



to our last newsletter of 2022

Newsletter

Christmas 2022



Dear friends and members of Mothers' Union

I enclose extracts from a letter written by our Worldwide President, Sheran Harper. Although intended for our indoor members it is worthy of being shared with all at this time.

'There is no doubt that we are living in changing times, the world is so different to all we have been accustomed to. However, through it all, I join you in thanking God for his many mercies which are new every morning, for the opportunities he gives us to make a difference, and his hope which is sufficient for anything that comes our way.

You will agree with me that we are living in very different times and change is never easy especially in a world torn apart by conflict and war. The challenges are many, and the social issues are affecting individuals, families, and communities more than ever, maybe more than this world has seen in the last 100 years. Globally, we continue to struggle through the aftermath of the Covid 19 pandemic and the devastating effects of Climate Change, bringing with them loss of homes and livelihoods; an increase in GBV; and other injustices, including poverty, hunger, and bereavement. Each of these has negative spinoffs – resulting in deep agony in the voices of our women as they feel the pain and suffering as stable family life for many is crippled.

As a movement, we never imagined that recovery from the pandemic would be this slow, but it is in our perception of "slow" that we need, more than ever, to depend on Jesus alone, recognising that he is able to fashion us into what we should become. It is this kind of preparation that equips us to do his work and use his resources, as we accept that it is His will and not ours.

I can see the bright light already emerging from the shadows and I am not fearful, for this light is the sign of what is to come, the flourishing and the manna for the journey ahead. The flood gates of heaven are already open, preparing us for the task ahead, if we choose to look upward to the hills from whence cometh our help.

I am inspired and encouraged by the MU 2022 stories from right across the globe which remind me of the relevance of MU in 21st Century life, the reach of our members and the commitment of our staff team. We continue to make huge impact as you will see in our Annual Review 2021 and the stories on our website and newsletters.

As Christians and Members, we continue to be steadfast in faith, supporting each other and doing our little bit in our branches and new spaces, which when joined up has a transformational effect at Diocesan, Provincial and Global levels. Mary Sumner House too has been adapting and looking at new income streams to ensure that we are in the best position to provide support wherever needed.

Our theme of Transformation-NOW! drives us to continue the journey of re-imagining MU within the context and culture in which we live, while remaining true to our Christian faith and relevance of MU in 21st Century life.

As we prepare our hearts through prayer and reflection this Advent season, and as we celebrate this joyous season of Christmas and the peace, love, and joy the Christ-Child brings to all the world, let us remain confident of the sure hope and bright future that lies ahead.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to spend this time with you and for all your prayers and support through 2022. As we thank God for the blessing of family and friends, and for providing for us from his bounty, let us also pray for all those who are having a very different Christmas this year. May they feel the unending love of Jesus Christ and be assured of the hope he promises us for the future.

A happy, peaceful, joyous and love-filled Christmas to you all. May the gift of a New Year bring transformation, and shape us into something magnificent, as together we build hope, tackle injustice, and share the good news of the Christian faith individually and collectively through Mothers' Union.

I wish you and your loved ones a very happy and blessed Christmas!

With my love and prayers as always,

Sheran.

On behalf of the trustees of Mothers' Union in Lichfield Diocese I would like to thank you for all you have done in 2022, and to echo Sheran's good wishes for a peaceful Christmas and a happy and healthy New Year.

Yours, with love and prayers

Helen

Prayers



The prayer link will continue over the Christmas period. It is often a time when many are lonely and in need of comfort and support. While the office is closed over the Christmas break please feel that you can contact Deb directly using the email and phone number below. The office re-opens on Tuesday 3rd January.

Email, phone, WhatsApp. Just say how you want to be included.

To offer to be a 'pray-er' or request prayers for yourself, someone else or any situation, please contact Deb or the office. Details are below.

Let's share.

Deb : debtudor@live.co.uk

01543 382390

Office: office@mothersunionlichfield.org.uk

01785 227221

Many thanks.

Hats For Farmers



Thank you to those who have taken on the Wool for Wellness campaign launched at the November Council Meeting. The response has been fantastic and already 14 hats have been handed over to be passed on to the FCN (Farming Community Network) for distribution. Keep them coming in, along with any unused wool which

can put with other small amounts to make stripey hats! Word has spread to other parts of the diocese too! If you want more information, please contact Helen at hapallfrey@sky.com I can also let you have some helpline labels if you were not able to get them earlier.

More information can also be found at

fcn.org.uk/wool-and-wellness

Annual Gathering York 2023

Tickets for the Annual Gathering 2023 at the York Barbican on Friday 22nd September 2023 are now on sale. The programme is in development and will focus on member stories and how we are working together to sustain and grow Mothers' Union into the future. Sheran Harper, our Worldwide President will be at the gathering and the Archbishop of York will be leading the celebratory service at York Minster that evening. The central webpage will be updated on a regular basis. Please go to

<https://www.mothersunion.org/annual-gathering-2023>

for all the information as it is added.

It is **strongly** recommended that if you require accommodation on the Thursday and/or Friday night, you book this as soon as possible, availability is high and rates are low at the moment.

Travelodge is offering rooms from £70 per night– links can be found on the webpage. The organising committee look forward to welcoming members to York for a packed programme of inspirational stories and information, fellowship, and worship. Book early to avoid disappointment.

Christmas Cards for Prisons

Thank you to all the members who wrote Christmas cards to send out to prisons in our area. At one time I am told that you sent out nine thousand cards and then were told no more cards only prisoners attending Church would receive cards.

The first year I was involved sending cards out to prisons we only sent out about 900 cards this year we sent out 2350 cards and it is my understanding that the Chaplaincy teams themselves are now allowed to decide how many cards they will require so times have changed again.

I have been asked by some prison clergy if any of our members would consider becoming prison visitors or would be a correspondent with a prisoner. I am not sure how this would work to keep the anonymity (names and addresses of our members) safe. I have asked how this would work to protect members who decide they might help and still keep themselves safe but have has yet not had a response.

Currently we have about 800 written cards and 200 unwritten cards stored at Doxey so next year we will need about another 1500 cards to keep pace with rising demand. Thank you all and best wishes for a joyful and peaceful Christmas.

Julia Collinson

Membership for 2023

Every current, or recent, member of Mothers' Union in this diocese should have received or will receive a letter about the changes to administering membership in the diocese. These have been posted, either individually or to branch/group contacts, so there may be some delays because of the disruption to mail services. Please be patient, but do contact the office if you have not received this paperwork by the week beginning the 16th January 2023. The documents will also be available on the Diocesan Mothers' Union website as soon as possible after Christmas. The end of year paperwork for Branch and Group leaders, and Branch Treasurers, will also be found on the website along with details of diary dates (some amendments from the dates in the Lichfield Beacon

A reminder that the subscription for 2023 is £29.00'

Thank you for your continued support.

SAVE THE DATE!

Staffordshire County Show 2023

As in previous years Mothers' Union has been asked to help with the refreshments in the Churches' Tent at this event. The dates are Wednesday 31st May and Thursday 1st June. A rota of time slots is set up and the length of each will depend on the number of volunteers! The more people available the less time per slot, giving you more time to enjoy the attractions of the show. Please think about helping with this outreach opportunity to engage with members of the public as well as clergy and other church members who are part of the team.

Diocesan Chaplains

Rev Jassica Castillo-Burley Please note that from 18th September Jassica's email will be
interimteamvicar@gmail.com

Rev Kathryn Trimby Llanyblodwel, Oswestry Deanery
kathpant@aol.com 07944 504330 01691 590025

Associate Diocesan Chaplain Rev Chris Rushton chris-rushton@outlook.com

Please remember that the Chaplains are there for every member, in every part of the Diocese.

Office Closure

The Mothers' Union Diocesan Office at Doxey will be closed for the weeks beginning 19th and 26th December.

It will re-open on Tuesday 3rd January 2023.

If you have an urgent enquiry please contact any of the Trustees.

Diocesan Office – Normal Opening Times

The times when Adrian, Diocesan Administrator, will be available to take calls are:

Monday 9.30am – 1.30pm
Tuesday 10.30am – 2.30pm
Thursday 9.30am – 1.30pm

Mothers' Union Office, Parish Church of St Andrew and St Thomas,
Doxey, Stafford, ST16 1EQ

Tel: 01785 227221 (answer machine available)

email: office@mothersunionlichfield.org.uk

website: <https://mothersunionlichfield.org.uk>