



2022

Mothers' UNION  
Christian care for families

# February Newsletter

*Heavenly Father, you have called us apart to share in a worldwide fellowship of Christians united in prayer. Take our prayers we humbly ask, fill them with your love and power, and use them in the cause of your glorious kingdom, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

## Whitworth House

It is wonderful news that the funding for the House is now secure for 3 years and can be renewed for a further 3 years. The House can accommodate 15 young women and there is a waiting list.

5 washing up bowls for the young people moving on to independent living (stored in my loft since I took the last lot) and 6 welcome bags, were taken to the House in December.



Many thanks to those who contributed to these welcome bags which I have just assembled. Each one costs around £20 and contains:

Mirror, manicure set, pk of 5 socks, pk 4 panties, brush, comb, sponge bag, toothbrush, toothpaste, flannel, shampoo, bar soap, shower gel, nailbrush hand cream, pk 5 long lasting emery boards, sanitary pads, deodorant, cleansing wipes, 2 small pks tissues.

Jo Wibberley



We have just been given a Silver Cross pram/pushchair/baby car seat with waterproof coverings which is in pristine condition and will be greatly appreciated by the young mum expecting a baby in June as well as by the staff who are so grateful for our support.



# Thank You

Firstly, a very big **THANK YOU** for your generosity with Christmas donations and vouchers for “those whose lives have met with adversity”. The Refuges and hostels have been so well supported, and the Workers I have spoken to, or received messages from, are most appreciative.

The following is from the Fenland Refuge, but the message is the same for all -

*Dear members of Mothers Union*

*This is a massive thank you to everyone that sent Christmas presents, gift bags, gift vouchers, advent calendars, and selection boxes in for the women and children that have fled domestic abuse.*

*The families were overwhelmed by all of the donations and gifts. The gifts helped to make a difficult period that much happier knowing that people that they don't know, care about them. One lady just could not believe that she had gifts and said how lucky she felt to have received one and being able to see the children's faces as they opened theirs.*

*It's never easy to make the decision to flee an abusive relationship. It can be even more difficult at this time of year.*

*Women worry that they are leaving everything behind that they know and any support networks that they may have. Mothers worry that their children will be upset and about what will happen to them all, what will a refuge be like? Children worry about pets left behind, school friends that they can't contact and whether Father Christmas will be able to find them. Once in the refuge they are supported by the staff and new schools and routines are put in place for children to help things feel more 'normal'.*

*And then on to new beginnings and new memories*

*Your gifts and, even more importantly, the time you spent thinking about the women and children, to put together the presents and vouchers means the world to these families.*

*Thank you for caring. Thank you for thinking about others. Thank you for bringing a smile to everyone that received your gifts. Thank you for being part of their happier new memories. Wishing you all a very happy and healthy new year*

*From all of the staff, Women and Children in Fenland Refuge*



Photos sent by Sue Claydon from March

Christmas may be over but our work to support others continues. Whether you are spring-cleaning, or just having a little “sort-out” – all basic household items are welcomed.

I shall shortly be taking soft twiddle muffs and lap blankets to the Frailty Unit at Hinchingbrooke Hospital, they are always in demand, so please do continue making. A Twiddle Muff pattern is available. We are hoping the Covid Restrictions will have been lessened so that the Maternity unit will accept baby hats again – we have a large collection ready.

It is always good to hear about branch projects, as every branch is different. I enjoyed reading about Downham Market in the December Newsletter and how they have been supporting a Hygiene Bank locally.

Ely Cathedral branch run Edward Bear Worship Group for parents/carers and under-fives. For the 5th year running the families supported the Sick Children's Trust at The Rosie Hospital, providing filled Christmas bags for parents with very sick babies.

Throughout the year we supply the SCT with emergency toiletries packs for Mothers who arrive from some distance, with their very sick baby and no more than their handbag. Our packs containing basic items see them through until their own arrive. Small sizes of toothpaste, shower gel, shampoo etc are always welcomed by Maureen.

Jean Webb Faith In Action Coordinator 01353 658581 [jmw35n@gmail.com](mailto:jmw35n@gmail.com)

Maureen Haigh Local Projects officer 01353 749760 [gmhaigh@talk21.com](mailto:gmhaigh@talk21.com)



### **Yaxley St Peters, Mothers' Union**

For our January meeting we had a "TRANSFORMATION - NOW!" service lead by lovely vicar, Rev Sarah, based on the service on the Mothers' Union website. We sang "We seek your Kingdom", from Thy Kingdom Come, which you sing to the "Abide with me" tune. The last line of each verse is "Transform, revive, and heal society" which fits very well with this year's theme. "I am a new creation" was our second hymn.

As part of the intercessions items were placed on a table, with prayers.

"Lord you have promised to give us a crown of beauty instead of ashes" a garland was then placed, "we pray for the transformation from adversity to blessing"

"The oil of joy instead of mourning" fragrant oil placed, "from sadness to joy"

"A garment of praise instead of a spirit of despair" a colourful scarf was placed, "from despair to hope, in our own lives, in our families, in our communities and in the world"

Butterflies were handed out and members to place on a dull hanging to transform it into something beautiful, which you can see in the picture.



#### **Ely Diocesan Mothers' Union**

**Charity no. 251394**

<https://www.facebook.com/MU>

[ElyDiocese/](https://www.facebook.com/MU)

#### **CONTACT DETAILS**

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**Thursday prayer will be presented by Philip Baker on 17<sup>th</sup> February at 10 30am. It will be Zoom only because the cathedral is closed for filming.**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83847809128?pwd=VVhXUGINWkpaeGkyMUdwWHQvcC9tQT09>

ID. 838 4780 9128 Passcode 338053



## A REFLECTION

Philip Baker (20<sup>th</sup> January 2022)

Recently, for Epiphany, when Jesus was revealed to the world, I wrote a Reflection for my parish magazine on the subject of Faith, using the story of the blind man from Matthew 10: Bartimaeus, a blind man, was begging by the roadside when Jesus came by and, hearing that it was Jesus, called out to him. *“What do you want me to do for you?” Jesus asked him. The blind man said, “Rabbi, I want to see.” “Go,” said Jesus, “your faith has healed you.” Immediately he received his sight and followed Jesus along the road.* Without Faith such as was displayed by the blind man, nothing we do as Christians makes sense. Indeed, without Faith we would not be Christians at all!

However, sometimes Faith alone is not enough; believing things will be all right may not be what God requires of us; sometimes we need to do things as well. That is one reason we are members of the Mothers’ Union – to do things which will help others who in some way, or ways, are less fortunate than ourselves. Our Diocesan President, Hazel Williams, spoke at Thursday Prayer in January about the Mothers’ Union programme of Transformation. The world is constantly changing and evolving and as an organisation which is closely connected with people throughout this changing world, Mothers’ Union needs to make sure it is in step with people, wherever they may be on the cycle of change. This process has been given the name “Transformation Now” because a) we need to change to reflect the needs of the world we engage with and b) because we need to do it now – it is urgent. For example: my Branch is made up of members who are growing older year on year and no new, younger members are joining. We cannot do anything about growing older but we can, and must, do something about not attracting younger members. What we do is too important for it to fall away and cease to be.

We know that God will lead us where we need to go and show us what we need to do. All we need to succeed is have Faith. Firstly, Faith to see, hear, feel what God is telling us to do and secondly, Faith to then follow where we are lead and do what we are told. Just like the blind man in Matthew’s gospel.

I am reading the Bible for a second time, using a different translation, and I have just read Psalm 33 – a psalm of joy. Verses 20 to 22 express this so well:

*“We wait in hope for the Lord; he is our help and our shield.*

*In him our hearts rejoice, for we trust his holy name.*

*May your unfailing love rest upon us, O Lord, even as we put our hope in you.”*



I am delighted that Revd. Paula Spalding will be commissioned soon as our Ely Mothers’ Union Diocesan Chaplain. She is from St. Mary’s Church in Burwell where she is Associate Priest.

## NEWS FROM BALSHAM BRANCH

We are hoping to restart regular meetings from February this year. Due to death and ill health the numbers in our branch have fallen.

I am saddened to have to tell members of the death of a much-loved member of Balsham – Olive Brinkley who died in December aged nearly 94.

She had been married to Gordon for 67 years and they both came from Suffolk. Balsham MU members were able to provide the food for Olive’s wake which was held at the back of Balsham Church. Olive is buried in the Churchyard. Her husband Gordon aged 97 was able to come to her funeral.

We shall much miss Olive’s cheerfulness and friendliness at meetings. May she rest in peace.

January 1st arrived, time to put away my Archdeaconry Vice President badge and take on my new role of Worldwide links officer. I sent email New Year greetings to our link Diocese in Zambia, Rwanda, Nigeria and India. A lovely reply has come from Claudine in Rwanda, she sends greetings to Ely, and in her email, she says this;

"In this time, we continue to believe in God and to put our faith to God, so let's continue to pray for one another in this year in order to perform our goals of serving the Mothers' Union members and other activities even if we are struggling with covid 19"

The Worldwide display board has been collected, along with a box of wonderful items to help us relate to our link countries. Gill has guided me through all the information about our link countries, so thank you Gill for the smooth handover.

In 2014 I was part of a group from my church in Yaxley that went to Rwanda and saw some of the work done by Mothers' Union. During that time, I met Bishop Nathan, then Bishop of Cyangugu, and his wife Ester, Bishop Nathan is now the Bishop of Kigali which Ely Diocese as links with. I hope to be able to make contact with Ester.

This photo is of me, on the left, meeting Berthe, centre, Mothers' Union coordinator in Cyangugu, and Pat, right, also part of the St Peter's team from Yaxley.



**Banners**

Now we have had to clear all our things from Bishop Woodford House, some old banners have found their way to my loft. Prickwillow, Girton, St. John's Cambridge are all clearly identified, but there is one mystery one. Does anyone recognise it? It came in a box originally sent to the Eastern Electricity at Milton Hall, Cambridge CB4 4AA. The box is also marked "original banner pre 1900" made by Miss Sayle" and is in excellent condition.

Jo Wibberley



## MU Noticeboard in Ely Cathedral.

We are delighted that the MU Noticeboard in the Cathedral has been restored back in position, and is currently located by the Prior's Door, for the time being. Grateful thanks to Penny and Mary for their help with looking after the displays. These will be changed on a regular basis, with seasonal and thematic posters, news and leaflets. If any Branches/Members have some news they would like included, please could you contact: Communications Co-ordinator, Debbie Tye ([dmtypost@hotmail.com](mailto:dmtypost@hotmail.com)).

## COMMUNICATION NEWS – NEW YouTube VIDEO.

Debbie Tye - Co-ordinator

We have another YouTube video link to share with you for **JANUARY THURSDAY PRAYERS**, led by Hazel Williams on the theme: "Transformation – Now!", which is the MU Theme for 2022.

A Reflection on Epiphany was also given by Christine Holt, the new Praying Our Faith Co-ordinator. Hazel also introduced our new MU Chaplain for the Diocese of Ely, Revd Paula Spalding, Curate at St Mary's Church, Burwell.

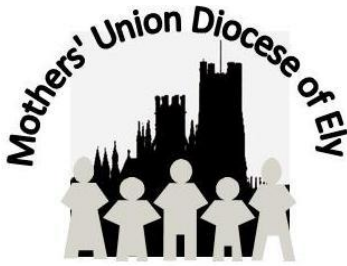
YouTube Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Vw1771rdoQc>

In the last two years the only **Diocesan meeting** we have had was a very enjoyable get-together in the Bishop of Ely's garden, enjoying comments and praise from the Bishop of Ely and our own picnic tea. We are likely to be able to use the venue later in 2022 again.

Our next Diocesan meeting will be on Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> April at St. Peter's in March. This will be the **Diocesan Spring Meeting and AGM**. The morning will include coffee/tea, our AGM including our 2021 financial report, a speaker from the charity Mary's Child, some time together and eating packed lunches (still). More details of times etc. will follow in our next newsletters. *Hazel*

Christine Holt, our Praying our Faith co-ordinator, is hoping to arrange a **Quiet Day** in March. Speaker and venue have yet to be finalised but please look out for the details.





**Mothers' UNION**  
Christian care for families

## Newsletter April 2022

Lord, we pray that we may make each day of our earthly life worthy of your great sacrifice on the cross. Thank you that we can find sanctuary in your love because you have chosen to love us just as we are, with all our faults and failings and that, if we truly repent, you will forgive our sins.

Lord Jesus Christ, in dying you conquered death and rose again in glory. Amen  
*Margaret Devlin, Diocese of Newcastle.*

### Anglesey News



Ann Langran sent a couple of photographs of these lovely knitted Easter egg baskets made by herself and Joan Berry that were sold at their March meeting to raise funds for MU.

### **MOTHERS' UNION SPRING MEETING & AGM.**

St. Peter's Church. March. Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> April. 10.15am.

There is a service in church at 10 am so please arrive quietly and **do not go into the church**. We will meet for coffee in the hall at the side of the church (follow the signs) where there will also be MU displays. AGM will start at 11am in the church followed by a talk from Revd. Carol Avery from Mary's Child, a charity MU is supporting, who work with families and individuals in need. If each branch representative who is attending could bring donations of tinned or packet food from their branch (greatest demand is for tinned protein foods - tinned meat, stews, fish, corned beef, chickpeas. Long life milk and toilet rolls always wanted) it would be a wonderful gift for the charity from MU members. If you are not able to send a representative perhaps a nearby branch could deliver for you.

Packed lunches required

## Haddenham News

The new leader of the Haddenham branch, Audrey Kirk, made these pretty bookmarks to give to women on Mothering Sunday.



## Wisbech News

Maureen Norgate has informed us that one of their members, Una Payton, will be celebrating her 90<sup>th</sup> birthday on 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2022. Congratulations to Una on this special occasion.

All Wisbech churches with Mothers' Union branches have now joined together and in future will be known as the Wisbech and North Nene Deanery Branch.

## Faith In Action – April 2022

My Lent Reading today (from the Trussell Trust), is about Dignity – the state of being worthy of honour or respect. There are many in our world, locally and overseas, who feel their dignity has been taken away because of life's circumstances. As M U members we seek to serve those who are vulnerable and restore some of that dignity to their lives when we can.

Our Local projects support many people needing rehoming, whether from Women's Refuges, young people's and homeless hostels, and now refugees, including those from Ukraine as well as Afghanistan. We are not able to store larger items, so please support local appeals for basic furniture items. If you aren't aware of local campaigns and have items to offer, do let Maureen or I know, and we will contact you if we hear of somewhere needing them. Please note we *cannot* store them.

We will continue to accept good condition small kitchen items, bedding, toiletries etc. to help with restoring dignity. With all the emphasis on Ukraine at the moment, we must not forget our hostels and refuges will be working as normal, and needing our continual support.

AFA – I am pleased that we now have 4 families booked for a half term break at the end of May. As well as providing the accommodation at Searles Leisure Resort at Hunstanton, and pocket money for the children, this year we are providing help with fuel and food costs, enabling our families to have a better break, and less financial worry – towards restoring dignity. This is possible because of the regular, generous support of members, so thank you all.

Jean Webb - Coordinator

Jmw35n@gmail.com or 01353 658581

### THURSDAY PRAYER

**In the Cathedral and on Zoom 10.30am**

**7<sup>th</sup> April – Canon Stuart Mitchell**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83847809128?pwd=VVhXUGlNWkpaeGkyMUdwWHQvcC9tQT09>  
ID. 838 4780 9128 Passcode 338053

**A reminder that each branch can claim up to £50 towards expenses for a speaker if they are unable to cover the cost. Maybe get together with another branch close by to have someone special.**



## A REFLECTION

Philip Baker (28<sup>th</sup> March 2022)

It is generally easier to consider a passage from the New Testament than one from the Old Testament as, although they are both from a very long time ago, the New Testament can be some thousand years nearer to us today and the references and concepts are easier for us to follow. But this month, I am delving into neither, rather I am looking at the Psalms for inspiration. You will say, of course, that the Psalms are in the Old Testament, which is true. But to me, although written in Old Testament times (up to a thousand BC) they have a different “feel” as they are songs or poems and they speak more of feelings than events.

On my first read of the Bible I found the Psalms impenetrable. Now, the second time round and with a different translation, they are beginning to make more sense. And some shout their meaning! For example, Psalm 62 is on the subject of “resting in God” and is ascribed to David (although that may be a red herring as the authorship of the Psalms is somewhat mysterious). Verses 5-8 read: *“Find rest, O my soul, in God alone; my hope comes from him. He alone is my rock and my salvation; he is my fortress, I will not be shaken. My salvation and my honour depend on God; he is my mighty rock, my refuge. Trust in him at all times, O people; pour out your hearts to him, for God is our refuge.”* What powerful words! Direct and to the point – you can depend on God. That applies any time and at all times, in good times and bad, regardless of the need or situation. Every phrase contributes to the same conclusion: Trust in God. When troubled, find hope; when threatened, find courage; when in danger, find safety; when troubled, find solace.

This Psalm is telling us that whatever situation we face, tell God about it and help will be forthcoming. I know this is true because God has helped me exactly as he promises to. And we know this from countless other passages in the Bible; having Faith in God and trusting him is key. So, when we are in trouble of any kind, is God our first thought? I can think of times when I have had circumstances to deal with which trouble me until I remember to turn to God. With our background, it should be second nature to us, but sometimes I forget, how about you?

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### St Mary's Ely Mother's Union – Overseas Day.

Members and guests attended St Mary's MU Annual Overseas Day on 9<sup>th</sup> March.

After an enjoyable lunch, a talk was given by Irene Porter, our new Worldwide Links Officer.

She showed some slides and spoke about our Diocesan Links within other countries: including our special MU Links with Lusaka in Zambia; Shyogwe in Rwanda; Sokoto & Ikka in Nigeria; and Karimnager in India (as well as the Ely Diocesan Links with Kigali & Vellore).

She brought along some crafts from places she had visited in Africa.

A total of £160 was raised which will go to MU Worldwide Funds.

**Ely Diocesan Mothers' Union Charity no. 251394**

<https://www.facebook.com/MUElyDiocese/>

**Ros 01223 861846 [roswright1@gmail.com](mailto:roswright1@gmail.com)**

**Hazel 01638 743897 [hwill66@icloud.com](mailto:hwill66@icloud.com)**

### Burwell News

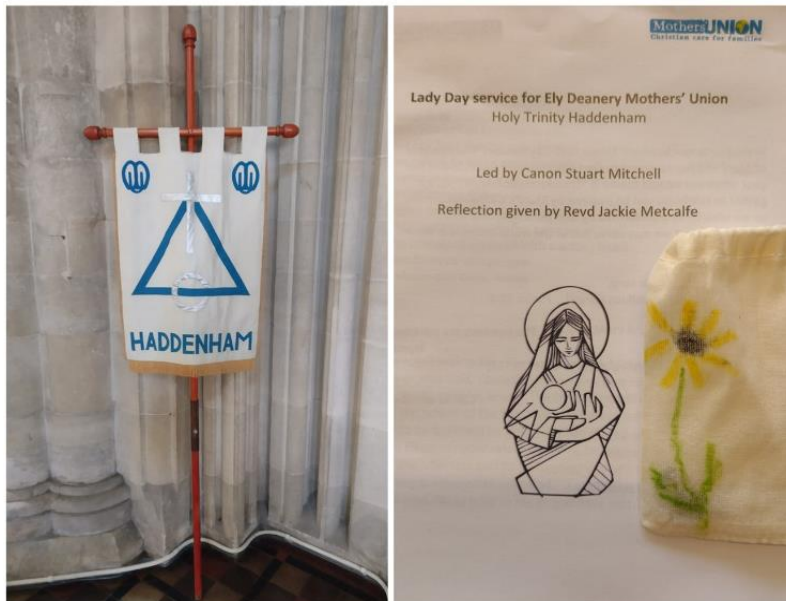
MU members and parishioners in Burwell contributed £170 for Make a Mother's Day. The Mothering Sunday service was led by the MU.

We have another YouTube video link to share with you for **MARCH THURSDAY PRAYERS**: Jesus blesses the Children. It is a Lent Meditation led by Di Sabel, who helps organise AFIA (Away From It All holidays, for families in need of a break).

YouTube Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TtZSXu4T-GI>

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### Ely Deanery Lady Day Service.



This year's Lady Day Service took place on 25 March at Holy Trinity Church, Haddenham.

It was led by Canon Stuart Mitchell, a retired priest from Clare, now living in the Deanery. Revd Jackie Metcalfe, Curate at All Saints Milton, gave an inspiring reflection about Mary's responses to Jesus at the different stages of his life – and thinking about our responses to God's calling in our lives. Members were given sachets of seeds to take away and plant as a symbolic offering of our willingness to be transformed in vision and service, and as an affirmation of our faith that all things are possible with God.

“When you come to us with gentle whisper or mighty wind, and ask what seems impossible to human minds, as you did to Mary, may our response not be to hesitate, make excuses or run away, but to echo instead those trusting and beautiful words, ‘I am the Lord's servant: may your word be fulfilled in me’.

**For Mary's faithfulness and her life of service we thank you, Lord. Amen.”**

© John Birch

It was lovely to gather together and celebrate the “Feast of the Annunciation”. Fellowship continued after the service with enjoyable tea and cakes, served by Haddenham Mothers' Union. A retiring collection raised £110 which will be sent to Mary Sumner House to further the work of the MU Worldwide.

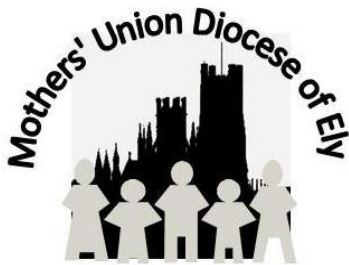
## MOTHERS' UNION GARDEN PARTY

Bishop Stephen's Garden, Ely. Friday 15<sup>th</sup> July. 3-5pm.

Bring your own packed tea. Fizz and soft drinks provided.

Raffle prizes will be gratefully received and there will also be an opportunity to buy MU cards and see a display about our worldwide links.

Wear something red, blue or white – or all three.



# NEWSLETTER MAY 22



## SPRING DIOCESAN MEETING Revd Carol Avery, MARY'S CHILD

Carol gave a talk at our AGM in April about the charity 'Mary's Child'. She moved to the Diocese of Ely in 2019, and is Associate Priest of Stanground, Farcet, and Fletton.

'Mary's Child' is a charity that was created to love, care and support families and individuals in need, by providing practical support, pastoral care and signposting to other charities and agencies as needed. Founded by Carol in 2014, it was originally based on seeing a need in the areas around Greenhithe in London, and is now also supporting families in Peterborough.



In Peterborough, through the C of E Churches of Stanground and Farcet, the work of the charity began in March 2020 as they responded to the needs of the local community during the Covid-19 Pandemic, responding to referrals from Peterborough City Council and via their communities and churches. At the moment they are focused on providing food and toiletries via their 'Parish Pantries' as well as 'kindness bags', a listening ear, and liaison with other charities and organisation who can help in other ways. In both locations they are able to offer legal advice and advocacy on housing and benefits on occasion.

Carol told several profoundly moving stories of how different people in need had been helped, particularly with regard to those with 'no recourse to public funds'. In the course of a year they had helped 200 families and provided ten thousand meals. As can be seen in the photograph, members had donated a huge amount of food and toiletry products to be used by the charity in support of families and individuals in need, as it aims to offer 'God's light, love and hope in our communities'.

For more info visit their website:

<http://www.maryschild.org.uk/> and you can also

follow their facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/maryschild.org.uk/>

Her bible reading reflected this commitment, following Jesus' teaching based on Matthew 25: 31-46.

*Then these righteous ones will reply, 'Lord, when did we ever see you hungry and feed you? Or thirsty and give you something to drink? Or a stranger and show you hospitality? Or naked and give you clothing? When did we ever see you sick or in prison and visit you?' And the King will say, 'I tell you the truth, when you did it to one of the least of these my brothers and sisters, you were doing it to me!'*





## Worldwide Links

For Easter I posted the Mothers' Union "Easter Greetings" card and the Mothers' Union Easter Prayer Bookmark to each of our link Diocese. I hope they reached their destinations. On Easter morning I emailed an Easter message and a photo of the cross outside my church, St Peters Yaxley. This had been painted by a very talented member of our congregation. Claudine, from Shyogwe Diocese in Rwanda replied and sent greetings to us all in Ely Diocese, in Jesus' name.

Irene Porter

This year's MU **Thy Kingdom Come** service will be live streamed on [Facebook](#) and [YouTube](#) at 2pm on **Friday 27th May** so do save the date now. You may like to watch it together with other members and friends of MU.

3pm  
Saturday 14th May  
Little St. Mary's Church, Trumpington Street  
by kind permission of the Vicar and churchwardens



music for voices and instruments  
by Isabella Leonarda  
1620–1704

performed by Music students from across the University of Cambridge  
directed by Catherine Groom

with a talk by Nicky Padfield,  
Professor of Criminal and Penal Justice  
and Director of the Cambridge Centre for Criminal Justice

a concert in aid of  
The Prison Reform Trust's Women's Programme  
and Birth Companions  
two projects supporting women in the criminal justice system

tickets via [Eventbrite](#) or on the door  
Pay whatever you can

## Music for voices and instruments by Isabella Leonarda

A concert in support of two projects supporting women in the criminal justice system: Birth Companions, which works to improve the care of pregnant women and mothers of infants in the criminal justice system, and The Prison Reform Trust's Women's Programme, which calls for a step change in the criminal justice system's response to the needs of women and their dependent children, highlighting the estimated 17,000 children affected by maternal imprisonment every year.

Tickets are available in advance thus  
<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/music-by-isabella-leonarda-a-fundraising-concert-for-women-in-prison-tickets-329614675367>

and on the door, and audience members are asked to pay whatever they can and wish.

The concert and talk together will last a little over an hour with no interval.

**Mary Brook**, a MU member at Great Staughton died at the beginning of April. Her husband, the Revd Neville Brook, vicar at Great Staughton was MU Diocesan Chaplain from 1995-97 when I was DP. On his retirement they moved to Eastbourne, then in 2018 to Willeborough near Ashford Kent. I have an address if anyone who remembers Mary would like it.

Della Fletcher

**Margaret Martin** from March, who many of you will know because she has for several years sold cards and other MUE items, died last week on 27<sup>th</sup> April, at the age of 80. She had been a trustee and Archdeaconry Vice-President for Huntingdon and Wisbech and helped countless people in so many different ways. She will be greatly missed by the Mothers' Union and we send our condolences to her family. Information on her funeral will be circulated when it is arranged.



### BALSHAM NEWS

Two people in Balsham have knitted these lovely little pink garments from baby wool from a member from Linton.

Lap Blankets have been made and Christian Hope International have received knitting using wool from Linton

### THURSDAY PRAYER

In the Cathedral and on Zoom 10.30am

19<sup>th</sup> June – Dierdre Milner

The True Vine

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83847809128?pwd=VVhXUGINWkpaeGkyMUdwWHQvcC9tQT09>

ID. 838 4780 9128 Passcode 338053

**COMMUNICATION NEWS – NEW YouTube VIDEO.** Debbie Tye - Co-ordinator

We have another YouTube video link to share with you for **APRIL THURSDAY PRAYERS**: “The Presence of Jesus is Transforming”. Led by Canon Stuart Mitchell, retired priest from Clare, now resident in the Ely Deanery.

YouTube

Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YiRUIHeDzzk>

### A REFLECTION

*Philip Baker (23<sup>rd</sup> April 2022)*

As those of you who have had the misfortune to have had Covid will know, it causes a change to the senses so that things seem different, familiar yet strange at the same time. This applies to the taste of our food, the smell of our surroundings and even how things feel to our touch. I have also found that it has changed my perceptions about what I read, such as with my daily Bible passages. At first, I found this last a difficult change to cope with, but I am learning to use it to see new meaning in passages I had previously taken at face value. For example, Luke’s gospel is written about the origins of Christianity and aims to be a carefully researched study of the life and teaching of Jesus. It is joyful and features significant encounters of many women with Jesus. Then Acts, also considered to be written by Luke, is another book about origins, but this time of the church, so it starts with Jesus’ resurrection and covers a period of difficulty, decisions and conflict.

So what is the difference? Well, Christianity could exist without the church (difficult, but possible) whilst the church could not exist without Christianity. No Christ, no Christianity, no Christian Church. Totally interdependent but different from each other. Does it matter? I think it does and in very fundamental ways. Christianity is an absolute, made in heaven and cannot be wrong. As humans we have no say whatsoever in defining either it or our response to it. It is even beyond our understanding so we have to follow what we are told about it. The Church, on the other hand, is a construct of humans, it is our response to God and reflects our efforts to follow Christ. Not only can it be wrong but it frequently does get it totally wrong, even to the point of arguing against itself through the selection of different key beliefs.

Acts 6 verses 1 - 4: *In those days when the number of disciples was increasing, the Grecian Jews among them complained against the Hebraic Jews because their widows were being overlooked in the daily distribution of food. So the Twelve gathered all the disciples together and said, “it would not be right for us to neglect the ministry of the Word of God in order to wait on tables. Brothers, choose seven men from among you who are known to be full of the Spirit and wisdom. We will turn this responsibility over to them and will give our attention to prayer and the ministry of the word.”*

It was a simpler time, but there is an attractiveness in the simplicity of the model described by Luke, where the word of God had clarity and the church served his people. Living a Christian life has become more confusing over the years; it is as though we are being tested ever harder!

It looks as though we will be able to go into Littlehay Prison, at Perry near Huntingdon, soon (after 2 years) to continue with the course MU runs there as well as the coffee mornings. Catherina needs someone else to go with her. She is able to run the course but has to have another person there too. Checks will need to be made by the prison. Any Volunteers? More information from Catherina on 01480 393372.



**From Debbie Tye Communications Co-ordinator**

**June Payne** was presented with a long service award at the AGM in April.

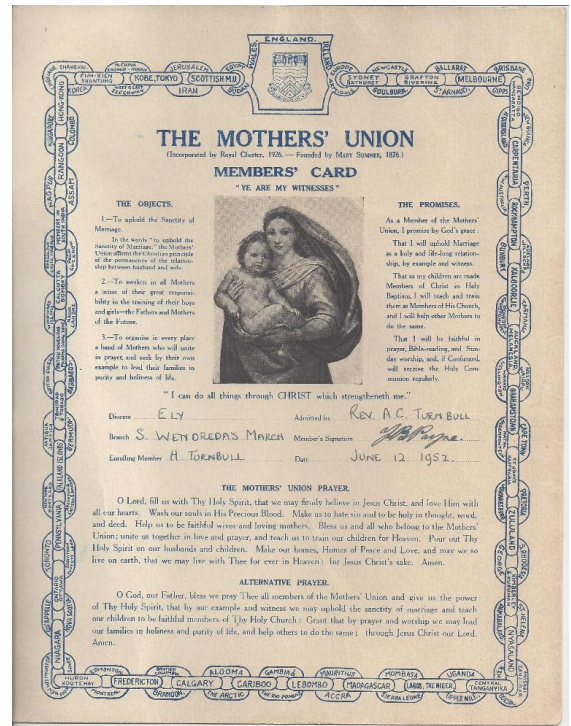
She joined Mothers' Union in June 1952, representing 70 years of faithful membership.

She first went to her MU Branch at St Wendreda's Church, March with her mother Lillie, even before she herself became a mother, and where she still continues to worship on Sundays.

June was born in March in 1929, and married Jim in 1951 at St Wendreda's, with their son John being born in 1956. She was employed by Cambridgeshire County Council, at County Hall, March, as Secretary to the County Surveyor, and later as Secretary to the Highways Training Scheme.

When June enrolled in the Mothers' Union 70 years ago the world was a very different place but surprisingly many similarities exist today. In 1952 the struggles of the Second World War were still a very pertinent memory, many basics were still subject to wartime rationing, hardship was commonplace, and the NHS was less than 3 years old. Babies were still born at home, but trained midwives and clinics were beginning to replace childbirth and parenting help from other experienced mothers in urban areas. Nonetheless, young couples, and particularly new mothers, enjoyed the help, support and example of family and friends – a real community spirit prevailed. Moreover, the desires of a happy, contented life and the ideals of the love of one's family, mutual respect of others and having a caring attitude, remain as important today as they did 70 years ago.

June has adhered to the promises of the Mothers' Union through example to her son, her grandchildren, great grandchildren and goddaughters. Her faith and values have remained unshakeable and constant throughout her long life, and her support for the work of the MU and regular attendance at MU Meetings and Events, have been a witness to this.



**MOTHERS' UNION GARDEN PARTY**  
Bishop Stephen's Garden, Ely. Friday 15<sup>th</sup>  
July. 3-5pm.  
Bishop of Huntingdon will be with us  
Bring your own packed tea. Fizz and soft drinks provided.  
Raffle prizes will be gratefully received and there will  
also be an opportunity to buy MU cards and see a display  
about our worldwide links.  
Wear something red, blue or white – or all three.

**Ely Diocesan Mothers' Union**  
Charity no. 251394  
<https://www.facebook.com/MUElyDiocese/>  
**Ros 01223 861846**  
[roswright1@gmail.com](mailto:roswright1@gmail.com)  
**Hazel 01638 743897**





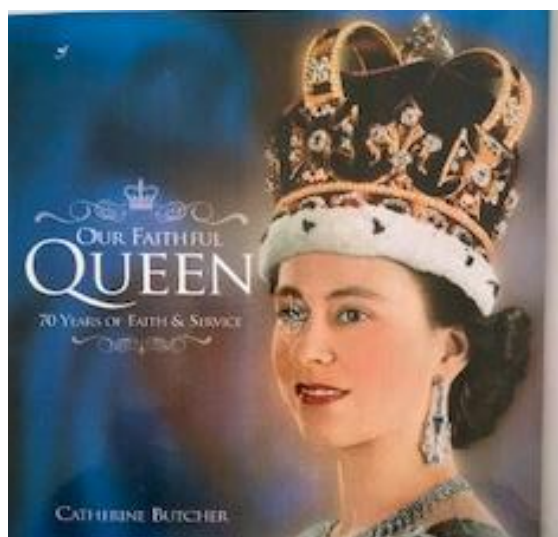
**Mothers' UNION**  
Christian care for families

## NEWSLETTER JUNE 2022

### JUBILEE SUMMER OF HOPE

This year, Queen Elizabeth II will become the first British monarch to celebrate a Platinum Jubilee. She has also been the Patron of the Mothers' Union for 70 years.

All members have received a booklet containing lots of ideas to celebrate this special occasion, as well as suggestions for fundraising to support women to reach their leadership potential. This can help transform communities throughout the world.



#### Prayer for Her Majesty the Queen, Patron of Mothers' Union

Eternal God, we thank you for Queen Elizabeth II,  
Patron of Mothers' Union.

For Her life of dedicated services to your Church,  
to Mothers' Union and people of all nations.

Bless her with more years of good health and  
service to you.

Teach us to serve you with humble hearts.

Lead us from despair to hope.

Make us trust you without fear.

Remove hate and install love within us.

Help us make peace not war.

Let peace fill our hearts,

our world our universe. Amen

*From Auckland New Zealand, translated from Samoan*

#### Is this a first?

Mothers' Union in Haddenham have been invited to  
run a stall at the Beer Festival on Sat. July 3<sup>rd</sup>.

An unlikely setting to raise money for the Summer of  
Hope – but we will see how it goes. *Audrey Kirk*

Ely Diocesan Mothers' Union Charity no. 251394

<https://www.facebook.com/MUElyDiocese/>

Ros 01223 861846 [roswright1@gmail.com](mailto:roswright1@gmail.com)

Hazel 01638 743897 [hwill66@icoud.com](mailto:hwill66@icoud.com)



The sun shone and the crowds turned out for the return of the **Yaxley Festival** in May, and we were there! Our tent was well positioned near one of the entrances, with lost children and first aid nearby. Over the two days 62 very grateful families used our facilities, including one little girl who had come overdressed for the heat, it was very hot, her mother bought her a dress from a nearby stall then used our tent to get her changed. During one hour on the Saturday, we had 16 families use our tent, resulting in a bit of a queue! At the entrances we handed out 360 leaflets about our tent to families with prams or buggies. I put a photo on our local Facebook page, we got over 100 "likes" and several comments on what a good idea the tent was. Our Vicar also put a photo on our church page, one parent's comment was "We didn't need to come to the tent in the end but I was so glad to know the space was there and I said to my husband, how wonderful for the church to be looking after people like that" All the members that helped over the weekend thoroughly enjoyed helping and talking to the families and are looking forward to the next festival. *Irene Porter*

**All Branch leaders need to have Safeguarding Training as well as DBS checks.**

I know that some of you will have already undertaken this through your church. For others, Kristy Leach, our safeguarding officer, is happy to have a session with MU members. It would be helpful if you could let me know if you have a hall or church room we could use so that we could get a few people together for training, in different areas. We will of course pay for use.

*Hazel*

**THURSDAY PRAYER**

**In the Cathedral and on Zoom 10.30am**

**9th June – Chris Holt - The Bread of Life**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83847809128?pwd=VVhXUGINWkpaeGkyMUdwWHQvcC9tQT09>

ID. 838 4780 9128 Passcode 338053

**COMMUNICATION NEWS – NEW YouTube VIDEO. Debbie Tye - Co-ordinator**

We have another YouTube video link to share with you for **MAY THURSDAY PRAYER**: “The True Vine”. Led by Deidre Milner, Branch Leader, All Saints Church, St Ives.

YouTube Link: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wqy\\_M6o7GXM](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wqy_M6o7GXM)

**MOTHERS’ UNION SERVICE, LUSAKA, ZAMBIA.**

This video is from the Anglican Cathedral of Lusaka, one of our MU Link Dioceses, and was posted on their Facebook page. It is a St Mary’s Day and Mothers’ Union Renewal of Vows Service at the Cathedral of the Holy Cross, Lusaka. I have been able to post it on our YouTube Channel, so hope you will enjoy watching this service of celebration – particularly the singing of the MU Members!

YouTube Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HUum0HEP0UY>

More info can be found on the Lusaka Cathedral Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/anglicancathedraloflusaka/>

The Cathedral of the Holy Cross is the Mother Church of the Anglican Diocese of Lusaka. Situated on Cathedral Hill, The Cathedral is a place of worship for members of the Anglican Communion of Lusaka and also a historical landmark for the country. (<http://www.anglicancathedraloflusaka.com/>)

## A REFLECTION

One of the notable things for me about reading the bible is that sometimes sentences or phrases leap out and demand attention. One such recently was in Acts 17: 26,27 – “From one man he made every nation of men, that they should inhabit the whole earth; and he determined the times set for them and the exact places where they should live. God did this so that men would seek him and perhaps reach out for him and find him, though he is not far from each one of us.”. If ever there was a mind-blowing statement expressed in simple, everyday words, surely this is it. From the concept that everything was pre-ordained from the beginning to the fabulous thought in the final phrase of the extract, it is almost too much to contemplate. However, contemplate we should, and I would like to take as our initial subject that final phrase – “though he is not far from each one of us.”

The author of Acts, probably Luke, is writing of the founding of the church and here, Paul, shortly after his conversion from Christian-hunter Saul to Christian-preacher Paul, is preaching a sermon on judgement and the importance of repentance. But what the phrase I have selected says to me is that God, who can sometimes feel to be remote from us and difficult to find, is actually near to us at all times and easy to access at all times. Now there is a stunning thought! This is why, when we pray God hears; because he is there with us and is sharing our problems. It is why we are never alone with our worries and concerns; because God is right there, he put us in place and, when things are difficult, he expects us to reach out to him, so he makes sure that he is right there, with us at all times. And not just me, but every single one of us right around the world, all 7.9 billion of us! If you look at it slightly differently, it means that he is with every one of the individuals on earth, whether they believe in him or not, and knows what they are doing, going through and what will become of them. That puts him in exactly the right place to furnish support when asked but also to judge each and every one of us, based on what we do (and why).

If you now re-read the selected verses printed above, I imagine you will read them in a new light. Go on, try it.

*Philip Baker (19<sup>th</sup> May 2022)*

## **PRISONS - COMMUNITY OF INTEREST NOTES.**

No-one was more surprised than me that a 4-week placement at a prison visitor centre, during my ministry training, led to 2 years volunteering with the charity that runs it, and a continuing heart for prison ministry. So, it was inspiring to be part of the community of interest meeting recently, to hear about the commitment of those involved in this ministry, and the generosity across the MU dioceses and branches.

Activities range from group courses to giving individual greetings cards, but what struck me about all of them is that they speak to a person's worth, to their individual dignity. That's so important to anyone who finds themselves in prison, or, as a relative or friend, a member of a community they never anticipated being part of. Receiving a personal, handwritten card or being given a holdall to replace the black or see-through bin bag to contain your belongings when you leave prison speak volumes. They speak of God's love, of sisters and brothers in Christ loving each other as he loves us.

Of course, it's not easy. Finding a way in, the right person to make contact with to build a relationship, is essential. Helping them to see the value of what MU can offer brings opportunities for partnership in supporting prisoners, and/or their visitors, helping to fill gaps in provision. Often, working with and alongside charities already involved is a good way to partner and build this ministry. In today's financial climate, it helps that MU support is free to the prison - though not without cost to members and supporters. That cost is even more of a challenge during this cost-of-living crisis and amid the many calls for generosity to help those less fortunate. Additionally, volunteer numbers are down post-pandemic as people reassess their commitments. Charities and prisons are also working with staff at full stretch,



including in prison chaplaincy. However, there are signs of hope, especially in valuable relationships already made and being built upon.

Hope springs too in prisons being opened up for more visits, especially Family Visits, and to starting up courses again. We were privileged to hear from Jackie Brocklebank, from Birmingham Diocese, about the Being Dad course she runs for men aged 18-25 at Swinfen Hall. With young children, these men are supported to be the best Dad they can be to their children now, in this situation. Taking varying literacy levels into account, the course is mostly talking and listening, and is highly valued by those who take part. It will make such a difference to the whole family.

I hope that we will all feel able to support Prisons' Week, for which leaflets will be available to dioceses in July (with a request for a donation to cover postage), and to share real stories in our branches and parishes that speak more deeply and truly than the soundbites and headlines in the media.

Rev'd Paula Spalding  
Chaplain, Ely Diocese



### **MARGARET MARTIN**

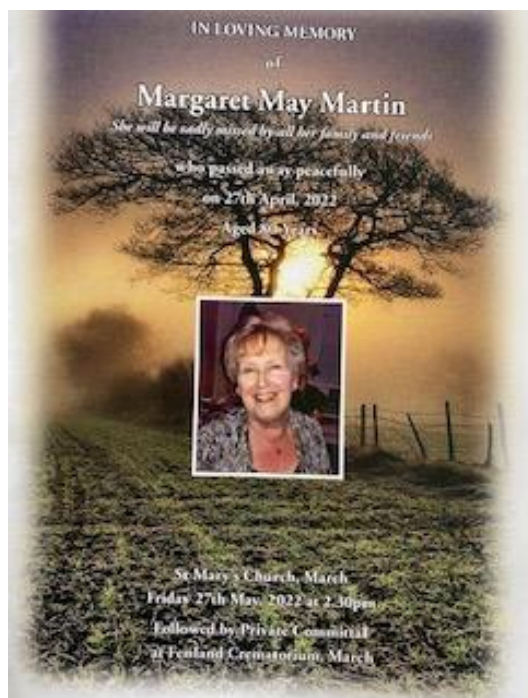
Four Mothers' Union banners from March churches and Farcet, and twenty mothers' Union members formed a guard of honour outside of St Mary's Church, March to lead Margaret's funeral cortege into the church.

Inside every seat was taken with friends and members of the many charitable groups she supported, including more MU members. Tributes were led by members of her family, both in words and music and the reading was from Luke 2 v22-40. The address was given by Revd. Andrew Smith. The Mothers' Union prayer was included in the service.

Margaret was very active within the Mothers' Union having been a diocesan trustee as Marketing Unit Co-ordinator then Archdeaconry Vice-President. Latterly she organised MU Enterprises in the diocese raising money for the diocese with MU card sales.

She will be much missed. Nothing was too much trouble for her and she was always ready to listen and advise at any time.

May she rest in peace and rise in glory.



### **MOTHERS' UNION GARDEN PARTY**

Bishop Stephen's Garden, Ely. Friday 15<sup>th</sup> July. 3-5pm.

Bishop of Huntingdon will be with us

Bring your own packed tea. Fizz and soft drinks provided.

Raffle prizes will be gratefully received and there will also be an opportunity to buy MU cards and see a display about our worldwide links.

Wear something red, blue or white – or all three.



**Mothers' UNION**  
Christian care for families

# JULY & AUGUST NEWSLETTER 2022

God of relationship, we look to your example of how to value the people who are part of our lives. May all of our relationships with family, friends, community and with the church, flourish and grow and glorify Christ. Amen.



**THE ORDINATION OF PRIESTS** took place at Ely Cathedral on Saturday 2 July, led by The Bishop of Huntingdon. The Preacher was Bishop John Pritchard. Among those ordained was MU member **Sue Squires-Dutton**, to serve in the benefice of St Peter & St Paul, Wisbech and St Augustine, Wisbech (pictured here with her husband Paul, and Revd Canon Matthew Bradbury and Sarah Bradbury).

Also ordained was **Jill Stimpson**, to serve in Wilburton, Haddenham, Witchford and Wentworth. Jill is a member of Haddenham MU. We pray for them and their families in their continued ministry within these parishes.

You can see some of the service here, beginning with Bishop's John's sermon:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QSjCINO5IAg> Read more about all the candidates becoming priests and deacons here: <https://www.elydiocese.org/about/news-jobs-and-events/news-and-announcements/news/petertide-ordinations-2022.php>

*Debbie Tye*



## WORLDWIDE LINKS



Good news, new contact has been made with our links in Zambia and Rwanda. I have had an email from Esther, wife of Bishop Nathan in Kigali. Esther sends her love to everyone. Rwanda has been in the news recently with the Commonwealth Summit in June. I have asked Esther if she was at the conference on "Violence against Women" which was attended by the Duchess of Cornwall and Boris Johnson's wife Carrie, also if Esther or Nathan met Prince Charles or the Duchess of Cornwall while they were there.

I now have a link, via messenger, with Ellen who is the Mothers' Union Vice President of Lusaka Diocese in Zambia. If you are on Face book, do have a look at Anglican Diocese of Lusaka Mothers' Union page, you will find photos of some of their events and services, which are all in English. They will be having a Diocesan Mothers' Union conference at the end of August, so we can look forward to getting news from that event.

I hope to be able to take some photos of our members at the garden party which I can send to our links, so lot's of happy smiley faces please.

*Irene Porter, Worldwide Officer*

### **Police say that new strategy to end violence against women and girls is taking shape**

The police force has been working hard to improve the way it responds to incidents involving violence against women and girls (VAWG). A new strategy was launched in November with key aims of improving VAWG performance across all areas of the force, building long-term cultural change and restoring public confidence in the police.

Chief Constable Nick Dean said: "We have always had strategies in place to protect vulnerable people, but the last year has highlighted the need to review and further improve our strategic and tactical response to violence against women and girls. There have been four distinct improvement projects, all of which are evolving and will continue to strive for enhancement." T

The projects are as follows:

**Project Kaizen: Domestic Abuse.** This project examined each phase of a domestic abuse investigation, from the point a victim contacted police to the conclusion of the court process and beyond. **Project Artemis: Child Sexual Abuse and Exploitation (CSAE).** This provides a strategic review of CSAE response through effective partnership engagement and early-intervention strategies with the aim of creating an environment where children feel safe in their homes, community and online. **Project Boyd: Offender management and Public Protection Unit (PPU).** This project reviewed the offender management and PPU processes across all Cambridgeshire. Ensuring that a consistent approach is adopted when managing registered sex offenders dangerous, and violent offenders within the community. **Project Eleos: Serious Sexual Offences (SSO) / Rape Investigation.** This has involved the review of the force's SSO response.



## MOTHERS' UNION GARDEN PARTY

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Bishop of Huntingdon will be with us

Bring your own packed tea. Fizz and soft drinks provided.

Raffle prizes will be gratefully received and there will also be an opportunity to buy MU cards and see a display about our worldwide links.

Wear something red, blue or white – or all three.

### A REFLECTION – MU

*Philip Baker (22<sup>nd</sup> June 2022)*

The Old Testament book of Ecclesiastes is full of woe and the futility of life. In that sense it is unique in the Bible, pointing out that life is meaningless and a drudgery. However, as with all things, it is how the reader makes sense of it that matters and I find there are lessons even from such despairing text.

For example, in 5.10-12 the writer (possibly Solomon) says: "Whoever loves money never has money enough; whoever loves wealth is never satisfied with his income. This too is meaningless. As goods increase, so do those who consume them. And what benefit are they to the owner except to feast his eyes on them? The sleep of a labourer is sweet, whether he eats too little or too much, but the abundance of a rich man permits him no sleep." And so it goes until in 5.15 we read: "Naked a man comes from his mother's womb, and as he comes, so he departs. He takes nothing from his labour that he can carry in his hand."

At one level this is indeed a statement which is true and utterly clear about the pointlessness of life, of our existence on earth. But at another level it is a reminder or a pointer for us that our time on earth is not about striving for personal betterment or private gain. For whatever we accumulate in human terms loses all point on our passing into life with God. More it is about accumulating credit in the ways that God measures success; in love for God and our neighbours, not in love of ourselves. This we can take with us, as we leave all earthly signs of our wealth behind.

It seems to me that Ecclesiastes contains much valuable guidance for us to follow if we just read the words with our brains engaged! What the text relates is the reality of man's existence on earth, but to read it as that and not in the context of our life on earth being only a prelude to our life afterwards is to miss the point. So let us see our time on earth through new eyes, where all we do is aimed at being in a better position when we start that next part of our lives. Following God's instruction is difficult, but it can also be very rewarding, not just right now but also in our life to come.



**Members of Burwell Mothers' Union enjoying afternoon tea in Philip Baker's garden**



## Balsham MU Garden Party 21.6.22

### Platinum Jubilee Celebration Quiz

Heads down doing the quiz that Joanna had prepared in the Neale's garden - 20 questions on the earlier part of Her Majesty's reign. As members were children/teenagers when the Queen came to the throne I thought members would remember earlier events rather than later ones

If anyone is interested in having a copy of a quiz I can email a copy. Our members seemed to enjoy doing it. Contact [sanderschimneys@uwclub.net](mailto:sanderschimneys@uwclub.net)

Joanna Sanders

#### IMPC MEMBER Margaret Barnard aged 94

Margaret lives in Upwell and her son David has posted to me about 50 large squares 14 in x 10 in so I am making these up into blankets for Christian Hope International.

The colours are very bright and I think there are enough squares for around three blankets so I feel rather like a Bangadeshi machining and machining! Then they look so much better and are stronger if you blanket stitch round the edges – that takes quite a long time as well. I will post the blankets to C H I when done, so hopefully they can get into the next container load.

I have scanned an article from the CHI magazine showing where it all goes. Meanwhile another of my knitters has done 48 x 6in squares for me but I have just started to sew them up. I have doors open so getting lots of fresh air whilst I machine.

*Joanna Sanders*



This is in brief what the article says:

Stitches of Hope have a tried and tested route to Moldova and Romania through Mission Without Borders. The lorry left the warehouse in early April and arrived safely. Ukrainian refugees were supplied with knitted items, medical supplies, food, bedding, toiletries and other essential aid.

Huge thanks go to those who provided items and also donated over £40,000, and those who helped sort, pack and load over 5 tonnes of Aid.



**AFIA** I was so thrilled when I received this letter from one of the families who had been away at the May half-term

*Dear Mother's Union,*

*The holiday gave us the opportunity to be a family without the day-to-day stresses of home-life.*

*L has only left the house on a few occasions over the last 3-4 years and so this was a massive achievement for him and gave him something to look forward to. It has made him realise he can go out and he has started to do small outings.*

*We have now put together some activities for over the summer, one is going to the beach with our dog which would not have happened before.*

*The boys also spent some quality time with their Dad. This is the first holiday he has had with them.*

*The holiday itself was wonderful. Caravan was stunning and that in itself was amazing but then to receive 2 wallets, one for each of the boys and an envelope for myself with spending money made all the difference. L ate fish and chips from a fish and chip shop which he has never done before.*

*Thank you so very much from all of us. Much appreciated.*

It is thanks to you, our members who raise money for the AFIA fund. I know several branches have held AFIA fundraisers recently, and there are others planned, so thank you all. You can see from the above the difference it can make for a struggling family.

For your information, this particular holiday cost £723, this was for the caravan hire, pocket money for the children (£15 each) and £100 contribution towards petrol and food. (August holidays will cost more). I think you will agree this is money well spent.

Pocket Money – I put each child's money into separate age-appropriate purses/wallets. I have almost exhausted my stock. I would be grateful to receive any new or good condition used ones. I look around the charity shops and they are usually priced under £2.

Di Sabel, our Bookings Officer has been busy arranging 4 holidays for the end of August, and will be booking several more for the October half term week.

**THURSDAY PRAYER In the Cathedral and on Zoom 10.30am**

**21<sup>st</sup> July – Debbie Tye - God's Sign to Noah**

There will be no Zoom at this service. Join us at the cathedral if you can.

**18<sup>th</sup> August – Gail Swanson – Celebrating Mary Sumner**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83847809128?pwd=VVhXUGlNWkpaGkyMUdwWHQvcC9tQT09>

ID. 838 4780 9128 Passcode 338053

**COMMUNICATION NEWS – NEW YouTube VIDEO.**

*Debbie Tye - Co-ordinator*

We have a new YouTube video link to share with you for **JUNE THURSDAY PRAYERS: "The Bread of Life"**. Led by Chris Holt, Praying our Faith Co-ordinator.

YouTube Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sYwddAaYDSk>



## Jo Wibberley interview

Many of you will have read the article sent with the June newsletter written by Oksana about their life in Ukraine and how she and her two children eventually managed to get to Cambridge. They are staying with Jo Wibberley and if you click on the link below you can hear Jo's interview for the Mothers' Union about being a host. It is on the MU web site and lasts about 4 minutes.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6AjG9fPuuiY>

Jo is also on a What's App group for Mums4Ukraine and they have just published a wish list. Jo is happy to be a collecting point and you can get in touch with her on [jowibs.mu@gmail.com](mailto:jowibs.mu@gmail.com) or 01223 248728. Perhaps your branch could get together if they have items on the list.

## Aid to Ukrainian Refugees in Cambridge via Mums4Ukraine Wish List

Toiletries & hygiene items especially deodorants and soaps

Cleaning items

Stationery

Canned/long shelf-life food e.g. pasta, rice, pulses, preserves, sugar

Sports items, e.g. yoga mats, bicycle helmets/lights/locks

New/nearly new women's and children's summer clothes, rain wear, tracksuit, shoes.

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## ANNUAL GATHERING BELFAST 23-25<sup>th</sup> September 2022

The Annual Gathering (previously called General Meeting) is this year being held in Belfast. The meeting is interesting in itself but the opportunity of fellowship with members from far and wide opens up the understanding, love and reasons for the very existence of Mothers' Union across the world. If you have been before you will know this and I am sure would share only positive comments about attending.

### BELFAST 23<sup>RD</sup> – 25<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2022

**The basics:** Service at St. Anne's Cathedral – no charge, Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> September

Tickets are £25 for combined Meeting and Concert on 24<sup>th</sup> September

**Accommodation:** Approximately £120 per person for 2 nights if you share in a double/twin room for 2 nights. Breakfast included. (£240 if you prefer a room of your own).

We are also looking at a cheaper option outside the city and more details will be available soon but it is easy to book your own seat for the service and event ticket. Other costs can be kept to a minimum but really only meals.

**Flights:** Easyjet or BA are quite reasonable

<https://www.mothersunion.org/annual-gathering-2022>

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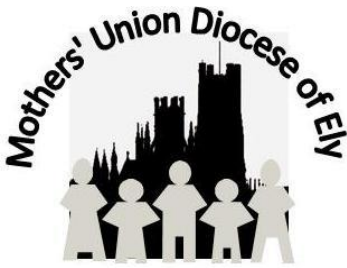
### Newsletter contacts

Ely Diocesan Mothers' Union Charity no. 251394

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<https://www.facebook.com/MUElyDiocese/>

Hazel 01638 743897 [hwill66@icloud.com](mailto:hwill66@icloud.com)



# SEPTEMBER NEWSLETTER 2022

A few of the members from Ely Diocesan Mothers' Union were very privileged to meet Mrs Sophi, the wife of Bishop Sharma of Vellore, when she was in Ely Diocese after their time at the Lambeth Conference. She is President of The Women's Board, who organise work similar in many ways to the Mothers' Union.



Photographs showing the beautiful sari that Sophi wore and the gifts of stoles and bags that she gave us.



Over the next few newsletters, I will have a section to tell you about many and varied aspects of their work covering the following:

## Activities Carried out in Women's Board:

- Gospel of bible women
- Bethelpuram Leprosy Project
- Skill Development Program - Jewellery Making, Knitting Wire Baskets, Cross Stitches - Embroidery
- Girl Child Development - Awareness on Menstrual Hygiene, Awareness on Child Help Line and on Safe and Unsafe Touch
- Women Entrepreneur Meet
- Church Planting
- Rural & Union Women's Fellowship and Flood Relief Work

Tanzania has one of the fastest growing economies in Africa, but has many challenges to overcome – one is access to clean water, another is environmental degradation as well as poverty and food security. The country has also suffered greatly during the Covid crisis.

Stapleford has for the past 41 years had a link with the district of Nachingwea in Tanzania, supporting them through educational, health and engineering projects. The Link committee arranged a Zoom meeting with the Bishop, James Almasi, and his wife, Mama Veronica (who leads the MU in Masasi diocese). I was invited to participate as leader of Stapleford Branch.

I learnt many interesting things about the situation in Tanzania in general – one was that the parish priests are not paid a formal salary and so many of them have to support themselves by having a small farm (apparently Veronica has chickens and pigs). Most villages in Tanzania now have access to electricity and public transport (so that people can work in larger towns). Tanzania has also suffered from a failure of the rains in the autumn when planting is done, with the result that the later planting has led to poor crops, and some deprivation, meaning there is less money to go towards the support of the Church in Tanzania. Speaking to Mama Veronica (via her husband as interpreter), she told me there are 5,500 MU members in the diocese; last year each deanery was visited to motivate and mobilize younger women to join the MU. There is a challenge as there are two distinct groups – single and married women – so she feels they should be treated in different ways according to their status. Local seminars are held so that women can explore ways to improve their economic status. The 16 Days of Activism is supported as well via a service in the cathedral, last year attended by 400 members.

The Masasi diocese has its centenary in 2026; projects to celebrate this include the foundation of a boarding school for girls' further education, training of more priests, and the establishment of more dispensaries. The Stapleford Link committee has supported many projects including setting up English classes for pupils so they can progress towards further education, and in the past the establishment of a school library, and health and medical equipment for the hospital in Nachingwea. The Mothers' Union in Nachingwea is very active; ten young women were trained as machinists (financed by the Stapleford Link Committee); they are now making wedding dresses to be hired out to brides (in the hope of encouraging marriage), as well as school uniforms for the Special Needs School there. There is also a plan that this group could make (washable) sanitary products as a business proposition to earn money both for the machinists (fulfilling the Bishop's plan of encouraging financial self-sufficiency for women) and to help the community. It was felt that doing something practical like this could motivate women to join the Mothers' Union.



**NEW YouTube VIDEO. Debbie Tye - Co-ordinator**

We have a new YouTube video link to share with you for **AUGUST THURSDAY PRAYER**: “Celebrating Mary Sumner”. Led by Gail Swanson, Ely Cathedral Branch

Leader. YouTube Link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fVPFKp0vkwU>

<p><b>THURSDAY PRAYER In the Cathedral and on Zoom 10.30am 15<sup>th</sup> September – Linda Swain – The Gift of the Holy Spirit</b></p> <p><a href="https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83847809128?pwd=VVhXUGlNWkpaGkyMUdwWHQvcC9tQT09ID.83847809128">https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83847809128?pwd=VVhXUGlNWkpaGkyMUdwWHQvcC9tQT09ID.83847809128</a> Passcode 338053</p>
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Members of **Haddenham Mothers' Union** enjoying their tea party to celebrate Mary Sumner's Day. Young waitresses helped serve the tea and cakes.



\*\*\*\*\*

Faith In Action - September 2022

Jean Webb - Faith In Action Coordinator

Thank you for all the knitted lap blankets and twiddle muffs, some of you have been very busy! A special mention to Balsham and Brampton branches. They are off to Hinchingsbrooke Frailty Unit, and I know, will be gratefully received. If anyone has any odd balls (or part balls) of double knitting wool, we'd be grateful for it, and it can be put to good use.

Thank you also to those who have alerted Maureen and me to house clearances, we have been able to distribute some quality items to the hostels and refuges that rely on our help.

If you have any postcards for Mission Aviation Fellowship, we will be collecting them at the Diocesan Meeting, also postage stamps for Marie Curie/Leprosy Mission/ St John's Hospice Moggerhanger.

The Wish List will be available soon, and some ideas for Christmas giving.

I'm always pleased to know of any ways *branches* are putting Faith into Action, it is so good to share best practice and new ideas.

\*\*\*\*\*



It is with sadness I inform you of the death of **Dawn Laver**, at Arthur Rank Hospice, on Monday 29<sup>th</sup> August. She was a long serving member from Soham branch who was also their treasurer. The photograph shows her (on the left) helping to serve teas this April alongside other Soham members.

Her funeral will be on 12<sup>th</sup> September at St. Andrew's Church, Soham at 2pm.

At the start of my bible-reading career I found Isaiah to be difficult to read, but I am developing a high regard for his writings as I am starting to understand his purpose. “Isaiah” means “the Lord saves” and he lived around 700 BC. He writes of God’s judgement and punishment, but he also shows how He rescues us when we pay attention to Him. This means that, mixed in with the doom and gloom, there are visions of redemption and glory, which (in my opinion) are among the most up-lifting passages anywhere in the Bible.

In 1:16-17 he writes: “(Your hands are full of blood;) wash and make yourselves clean. Take your evil deeds out of my sight! Stop doing wrong, learn to do right! Seek justice, encourage the oppressed. Defend the cause of the fatherless, plead the case of the widow.” Now we all sometimes struggle to do the right thing, sometimes even knowing what is the right thing to do is difficult to determine. But this is fairly definite as a statement – do it like this, in the right way, or go away, I will disown you. Now that would be disastrous so it is clearly worth the effort to try!

And in 1:18-20 Isaiah goes on to show what we are expected to do and the benefits (plus the consequence of disobedience): ““Come now, let us reason together,” says the Lord. “Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red as crimson, they shall be like wool. If you are willing and obedient, you will eat the best from the land; but if you resist and rebel, you will be devoured by the sword.” For the mouth of the Lord has spoken.” This is simple and does not require interpretation. That is why I find it so powerful; it does not need thinking about at all. It is clearly stated in black and white – behave well and survive, behave badly and die.

Now it is not always possible to see our actions so clearly as black or white, but, as with so many things in the Bible, it is our intentions that matter most. Given the potential prize, surely it must be worth the effort?

\*\*\*\*\*

**FUTURE DATES**

**MU QUIET DAY**

**Milton Church**

**29<sup>th</sup> September 10am -3pm**

**Revd. Jackie Metcalfe**

**Tea/Coffee provided. Packed lunch  
required.**

\*\*\*\*\*

**AUTUMN DIOCESAN MEETING**

**Milton Church**

**Sat. 8<sup>th</sup> October**

**Coffee/Tea 9.30am for 10am start**

**Packed lunch and finish by 2.30pm**



Supporting young, vulnerably housed women in Cambridge

PLEASE JOIN US

**THE  
WHITWORTH  
TRUST**

AGM & UPDATE ON  
WHITWORTH  
HOUSE

Wednesday 28  
September 6pm  
Magdalene College  
Benson Hall. RSVP  
whitworthtrust@gmail.com

**CELEBRATE, SUPPORT, SHARE**

Registered Charity number: 1091682



The Diocese of Lusaka, Zambia, Mothers' Union held a conference at the end of August. Events at these meetings were available to watch on Facebook. It was wonderful to see all the ladies, most of whom were wearing their blue and white Mothers' Union uniforms. The opening involved the participants parading along the road to the venue, following the event banner, they even had a band marching with them. There was a lot of joyful singing and with English being spoken I was able to follow most of what was being said. One speaker had a strong accent that was difficult to understand, but he, yes a man, must have been very amusing as there was a lot of laughter from the ladies, and a lot of Amen's.

If you are able, I would encourage you to look at the Diocese of Lusaka mothers' union facebook page.

God is good, all the time, all the time, God is good.

\*\*\*\*\*

Yvonne Cubitt, a very committed churchgoer and long-standing member of Balsham MU had her 90<sup>th</sup> birthday on 20th August. We send sincere congratulations to her on this special celebration.

If you have any members with special birthdays (70,80,90,100) please let me know and I will put them in the newsletter so that everyone knows your age and not just your family!

\*\*\*\*\*



I thought you might like to see the knitted top to the post box in Kessingland, Suffolk. Last time we were there it had knitted sand, buckets, spades, shells and a deck chair on it. This time it was to celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee. It always makes me smile as does the one in Ely near the Market Square.

Ely Diocesan Mothers' Union Charity no. 251394  
<https://www.facebook.com/MUElyDiocese/>  
 Ros 01223 861846 [roswright1@gmail.com](mailto:roswright1@gmail.com)  
 Hazel 01638 743897 [hwill66@icloud.com](mailto:hwill66@icloud.com)





Photos taken at the MU Re-Imagining Conference in Liverpool, with Wendy, the Diocesan President of Cheshire and with Sheran Harper our Worldwide President.

\*\*\*\*\*

**HARSTON-HAUGHTON Have any individual MU members information that could help Margaret?**

'We have recently discovered a handsome banner created for the All Saints' Harston and St Edmund's Houghton Mothers' Union. We suppose by its arts and crafts style that it must be 80 to 100 years old. It needs some repairs and we are looking into how these may best be done to the highest standard.

However, I am writing to you because we know very little about this joint branch of the Mothers' Union and wonder if there are records with Ely Diocese about the branches of the MU within the Diocese? Any information you can give me or may lead to will be added to the history of our churches and, in the case of Harston, to the Harston History website [www.harstonhistory.org.uk](http://www.harstonhistory.org.uk). With many thanks in anticipation of your assistance

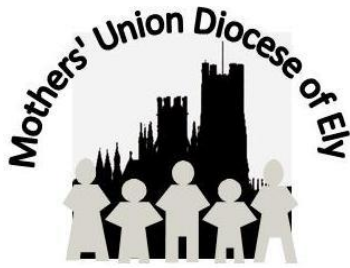
Kind regards

Margaret Greeves - Assistant Churchwarden, All Saints' Harston



We had a lovely afternoon in the Bishop's garden at the end of July. Bishop Dagmar came and spoke and you can see her with Irene Porter our Worldwide Officer, at her display. Bishop Stephen then popped in unexpectedly too to chat to members. So two for the price of one!





**Mothers' UNION**  
Christian care for families

## OCTOBER NEWSLETTER 2022



### Parent and Baby tent at great Gransden Show

A lovely picture of a family who used the tent to use the baby changing facilities. We have some very dedicated volunteers, headed by Maureen Haigh, who attend the tent to help make life easier for feeding and changing little ones. It was also the first outing for our new flag.



### THURSDAY PRAYER

**20<sup>th</sup> October 2022 10.30am**  
**'Looking Forward with Hope'**

Della Fletcher will be leading this.

We are unable to use the Cathedral as we normally would so this will only be on Zoom

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83847809128?pwd=VVhXUGlNWkpaeGkyMUdwWHQvcC9tQT09>

ID. 838 4780 9128      Passcode 338053



## *With Love from Mothers' Union*

On Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> September Brampton Mothers' Union met at the Chapel in Hinchingsbrooke Hospital. The chaplaincy team welcomed us and we joined together for a communion service. We donated five memory quilts for the chaplaincy team to give to parents as part of a funeral service for babies who have died in hospital. We were also delighted to meet Alison and Sherly the Dementia Advisers for Hinchingsbrooke and Peterborough hospitals and hand over 13 lap blankets and 3 twiddle muffs for use by their patients.

We have been supporting projects in the hospital for several years including financial donations to their "999" club which liaises with school children about the work of the hospital, raising money for the purchase of holding crosses to help with bedside chaplaincy, making memory quilts and now knitting lap blankets and twiddle muffs. We have also started collecting items for antenatal women who are admitted to the antenatal and postnatal wards without items such as nightwear and nappies for the baby.

If you would like to find out more about Mothers' Union in Brampton, please email [mu@eastleightonstone.com](mailto:mu@eastleightonstone.com).



Two members of the Anglesey Branch have celebrated special birthdays recently. Jill Jenyns had her 80<sup>th</sup> birthday on 29<sup>th</sup> August and Enid Buckett her 90<sup>th</sup> birthday on 15<sup>th</sup> September. Our congratulations to both of them. If there are any special celebrations at your branch do let me know.

Hazel



## A REFLECTION – MU

Philip Baker (30<sup>th</sup> September 2022)

The House Group I attend studied a section of Peter’s first letter at our last meeting. Now Peter is a writer I like, as he talks in his first letter about hope; he gives encouragement to Christians who are suffering, and we need that today just as early Christians did then (although in many ways their lot then was far worse than ours is now!).

In this letter, strong use is made of the imagery of the Temple and the stones of which it is made. In 2:4,5 “As you come to Him, the living Stone – rejected by men but chosen by God and precious to Him – you also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.” This is fairly straightforward, but verses 6 to 8 read: “See, I lay a stone in Zion, a chosen and precious cornerstone, and the one who trusts in Him will never be put to shame”. Now, to you who believe, “The stone the builders rejected has become the capstone, a stone that causes men to stumble and a rock that makes them fall.” They stumble because they disobey the message – which is also what they were destined for.” At this point I turned to my favourite guide and I cannot improve on the words it uses to explain this: “We are not only the temple itself, but also the priests who serve within it. Ironically, this holy, life-changing edifice is built around a stone that other builders regard as useless and ill-shaped. They can’t ignore this stone; it keeps tripping them up and getting in their way. For many, Christ is a foundation to their lives. For others, He is a problem that simply won’t go away.”

This imagery would have been much clearer to contemporaries of Peter (around 65AD) than it is to us today (or is it just me?). But it is a picture of hope for those who believe. It says that believers are God’s chosen and special people, a group of royal priests and a holy nation. God has done this for you and now you must tell all of the wonderful things He has done. For “you” in this you can also read “we”! This is encouragement on a grand scale, putting all of us believers together as a nation, and unbelievers as those whom we have still to reach with the Word. It is so comforting to feel a part of a movement and not just to be an individual, especially in times of trouble. Not only that, but also, that whatever we are going through, God is there with us, the Cornerstone of our lives.

.....

I promised last month I would write more about the work carried out in the Diocese of **Vellore** in India. Mrs Sophie, the President of The Women’s Board told us about their Skills Development Programme. This training workshop helps women to have some economic independence. It includes Jewellery making using Shilpkar clay to make bracelets, chains and earrings, learning the traditional skill of Knitting Wire basket (a forgotten skill) in a variety of patterns and Cross Stitch and Embroidery to decorate pillow cases, towels etc.



Each skills development workshop begins with prayer and song and bible reading. Tea and snacks are provided with Biryani for lunch. Women Empowerment songs are taught to the participants. The aim is that these rural women will impact on others in their community.

## AUTUMN DIOCESAN MEETING

Milton Church

Sat. 8<sup>th</sup> October

Coffee/Tea 9.30am for 10am  
start

*Agenda includes reports from  
Task group trustees and  
information on the Re-imaging  
Project – the national initiative  
for all of Britain and Ireland*

**Packed lunch and finish by  
2.30pm**

Parking is available in Milton Hall as usual but it will be locked during the day when we are meeting.

At the end of September we had a lovely **Quiet Day** at Milton led by Revd. Jackie Metcalfe, who is a past trustee of Ely MU Diocese and long-time MU member. The title was 'Finding God In The Mundane'. We had time for reflection using talks, music and bible reading leading us in to quiet time of our own to reflect on 'finding the extraordinary in the ordinary'.

About 20 people attended and we concluded with a silent communion.

Our MU Diocese holds two or three of these a year across the county so please look out for the next date and think about joining us.

Hazel

**Ely Diocesan Mothers' Union Charity no.  
251394**

<https://www.facebook.com/MUElyDiocese/>

Ros 01223 861846 [roswright1@gmail.com](mailto:roswright1@gmail.com)

Hazel 01638 743897 [hwill66@icloud.com](mailto:hwill66@icloud.com)

## COMMUNICATION NEWS

**NEW YouTube VIDEO.**

**Debbie Tye - Co-ordinator**

We have a new YouTube video link to share with you for **SEPTEMBER THURSDAY PRAYER**: "The Gifts of the Holy Spirit". Written by Linda Swain from Ely Cathedral MU. There was a technical problem in recording the live service, so Sue Claydon has very kindly shared the Powerpoint slides, so you can read the prayers and talk, and listen to some music. If you need more time to read the slides, please press the pause button as the video is playing.

YouTube Link:

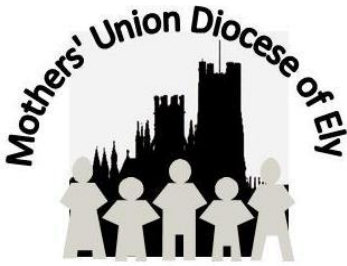
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ORN5hhhy8Z-W>

*Do find time to listen to this if you can. Having a musical background makes it even more beautiful. Thank you Debbie. Hazel*

## JULY GARDEN PARTY.

This lovely cushion was left behind at the Garden Party in July. If it belongs to you, please could you contact Debbie Tye (01353 666883 or [dmtypost@hotmail.com](mailto:dmtypost@hotmail.com)). She will be bringing it to the Diocesan Day at Milton Church on 8<sup>th</sup> October if you wish to collect it then, or else make other arrangements for its collection from Debbie.





# NOVEMBER NEWSLETTER 2022

## AUTUMN DIOCESAN DAY



At Diocesan Day in October members met together to hear up to date news from task group leaders. It was encouraging to hear that 15 families had enjoyed AFIA holidays this year. The bulk of the day was taken up with information about **Re-imagining MU**. This focussed on what we need to do to both locally and nationally to ensure that Mothers' Union can continue for many years to come.

We have an increased age demographic and a reducing membership. Members worked in groups to discuss how we can get the message over to others about the work we do, and how we can encourage others to take part. They covered four areas.

**Modernisation** including banking, flexibility of meetings, paperwork and leadership.

**Relevance** and connecting with communities in practical ways as well as through the campaigns we run.

**Building relationships** and partnerships while keeping our own MU identity as well as raising funds for what we do.

**Living the faith** and exploring how we reach out and support within our own church.

*Prayer is the bedrock of our movement. Time with God can give us inspiration for improving and sometimes changing what we do.*



You will have seen the photographs and article on the front page of the October Newsletter about the **parent and baby tent** we run at country shows. We were delighted to receive a donation of £300 from the organising committee in Great Gransden. We do not expect payment but it is good to know that our help is appreciated. It will go to AFIA for holidays.

Ely Diocesan Mothers' Union Charity no.  
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<https://www.facebook.com/MUElyDiocese/>

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Hazel 01638 743897 [hwill66@icloud.com](mailto:hwill66@icloud.com)



In August a remarkable discovery was made in the church office. Tucked away in a corner was a drab, battered old notebook that didn't look at all exciting, but contained in its pages a treasure trove of MU history in the form of registers and reports of meetings and other events between 1938 and 1953.. Together these records give insights on how MU was run, how active it was, and what was expected of members in those far off days, especially during and just after WW2. The register records several names of mothers and aunts of present members!

MU was evidently a much bigger organisation than it is now, at every level. There were many more members as there was a branch in almost every village and parish in the deanery, and an attendance of hundreds at deanery gatherings. Our branch had a close affiliation with Eynesbury branch with joint meetings being frequently held. The record book also contains newspaper cuttings of detailed reports of MU festivals and other notable events.

Monthly branch meetings followed a regular pattern: the vicar played the hymns and read the prayers and the visiting speaker's topics were always on some aspect of the Christian faith, the main emphasis being on how to bring up children in the faith, and the importance of a truly Christian home environment. At a meeting in 1939 members listened to a talk on hosting evacuated children, in which the speaker emphasised what a great opportunity this was for showing what a Christian home was like, perhaps even giving their charges their first idea of God!

The meetings then, as now, were usually held in the Church Rooms, but during the war these premises were often occupied by evacuees and branch meetings took place in Brook House, home of Mrs Atkinson, the branch honourable secretary from 1922 for almost thirty years this hospitable lady also hosted the branch's annual garden party. Other social events were also held, the programme consisting of songs, recitations and games, and there were coach outings in the summer months to a seaside resort or other places of interest.

Refreshments of course always played an important part in MU gatherings and the branch had a tea committee to organise this. During the war years only buns could be served as cake had become a rare luxury. In 1943 members paid 3d each for their tea and bun! As part of the war effort St Neots, Eynesbury and Great Paxton branches undertook to wash and mend socks each week for the troops. It has indeed been fascinating to learn how in those most challenging years of wartime and austerity Mothers' Union members in this part of the country kept calm and carried on.

\*\*\*\*\*

**COMMUNICATION NEWS – NEW YouTube VIDEO. Debbie Tye - Co-ordinator**

We have a new YouTube video link to share with you for **OCTOBER THURSDAY PRAYER**: “Looking Forward with Hope”. Led by Della Fletcher, Clergy Liaison Officer. (This was a change to the published programme, which would have been Sue Claydon on “Peace”. This will now take place on December 15<sup>th</sup>).

YouTube Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qtDk2gMt5qg>

\*\*\*\*\*

**THURSDAY PRAYER**

**In the Cathedral and on Zoom 10.30am 24<sup>th</sup> November**

**Irene Porter – Christ’s Disciples are sent out into the World**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83847809128?pwd=VVhXUGlNWkpaGkyMUdwWlHQvcC9tQT09>

ID. 838 4780 9128      Passcode 338053



## KNITTED BLANKETS ALWAYS NEEDED

Burwell Branch member Pat Leah with one of the blankets she has knitted for the Mothers' Union to give to those in hostels and refuges as well as, in some cases, going abroad. A useful item, particularly at this time of year to help keep people warm.

A reminder of the **WISH LIST** that went out last month, some of which was for Christmas gifts. Bags for Life, Toiletries etc should be with Jean Webb (Ely) or Maureen Haigh (Haddenham) by the **end of November**. If you have problems getting the items to them it is worth asking the nearest trustee (names and contact details in the Branch Directory which each branch leader has), if they can help or ring me.  
Hazel

### Faith In Action News

Jean Webb, Faith in Action Coordinator.

**AFIA** I was so pleased to receive this from one of the families we recently supported, the boys lost their mother to Covid. Their grandmother wrote on the 2<sup>nd</sup> day at Hunstanton -

*'Firstly, a massive thank you for the very generous amount you gave us, the boys were thrilled with their wallets.*

*Secondly, we arrived here safely and the caravans are really lovely and very comfortable.*

*The boys are so excited about today and it's so heart-warming to see them both with big smiles on their faces. I can't thank the Mothers' Union enough.*

Thanks for all the items brought along to the Diocesan Meeting at Milton. Most of the baby knitting has been delivered to Ely Baby Bank, who were really pleased to receive it (knitted items are much sought after). Knitting wool has been passed on to those who like to knit, and the knitted squares are being pieced together by a clever Helen.

Postcards and stamps are awaiting collection.

A plea for those who collect stamps for our charities – and with Christmas post coming up, please do! Please ensure that there is sufficient envelope left around the stamps so that the perforations don't get damaged (which makes them worthless), 1 cm or ¼ inch is ideal. Thank you.

One of our members has several embroidery and tapestry kits to give away, a donation to one of the M U charities would be appreciated. If interested please contact Chris Mitchell [cbm.scb@btinternet.com](mailto:cbm.scb@btinternet.com) 01353 669975. Chris also has a sewing machine trolley available (not a machine!)

If anyone does have an unused, working sewing machine, Fenland Refuge would appreciate it.

\*\*\*\*\*

Joanna Sanders from Balsham branch would be happy to receive Mothers' Union badges no longer in use. These would go to a branch in Malawi where very few of the members can afford badges. She can be contacted on 01223 893063 or [sanderschimneys@uwclub.net](mailto:sanderschimneys@uwclub.net)

## **A REFLECTION – MU**

*Philip Baker (28<sup>th</sup> October 2022)*

There was discussion at the recent Diocesan Day in Milton about the role of Mothers' Union Branches in the parishes. Most were fully integrated with all the clergy enthusiastic and supportive members, but there were some where the potential benefits to be derived from the synergy of the two organisations were not appreciated. This saddens me, and I thought it would be a worthy subject for our thoughts this month.

A good place to start is that wonderful and oft-quoted extract from Matthew 22:37-39 in response to the Pharisee who asked "Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the law?" and Jesus answered "Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind." This is the greatest and the most important commandment. The second is like it: "Love your neighbour as you love yourself." I do so love direct answers!

Now I have a take on this which helps address the nature of the relationship between the church and the Mothers' Union. I suggest that the primary focus of the church is on the first of these, the "greatest" commandment – loving God. The church gives us the opportunity and the support to find how that love is to be found and then to be expressed. The church teaches us about God through the Bible and spreads that word in any way it can throughout the world. It also gives fellowship and support to those in need, but its prime purpose is to spread and teach the word.

The Mothers' Union is made up of Believers in Christ – their faith is supported by the church but their actions are through the Mothers' Union to live out the Second of these commandments – "Love your neighbour as yourself". Members work to support the human fabric of societies where there is need of any kind (which is pretty much anywhere!) and to spread the love of Christ throughout the world.

So, in my vision of the world, the church spreads the word of God and the Mothers' Union spreads the love of God. Surely, working together should be a natural outcome where the sum of the parties working together is greater than the result obtained by the parties working independently? In some parts of the world, to be a member of a church congregation is automatically to be a member of the Mothers' Union – how about trying to make that true in our diocese?

---

## **Susan Baker Memorial Fund**

### **PURPOSE OF THE FUND**

For supporting those who work with families, particularly in Areas of Deprivation, Changing Market Towns, or with identified need within the Ely Diocese.

### **Ways in which we might support**

Resources for groups i.e. Books, Audio Visuals, Art and craft materials

Christian themes – Advent calendars, Easter resources

Administration

Courses

Venue hire

### **APPLYING FOR A GRANT**

For an application form apply to:

**Ely Diocesan Mothers' Union C/O Mrs Jean Webb, 35, Norfolk Road, Ely, CB6 3EJ or [jmw35n@gmail.com](mailto:jmw35n@gmail.com)**

Faith in Action task group will make the decision and report to trustees of the amount granted. Maximum is £500.



## 16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence and Abuse

This annual international campaign takes place from 25<sup>th</sup> November for 10 days. Throughout the campaign, Mothers' Union joins with over 6,000 organisations from 187 countries to raise awareness of and call for an end to, gender-based violence and abuse in all forms and in all societies. GBV can affect any person at any time, and statistics demonstrate that women and girls are particularly at risk.

We are rightly proud of the work our members do across the world: making individuals, families and communities safer and supported, giving them a chance to thrive.

Every member has already received a Prayer Diary to use throughout the 10 days.

**The Mothers' Union Global Day of Action** will focus on the fact that 1 in 3 women, across the world, will be impacted by some form of violence in their life. It will take place on **Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> November** and as well as a Vigil at Ely Cathedral from 12.15pm and prayers at some churches, all will stop for a one-minute silence at 1.03pm.

\*\*\*\*\*

**Wave of Prayer** for the Worldwide Diocese linked with Ely Diocese will be on 10<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> December. The prayers for branches to use when they meet will be out later in November.

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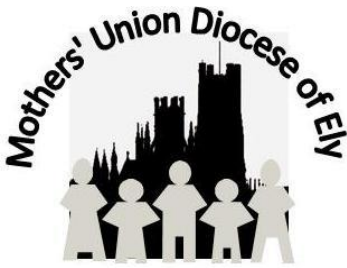
**Christmas Cards** from Mothers' Union, diaries and calendars can be seen in the Gift Guide which many of you will have or in CONNECTED magazine which you all receive. Sadly, some are already sold out (Nativity, Madonna and Child and Dove Wreath). Please either get in touch with Hazel if you have an order or get together with others in your branch. Orders over £60 are postage free. Order details are on page 34 in CONNECTED.

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## Continuing our news of the work that the Women's Fellowship does in Vellore.

- ✓ In Boards for Women's Work, we have 18 Bible Women to spread the word of God to village women.
- ✓ Each Bible women has been allotted to certain number of villages according to their residential territory.
- ✓ Bible Women will be paid rupees 10,000/- (101 Pounds) once in 4 months.
- ✓ We have separate syllabus and curriculum book called "Thisai Kaattum Pengal" (Leading towards the Path) which was designed by the theologians of our Diocese. And it was explained to Bible Women by Theologians.
- ✓ The book 'Thisai Kaattum Pengal' was released on 28<sup>th</sup> February 2022. This book has been specially designed and prepared for bible women to spread the gospel.





**Mothers' UNION**  
Christian care for families

# December/January Newsletter 2022/3



*Rev Carol, Esther and Charlie are truly putting their Faith into Action with the work they are doing to support Children and Families in these parishes; I am so pleased we are supporting the Family Worker post'.*

## SUBSCRIPTIONS FOR 2023

A reminder that the subscription for Mothers' Union in 2023 is £21. The trustees are not adding any Diocesan subscription this year (or in 2023 or 2024), so the whole of the £21 will go to support Mary Sumner House and our worldwide activities.



**CHRISTMAS GREETINGS TO ALL FROM  
ELY DIOCESAN MOTHERS' UNION**

## MARY'S CHILD CHARITY

In the May newsletter we featured a talk that Revd. Carol Avery gave at our AGM about the work of the charity 'Mary's Child'. Since then, trustees have been investigating how we could support the charity with more than the practical items of toiletries, and household goods. It has been agreed that we should financially support a family worker employed by Mary's Child Charity in much the same way as we have supported a worker in Wisbech in the past. Finance for that role has been taken over by the Ely Diocese although we are still involved.

Jean Webb (Faith in Action Task Group leader) says, *'It was a joy to meet Esther, the Family Worker for Mary's Child at Farcet, Stanground and Fletton. Esther comes from Zimbabwe where she was a Mothers' Union member for 5 years, alongside her mother and 4 aunts, before moving here.*

*We met at the weekly Community Café at Stanground Church (a modern, warm and flexible building, which is becoming a Winter Warm hub on Saturdays). Revd. Carol Avery was busy cooking bacon, for butties, and preparing lunch, while I chatted with Esther, hearing about her work with families and how she aims to offer support. I was also introduced to Charlie, a lawyer, who provides legal advice to Mary's Child clients.*

*I had arrived with a full car-load of toiletries, bedding and other household goods recently donated, which were enthusiastically received for needy families.*





**Sawston Branch**

I expect you remember we sent some cards and gifts from our Mothers' Union Branch with Revd Kathryn on her recent visit to Rwanda.

Kathryn has sent us this picture from the Mother's Union in Gasata with the gifts we sent. I thought you would like to see the picture - it is lovely to have this reminder of our links with MU Branches all over the world and the importance of our support for them. *Janet Martin*

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**Yaxley Mothers' Union** stall at their Church Christmas Fair raised £225 for MU projects. All the items for sale were donated by members.

Joanna Sanders writes:

*'Congratulations to Anne Kiddy of **Balsham** Branch on reaching her 90<sup>th</sup> birthday on 6th November – she was treasurer of Balsham MU for 35 years! Anne's husband David was 90 at the end of March and they had a lovely celebratory lunch party in October to which they kindly invited me'.*

**COMMUNICATION NEWS – NEW YouTube VIDEO.**

*Debbie Tye*

We have a new YouTube video link to share with you for **NOVEMBER THURSDAY PRAYER**: "Christ's Disciples are sent out into the World". Led by Irene Porter, Worldwide Links Officer. We were delighted to welcome some MU Members from Kigali who joined us via a Zoom Link which was live on the day, and have been able to include their greetings. We had a few sound and technical issues with the recording but together with the videos and slides of texts, we have produced quite a good representation of the service. If you need more time to read the slides, please press the pause button as the video is playing.

YouTube Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TB9wyMBej68>



I hope you have all got your time slots sorted for our wave of prayer on 10th, 11th and 12th of December. Since the wave of prayer information was sent out, I have received more news from our diocesan link with **Kigali, Rwanda**. Esther tells us that Mothers' Union has been involved in supporting prisoners, they collect clothes, shoes and children's toys etc and their Pastors preach to the prisoners and give Holy Communion. They are also feeding vulnerable children (something I witnessed when I was in Rwanda) and teach their mothers on giving a balanced diet. Mothers' Union are also doing hospital ministry as well. On the 3rd of December they are going to participate in a campaign on gender- based violence. Esther hopes to send us some photos.

Claudine in Shyogwe, Rwanda, has also sent photos of the celebrations of 30 years of the Diocese. One of the photos included a "Fathers' Union" banner. This was started in the Diocese in 2006, in order to build a whole family and is coordinated by a Mothers' Union worker.



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**News of Jo Wibberley** who has just undergone a hip replacement operation.

*'Yes, the operation was last Tuesday and I was home again on Thursday. All is good. Just keeping on with the painkillers and exercises and enjoying having my daughter with me.'*

## A REFLECTION

Philip Baker (27<sup>th</sup> November 2022)

Around this time of year, the anniversary of Susan's passing, my thoughts naturally turn to the subject of "loss". Of how it is not until you have lost something important to you that you fully appreciate just how much it meant to you when you still had it. If only we could see with the clarity of Hindsight! But I think we can, at least to a degree. And, as I hope to show, it has seasonal importance to us as Christmas approaches. The problem lies in human nature – we accept what we have and are comfortable with it without question or consideration. I don't kid myself I was perfect, and there were ways in which I knew I could have done better, but there is always tomorrow. Until there isn't.

So how does this connect with Christmas, or indeed, anything else? After all, we can lose any number of things; most, like keys, are major problems but of short duration and we quickly forget they ever happened. Other things, such as loss of health, are more serious, but we just have to get on with it: there is no choice. But Christmas?

As I describe above, we drift through life accepting all the things we have without any great questioning or consideration of "what if ...". Let's think about Christmas for a moment. Suppose we didn't have it, had never had it, it never happened. Homo Sapiens developed between 200 and 300 thousand years ago, and language started about 50 thousand years ago (we are told, that is before my time!). So, had we the ability to time travel backwards more than 2 thousand but less than 50 thousand years ago, we would be talking about something else at this time of year – the cold perhaps, or the strange lights in the sky? We would seriously miss Christmas and everything it represents. But we do have Christmas and we do know what it represents. One of the things that amazes me is that in spite of all the commercialisation of Christmas and secularisation of society as a whole, Christmas still retains its "Christianity" – people give gifts, look after those who are homeless or hungry, and all those other Christian acts born of Love of one's Fellow Man. (see Leviticus 19:18 or Matthew 22:39 or Mark 12:31 or Luke 10:27 or Romans 13:9).

In these ways it serves as a sign in a largely non-Christian world that there is good in the Christian corners, like a beacon on a hill top attracts weary travellers, it can collect the meek and humble of society – God's children. The very fact that it displays such an unwillingness to be subsumed by commercial interests is a demonstration that God is giving it a little help. But it needs our help too. Our priests are doing their bit by putting on services and other occasions where we can celebrate Christ's birth, and we must do our bit by turning out and, if possible, taking a friend with us. It is such an opportunity and everyone knows what the basic story is, so no complex explanations are needed, just an invite. Let us embrace all the tackiness and dreadful Christmas songs on the radio and in shops, seeing through the tackiness to the opportunity beneath to rejoice and be happy.

Therefore, let us assess the importance of Christmas to our Christian year now, whilst we still have it, let us not permit Christmas go the way of so many other festivals, let us not allow Christmas to be changed until it is simply another retail opportunity, like Halloween or Black Friday! If we do, we shall surely find it a huge loss – once it has gone.

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Since 2019 Able Community Care, a Norfolk company, has given out, free, almost 100,000 'DO NOT KNOCK' door stickers to older and disabled people who do not wish to answer the door to strangers.

If you would like to receive any door stickers to give out to older or disabled people you know, please email to: [info@ablecommunitycare.com](mailto:info@ablecommunitycare.com) with how many you would like to receive and an address to send them to. (No addresses will be kept or passed on) [www.ablecommunitycare.com](http://www.ablecommunitycare.com)



## 16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM AGAINST GENDER VIOLENCE

The sun shone for Ely Diocesan Mothers' Union as they stood in silence at 1.03pm on Saturday 26 November for 3 minutes, raising awareness of the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence and Abuse. Prior to this, the same members took part in a silent prayer vigil inside Ely Cathedral for 30 minutes.

Members wore purple scarves to show solidarity with victims, as they stood together, outside the West door of the Cathedral on this Global Day of Activism. They also wore badges highlighting the #nomore1in3 (no more one in three) which emphasise the fact that 1 in 3 women worldwide will experience gender-based violence in their life time.

A display on the 16 Days of Activism Campaign can be found inside the West door of the cathedral, to the immediate right, which will remain in place for the duration of the Campaign. This annual international campaign starts on 25 November (International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women) and runs until 10 December (International Day of Human Rights).

For more info visit: <https://www.mothersunion.org/global-day-2022> and <https://16dayscampaign.org/>



Ely Diocesan Mothers' Union  
Charity no. 251394

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**THURSDAY PRAYER in the Cathedral and on Zoom 10.30am**

**15<sup>th</sup> December-Sue Claydon 'The Prince of Peace' 19th January-Hazel Williams 'Transformation Now**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83847809128?pwd=VVhXUGlNWkpaGkyMUdwWHQvcC9tQT09>

ID. 838 4780 9128 Passcode 338053



## DIOCESAN MEMBERS' LUNCH.

*Debbie Tye – Communications Task Group Leader*

The first Diocesan Members' Lunch for a few years, took place on 1<sup>st</sup> November at the Old Bishop's Palace, King's School Ely. Nearly 30 Members and Trustees enjoyed a lovely 2-course lunch of chicken and cheesecake. The cheesecake proved to be so popular, that several people requested the recipe, which was kindly provided by the school chef, and was circulated to members.

There was also a card stall and Faith in Action display. We were pleased to welcome Canon Jessica Martin from Ely Cathedral, who gave an interesting talk about All Soul's Day. Hazel Williams gave us an update about latest MU News. The raffle raised £64 which will go towards AFIA (Away From It All Holidays). It was great to be able to gather together again and enjoy good food and fellowship.



### **Gifts for children visiting Whitemoor Prison**

Members of Burwell St. Mary's MU and congregation with some of the 103 mini-Christmas stockings, knitted using the MU Connect magazine pattern, and filled with sweets. They will be distributed to children making visits to men at HMP Whitemoor during December.