



**Diocese of Edinburgh**

**Mothers' Union Newsletter**



**March 2012**

## *Letter from the Diocesan President: September 2012*

Dear Friends,

Spring is well advanced. The bulbs are out along with one brave marigold and we are looking forward to Easter. This is a time to re-assess ourselves, take extra time in reading and learning about our faith and our place in the Mothers' Union.

I sent a letter of congratulations to our new Bishop – elect, John Armes, assuring him of our prayers and support. He suggested the Revd Frances Burberry as Chaplain and we have met. A Quiet day later this year is planned. We welcome Frances to the Mothers' Union.



After the excitement of the Annual Meeting, this year may appear to be quieter – but as you have already seen, we have had two Consultation Papers already. I hope you took time to read them and reply. We all moan - “ what is the world coming to?” “What stupid rules!” etc but have we played our part in trying to change things by giving our point of view? Can we moan if we don't take advantage of our opportunity to, maybe, change things?

The Gathering is being held October 5-6th at Tulliallan Police College, Kincardine and is open to everyone, not just office holders. The cost is £20 per person, the rest being paid for by the Diocese, (£450 regardless of how many go from Edinburgh) and the Province. This replaces the Unit conferences held at Derby. Come and hear what is happening and discuss the future of the M.U in Scotland. Posters and booking forms have been sent out. Naturally, there will be good fellowship, time to make friends and renew old friendships. Perhaps some-one in your Branch would like to go, some-one new to M.U, wants to find out about us? Please give this some thought.

We also awarded long service certificates to over twenty members , spanning forty to fifty five/ two years.

Last year we heard about Domestic Abuse and I went to their A.G.M and heard very moving stories from women about their experiences. One young girl gave a very articulate account of her life in an abusive family. Perhaps this is a project we can support.

At World Wide Council we heard about changes in the voting system to General Trustees in London which will give our overseas members an equal opportunity to take their part in shaping the work of the M.U. There will be more of this at Council, April 23rd at St James the less, Penicuik. This is a new venture moving out of Edinburgh.

This is Election year and several Trustees are stepping down having done more than their six years or because of ill health. Will you volunteer to replace them? Don't be shy. Could you nominate some-one? If no-one comes forward, then it is more for the few to do. Please contact me for more information if you are interested.

Sadly, the year started with the death of three long serving members – Rose (who served on the Trustee Board for years) and Muriel and Audrey who were faithful members at St. Ninians and had been members for forty years plus.

There is still plenty of work for us to do. As Andrew Watson says in “The Way of the Desert” .....”we may need to sit down more than we used to and depend on others for our physical support, but our role is indispensable. No-one is redundant in the Kingdom of God”  
(page 40)

With all good wishes for a happy, healthy and fruitful 2012,

*With love and prayers ,                      Angela.*

## MESSAGE FROM THE MU PROVINCIAL PRESIDENT SCOTLAND

Your Gifts? Discover and Celebrate!

Dear friends,

This year we are asked to look at what gifts we have been given by God. Sometimes I'm surprised by the tasks I do now, 10 years ago I would never have thought I would be doing the work I do at present. God moves us in different ways and it is for us to discover what we are capable of doing and ask for his guidance.

Spending a period of time away from everyday life can really help us in this endeavour. So I would commend to you our Provincial Retreat from Tuesday 27th to Thursday 29th March, at Kinnoull Monastery, beside Perth. There are still a few rooms left if you would like to come to a partially silent retreat with us. Revd. Canon Dominic Ind will be leading the retreat.

Spending some quiet time at home is important too. I ask you, this year in particular, as it is an election year for the Mothers' Union and there will be a lot of office holders standing down, that you ask yourself how important the work of the Mothers' Union is to you? The branch membership is fundamental to their being a good supporting network for fellowship all over the world, but they do need people to organise them. We will be looking at what we can do to support the branches at our Scottish Gathering. Leadership rolls in the diocese are also needed. So maybe it is time to discover your gifts and offer yourself in service?

You are all invited to 'The MU Scottish Gathering 2012' to go on 'The Road we Take'. On the way we will discover, where we've come from, where we are now and where we are going. It will be from Friday 5th October to Saturday 6th October, in the attractive house and grounds of Tulliallan Police College, Kincardine, Fife FK10 4BE. It will be an exciting Gathering, a chance to pray together, share together and look forward together, as nothing stands still in this life. This is your chance to meet with members from branches all over Scotland. Oh, I forgot to say Celebrate together too. There is a small cost of a £20 deposit to secure you a place, first come first served. We have Bishop Mark Strange from Moray, Ross and Caithness as our Gathering Chaplain, the development of the younger element to the Mothers' Union is close to his heart. Marian Pope from Mary Sumner House and Trish Heywood along with my committee will lead us over the two days. Your DP will have the booking forms.

An extended Mothers' Union meeting with a difference will be from August 9th to August 15th, Lands End to John O'Groats by public bus. This is happening to raise the awareness of the Mothers' Union. Did you know that we are helping in six prisons in Scotland? Come and meet us at the bus stops and jump on it for a while. Your Provincial Representative member Linda Brownlie will be travelling on the bus, come and hear about her work in Malawi and Sierra Leone. Rosemary Kempself will be on the bus from Aberdeen to Inverness. Your DP will have the time of the buses we will be on in your area. We hope to see some of you along the way.

Mon. Aug. 13<sup>th</sup> Dep. 08.50 Dumfries—Glasgow—Dunfermline—Dundee—Arbroath Arr. 16.25

Tues Aug 14<sup>th</sup> Depart 07.10 Arbroath—Montrose—Aberdeen—Elgin—Inverness Arrive 16.40

Wed Aug 15<sup>th</sup> Depart 08.30 Inverness—Brora—Wick—John O'Groats Arrive 13.30

I'm on the only Scottish Inter Faith committee concerned with domestic abuse. We are about raising awareness within our faith communities of domestic abuse, challenging preconceptions and standing together as people of God with those who are abused. 3



We have a very moving exhibition called 'Souls of Our Shoes'. At this event abuse in the home is portrayed by an exhibition of shoes. The collection of shoes on show, with their accompanying comments, will speak on behalf of abused individuals who suffer, and some who die, at the hands of their partner or ex-partner. Other comments come from people who journey with them and many of these reflections will represent a faith perspective. The exhibition is available for local use and is free. Contact me if you would like to use it. [hilary.moran@btinternet.com](mailto:hilary.moran@btinternet.com) or 01475 686213.

### Overseas news

The latest news for Uganda is; The Family Life Programme has a special outreach into community members affected by HIV/AIDS. This vital work is carried out often by people affected by HIV/AIDS themselves, who have trained with Mothers' Union to become "home carers". They want to expand this work in the eight areas in Uganda to six new areas this year. Naomi went to Ethiopia and Brundi this January give facilitators training to expand the literacy programme with the local Mothers' Union. She will be travelling to South Sudan in March to see their progress with this programme and gather information for our Comic Relief Grant application.

In December 2011 and early January 2012 we received **Relief Fund** requests from four dioceses in South Sudan.

Juba diocese, has witnessed a massive influx of people returning home from the north following the split of the country in July 2011. Many have fled to South Sudan, fearing how they might be treated in the north (Sudan) now the country has officially split. Local statistics indicated that at the end of 2011 over 500 people were arriving in Juba each day. This put immense pressure on land and resources within Juba and the Mothers' Union identified 200 households they wished to help with items of food and medication in the short term.

Lainya and Rumbek dioceses were both affected by conflict at the end of 2011 leading to mass displacement. In Rumbek, the scene was described by one eye witness: "the raiders passed through one of the villages call Reel-kou and they started to kill people and loot the house and around 15 houses were destroyed by looting them and burnt them down. In the morning...soldiers still moved in the bushes looking for whoever tried to follow the raiders and the situation was getting more tense and worse and worse for four days". Mothers' Union in Lainya and Rumbek dioceses aimed to reach 9,500 people in total through their relief projects.

In Cuiebet, floods caused by heavy rainfall led to a massive loss of homes, crops and livestock and potential outbreaks of disease. The Bishop of Cuiebet diocese described the situation in Pakam: "water had covered the villages in the county - many houses were demolished by water and many families were displaced and the county commissioner declared over the state radio that his county had been overrun by the floods. Only some few villages in the high land remained...So displaced families came with their children to the roadside to stay there for their survival and the same road had become a grazing land for cow and goats".



Amongst those affected the diocese identified women and children as being those most vulnerable and with this in mind Mothers' Union in Cuibet identified 3,490 displaced people that they wished to support with food items, tools, plastic sheeting and utensils. Grants were agreed from the Relief Fund to support the Mothers' Union relief work in these four dioceses.

*With much love to you all, Hilary*

## **Our Gifts**

Lord of life,  
we thank you for the gifts you have given us –  
the things we do well and enjoy doing,  
the things that bring happiness to us,  
and contribute to the happiness of those around us.  
Lord of life, teach us to use the gifts you have given us;  
**to play our part in the life of our fellowship and our society.**

We thank you for the gifts of others – those things they can do which we can't.  
the talents they have which we haven't,  
The skills they can offer which complement our own, and the qualities they display  
which in so many ways enrich our lives.  
Lord of life, teach us to appreciate the gifts of those around us;  
**to appreciate the contribution they make to our lives.**

Lord of life,  
teach us to recognise those things we can do well,  
**and those things others can do better.**  
Teach us that we belong together;  
**that all have something to give and something to receive.**  
Teach us to see the worth of every human being,  
**and to understand you have a special place for each of us  
in the body of Christ,**  
**For in his name we pray. Amen**

*Nick Fawcett*

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### **Provincial President for Mothers' Union Scotland**

**Mrs Hilary Moran**, 206 Greenock Rd, Largs, Ayrshire KA30 8SB

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<<http://www.muscotland.org.uk/>> [www.muscotland.org.uk](http://www.muscotland.org.uk)

Mothers union is a Christian mission organisation working through grassroots membership to support families and communities around the world.

I support - [www.togetherwecanstopit.org](http://www.togetherwecanstopit.org)

Scottish Charity SCO 36459

## **Congratulations to Trish Heywood on her forthcoming marriage.**

Trish was a past DP of St Andrew's MU, then the first Provincial President for Scotland and finally Worldwide President.- **Good News** which Hilary asks us to pass on.

Trish is to be married on 28 April to Michael, who she met on holiday in Egypt two years ago. Michael lives in York but will move to Ashtead,

Trish is very happy and frantically trying to sort out wedding arrangements.

## **Letter from the new Edinburgh MU Chaplain**

*We welcome our new Chaplain - Frances Burberry, who is currently only 7 months into her time at St Ninian's, so there is much for her to do in the life of the congregation and Lent will be particularly busy for her on top of all the various activities and studies across the generations; and workshops (to which she is already committed) at the university. Below is a contribution from Frances.who is hoping to arrange a Quiet Day after Easter.*

Dear Friends,

A few years ago I made my first visit to St Petersburg; a city that's been dubbed the Venice of the North for its palace-lined waterways; a city sculpted by islands and the sinuous River Neva; and a city that's managed to hold onto its relics of tsarist days – including the world-famous Hermitage Museum which houses one of the greatest art collections in the world.

The Museum buildings include the magnificent Winter Palace and stretch along the bank of the Neva, in the heart of the former imperial capital. For the Hermitage was once part of the imperialist residence in which Catherine the Great placed her collections.

And the Museum is a truly awe-inspiring place; it and its collections are incredible, and are breathtakingly beautiful. And none more so than one of the last and most famous masterpieces by Rembrandt – The Return of the Prodigal Son. Indeed, you might have seen this for yourself.

Its subject is the familiar Gospel parable that we find in Luke; and the painting depicts the culminating moment of the story; the meeting between the father and the younger son; the act of forgiveness; the act of blessing and embrace; the triumph of loving kindness and goodness; and the restorative love of God – a love that knows no limitations.

It is a simply enormous canvas – with larger than life-size figures – and, to me, it resembles an altar-piece. Indeed, there is nothing extraneous about it; its colour, and light, and even the surface of the painting itself, have acquired a spiritual quality.

Henri Nouwen reflects on this Rembrandt masterpiece, 'When I went to St Petersburg to see Rembrandt's The Return of the Prodigal Son, I had little idea how much I would have to live what I then saw...Rembrandt led me from the place of being blessed to the place of blessing...As I look at my own...hands, I know that they have been given to me to stretch out towards all who suffer...to offer the blessing that emerges from the immensity of God's love.'

Perhaps finding the strength to live this parable today might be a challenge for our own Lenten journey of return to a loving God. And so, let our heartfelt prayer be that we may be alive to the transforming and unpredictable energy of God's Holy Spirit so that our hands may truly be a blessing to others.

*Frances*

## **AROUND THE BRANCHES - ST NINIAN'S, COMELY BANK**

After 3 years as branch leader Julia Mason is passing on the baton so please update your records of newly appointed office bearers with immediate effect.

\*Please send all future mailings for St Ninian's to the Secretary, Jeanette Stevenson

**Branch Leader:** Janet Hopkins      **Assistant BL** Sheila Donaldson

**\*Sec.:** Jeanette Stevenson      **Treasurer:** Ella Wardrop,

Contact Catherine Pow for details of address etc. until the new Directory is available.

**Poster** from St Ninian's re the long service awards to St Ninian's members on back page.

### **Audrey Marshall.14 March 1929- 6 February 2012.**

Sadly, St Ninian's Church Mother's Union has lost another long term member this year. Audrey Marshall died in February at home after a short illness. Audrey brought to our MU meetings her sense of humour and love of life. Despite both being blind, she and her husband George brought up a loving family of four children. They were happily married for 57 years. Audrey sang in the church choir, was a willing helper washing dishes after MU meetings and helped run a knitting group for charities - many members (and clergy) wore Audrey's knitted hats proudly. She loved fashion and often showed us her latest shopping. Audrey's love of life, despite health problems was an example to us all.

### **Muriel Aitken.1st February 1924 - 4th January 2012.**

"Muriel Aitken sadly died in January .Her long service with The Mothers' Union had recently been marked by recognition with a presentation of her 50 year membership award by Diocesan President Angela Sibley.

Muriel had been a long standing member, joining in the 1950's when the group started at St Ninian's Episcopal Church in Edinburgh. Muriel supported the meetings regularly - taking her children with her - a young Robert liked to join the choir if he could. When the group stopped, she continued to attend meetings at The Chapter House at St Mary's Cathedral. Her husband Jim says she really enjoyed the yearly MU retreats, and went with her friend Lily to Pitlochry and then to Perth. Muriel lived with the MU commitment to put our faith into action. She was Sacristan at St Ninian's for many years and representative for The Links Magazine, which her husband took over when ill health limited her. Muriel had nursed in London and Jim's brother was a patient. When he knew she was coming to Edinburgh – he told her to visit his family, and the rest is history - a happy marriage of over 50 years.

### **Livingston branch of the Mothers Union *from Fay Edgar***

Two of our members Mary McCloskey and Aileen Reid are celebrating important birthdays this year so congratulations from all the Livingston branch to Mary and Aileen. Last year - May 2011 one of the founder members of our branch Margaret Douglas passed away in May.

Margaret had been Secretary of the branch for a number of years and she is sadly missed by all our members. We held our AGM on Sun.19<sup>th</sup> February All our members are look forward to this! An AGM yes because we all enjoy the pancakes which two of our members make for tea after the meeting.

# St James the Less Penicuik

Cross-Government definition of domestic violence: Extract from the Consultation that was discussed by 14 members of the branch.

Across the world, Mothers' Union works to oppose domestic abuse and violence against women. In the UK and Ireland members support the work of refuges for victims; and in recognition that domestic violence affects those within the church family, Mothers' Union contributed towards the Church of England's Responding to Domestic Abuse: Guidelines for those with pastoral responsibility. Mothers' Union is part of the worldwide Christian alliance Restored, which seeks to transform relationships and end violence against women through a change in attitude and practice of the church. Mothers' Union also lobbies government to tackle domestic violence, through domestic law and through adhering to international obligations such as the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW).

The UK government is currently considering whether to widen the current definition of domestic violence used across all government departments, and is seeking views on whether the current definition is being applied consistently across government and if it is understood by practitioners, victims and perpetrators. Victims from different groups may have different experiences of abuse and different needs arising from it and the government is keen to understand the impact of age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex and sexual orientation on domestic violence situations. Mothers' Union is responding to this consultation.

**1. Option 1:** The government's definition of domestic violence remains the same.

**a)** Do you think the cross-government definition of domestic violence should remain the same? Yes -- No 14 - Don't know -

## Comments:

It should change the definition of adult to include 16 & 17 year olds. Some of this age group are living with partners/have partners to stay in their flats, so how does the Child Protection Act work for them?

We are not sure that frontline practitioners and Government Depts work together and apply the definition properly (we suspect not)

	<b>Yes, understood</b>	<b>No, not understood</b>	<b>Don't know</b>
Victims	May understand some of it, afraid to speak out		
Perpetrators	Some do/some don't 14	They think it is "normal " 14 Say that they "deserve it "	
Front line practitioners	They SHOULD DO!!		
Government departments	They SHOULD do – but afraid of Human rights?		
General public		14	
Local Government	Should do, but we do not know 14		14

The above is just a taste of what was discussed, There were 4 options discussed.



### Diamond Wedding Celebrations:

Congratulations to Ian & Margaret MacLennan who on 15<sup>th</sup> Feb celebrated 60 years of marriage. Ian was MU Diocesan Treasurer before Vera Jones. The photo on the left shows them with a card from the Queen and the bible that was presented to them by St James MU.

Joyce and Cliff Jones will have been married for 60 years on 15<sup>th</sup> March. Cliff, unfortunately, is in residential care.

Ralph and Jean Hindle would have celebrated their 60 years on the 14<sup>th</sup> June, but unfortunately Ralph died on 19<sup>th</sup> Jan after a long illness. Ralph was a MUSCI – man, (*MU Supporter's Club*) entitled to receive a free cup of tea at any branch and wear a special tie (*MU logo with legs*).



Irene Hair celebrated her 90<sup>th</sup> birthday on Feb 5<sup>th</sup> with flowers presented to her in church and a cake in the hall after the service.



The Mothers' Union enjoyed a celebratory lunch the following Wednesday at the Craigiebiel Hotel in Penicuik.



## **St James the Less Penicuik** continued:

Congratulations to Dy Goodchild and Colin Harvey who were married on 15<sup>th</sup> Oct 2011. Thanks also to Dy who has printed this issue of the Newsletter as well as many issues in the past. Dy is also a member of St James Church choir.

Several members enjoyed the outing to St Ebba's to celebrate Mary Sumner Day when long serving members received their long service certificates.

### **Diocesan Membership**

Sadly Rose Nuttall died on Dec 25<sup>th</sup> after a long illness. We send our sympathy to Rose's family. She will be missed by the Diocesan members, especially Margaret Gibbs who worked with Rose to look after this membership and keep them informed about MU news and events.

### **CALENDAR**

**The Lady Day Service will have taken place by the time you receive this Newsletter,** at St Mary's Episcopal Cathedral, Palmerston Place.

**The 2012 Provincial Retreat** will be held from 27<sup>th</sup> to 29<sup>th</sup> March at Kinnoull, led by the R<sup>evd.</sup> Canon Dominic Ind, Rector of St Saviour's, Bridge of Allan and University Chaplain. The 2013 Retreat will be in the week following Easter Week from 9<sup>th</sup> – 11<sup>th</sup> April.

**Diocesan Council Monday April 23rd 10.30am for 11am**

**at St James the less, Penicuik. Soup, tea and coffee will be provided**

This is a new venture moving out of Edinburgh – plenty of parking!!

**Saturday 16th June from 10.30am to 3.30pm. - The General meeting**

Venue Cymru in Llandudno. The Promenade, Llandudno LL30 1BB.

This year there will be two cathedral services on Friday 15th June – Saint Asaph Cathedral Church at 6pm - Cathedral Church of Saint Deiniol, Bangor at 7.30pm.

**2012 Fri 5th October - Sat 6th October** - All are invited to **THE MU SCOTTISH GATHERING** to go on "THE ROAD WE TAKE" on the way we will find out where we've come from where we are now and where we are going at Tulliallan Police College, Kincardine, Fife FK10 4BE - cost £20. Please send in your application as soon as possible. The Booking Form is available online - Arrive for 1pm Depart at 3pm on Saturday 6th October. You are welcome to come later on Friday afternoon or Friday evening after work, or just first thing Saturday. Let us know when you will be coming.

### **Editorial**

Items for the next Newsletter should be with me by September 2012 to enable distribution at Diocesan Council in order to save on postage. News of branch activities, special birthdays, anniversaries etc. plus photos would be welcome.

Email: [jean@jrhindle.co.uk](mailto:jean@jrhindle.co.uk) – Tel 01968 674591 or post to  
Mrs J Hindle 24 Mauricewood Park, Penicuik EH26 0BP

**The following was downloaded from the MU web pages in 2009  
but bears repeating**

The season of Lent has come, a time when Christian traditions encourage us to examine ourselves honestly, to acknowledge our shortcomings and to seek reconciliation with God through prayer, fasting and almsgiving. Lent is God's call to us to recognise the truth of our lives. A torn heart is an open heart that enables us to get in touch with the ways in which we have lost our truth, our ideals and our connection with community. This is a spiritual journey searching the innermost corners of our heart. So let this Lent be an honest time in which we use the season to ponder and make new decisions that will bring us to wholeness. The capacity to forgive and ask for forgiveness is acknowledgement that we have broken bonds and their effects diminish us as persons. Living with harbouring hurts and pains, limits the possibility of God's love breaking into our lives. Let's accept the Spirit's invitation and go into the desert this Lent. The Old Testament psalmist reminds us that God "turns a desert into pools of water, a parched land into springs of water. Psalm 107:34

**The symbolism of ashes**

Archaeologists tell us that the people of Israel were not alone in using ashes in rituals of purification. Ashes appear in Phoenician burial art and Arabic expressions. Ashes were a sign of grief, mourning, humiliation and penitence. When Job loses everything, he sits among the ashes. Cursed and overrun by enemies, the Psalmist "eats ashes like bread, and mingles tears with drink." Ashes are what are left after destruction. After chaos or catastrophe, ashes are what remain.

Ashes also remind us of a common origin. The second chapter of Genesis tells of how we were created from the dust of the ground. Though we may spend our lives trying to distinguish ourselves from others, running after success and trying to feel different from others, the dust and ashes remind us that we are all made of the same stuff. We are reminded not only of our beginning but also of our end. On the First Day of Lent, ashes are imposed with the words, "Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return." Those words apply to us all. While ashes may signify and remind, they also invite. They invite us to repentance. They invite us to turn again to God and to receive new life. Isaiah brings glad tidings to the people of Israel, "to give them a garland instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning." Ashes are not the end but are just the beginning. They begin a season that moves us through silence and longing into a season of joy and resurrection.

**HELLEBORE (LENTEN ROSE)**

Flower of Lent: purple for penitence  
Hidden below its own leaf canopy  
Inward looking, head bowed down  
Colours of mourning - mauve, violet, plum.

Down on ones knees gains a better view  
Sombre beauty: discrete symbol of the season.  
Gently nodding blooms, introspective  
self-contained, thoughtfully, quietly renewing.

Gentle hands cupped around the flower  
To carefully upturn the bell shape  
Discover a surprising centre - sun yellow  
Redeeming light in the darkness.

*Penny Snowden*

# Mothers' Union:- Long term Members

*St. Ninian's Mothers' Union is privileged to have two members with over 50 years membership in the organization: Muriel Aitken and Lily Scott.*



*At the first meeting of our new year, on September 12th 2011, Lily was honoured for her long service to the MU, being presented with her 50 year award by Diocesan President Angela Sibley, and receiving congratulations and a cake(!) from fellow members.*



*On Thursday, September 22nd, the cafe at The Tor Care Home was "taken over" by several St. Ninian's MU members along with Muriel's husband Jim, Angela made the presentation of the 50 year award to Muriel, and celebratory refreshments were enjoyed by all.*

*Congratulations Lily and Muriel!*

