



How Mothers' Union Helps

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As we pray about and support the work of Mothers' Union, and reach out to those around us, we often don't hear about the impact that we're having. We understand that often we're part of a chain of kindness and support being offered. We're reminded of what St Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 3:6, "I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God has been making it grow."

But just sometimes, people will pause, to share with us the difference that Mothers' Union has made to them. All members, who faithfully pray for the work of Mothers' Union, should feel encouraged by these glimpses of the difference that their prayer, care and commitment to families is making.

Below are some comments and stories from people who have been helped by Mothers' Union that we hope will encourage you.

Comments from couples who have attended preparing for your marriage sessions, led by members who have participated in Mothers' Union's Loving for Life training programme

"It has given me confidence that, as a couple, we actually work very well together and that the disagreements we do have are normal."

"We were a bit worried – thinking we might be grilled – some vicars can be a bit strict!. But it was fun, we laughed our way through it. Although we knew each other really well anyway, we still tease each other about some of the stuff that came up through it."





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A father using a Child Contact Centre where members volunteer

"I realise that we only used your contact centre for a short period but in that time it gave me and my children a chance to stay connected with each other especially over their respective birthdays. I am sure if they could, both Tom and Harry would express their gratitude as well. I fully understand the difficulties you may face, dealing with what can appear to be two warring factions at times, but in my experience you manage this with compassion, kindness and above all else make the children's needs a priority."

From a member of a friendship group for widows, the Golden Girls Club (featured as an Inspired idea)

"It can get lonely living by yourself, especially at night when you can feel totally isolated and worries get magnified. Now there are 'sisters' ready with a listening ear and a supportive shoulder. If someone's ill the others rally round with help: and it's great just having someone to share your news with."

From prisoners

"Thank you, it's really comforting to know that someone on the outside is thinking of me at Christmas." *(From a prisoner who received a Christmas card from Mothers' Union)*

"When I come to a card making session, I leave feeling renewed and refreshed. It is nice to have somewhere to go where you're not judged and where you are made to feel welcome and at ease."

From a member of the Snack and Chat group, for those who are feeling lonely, isolated or bereaved (featured as an Inspired idea)

"I look forward to Tuesdays more than any other day in the week" says one of those who now regularly come to the group.



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From parents and grandparents who participated in Mothers' Union parents' groups, facilitated by members who had attended the Mothers' Union Passionate about Parenting training programme

"The most important thing for me – new to it all – was to realise that everyone was really struggling like me, and that at whatever stage we were at, we were all facing new things and thinking on our feet."

"I realised I could let the children learn from their own mistakes rather than always nagging and picking up the pieces for them. I feel now that I have more confidence to do this and am much calmer. I try to connect more and listen more."

"Just a quick note to say thank you so much for giving up your time to facilitate the parents' group. I feel very lucky and privileged to be able to attend. Our whole family has benefited greatly from the group. It would be fair to say that it has changed our lives. So thank you very much."

"I did wrong and got caught and I have had my punishment. I made mistakes with my children, but now I've been to this course, I don't intend to make the same mistakes with my grandchildren." *(A comment from a grandfather in prison).*

Feedback from those who have been on a Mothers' Union Away From It All holiday

"I thank you to the moon and back for our holiday. I think of you as fairy godmothers, letting us have the trip of a lifetime, you may not go to a ball but go to Butlins at Minehead!" *Peter, aged 10 and diagnosed ADHD*

"I really realised that God had touched my heart. I saw that the team were not 'do gooders'. They were people who wanted to help make a difference in people's lives. They did it with the love of Christ.....I opened up to Bennie who sat on our table for meals....she prayed for me and for my family. After that holiday I went to church. This time it was not for show. It was because I had actually started to believe in Jesus and in God."





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Neil's story: "I was a soldier who had done just about everything. I had done all the combat stuff, pulled people out of burning buildings, done humanitarian aid work, seen mass graves of ethnic cleansing, been in riots, searched for bombs. I'd done close observation, human intelligence, and frequently gone into hostile territory in plain clothes. I had been shot at more times than I can count or remember, I'd been blown up, and I'd been set on fire. But ...I was virtually a broken man, suffering with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. My wife had gone to church for years but I was not interested. In fact I did not believe in a lot at all. But, we were offered a holiday by Tina's church, something called the 'Mothers' Union, Away From It All Family Holiday', and so, begrudgingly, I went along.

"When we arrived, I sat waiting in the car nervously for 10 minutes, wondering what was going to happen. I had been it, seen it and done virtually everything, so why was I here with a bunch of do-gooders? After a few days I felt something change. I went to the evening reflection led by the holiday's chaplain - a lady vicar who could make a pig out of a banana!! I really realised that God had touched my heart. I saw that the team were not 'do gooders'. They were people who wanted to help make a difference in people's lives. They did it with the love of Christ. I opened up to Bennie who sat on our table for meals. She was shocked at some things I had seen and done, but she prayed for me and for my family. After that holiday I went to church. This time it was not for show. It was because I had actually started to believe in Jesus and in God."

(This is just a part of Neil's story – he continued to draw closer to God, and now, with his wife, helps to organise Mothers' Union holidays similar to the one he went on).

The above are just some of the stories and comments that reach us. If you have some story to share which illustrates how Mothers' Union members are helping people, that you can give us permission to share, do please send it to the Mothers' Union staff team at inspired@themothersunion.org

Please change any names or other details if confidentiality needs to be maintained.

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