

Mothers' UNION

Christian care for families

Diocese of Glasgow & Galloway



NEWSLINK
Spring 2017
Scottish Charity SC023885



**A LETTER
FROM
OUR
DIOCESAN
RESIDENT**

**The Year
Ahead.
The**

Mothers Union theme for 2017 is 'Faith in Action.' We are blessed in our diocese that we see MU members of all ages and backgrounds demonstrating exactly what 'Faith in Action' means. We continue to support Low Moss Prison and other prisons in our area in a variety of ways, from delivering cards for Christmas, attending prayer groups to helping out practically in tea bars. Our knitting/crochet projects have been extended to include more hospitals and regular donations to ensure continuity. We have also extended our care home visits and as well as providing services at Harvest, Christmas, Easter etc.; are now going to put on entertainment for St. Patrick's Day. This will perhaps lead to St. Georges and St. Andrew's day celebrations.

We are involved , as part of the Province of Scotland, in hosting the MU General meeting at the end of September in Edinburgh. We are delighted to be using the Edinburgh International Conference Centre and hope that our diocese will be well represented by all members. It is a wonderful opportunity to welcome visitors to our Province. All MU trustees in our diocese have taken an active part in negotiating the new Worldwide Mothers Union Constitution, which will be presented to all members for approval in the next few months.

As a diocese we hope to visit churches with no Mothers Union when we organise our diocesan meetings and services. Hopefully other congregations will see the amazing work MU does and be encouraged to join us.

Resources for Mothering Sunday are now online at the main MU website. These are excellent and well worth looking at. They have been emailed to all clergy in the diocese so please remind your priest they are well worth looking at.

With love and prayers as we go forward into 2017,

***Jill Cameron,
Diocesan President.***

UPDATE ON PROJECTS.

It is with great sadness that I have to report that The Raven Trust, who delivered our 'New Baby' parcels to Malawi, is about to wind down. The couple who started and ran the charity are retiring. The cost of shipping out containers from the U.K. to Malawi is simply now too expensive. The Raven Trust is one of several charities forced to abandon this link with Africa. Since September 2015 we have sent 78 'New Baby' parcels out along with 225 toothbrushes and toothpastes for the Smileawi Project. I have contacted the Smileawi Project, which is now a separate charity, to see if they still want tooth brushes and toothpaste to take out when their dentists visit Malawi. As yet I await a reply. Our baby knitting is still required for the maternity units here. Baby hats of all sizes and the bonding squares are the main resource required by the hospitals. I have recently started a project crocheting sleeping mats for the homeless from carrier bags. These will be given out by the Simon Community street workers along with sleeping bags to those in need. The mats are to replace the bits of cardboard which are normally used.

Instructions for Carrier Bag Mats.

Flatten carriers. Fold from side to side until you have a long strip.

Trim off top and bottom and discard these bits. Cut strip into 1 inch pieces. Unfold these pieces. Slip one through another then back again to form a slip knot, pull tight and continue. After about 10 carriers roll into a ball of plarn (plastic yarn!) Use 12mm crochet hook. Chain for 2 ft. Then continue in double crochet until 6 ft. Crochet a handle to wind round for carrying.

You tube has dozens of videos showing this. Hope photos help. Please get in touch if you need any more information.

Hard to begin to crochet with at the start but becomes easier. Some members could prepare the plarn for those who can crochet.





the southern states of America during the 1950's and 60's. The story is about a young white journalist who persuades a group of women working in white households to write anonymously about their day to day experiences. The idea comes to her after she has been talking to the 'help' in her own parents' home. This woman mentions how she writes her prayers every night in a notebook and that helps to spark the idea.

The book is well worth reading if you have not come across it, but it is the idea of writing our prayers that I want to pick up on. The technical term for writing down our spiritual thoughts and prayers is Journaling and you can even buy special note books printed to help you 'journal' but what I have in mind is quite simple; a pen and note book will do.

JILL CAMERON

Try a different way of Praying

Some Years ago I read a book called '**The Help**' by **Kathryn Stockett**, it is also a film of the same name. The phrase 'The Help' refers to the black women who worked as domestic help for well off white households in



I was finding it difficult to focus on praying; formal liturgies did not seem to engage me but when I tried just talking to God I found my thoughts quickly wandered. It was not easy to find a focus that did engage me so I started by using a hymn book. I found a verse or two from a well-known hymn that expressed something from the

day and wrote it in my notebook and that seemed to help me connect to God – which is what prayer is about. Sometimes I used a thought from my daily Bible reading notes or a single prayer from one of the daily offices that seemed relevant to the things that were on my mind that day. It was also a place where I could write down things that were bothering me and sometimes that helped me see a way forward. Recording the good things from the day became an important way of lifting my gaze from the things I got bogged down with.

I could go on but the point is that the act of writing things down seems to help make our thoughts more concrete and connect us to God. It also helps us to slow down when our minds are whirring with 'stuff'. If you find praying difficult at the moment or you feel you have got in a rut why not try writing your thoughts and prayers down for a while – see if it helps you too.

Rev. Lucy Ireland
MU Chaplain

Memorial

Many of us remember Robbie Cornish, the past leader of Helensburgh Mothers' Union with great love and affection. She brought light and

happiness to all she met, and when she died in 2015 we were all down hearted and although she and her husband had moved south to Scaynes Hill, West Sussex, we had kept in touch. Maurice phoned me in January this year and asked for details about Mary Sumner House in London as he was minded to visit it and give a donation in memory of Robbie. I gave him some details and suggested who to ask for when he visited. Last week he gave me an update on his visit. He was made very welcome, introduced to several staff members, given a tour of the building, invited to join in Midday Prayers where he met Beverley Julien who invited him to sign the memorial book for members of MU and was told that the book would be placed on the altar there and blessed in their service for Mothering Sunday. Maurice was greatly moved by this and the kindness he was shown by everyone in MSH and especially the Chief Executive of Mothers' Union. He said we had gained a real treasure in her and those of us who have made her acquaintance would roundly endorse this.

Margaret Horrell
MU Trustee

16 Days of Activism against Gender Violence.
Glasgow and Galloway 2016

Members from across the Diocese marked the 16 Days of activism in a variety of venues. In Holy Trinity, Ayr, branch members joined together with members from Kilmarnock in a service of prayerful reflection on Friday 25th November.

On the same day in Holy Name, Cumbernauld several MU branches came together, along with other ecumenical groups to join in a service. After the service white ribbons and friendship bracelets were sold. The money raised will be used to buy pants to send to various parts of Africa. These will -
Gain respect for wearers and thus reduce rape.
Enable women to leave hospital after reconstructive gynaecological surgery.
Enable girls to attend school every day of the month.

And at Bishopbrigg's branch at their monthly meeting on 14th November they shared information on the issue of gender violence and the importance of helping people practically and through prayer. A prayer tree was created which was placed in church for the 16 day period, MU members and the

wider congregation were asked to write prayers to hang on the tree.

Elaine McAlpine
Diocesan Secretary

Glasgow Children's Holiday Scheme

Holidays, for most of us, offer an escape to new horizons, fun and adventure.

For many families, however, holidays are out of reach. These families belong to the 20% of the city's population that is income deprived. A third of Glasgow's children live in poverty. That's 36,000 children, many of whom may never enjoy a few days at the seaside or in the country. A break can help improve self-esteem and promote better health and wellbeing. Each year GCHS organise



holidays for almost 500 children from the Greater Glasgow area.

What Children and Families Said 2016

A family who enjoyed a holiday at River Tilt said "it was a true getaway from the hustle and bustle of the city, we couldn't stop admiring the breath-taking

scenery with so much to do and enjoy outdoors. We felt incredibly blessed to have such an opportunity"; a mum with a 7 year old son with autism who also enjoyed a holiday at River Tilt said "the location was ideal, true calmness for our son – it was perfect, freedom". Mum, Kate, and her son let us know they had a marvellous and much needed holiday for both of them. "It felt so good to be able to say to my son that we were going on **our** holiday, not just watching all his friends go away on their own. It was empowering to let him know we were participating in that and were not different to other folks"; mum Colette, let us know that her son who has Asperger's could be given a little freedom when on holiday at Wemyss Bay as it was safe and secure; "Raymond (12) loved to watch the entertainment and the children's club activities and this time he joined in which was a breakthrough". A family of 6 enjoyed a week at Wemyss Bay with appropriate support – the family have complex needs with mum and a 9 year old son both in a wheelchair. Mum was feeling depressed as she felt that the family did not engage in many activities. The opportunity to get away enabled them to do this. Dad, as main carer, got the

opportunity for some respite too with additional adult support. The Holiday Scheme relies entirely on grant funding and donations.

Bonding Squares

MU Members are knitting tiny comfort blankets for premature babies and their mums at Kilmarnock neonatal unit. The blankets are placed next to babies in incubators and mums get one to hold close too. They are then swapped over so infants can inhale the smell of their mothers. It is proving a big hit in the neonatal unit at the hospital, where the items bring solace to new mums who cannot hold their special care babies. Helen Stephen has led the campaign to make the comforters known as "bonding squares". Helen says "The project means a lot to me. My own daughter was born premature, and I was separated from her. There was no contact apart from feeding. I really didn't get to know her properly until I got home. It is a stressful situation for mothers." The bonding squares give comfort to the child and mother. Helen uses garter and moss stitch for the mini-blankets. Mary McCorquindale, leader of Ayr branch said "Every stitch is a stitch of love. It reminds mums

they are not alone.”

If you wish to knit bonding squares, use size 8 needles, cast on 39 stitches and knit until the square is 7 inch x 7 inch. Knit two identical squares; one for baby and one for mum.

Prayer Circle

First of all some verses from the Song of Songs Chapter 2, verses 10-12.

My lover spoke and said to me, “Arise my darling, my beautiful one and come with me. See! The winter is past; the rains are over and gone. Flowers appear on the earth; the season of singing has come, the cooing of doves is heard in our land.”

These words from the Song of Songs seem pertinent to the natural world at this present time. As David and I journey about, I am amazed at how new life is appearing, every day there is another flower to see. First of all in Milngavie, snowdrops, then bright yellow crocus beside Bingham’s Pond which is next to Gartnavel Hospital. Two days later, drifts of snowdrops on the verge beside the Garloch, then the very next day in Inverary grape hyacinths and daffodils. In our own garden the roses are sprouting and the wood pigeons

have returned to wake us up in the mornings.

We had a challenging week recently, on one day my Bible notes were on Psalm 46, both David and I were heartened by these words, Psalm 46: 1-3,7

“God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear, though the earth give way and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea, though its waters roar and foam and the mountains quake with their surging. The LORD Almighty is with us; the God of Jacob is our fortress.”

As winter gives way to Spring, I pray that your lives may be brightened by the abundance of God’s gifts to us, and that you may move forward into the year with joy and reassurance, knowing that we have a God who is always a very present help in trouble.

Please pray for our overseas Link Dioceses. Malakal, South Sudan. All Saint’s Cathedral, Kenya. Kontagora and Osun North East, Nigeria and Pune, India.

Yours in Christ
Sue Brough

Saturday 13th May 2017	2pm	Festival Service followed by afternoon tea kindly provided by branch	St Cyprian's, Lenzie
Friday 29th September 2017	5.30pm	MU General Meeting Service	St Mary's Cathedral, Palmerston Place, Edinburgh
Saturday 30th September 2017	Tbc All Day	MU General Meeting	Edinburgh
Saturday 7th October 2017	11am (TBC)	Autumn Diocesan Council	St Mary's, Hamilton

Link Diocese Malakal (South Sudan)

Michael Paget-Wilkes the chairman of Sudan Church Review writes ...

“The part of my ministry in SCA that I have most appreciated has been in Khartoum, Juba and their surrounding areas to stand alongside and serve South Sudanese and Sudanese seeking to claim and reflect the love and power of Christ. The many faithful worshippers meeting each Sunday, usually in congregations underpinned by the Mothers’ Union, are

outstanding witnesses to us in the West.”

Postcards

Len Whittaker, who over the past years has raised an incredible £190,000+ for the SCA with his tireless work collecting and selling postcards. 200,000 postcards are needed to raise £10,000 to £12,000 profit a year. It is therefore, imperative that everyone renews their efforts to collect and encourage collection of postcards. For details of Len’s collection tours’ please contact Len by email at

leonardwhittaker007@btinternet.com

By post at 16 Mark's Close,
Ingatestone, Essex CM4 9AR or
by phone: 01277 352464.

South Sudan Emergency Relief

Since December 2013, Mothers' Union has been supporting those affected by the on-going regional crisis stemming from the civil war in South Sudan. In total more than 1.5 million refugees have now fled from the country to the surrounding regions such as Uganda, Ethiopia and Sudan - the UN also estimate that a further 2 million have been internally displaced. 60% of the refugees are children who will often arrive at the camps suffering from acute malnutrition. Despite the scale of the crisis, it is receiving little international attention and is therefore chronically underfunded.

In response to this growing crisis, Mothers' Union aims to fund a £50k emergency relief project to help feed, clothe and provide post-conflict trauma support for refugees fleeing the war.

The first phase of our relief project is focused around the Diocese of Madi West Nile in Northern Uganda where there

are over 500,000 people living in makeshift accommodation. We will work with the local churches to provide practical support and training. We will also work alongside other NGO's as part of the relief effort and Mothers' Union will uniquely focus on providing displaced peoples with spiritual, psychosocial and post-conflict trauma recovery support.

Prayer Points

Please remember all those in South Sudan and pray for the following:

- An end to the intense fighting which has overtaken large regions of South Sudan and the pursuit of peaceful means to resolve problems
- Mothers' Union involvement in the emergency relief work and the work of The Church and NGO's as we respond to the crisis and help the vulnerable
- The challenges facing the tens of thousands trying to leave the country and the neighbouring countries coping with the influxes of refugees
- The provision of food and clean water
- Mothers' Union members in affected areas as they bring support to their communities

- Sudanese families in other countries concerned for the welfare of family and friends in caught up in the conflict
- Long-term dialogue and reconciliation work to resolve the complex political and ethnic divisions at the heart of the conflict
- The work of Mothers' Union trainers in spiritual, psychosocial and post-conflict trauma recovery support

Loving Lord, who wept at the sufferings of Jerusalem; have compassion on your people in this day. Send your Spirit of justice and mercy that lives would be rescued and peace prevail. Amen.

Please consider what you/your branch can do to help raise funds for the South Sudan Emergency Relief Fund.

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Thanks to all the contributors. All articles for the Autumn edition of Newslink should be sent by **16th September 2017** to me: Wendy Petrie, 120 Meadowburn, Bishopbriggs, G64 3LX or E-mail: petriecw@virginmedia.com

New Year Honours - BEM for Ann

Ann Glenesk, former Diocesan President and member of Bishopbriggs Branch, has been awarded a British Empire Medal for her work in Low Moss Prison.

In response to the news, Ann commented: 'The British Empire Medal in my name represents the willingness of a host of folk to come together, to have fun and at the same time do a wee bit of good - often difficult to quantify, but reassurance comes in spades from the most unlikely sources. Victims of crime deserve justice, perpetrators of crime deserve punishment from courts. Rehabilitation, support for families in prisons can be aided by a friendly smile, chat and a willingness of us all to notice and respect our neighbours in whatever context.

Thanks to Scottish Episcopal Church, Mother's Union and the amazing Low Moss Volunteer Group and staff of HMP Low Moss.'

Congratulations Ann!



16 Days of Activism against Gender Violence

Photo on front page shows Rev. Moira Jamieson lighting candles at the Cumbernauld service. Back page shows prayer tree, and prayers being written by members at Bishopbriggs. White ribbons, friendship bracelets, and pants at the Cumbernauld service.

