

Mothers' UNION

Christian care for families

Diocese of Aberdeen and Orkney

NEWSLETTER



Pictured:- The Primus, Jean Richardson & Bishop of Moray, Ross & Caithness

May 2013

Mothers' Union Objectives

- 👉 *To uphold Christ's teaching on the nature of marriage and promote its wider understanding.*
- 👉 *To encourage parents to bring up their children in the faith and life of the church.*
- 👉 *To maintain a worldwide fellowship Christians united in prayer, worship and service.*
- 👉 *To promote conditions in society favourable to stable family life and the protection of children.*
- 👉 *To help those whose family life has met with adversity.*

The Mothers' Union Prayer

Loving Lord, we thank you for your love so freely given to us all.

We pray for families around the world.

Bless the work of the Mothers' Union as we seek to share your love through the encouragement, strengthening and support of marriage and family life.

Empowered by your Spirit, may we be united in prayer and worship and in love and service, reach out as your hands across the world.

In Jesus' name. Amen

From our Diocesan President, Chris writes



Dear Friends

A new triennium and one has to wonder what the future holds for the Mothers' Union, not only in the diocese but in the province as well. Some exciting ideas came out of the Scottish Gathering and a summary of suggestions has been produced and groups tasked with taking these suggestions forward. There will be changes because the Mothers' Union structure is top heavy and we just don't have members to fill every role. You will see that this is a problem that we have from the chart (Mothers' Union Tree) at the end of this newsletter and I can assure you that it is common throughout the UK.

Our new Provincial President is Jean Richardson and she has lots of drive and ideas and I am sure she will put her stamp on the work that we all do. Some of us attended her commissioning in Perth and a really good day was had by all.

We have held two diocesan events this year. Our Salt Day (Sharing and Learning Together) which was very poorly attended, although the feed back was good. You will find a copy of the summary of this event further on.

Our Diocesan Council was well attended and we were pleased to introduce our new Chaplains Rev Paul Watson & Rev Ali Harvey and our new Trustees whom we were able to welcome. I must however say a big thank you to the Trustees who retired at the end of last year for all that they did.

I just hope that you will remember us in your prayers and give us the support that is needed to take us all forward in the next three years.

I would just like to finish with a prayer taken from a book of prayers written by members of the Mothers' Union in Glasgow and Galloway called 'In the Palm of God's Hand', I feel this could have been written by Mary Sumner as it so reflects the sentiments of her personal prayer.

Prayer for the Mothers' Union

Lord, guide us this day in all we say and do.

Lord, in all things make us true.

Keep us safe from evil thoughts and deed,
aware of other peoples' needs.

Lord, guide us this day in all we say and do.

Lord, in all things make us true

Love and Blessings

Chris

From our World Wide President



Mothers' UNION
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Dear Friends and Fellow Members,

I feel wonderfully blessed to be writing my first letter to you as Mother's Union Worldwide President. I begin this Eastertide letter to you by offering a sincere and heartfelt "Thank you" for your prayerful ministry so that the work undertaken in the name of Mothers' Union may receive God's blessing upon it and that great things may be achieved.

Throughout my thirty-three years of membership I have been privileged to know and appreciate so many Indoor Members. I have valued greatly the friendship and support and assurance of prayer that has been promised through our many conversations.

As your Worldwide President I will travel a great deal to talk about our work and will meet people who know nothing about our work. I will meet with people of great faith and those with no faith at all.

Please may I ask for your prayers?

Please also be assured that I do and shall continue to uphold each one of you in my daily prayers. Our founder Mary Sumner had a wonderful vision - to win the homes of the nation for Christ. I hope and pray that in 2013 we may continue to fulfil this hope.

We read in St. John's Gospel Chapter 15 verse 11: "That my joy may remain in you". In our own lives we sometimes experience emptiness, sometimes feel our lives lack meaning or purpose.

I imagine that those early disciples felt similar feelings. May our hope and our prayer this Eastertide be that the joy those early disciples knew live within the hearts and lives of all people.

With love and prayers

Lynne Tembey

Lynne Tembey
Worldwide President

Mary Sumner House 24 Tufton Street London SW1P 3RB
Telephone: 020 7222 5533
Fax: 020 7227 9737
email: mu@themothersunion.org

Registered Charity Number: 240531

From our Provincial President, Jean writes.....



Hello Everyone!

Have you ever wondered what exactly does a Provincial President do? I must confess I also asked the same question after I had been nominated last year. Well, I soon found out a few weeks ago. We met from Monday lunchtime until Wednesday lunchtime by which time my head was spinning and I could hardly speak, I was so 'brain-dead'! There was so much to take in and learn; about the new structure of the Trustee Board, our legal responsibilities, plans for the future, team-building (just two short fun sessions I'm relieved to say!), official photos of us all and even a practical session with a media expert to learn how to look and sound confident for radio and television – now that's a worry!

These three days were followed by World Wide Council.

So who are on the new Trustee Board?

Well there are seventeen of us altogether.

The World Wide President, Lynne Tembey; five 'home' Provincial Presidents, namely York Canterbury, Wales, Ireland and of course me, representing Scotland. All the other Provincial Presidents from around the world are represented by Jean Price who is called Provincial Representative Trustee and after each meeting she will inform them of all that happens or is decided at the meetings.

Four MU members who are elected Head's of Units. They are; Faith and Policy, Action and Outreach, Fundraising and Communication and finally, Finance and Central Services.

Six Trustees are those who have been elected to represent all the six zones of the world. They come from Zambia, Kenya, DR of Congo, Ghana, Sodor & Man and Guyana, so we are truly an international Board - the first time this has ever happened. We meet twice a year, the next time being for a week in October.

I am really looking forward to finding out how MU works, how decisions are made and making a Scottish contribution. In the meantime I hope that the new beginnings of Easter will inspire us in the Province as we work towards a more relevant and expanding MU in Scotland.

With love and prayers,

Jean

A & O REPORT

The Neo-Natal Unit at ARI, as always were delighted with the bonnets and shawls knitted by our members.

If anyone would like to do something different the unit will also accept:–

1. First size cardigans.
2. Baby coloured teddy bears, providing they are stuffed with proper white kapok filling.
3. Knitted cot blankets.

Grampian Women's Aid. They still welcome our toiletry bags. Thanks to the generosity of the St Mary & St James Branch, at Easter I was able to take 16 adult bags plus 16 children's bags, with each children's bag having a FAIR TRADE Easter Egg. Each egg box had a leaflet inside telling the story of Easter, specially written for children. These are eggs to be recommended for giving at Easter time.

AFIA HOLIDAYS

So far this year the Diocese has received requests from two families for a holiday, with the possibility of two more in the pipeline.

The cost of these holidays is however increasing all the time and even with the very generous discounts given by Haven Holidays it has now become necessary that we need to allow £650 per holiday. Fortunately we have the funds available to send our first two families away, but that will leave the AFIA account almost empty. The Trustees are exploring the question of fund raising and one suggestion has been a quiz sheet which has been produced by our DP, Chris Crosley on 'Songs from the Musicals' for a donation of .50p each. Copies of these can be obtained from all Branch Leaders.

Anyone reading this who may have a brilliant suggestion of how to increase our funds for this much needed resource, please speak either to myself or any member of the Trustees.

Pam Dench

Faith and Policy

Hi! I am Sue Begg and have just been commissioned as the Mothers' Union coordinator for Faith and Policy for our diocese. What does that mean or what will I be doing? It means working as part of a team to promote the work of the MU in every area of our church and community life but for me especially to make sure that in everything we do, our faith and our work, is underpinned with prayer. I am thrilled to be a part of a worldwide organisation and would like to tell you how the worldwide nature of MU became very important to me. When my youngest daughter was eighteen she went to Australia on a gap year in a boarding school in Queensland in the outback. While she was there she became ill with a serious infection and had to be hospitalised in Townsville. Naomi didn't know anyone there and I was here in Aberdeenshire, after I prayed, I rang Mary Sumner House and asked if there was an MU group in Townsville, there was and they were asked to visit Naomi, they kindly visited her whilst she was in hospital and it made such a difference to her and gave me peace of mind, this is just a small example of how our faith and our actions work together.

I will be coming to the branches to introduce a course prepared by MU called 'We are Created by God'. Exploring our identity and relationships, I hope that many of you will do the course and together we may all learn about our relationship with God.

Sue Begg

I ask you please to give Sue enough time when she comes to visit you, as the course she will be doing takes quite a bit longer than is normally given to speakers. Take time to discuss how long she thinks this course will last and what is the best way to tackle it.

Sue has gone to the trouble of training as a facilitator and it would be a shame not to take advantage of this. I personally feel that it will be good for me as a Christian to examine my own relationship with God and I hope that many of our members will feel the same way. Sue will take us through various examples of relationships and I feel sure they will be challenging so please make space for this course in your programme and won't it be a good idea to have some feedback from those of you who complete the course.

SUMMARY OF SHARING AND LEARNING TOGETHER DAY (SALT)

Having watched 'The Seeds We Sow' we split into groups to discuss.

- Question 1:** We want to re-ignite our members' faith spirituality, to be more confident about our Christianity and Christian Ethos.
- Challenge:** What needs to be sown in my Diocese? By whom, how, where?
- By whom:** All of us.
New groups need to be given encouragement.
Each one of us.
- How:** Designated person to publicise and invite other groups.
Be seen to be making a difference and be flexible.
By being welcoming and greeting people with a smile.
By getting members involved in local (branch) projects where results can be seen quickly, making them feel that they were making a positive difference to peoples lives. Increasing confidence and strength in Christian Faith. Local projects a result could be seen quicker and they new they were involved and that they lived out something of their Christian faith.
- Where:** Everywhere people meet.
Out in the community.
- Question 2:** We want to show who we are in the Mothers' Union more positively and constructively so that we are heard more clearly in the public arena.
- Challenge:** What needs to be sown in my Diocese? By whom, how, where?
- By whom:** Designated person to publicise what we do and get it out to the public.
Encourage a Branch Member to do publicity and be pro-active.
We must all be willing to do so.
- How:** Advance notice, open invitation.
Writing to newspapers, encourage branch member to publicise.
Publicity, local and international, use photography (get permission first).
Visitors rota to get to know new people, find out about people's talents and encourage them to help.
By asking people to join.
- Where:** Where people meet.
Wherever an event is happening.
At local Galas and events, a table in a church hall or a special Mothers' Union event.

Doctors surgery, Library (permission may be needed), Local Press, Hairdressers.

Question 3:

We want members and new members to engage more effectively in their grassroots projects and programmes

Challenge:

What needs to be sown in my Diocese? By whom, how, where?

By whom:

Branch Leaders and members.

Designated members to pray for one another and projects.

All of us each one of us.

How:

Audience participation and more open discussion

Having a list and asking for feed back as to what God is asking.

Follow up on Baptisms with cards on anniversaries.

Talk about what we do in Mothers' Union

Where:

Wherever Branches meet and further afield

At home

Everywhere

Question 4:

We want to promote and celebrate our ground breaking faith and social justice work.

Challenge:

What needs to be sown in my Diocese? By whom, how, where?

By whom:

Everyone who meets.

All of us.

Everyone of us.

How:

Personal Invitation.

By being pro-active, get out meeting people and telling them about us.

Word of mouth.

Where:

In homes, getting involved with other groups, vary days, perhaps a ½ day for quiet reflection and ½ day for discussion of topical news items.

A tent at local shows such as New Deer with a prayer zone, other gatherings, School Parents evenings, Soup & Sweet Lunch.

Local scene getting out in the community to meet people and tell them what we do.

One group picked up on Mary Sumner's personal prayer which was read out at the end of this session.

This group felt that this summed up all that we had been discussing and what we were being asked to do.

Sharing and Learning Together (SALT) Day

St Mary on the Rock, Ellon

Saturday 2nd March 2013

Around 16 MU members from around the Diocese met together for this day.

Chris Crosley (President) talked us through the MU PowerPoint, “The Seeds We Sow” which was very interesting and informative.

We then split into small groups to discuss how we help the MU in our Diocese grow.

The general feeling was that we need to become MU member’s everyday not only on meeting days.

We also felt we needed to become more confident at talking about MU projects – local national and international – to the people we meet in our daily lives, as and when the opportunity arises.

After lunch we watched a DVD “Help Us Grow” – which was inspiring and wonderful to see how our fellow members in Africa are growing and supporting their own projects themselves.

We finished the day with Mary Sumner’s Prayer which many members felt summed up what we need to be striving towards:

**All this day, O Lord,
Let me touch as many lives
As possible for thee;
And every life I touch,
Do thou by thy spirit quicken,
Whether through the word I speak,
The prayer I breath,
Or the life I live**

Amen

This was my first ever SALT day and I found it very worthwhile and would recommend to anyone who has never been before to try and come to one in the future.

Rachel Officer

News from the Branches

Saint Andrews Cathedral

We have had a good start to 2013 and our programme is going well. We have enjoyed demonstrations, discussions, talks and a visit to the theatre. All our officers were commissioned at a Eucharist service in April, when two of our congregation were made members.

At one of our April meetings, Mrs Ruby Porter M.B.E. came to speak to us about her work in Bangladesh. The poverty and lives of destitute women and abandoned babies beggared belief, but thanks to such volunteers as Ruby, their lives are improving. They are trained to earn money for themselves by making simple articles using unusual threads made from natural materials. After this training many find places in factories producing clothes to be sold in many shops in Britain. We could have listened to her stories and looked at her illustrations much longer than the meeting was scheduled. We were all shocked to hear the following day, that one of these factories had collapsed killing hundreds of these women and children. This talk had made us realise how vulnerable these poor women and children are.

We are still busy making up toilet bags for Grampian Women's Refuge, knitting shawls, bonnets and bobble hats for premature babies and knitting hats for seamen.

Sonia Hudson

St James', Holburn Place.

Due to a declining membership and the increasing age of most of our members the structure of St. James' Branch has had to be radically changed. Technically we are still a branch, but without a branch leader, secretary or treasurer we have now become a Fellowship group within the branch. We have ten members one of whom is an Indoor Member. All have agreed to take on various necessary duties and we are sharing the years programme between us, with the help of our Diocesan Chaplains and President.

The year opened in March with a Eucharist celebrated by our new Priest in Charge, the Rev. Dr. Julia Candy and in April we met at the house of Cherry Allsopp who took a short service, including Mid-day Prayers followed by a lovely lunch.

In May we look forward to hearing about the work of one of our Diocesan Chaplains, Rev. Alison Harvey, as a shopping centre Chaplain.

Members have attended the Learning and Sharing Day in Ellon; the Diocesan Retreat at Kinnoull, Perth; the Commissioning of the Provincial President at St. Ninian's Cathedral, Perth and we continue to attend the monthly Prayer Group meetings at St. Mary's, Carden Place.

Corporate Communion has been reinstalled on the 1st Wednesday of each month where Mothers' Union prayers are said by one of the members and we continue to supply toilet bags for the Women's Refuge and thank the congregation for their contributions.

Although we are a very small group our hearts are big and we work for the good of the Mothers' Union in our Diocese. Please pray for us in all we aim to achieve.

Olga J Robertson



Where does the money go??

Mothers' Union Community Development Coordinators (CDCs) work within their own and neighbouring communities transforming family life through relevant grassroots activities. Just some of the ways they do this is by organising training and encouraging self-help projects for communities, even for those who live in the most isolated areas.

They travel vast distances to bring support to communities, sometimes walking for days or driving such a long way it's an overnight journey. On such long journeys they need money for food and sometimes fuel. Even when they are in a vehicle the driving conditions mean the journeys can be very uncomfortable. The landscape is harsh and, without tarmac, roads become muddy in the rainy season and can be washed away or eroded fast.

Many of the Mothers' Union Community Development Coordinators receive support from Mothers' Union towards their salary and travel costs. This support enables them to carry out this work among grassroots communities. Where possible this support is offered in conjunction with the local Provincial Mothers' Union.

*Below are just some of the stories we have received from CDCs travelling in 2012. By supporting the Wheels Appeal you will help to keep the Mothers' Union's CDCs on the road, travelling to isolated communities to bring transformational change. **Your help is vital.***



Pelagie, CDC, Burundi – Diocese of Matana

As a Community Development Coordinator in Burundi, Pelagie travels almost 2,000 kilometres every year to support Mothers' Union's work. The outreach she offers Mothers' Union members and their communities includes health education to improve HIV testing and accessibility of medicine, improve hygiene and nutrition and marriage and relationship support. She also visits and cares for families who live in poverty or are unable to help themselves due to illness. Whilst she is working she also looks to the future and helps to improve the capacity for outreach for Mothers' Union and plan how it can be improved and continued for many years to come.

'I went to Mihana parish, one of the farthest parishes of the Diocese in a remote area. I raised awareness of saving and credit when people come together to develop a group. The very day we left they started a saving and credit association.'

Over the last year alone Pelagie has directly helped over 1,000 people. Each of these people will no doubt pass on her advice and training to their families and others in their community which means Pelagie's support is improving the lives of countless others too.

Even with the support Pelagie received from Mothers' Union last year she was unable to travel to all 33 parishes in the Diocese of Matana. Your support will help to make sure she can reach more parishes in 2013 to offer advice and support.

Burundi has a hugely varying terrain of hills and mountains to the North and West dropping to a plateau in the East and South. The climate is tropical with extremely high temperatures during the day and rain is irregular with some long periods of drought. In the wet season the rain can cause issues with the muddy roads.

Jane, CDC, Kenya – Diocese of Kitale

Jane is one of two CDCs in the Diocese of Kitale in Kenya. Last year she travelled over 12,000 kilometres to offer advice and training to communities. When journeys are too far to go on foot, in some cases a CDC will take a public vehicle to a neighbouring parish. On one such journey Jane took, there were no public vehicles and so instead she had to hire someone to drive her on a motorbike, she also had to take her granddaughter as there was no-one to look after her. After travelling for some time on the motorbike they had to stop as a bridge they needed to cross had collapsed. In order to get the bridge built



quickly and carry on their journey Jane and the driver had to help load the stones to repair the bridge onto a lorry. By the time the bridge was fixed it was night time and too unsafe to travel. They were fortunate to be offered a place to stay with the Bishop for the night and then continued their journey in the morning.

The roads in Kenya are not usually tarmacked so are dusty in the dry summer months and become muddy in the wet season. With vast distances to cover the obstacles that come up can be difficult to overcome as there is not always help in the area.

Claudine, CDC, Rwanda - Diocese of Shyogwe

Claudine regularly travels to offer training and advice to Mothers' Union group leader Alphonsine. Alphonsine set up a Malnutrition group in her community where she educates the members on healthy eating and nutrition. As a result of the support given by Claudine, the group has learnt the importance of eating well and the benefits for themselves and their families. As a group they now grow crops and own livestock.

In fact, their first crop of maize will be ready to harvest in July of this year and they have already built a storage block to keep the grain dry. They will sell the maize to support their families and to buy seeds. They plan to grow vegetables next, which are far more nutritious.



Rwanda is a country dominated by a hilly landscape. Many people live on the side of the valleys so that the fertile bases can be used to grow crops. The hills and lack of proper roads means that it can be difficult to visit communities, particularly in the rainy season as the routes can become muddy and prone to mudslides.

Through all conditions Community Development Coordinators like Claudine want to continue to reach out to the heart of communities to offer training and advice. With their support families can find long term solutions to improve health and not only that but they can gain knowledge, learn to work together, build relationships and support one another. The work of Mothers' Union's Community Development Coordinators is vital.

Nutrition Group Member, Rwanda

Who's who

World Wide President

Lynne Tembey

Provincial President

Jean Richardson

Diocesan President

Chris Crosley

Diocesan Secretary

Sheila George

Diocesan Chaplains

Paul Watson & Ali Harvey

Diocesan Treasurer

Charles Fox

Co-ordinators

Action & Outreach

Pam Dench

Social Policy

Doreen Baillie

Faith & Policy

Sue Begg

Finance & Central
Services

Vacant

Fundraising &
Communication

Vacant

General Trustees

Florence Cal-Anglia Margaret Finch Laura Heatherington Agnes Robertson

AFIA rep

Pam Dench

Diocesan Member rep

Blanche Beattie

MUe rep

Agnes Robertson

Branch & Fellowship Leaders

St Andrew's Cathedral

Sonia Hudson

St Clements, Mastrick

Melanie Finch

St James', Holburn Junction

Joint Leadership

St Mary & St James

Carole Fox

Dates for your Diary in 2013

11th - 12th June - General Meeting in Bath

6th July - Trustees Only Meeting St James, Holburn Junction 10.30 a.m.

31st August - Quiet Day @ St Devenicks 10.30 a.m.

11th – 13th Sep - All Unit Conference Swanwick

30th November - Diocesan Council

Thank you to everyone who has contributed pictures or articles.

We would love to have news and photographs from ALL branches as well as information on activities.

Items from ALL members are most welcome, this is your newsletter!

Copy for next issue - please send to David Crosley at:-

muaberdeen@gmail.com

or by post to:

66 Snipe Street

ELLON, AB41 9FW

NO LATER THAN 31ST AUGUST 2013

Scottish website: www.muscotland.org.uk

Scottish Charity No. SC036627