalists of other faiths. The real danger for the church, particularly the western church is apathy. Life, despite the continuing crisis with our country's finances, is reasonably good. It's been that way for a while now. And when life's good then the temptation, like that of the rich fool, is to take life easy, to eat drink and be merry. It's at that point when the more important issues of life get pushed to the background. Things like faith, love, and goodness become a kind of embarrassing background noise which we overlay with stuff which gets us through the day - like politeness and prudence (the make-up of choice for those who find facing the truth more than a little uncomfortable).

But Paul said, when I am weak then I am strong. It is a big mistake to think that weakness is a sign of weakness. It's one of the reasons, I think, that the church is largely populated by the stronger sex – women. Men have been fooled into

thinking that church is 'for the women and the weans'. But that other man, Jesus, shows us something different. He did not act the hero. There was nothing remotely heroic about his experience in the wilderness – he simply responded in his weakness to the situation he encountered with honesty and faith. He remained and remains the fragile saviour who, in his desire to free us from apathy and despair, was committed to the point of death, that we may see in him a life of honour and love – a life worth living for ourselves.

As we approach the holiest moment of the Christian calendar may we all seek to brush off the cobwebs of apathy and rejoice in the weakness that allows the power of God to work in our lives.

Scott

An Urgent Appeal.



I have recently received a letter from Agnes Mkoko in Malawi, one of our Links Dioceses, in which she asks us to pray for The Mothers Union there. There has been no rain at all with the result that maize, their staple crop, has totally withered. Although many are facing starvation she says, "We know our God is a good and Merciful Father, he will still feed us, only if we trust Him. He feeds birds why not us? He will take care of us. May you please pray for us." She goes on to say that in the north many homes have been destroyed by earthquakes and repeats her prayer requests for them too.

We are linked with other dioceses specifically to pray for their needs so please help by not only keeping our sisters in Malawi in your own prayers, but by asking your congregations to pray too.

Jill Cameron, Links Correspondent.

These reflections were read at the Scottish Parliament, when the Interfaith Group on Domestic Abuse invited all faith leaders and MSPs to a meeting to raise awareness of Domestic Abuse.



The human value system has at its heart the belief in the dignity of the human person. Faith communities, in addition to human dignity add the importance of mercy, compassion, justice and love.

Domestic abuse challenges society as a whole to ensure that the key tenets of the faith communities are realised in the place where most enjoy peace, the home.

Domestic abuse comes in many guises, but at its core it is an individual's deliberate abuse of power and control over another. Both men and women can be the perpetrators of abuse, but overwhelmingly women are the victims of abuse and often but not always when women are violent it is a case of self defence against male violence. The abuse also extends to children who as well as witnessing the abuse of their mother are themselves abused.

The abuse leads to women and children losing their dignity, self esteem, their ability to operate as full members of society and may affect their ability to communicate with God. Women and children lose the opportunities to thrive and are denied the right to reach their potential. For those who survive the abuse recovery is slow and is hampered by lack of available, support, finance and housing.

Faith communities as part of society share in society's joys and woes. Faith communities are not immune to their people experiencing domestic abuse, either as victims/survivors or perpetrators. Indeed the incidence of abuse in faith communities mirrors that of society as a whole. Twerski (1996:43) suggests that domestic abuse does not exist in a vacuum, but in a society or culture in which it is condoned.

The indignity of the abused has been reinforced by the silence of the faith communities on the issue. Society and faith communities are called to stand alongside and empower victims of violence and to repent together for their complicity in violence and to work to end domestic abuse (Love cited in Clapsis 2007:xii, Hood 2004:374).

Ann Glenesk

26th November 2009

Relationship not Rules

Moments with Members

Canon Jeanette Jenkins, our outgoing Diocesan Secretary, has agreed to answer the questions.



1. Who or what has made a lasting impression on you?

This is difficult to answer as there are so many people and events that have helped shape who I am today. Firstly is, of course, my parents who brought me up in a good Christian home and supplied the faith and moral code that I have always tried to live up to. Secondly would be the Rev David Goldie, who as my Rector back in the late 1970's enriched my faith and also inspired and encouraged me to train for the ministry. Then there is my husband who has given me unstinting love and support over the last 45 years. Last but certainly not least are all the patients with whom I was involved during the twelve years I served in the Ayrshire Hospice, who allowed me the privilege of travelling alongside them on their last journey. From them I learned to make the most of the time that we have on earth. for 'we do not know the day or the hour'.

2. Name a poem, song or piece of music that inspires you.

One poem which I learned at school and can still recite in full is Wordsworth's Daffodils. It again reminds us of the importance of savouring what is around us and to appreciate, as he says in the last verse, 'the bliss of solitude'. In our hectic, noisy world we need to take time to be alone and with God, as he speaks in his still, small voice. I have many favourite pieces of music and hymns, but one stands out and that is, 'Brother, sister, let me serve you. For me it sums up what being a Christian is all about as we support one another through life.

3. 'Hindsight is a wonderful thing' it is said. What might you have changed with hindsight?

Interestingly I recently had this discussion with a group of ladies whom I lead in a study group and most of us agreed that we were fairly happy with our lives. Perhaps there were one or two regrets of things we had missed but on the whole we were content. I have had to make choices in life but always looking back I have been aware that God's hand has guided, and sometimes pushed, me on the right path. One thing I would have liked to do would have been to have travelled more and experienced

more of our wonderful world when I was younger. I envy the young ones today who go off on a gap year!

4. Has political correctness gone too far?

Definitely! I sometimes think that George Orwell was right when he wrote '1984'; he foresaw the problems that lay ahead. There are rules about everything nowadays and much of them seem to be without any sense at all. I often wonder how my parents managed to bring us up and also myself with my own daughters. We played outside, walked to school and had freedom to be children till we were teenagers. We had 'accidents' which were nobody's fault but our own and certainly respect for our parents and our elders. It is so sad that we are restricted from cuddling a child who has fallen down or in need because of 'rules'. I am glad that I grew up when life could be enjoyed to the full.

5. What could you not live without?

One thing I have learned through working in the Hospice is that material things are there to be enjoyed but can so easily be taken away. What is essential in life is the love and support of family and friends and I thank God daily that I am surrounded by so much of that.

6. What are you doing to minimise your 'carbon footprint'?

I make very good use of my free bus pass and only travel by car when necessary. Not only is it helping the environment but walking to the bus stop is beneficial to my health and you meet other people and overhear some interesting conversations! I have also started a small vegetable plot in the garden and enjoy eating home grown produce. It does taste better, and it's organic! This summer with my son-in-law's help we hope to expand into a small allotment. At home we try to be as energy efficient as possible.



Letter from Provincial President, Hilary Moran

Dear Mothers' Union friends,

With the long spell of cold weather we are having one does wonder will it ever get better? At present all the electricity is off and it has been snowing all day. It is a bit like our (Scottish) desert, how would we cope in the snow without our warm houses and mod cons, as our ancestors did, let alone for 40 days? Would doing this focus our minds more on God? The Mothers' Union Provincial retreat in Kinnoull monastery beside Perth is a place I look forward to going in a couple of weeks, to try to get closer to God. It is £85 for two nights full board, if you are interested for next year. If the cost is a problem, then we can help with that.

I would like to have this opportunity of thanking you all for the welcome I have received, especially at my Commissioning service last Saturday, it was lovely to see so many people had come out of their way to support me, thank you. But I'm here to serve you and help you with the opportunities that you are grasping in your local communities to serve others. Please phone or email me if there is anything you think I can be a help with, I want to keep in touch with things happening in the diocese. I'm not going to be so busy that I can't offer an extra pair of hands, so please ask.

Having just been at World Wide Council I have been given a lot of ideas, this tends to happen after conferences, but there was one idea that I thought you could help with. The thought was could we have a Mothers' Union Scottish fundraising event, right across Scotland (or just in one place), on one particular day in the year? Some of the MSH staff are going to walk up Kilimanjaro in June and are looking for support. Now I'm not suggesting we walk up Ben Nevis, but wouldn't it be a bit of fun if we could all do the same thing together and raise money for our much deserved overseas fund that desperately needs money just now. This could also attract some publicity for us too. So put your thinking caps on for original ideas and let me know your thoughts. I'm asking for fundraising ideas on the Mothers' Union face book sight if you want to check us out.

I hope to be able to meet with you all soon, let me know when your meetings are.

With much love,

Hilary

Tel 01475 686213

Email hilary.moran@btinternet.com

THE CROSS

The symbol of the cross is at the very heart of our faith; it is displayed in prominent positions in our churches, sometimes it may be made of gold and beautifully decorated with jewels, as if to underline its vital importance to us, at others it is simple and made of wood, a vivid reminder of the cross on which Jesus was crucified. Many of us wear a cross.



Lent will soon be with us, a good time to think again about what the cross means to us. For Jesus it meant suffering beyond anything we can understand, an agonising death as, crowned with mocking thorns, he ‘bore our sins in his own body’. As we daily ask ‘forgive us our trespasses’ we know, as Paul imaginatively described it, our sins were ‘nailed to his cross’ and we freely receive the forgiveness that cost Jesus so much. The cross in this way reminds us of our utter dependence on the love of God, for while we were ‘yet sinners, Christ died for us.’

The love of Jesus challenges us to take up the cross and follow him more closely; Paul writes, ‘I am crucified with Christ and no longer live, but Christ lives in me ... I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.’ This is the abundant life Jesus has promised us; a life lived close to him and for him, knowing that nothing can ever separate us from his care.

The Last Supper, remembered at Communion, speaks of the body of Jesus ‘broken for us’, and we have the reassurance that ‘our sinful bodies can be made clean by his most sacred body and our souls washed through his most precious blood.’ This is the central message of the cross.

But, as we acknowledge the wonder of the cross, we look on to the glorious resurrection of Jesus, for he has conquered death. It is a new life we have in him, and it is with his help that we can more faithfully take up our daily cross and follow him.

Barbara Jeffries - Diocesan Prayer Correspondent

*Barbara will be organising the **Prayer Leaflet** in future. To this end can I ask all Branch Leaders to let me, Elsie Murray know of members who are ill or who have died. My address can be found inside the back cover of this Newslink. In the next edition I will issue Barbara’s new address.*

Sylvia Elliott, a member of St Ninian’s Castle Douglas has taken on the role of Diocesan Correspondent. Welcome Sylvia to this position.

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.....from our new Provincial President Hilary



This is a picture of my commissioning at Mary Sumner house on 8th December in the chapel, when Sheila handed over the Scottish brooch to me. We had a Eucharist service on an Advent theme and I invited my sister and husband to

this. Afterwards we had lunch upstairs in the new conference rooms. It was a lovely day for me, with so many warm wishes given. Nearly all past Worldwide presidents were there including Trish and all the old and new board members. A very memorable day.

Commissioning Service

A service was held at St Mary's Cathedral, Glasgow, on Saturday 13th February 2010 for the commissioning of Hilary Moran as Provincial President of the Mothers' Union for Glasgow & Galloway. Also commissioned at this service were various Trustees and Office Holders.

The celebrant at the Eucharist was the Very Reverend Kelvin Holdsworth, Provost of St Mary's Cathedral. The Mothers' Union was also delighted to welcome the Primus and Bishop of St Andrews, Dunkeld & Dunblane, the Most Reverend David Chillingworth, who gave the Sermon. The Bishop-elect, the Very Revd Gregor Duncan was also present.

The new Trustees and Office Holders who were commissioned by our Chaplain, the Revd Scott Robertson are Carolynne Sorrell, Vice President; Jill Cameron, Overseas Correspondent; Margaret Horrell, MUE & Enterprise Rep. and Trustee ; Caryl Haglington, Marketing; Joan McKechnie, IMPC Coordinator; Elsie Murray, Trustee and Newslink Editor; and William Walker, Finance and Central Services and Treasurer.

After the Service everyone enjoyed a light repast and there was much mingling between members from far and near. No-one seemed to be in a hurry to leave, as they enjoyed catching up with people they might not have seen for some time. Paul Hindle also took photographs which will no doubt appear on the Website sometime soon, so don't forget to keep looking!

The first Trustees Meeting of the new session is very soon and it is hoped that everyone will relish their new roles within the Mothers' Union and, with God's help, carry out their duties purposefully and with enjoyment.

Caryl Haglington



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Reflections on Louisville



The welcome and hospitality we received from all the people we met in Louisville remains a key memory of our visit. Thank you all.

The itinerary arranged for us by Bob and Sharon was marvellous. Churchill Downs, the Kentucky show, Glass blowing, Abraham Lincoln monument, the Ohio River, the countryside with the horses, glorious colours - the Burning

bushes, Bourbon and driving around the different areas of Louisville gave us a good feel of what makes Louisville special.

The highlight of our visit was visiting St Matthews the companion church of our own St James the Less and the other churches to which Bishop David, Sharon and Bob, took us. St Matthews 'umbrella' roof is not too dissimilar to that of St James although ours is on a smaller scale. The resources of St Matthews, human and bricks and mortar left us with a huge wish list.

Ultimately, however, what makes the church is the people. Everyone was welcoming and showed an interest in the link with St James. We were impressed by the amount of energy used to ensure faith is not static, but dynamic by putting some of your prayers into action. We were impressed by all the social work done on a regular basis as well as annual events such as the Walk for Hunger and the sessions after worship on a Sunday and on weekdays. We were inspired by the outreach work of St Matthews especially the orphanage in Kenya, the Home for the Innocents, the retirement community at Dudley Square, the work with the refugees and the house building for the homeless. The commitment of Bishop David who following his 5.30am rise to write his sermon for St Lukes special service managed to fit in the Walk for Hunger before co- celebrating the 5pm service at St Matthews with Lucinda provided a great example of walking the talk!

We were inspired by the welcome extended at the start of each service, the reverence and holiness of the place and people, the 5pm service with its inclusive manner of sharing communion. We regret not going to the early service on the Sunday as all services are proper church and ensuring everyone is in the loop is vital. You are all very privileged to be able to receive communion on the round as you are all God's special guests irrespective of what role if any you fulfil. St James has lovely stained glass windows; however, we appreciated the clear glass windows of St Matthews

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allowing God's light to shine outwards while from within the variety of colours of God's creation can be enjoyed. St Matthews is truly a special place at which to encounter God.

It is to be hoped that the companionship link helps us all come closer to God. Despite the physical distance which separates us we have much in common and with IT links distance need not be a barrier to fellowship, prayer or mission. Also we look forward to showing some of you round our patch!

Thanks, best wishes; you are all in our prayers
Ann & Elliott Glenesk

Thank you Enid!



On behalf of all the members Ethel Shaw made a presentation to Enid, thanking her for all she had done for the Diocese during her term of office.

Helen Njenga also made a presentation to Enid from Heart for the City, thanking her for the loving and caring way she had supported them.

Update on Baby Clothes.

Although the Queen Mothers Hospital in Glasgow is now closed we continue to knit and deliver items to the Princess Royal Maternity Unit. These are still very much appreciated and used. I delivered the last batch of knitting, including some knitted angels for Santa to give out, on Christmas Eve.

Jill Cameron

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THE PRAYER SHAWL MINISTRY.



The Prayer Shawl Ministry was started in America in 1998.

Over the centuries shawls have come to symbolise shelter, peace and spiritual sustenance. Shawls are knitted or crocheted, not only to comfort the sick, bereaved, lonely or elderly, but also in celebration of a marriage, birth or graduation. Each shawl is filled with the love and prayers of those who produce them. Before a member picks up her work she will pray and each

stitch will be filled with love and prayers. On completion shawls are blessed, hopefully in church, before being given to the recipient. Shawls may be made by individuals at home or by groups of members who meet together on a regular basis for fellowship and prayer while they knit or crochet.

Shawls are often knitted in patterns of three e.g.: knit 3, purl 3. The number three is symbolic in many faiths but especially in the Christian Faith where we have The Trinity and where we are encouraged to live and act in Faith, Hope and Charity. Traditionally colours of wool may also be symbolic (this is not necessary) e.g.: Green for healing, safety, hope and peace. Shawls can be knitted either long and wide like a very large scarf with fringes at each end or crocheted in a triangular shape.

As members of the Mothers Union who hold prayer for others in our hearts and who already are involved in knitting for newborns, I feel the Prayer Shawl Ministry is the perfect way for us to progress. For those not able to knit or crochet, help is required in fund raising for wool, as this can be expensive.

A sheet is available with prayers, patterns, blessing etc. Please contact me for this or any other information.

We, at Holy Name, have now gifted a number of Prayer Shawls and have been thrilled with the wonderful response we have received.

Jill Cameron – 01236 451569

E-Mail : snowdropcarrickstone@tinyworld.co.uk.

Photographs (front and back covers) of the Commissioning Service.

Thanks to Paul Hindle our photographer.

Future Dates

Festival Service	Holy Trinity, Ayr	15th May 2010	11a.m.
General Meeting	The Guildhall, Preston	24th June 2010	10.30a.m. – 4.00p.m.
Autumn Council	All Saints, Bearsden	30th October 2010	

Triennial 2010 – 2012

Diocesan President	Mrs Ann Glenesk
Vice President	Mrs Carolynne Sorrell
Secretary	Mrs Wendy Petrie
Treasurer	Mr William Walker
Chaplain	
Finance & Central Services	Mr William Walker
Marketing	Mrs Caryl Haglington
Action & Outreach	
Faith & Policy	
Elected Trustee & MUE Rep.	Mrs Margaret Horrell
Elected Trustee & Newslink	Mrs Elsie Murray
IMPC	Mrs Joan McKechnie
Prayer Leaflet	Mrs Barbara Jeffries
Overseas Correspondent	Mrs Jill Cameron
Diocesan Correspondent & Prayer Chain	Mrs Sylvia Elliott
Social Policy & Diocesan Member on Council	Mrs Kathryn Urquhart

Thanks to all the contributors.

**All articles for the Autumn 2010 edition of Newslink should be sent to me
Elsie Murray, 1 Comrie Street, Sandyhills, Glasgow. G32 9TU
or by email to elsieb Murray@btinternet.com
by 30th September 2010.**

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