

November 2022

Dear Member of Mothers' Union

First of all, the trustees would like to thank you for your continued support for this amazing organisation which supports and cares for families throughout the Diocese of Lichfield, nationally and globally.

To enable that support to continue and flourish we plan to make some changes to the way membership in the Diocese is organised and administered. At the moment, we have branch members and diocesan members, some of whom meet together within groups. The 'deanery member' category faded away a couple of years ago. The plan for 2023 and beyond is a move towards all becoming a 'Member' of Mothers' Union in the Diocese of Lichfield, with no administrative distinction between those in a branch or group and those who are individual members, not attached to a branch or group.

Part of the plan is a move towards members paying the annual subscription directly to the Diocesan Mothers' Union, either by cheque or, preferably by bank transfer. This is intended to ease the burden on treasurers especially where banks have imposed punitive charges on small accounts. A new membership form has been designed and we ask that **all** members complete this form for 2023. This combines membership details, consent for how you wish your contact details to be used, and Gift Aid declaration. It is important that membership details are kept up to date and this form will also be used to check, and amend as necessary, the central database at Mary Sumner House. The closing date for return of completed forms and payment of subscriptions is **February 28<sup>th</sup> 2023**.

The branch structure is a very important way of how we operate and the last thing we want is for that to disappear. Working together is a valuable experience for all concerned and the fellowship side of meeting as a group is of significant importance to membership. Where a branch currently exists, the structure, with officers such as Branch Leader (or contact/correspondent), Treasurer and Secretary, can continue as long as members wish it to, and volunteers are willing to fulfil those roles. The branch bank account may be kept open to help with fund raising events.

The trustees do appreciate that this is a change that might be difficult for some, but it is done with the future of Mothers' Union in mind, and we hope that you will continue your membership into 2023. The subscription for 2023 will **£29.00**. There are some Questions and Answers overleaf but please do not hesitate to contact the trustees, either directly or through the office, if you have any queries. We are all more than willing to help. Please do not worry!

On behalf of the Trustee Board, with our love and prayers



Helen  
Diocesan President

## **FAQs - Change of Membership**

### **Can I still be a Branch member?**

You can still be linked to a Branch but the name 'Branch membership' will not exist in 2023. There will only be one individual membership going forward.

### **Will I still receive the 'Connected' magazine and Prayer Diary? What about Lichfield Beacon?**

The 'Connected' magazine and Prayer Diary come direct from central Mothers' union and so it is important that your correct details are on the database in the diocese, so we can also check that the central database is accurate. Any diocesan publication will come direct to you, or through your branch/ group if you are linked to one.

### **I do not have a cheque book or access to online banking. How can I pay my subscription?**

Perhaps a family member or friend would help you with this. As long as it is clear that the payment is for your membership (your name on the back of the cheque, or as the reference on the bank transfer) your membership will continue.

### **As a Branch Leader how will I know who has paid their subs and is linked to my branch?**

You will receive a branch list with the request for subscriptions for the following year. Once the deadline has passed for paying subscriptions and sending in database forms, we will provide a branch list of paid-up members. We hope to send this by email.

### **Do we need to close the Branch Bank Account?**

No, you can continue to operate a Branch Bank Account. The changes have been introduced to reduce the financial administration of branches. Some branches have found the cost of operating a bank account prohibitive so have not only closed the account but also the branch. If the account remains open it can be used for the banking of the proceeds of fund-raising events before sending on to the diocesan fund or used for a branch project. If the Branch Bank Account remains open an end of year Finance report along with Bank Statement will still need to be submitted, as in the past.

### **Can we collect subs and just send one cheque in?**

No, we are asking individual members to either pay by cheque or bank transfer directly to the LDMU. Branch leaders/treasurers can collect the cheques and send them in with the database forms.