

Newsletter

July - September 2019



Listen, observe, act - in step with God.

New Members

Canterbury & Ashford Archdeaconry

St Martin & St Paul's Church
Canterbury

Lucy Marsh, Zoe Robinson,
Ann Powell, Tess Hickson,
Trixie Collins, Reem Khider, and
Jasmin Chiaramello, and Sybil
Chambers transferred from Norfolk

Congratulations

Canterbury & Ashford Archdeaconry

St Laurence Fellowship Group

80th Birthday Muriel Wilson

St Leonard's Church, Deal

50 years service as member
Georgina Curling, Betty Ovenden,
Joan Finney, Heather Brodie, and
Lyn Inkley

Holy Trinity Church, Margate

Long Term Membership
Eileen Welcome - 68 years
Nora Reeves - 60 years
Dorothy Chapman - 54 years

All Soul's Church, Cheriton

Golden Wedding Anniversary
Margaret & Hugh Coleman

St Martin & St Paul's Church
Canterbury

90th Birthday Dawn Andrews

Maidstone Archdeaconry

Holy Trinity Church, Milton Regis

100th Birthday Marjorie Lacey

St. Michael and All Angels Church,
Maidstone

Golden Wedding Anniversary
Daphne & John Tester

FROM THE EDITOR...



I hope you all enjoyed the Festival Service and the parade of banners from all the branches. See back page.

David Horwood

Front Cover Photo: Shows our trustees at the Festival Service in the Cathedral; Revd Wendy Jackson-Hill, Sandra Goodey, Jean Sweetman, Sally Phillips, Chris Cook, Sue Thomas and Revd Lesley Valiant.

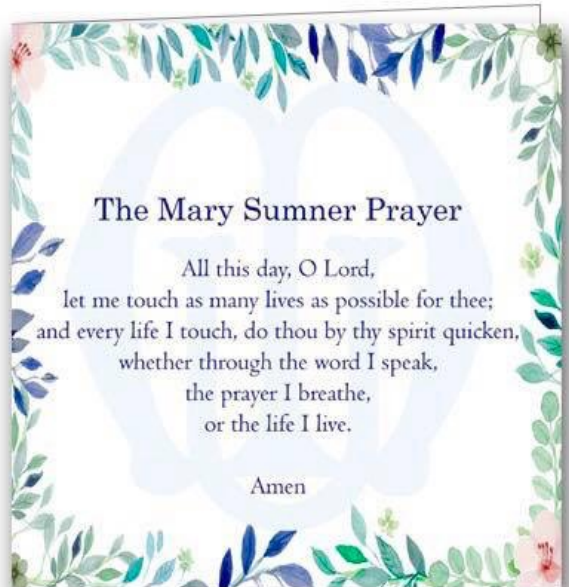
Dear friends

Portsmouth is not too far to make a day trip from Kent and its Guildhall has the room to fit us all in for the General Meeting in September. The only thing that IS missing is YOU (see p 6). And, just in time I remembered to book an overnight stay through the Easy Fundraising website which adds FREE money to our diocesan project fund.



The commissioning in the Cathedral was a joyful service and a tribute to the generations of Mothers' Union who have gone before us; from processing of the overseas links country flags and Bishop Trevor exhorting the Mothers' Union to stay disruptive in the cause of social justice, to our gift distribution of a mustard seed of faith.

Don't forget Mary Sumner Day on 9th August can be an ideal opportunity to talk about the meaning of your membership, AFIA and MU local branch projects, in and outside of church, and to inspire an outreach article in your parish newsletters: many will be helping with the work of setting up this summer a "community wardrobe" of nearly-new school uniforms; partnering to alleviate period poverty in schools, or working with the refuges and young homeless.



May we be blessed by a time of refreshment and renewal over the period of Summer.

Grace and Peace,

*Marianna Poliszczuk Diocesan President,
email: marianna2@compuserve.com*

The Away From It All Holiday 2019

The 2019 “Away From It All” (AFIA) holiday is now fixed for **August 18 – 24**, and as for the last holiday in 2017 we would be most grateful for any help that branches can give us.

This is a list of goodies that we would like to collect for the holiday this year, please note we are NOT collecting clothes this year: similarly please NO scooters or bicycles.

Toys and games. Balls and skipping ropes. Tricycles and ride on toys. Craft materials, Pencils, coloured or lead; Drawing and colouring books, Children’s books, DVDs.

The majority of the children are between 5 to 9 years and one little boy will celebrate his 6th birthday in the week with us.

We will need many towels for daily use and for the seaside outing! Useful items will be bath mats and some washing-up bowls (for use with little ones in the showers); extra pillows and pillow cases; children’s sun hats and High Factor Sun Cream and hygiene items (not sprays).

We hope to get help from a Christian charity shop MADM for some baby equipment, such as stair gate, toilet seat, potty, changing mat etc as we will have a few under-3s.

We thank you in anticipation!

Marianna Poliszczuk –Holiday Co-ordinator and your AFIA team

Smarties Tubes Appeal

We are commencing the “smarties” tubes cash collection from June to end-October. We eat the sweets and then fill the tubes with assorted coins. Boost fundraising with a summer social, coffee morning or afternoon tea to replenish the project fund.

Please bring donations along, as a cheque made out to **Mothers’ Union Diocese of Canterbury**, to the members’ meeting in St Paul’s Canterbury on 5th November.

In connection with MARY SUMNER DAY on 9th August and during the time of our holiday project please promote AFIA within your church family and in newsletters and please ask for protection prayers for the families and helpers (and our hope for fine weather).

Copy for the next Newsletter to be with the Editor, David Horwood, by Friday 26th July 2019. Please let me know what is happening in your area. Send to: 27 Abbey Gardens Canterbury CT2 7EU or email: boycieboycie@icloud.com.



Worldwide President

Our administrator, Susan Bradley received this from our new Worldwide President;

Greetings from a hot and sunny Guyana!

I am absolutely delighted to receive this very inspiring and informative Newsletter from Canterbury Diocese and even more thrilled to read Marianna's letter. Thank you so much for sharing and thank you for all you are doing as Diocesan Administrator to keep our beloved Mothers' Union visible in Canterbury.

I pray that God will continue to bless you as you journey in the footsteps of Mary Sumner and in step with God so that you can continue to be a blessing to all who pass your way. Please can you convey my prayers and support for the work of Mothers' Union in the Diocese of Canterbury.

Sheran Harper

MU WWP, Sheran Harper, Commissioned by Archbishop of Canterbury at Southwark Cathedral

In a colourful and packed Southwark Cathedral, Mrs Sheran Harper, was commissioned to her office as Worldwide President of Mothers' Union, by the Archbishop of Canterbury, The Right Revd Justin Welby. The new global Trustee Board was also Commissioned by the Archbishop. The congregation was made up of more than six hundred friends, family and Mothers' Union members, many of whom travelled from around the globe and closer to home for the occasion.



The photo shows Nikki Sweatman, Zonal Trustee, Sheran Harper and Susan Baker, Provincial President elect



Holy Trinity Church, Margate

Mothers' Union Holy Trinity Cliftonville have been working with the local branch of the Red Box. The Red Box Project is a community-based, not-for-profit initiative, which aims to support young people throughout their periods by providing red boxes filled with free period products to local schools.

Mothers' Union met with the representatives from the Red Box as well as local school community nurses and representatives from some of the secondary schools to learn more about the initiative and how we can help. Red Box are keen to get one of their boxes into all secondary schools in Thanet, and then look to providing local primary schools also with a Box.

Through a variety of generous donations to the cause Mothers' Union have been able so far to purchase and provide Red Box with an official red wheelie bin for collecting donations from the general public, and this has been placed in the entrance of the local Asda branch and is emptied out weekly by Red Box. In addition we have also been able to donate a selection of sanitary products.

Mothers' Union are also planning a variety of other activities during the year to help address and highlight the issue of 'period poverty' - with a sponsored children's/dog mini coastal walk scheduled, and a 19 mile sponsored walk from Canterbury to Ramsgate planned.

Claire Thrumble

Editors note;

Please be reminded that Foodbanks also require hygiene items.



Mothers in Union:

With God, with creation, with each other.

The Revd Ali Duguid, Vicar of Marden

July - August - September 2019

Mothers' Union is an interesting title - I'm sure once meant to signify the unity and solidarity of Mothers in what was a male dominated world that suppressed women and often oppressed children. In some places that sadly is still the case and so we continue to unite together and be a united voice that can be heard more loudly and clearly to stand up for justice, equality, safety and respect. But as I ponder 'Mothers' Union' I play, and suggest we are Mothers in Union - yes with each other, but also with God and Creation.

When a child is born, whatever the circumstance and wherever in the world, Humanity joins with God in creation. A new life is made. The job is not over though - mothering or nurturing is needed for that life to grow and flourish. Again we join with God in the nurturing of all life, but also with each other as we look for help, guidance and the wisdom of others, be they family, friends, educational or medical. That nurtured life might well go on to produce more life and so creation continues, forever evolving and growing.

We are mothers together, in union with God and his world of creation and each other.

Read Genesis Chapter One. (yes all of it)

Pray:

Heavenly Father, I thank you for creating me; for those who nurtured me in growth; for those who continue to nurture me now, with a listening ear, smiles, hugs and hankies. I thank you for the awesome responsibility you have set me to 'mother' and nurture others, be they related or not. Fill me with your Holy Spirit today that I might fulfil that role to your specification. I ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

These summer months let us ponder together what 'Mothers in Union' might mean for each of us.....

Mothers in Union: With God July

Re-read Genesis 1:26-29

As we ponder these words, possibly surrounded by the blossom of summer, the busyness of the birds and butterflies, we remember that in the whole glorious picture of the world, God created us. You and me. Individual, different, unique and loved. He told us to be fruitful and multiply, just as all living things do. That is Mothering in Union with God.

He knows what it is to be a mother, the pangs of childbirth, the worry of nurturing and letting go and allowing independence with all the mistakes experienced and watched.

As Jesus was presented in the temple by his loving parents, what a shock it must have been for them to hear Simeon warn Mary to what Jesus was destined and that a 'sword will pierce your own soul too'. That's Mothering for you! All mothers have experienced that at times I'm sure, and we no doubt did it to our own parents as we dared to challenge and dared to grow up independent and different. But we are reminded that we are all part of God's creation, we all continue God's creation and that is sometimes hard as indeed it was for Him. We are not alone in Mothering. We are united with God

Read Psalm 139: 1-14

Pray:

Loving God, I thank you that I am fearfully and wonderfully made, that you knit me together and created me unlike any other. I thank you for those you have given me to Mother in any way. Keep me mindful that there is no place I can be that is beyond your inescapable presence in both times of goodness and times of sadness and worry. Hear my prayer as I call upon you today. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Together in Prayer

Mothers in Union:

With Creation

August

Re-read Genesis 1:26-29

When God created humanity, He asked us to join in with the ongoing activity of it. Creation is not static. It involves, life, growth and death of all things. Join with me He says and let's party together! We do, but of course it involves responsibility too, to maintain growth and evolution. Life cannot be a complete party as that would just be selfish, using up resources with nothing left to create with or for. Perhaps that is what Eve thought later on (Genesis Chapter 3) when she succumbed to temptation to eat the only fruit that was banned.

So we try to act responsibly, to eat and feed others responsibly, to nurture responsibly so that we join with God in the continued creation of His. That's why its such a tragedy that we are destroying life with selfish living, with plastic etc. the food chain is being destroyed and with it (if we aren't careful) the ongoing business of God's creation. He has asked us to join in, no, He has *tasked* us to join in and join in we must. We are not alone in Mothering, we are united with creation.

Read Psalm 8

Despite being the eighth Psalm, it is recorded as the oldest Psalm. How awesome that we each have a place in creation, through God!

Pray:

Awesome God, how majestic is your name and being. Thank you that you care for me and continue to worry about me. Thank you that you care for those I love and those I love less. Help me not to give in to my own selfish desires, taking your love and keeping it for myself, but to share it with others, so that creation may truly grow. **Amen.**

Mothers in Union:

With each other

September

Re-read Genesis 1:26-29

Notice how God says 'Let US make human kind'. He is already plural. Father Son and Holy Spirit. The opening chapter of John's Gospel reminds us that all three aspects of God were there at creation in the beginning. God was plural and knew we needed to be plural. Very simply put, we need each other - especially in Mothering whether we are male or female. We need help. We need food. We need nurture. We need.

Jesus told us to Love one another as we love ourselves. That's a tall order! Let's face it, if we're honest we do love ourselves, we wash, we eat, we sleep, we do all the things for self nurture and Jesus tells us to love each other THAT much. Right down to the basics. Surely then, tying up the loose ends of these few reflections, that involves also loving the God who created us, loving the world of creation so that others can also reap its rewards and therefore we are loving each other and in union with each other. Yes, we can offer support through groups and networks, through charitable donations, through AFIA holidays, etc but we should also be sacrificial in our unity of mothering each other in the way we care for creation - for each other and for unseen generations to come. We are not alone in Mothering, we are united with each other.

Read: Matthew 5: 43-48

We are challenged here not just to be nice to our particular friends.

Pray:

Lord of All, thank you for those who maybe don't like me but are still able to love and mother me. As your child, help me to love those I find difficult or different from me and to give them love. Help me to reach out to those who challenge me and my way of thinking or doing and to share your mothering skills, in unity with you. **Amen.**

Maidstone Archdeaconry President

God brought our family to Lenham from Chesham, Buckinghamshire in January 2015.

Prior to making the final decision to move, whilst sitting and watching my two children, play in the park, I asked God for a word of discernment. He gave me a phrase, "There's an untapped army here that I want you to be involved with". Therefore, I spent the first year in Lenham seeking out this army. Would it be the parents in the playground? the school community? the members of St. Mary's church? or the people of the community?

The Mothers' Union notice board at the back of St. Mary's church caught my attention. I could see that this organisation (which I had previously not heard of and am now ashamed to admit) shared a heart for the same local and international issues that I too was passionate about. Since joining the Mothers' Union in January 2016 I have become fully immersed (in true keeping with my Baptist roots) in the life of the Mothers' Union. I soon realised that the 'army' God was referring to was not an exclusive group but was rather referring to everyone! (I really should have known that, shouldn't I). The Mothers' Union provides a precious opportunity to touch the lives of all with the love of Christ. Vera Congdon, took me under her wing, and enthused by her selfless dedication to both the church and the Mothers' Union, I decided to join her as Joint Branch Leader of the Lenham and Boughton Malherbe Branch.

I am now honoured to be the Maidstone Archdeaconry President and am thankfully being guided and supported by our gracious predecessor Jean Sweetman. My counterpart for Canterbury and Ashford, Rita Pengelly is a tower of strength too and we meet regularly to pray, encourage each other and discern the Father's will for our Archdeaconries and Diocese. My other hat, that of Diocesan Trustee has been invaluable, the Trustee Board is the 'Mother ship' to which I go to get answers to the many queries I collect as I navigate, by invitation, my way around the Branches within the Archdeaconry. I have received such a loving, encouraging and warm welcome from you all, please accept a very heart felt thank you to you for this.

(continued over)



Rita Pengelly, Marianna Poliszczuk, Caroline Gaskin, and Sally Phillips

I very much enjoyed our last Diocesan Members' Meeting in Maidstone when we were blessed to hear from the Charity *Holding on, Letting go*. I know most of us have either experienced or known someone that has experienced the bereavement of a parent. We now know about this wonderful charity and can signpost those young people affected for both timely and life changing support.

As we begin the new triennium, I am reminded of two Bible verses; Romans 8: 22,23 and Lamentations 3: 22,23 'We know that the whole creation has been groaning (us too probably) as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time.' We live in an unstable and challenging world full of self interest. But we, as members of the Mothers' Union 'who have the fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption to sonship'. We can take courage from Lamentations that 'The steadfast love of the LORD never ceases; his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness.' Brothers and sisters in Christ, as we journey together '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.

Sally Phillips, Maidstone Archdeaconry President

General Meeting 2019



We are very excited that this year's General Meeting will be taking place in Portsmouth on 18th September, with the Annual services taking place the afternoon and evening before (17th September).

Our full programme for the event will include a keynote address from our Worldwide President, Sheran Harper. In addition there will be; a "marketplace" for you to find out more about projects and programmes around Britain & Ireland and around the world, the launch of "Communities of Interest", which will give you the opportunity to become more involved in those areas of MU which are of particular interest to you, insights into how Mothers' Union will be involved in supporting the Lambeth Conference in 2020

plus a feature on "new shoots" in Britain & Ireland.

From Mary Sumner House

Around The Diocese

St Martin & St Paul's Church, Canterbury

Several new members were enrolled during the 10.30 service and Rita Pengelly, our Archdeaconry President, was in attendance.

They are left to right: Lucy Marsh, Zoe Robinson, Ann Powell, Tess Hickson, Revd Mark Griffin, Sybil Chambers, Trixie Collins, Rita Pengelly, Marylyn Collins, Reem Khider and Jasmin Chiaramello.



Sue Spillett

St Michael's Church, Sittingbourne - Evening Branch

All members and two guests took part in the Wave of Prayer, which was held in the upper room of Bailey's Coffee Shop, against a backdrop of The Mad Hatter's Tea Party.

Following an excellent lunch members participated in the service during which they listened to excerpts from Stainers "Crucifixion".

It was voted the best Wave of Prayer and thanks were given to Sally Ann Reeve for her kindness in hosting the event.

Valerie Hemsley-Flint

Holy Trinity Margate Evening Group

Claire, a member of our Evening Group at Holy Trinity, made up with help from her young daughters, Mothering Sunday Gifts for St Anthony's School which our Branch support. These gifts, mainly toiletries, were supplied by Claire, and by Hawkinge & Acrise Fellowship Group as all but one of the projects they supported had closed. Claire received a message of thanks from Lesley Gray, the Head of the school, saying the gifts that Claire had delivered, had been given to the children to take home for their mothers.

Wendy James, Branch Leader

Those Who Have Died

Maidstone Archdeaconry

St Paul's Church, Maidstone

Peter Jeffree

St Michael's Church, Sittingbourne
Afternoon Branch

Pamela Stone

Canterbury & Ashford Archdeaconry

St Dunstan's Church, Canterbury

Jan Woodroffe

When Jan came to live in Bredgar she immediately joined the 5 Parish Mothers' Union and what a breath of fresh air, she took on Treasurer and then Branch Leader. Jan had a wonderful sense of humour and was a most generous member not just with money but more importantly with her time. She opened her home up to guests from around the world and hosted many Branch meetings and she loved baking for many charity coffee mornings. After the death of her husband Jan moved to Canterbury but we never lost touch, Jan became a MU trustee and was a great asset to the Diocese, also enjoying the role of a guide at Canterbury Cathedral. Everyone will miss her and it has been a privilege to have known her.

Pat Hobday

St Leonard's Church, Deal

Heather Brodie

Heather was a long and loyal member, a very quiet person, but very caring, sincere and prayerful.

Georgina Curling

Georgina had been a member for many years, also a Branch Leader, Deanery Leader and Trustee, and when St. Leonard's Mothers' Union was struggling, she kept it going! She had a great faith, as was obvious at her funeral which was packed by the very many friends she had made over the years in the town, and by all the hymns and prayers she had chosen. She also had a very caring family, including dear Bert, whom she had been married to for 65 years. We will all miss her dreadfully, miss her at the Branch meetings, and the Canterbury meetings, where she liked to meet up with friends she had known for a long time.

Wendy Smithson

This newsletter is produced by Mothers' Union in the Diocese of Canterbury. All items must come with a note of the contributor's name and contact details. The editor reserves the right to edit or not publish anything received. Items are not intended to represent the official position of the Church of England, nor the official position of the Mothers'.

Dates for your Diary

Please remember in your prayers:

Wednesday 3rd July	Trustee Board Meeting, Diocesan House 10.00 am to 1.00 pm
Thursday 25th July	Cathedral Prayer Time, 12 noon St Gabriel's Chapel
Friday 26th July	Copy deadline for Diocesan Newsletter
Friday 9th August	Mary Sumner Day
Sunday 18th - Saturday 24th August	AFIA holiday - families at Lodge Hill Activity Centre
Thursday 29th August	Cathedral Prayer Time, 12 noon St Gabriel's Chapel
Wednesday 4th September	Finance & D S Meeting, 7.00 pm
Wednesday 11th September	Trustee Board Meeting, Diocesan House 10.00 am to 1.00 pm
Tuesday 17th September	General Meeting Services in Cathedral
Wednesday 18th September	General Meeting - Guildhall, Portsmouth
Thursday 26th September	Cathedral Prayer Time, 12 noon St Gabriel's Chapel

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Mothers' Union Website: www.mothersunion.org

Registered Charity No. 250124

Listen, observe, act - in step with God

Here are two photos of some of the banners at the Festival Service at the Cathedral and the gift.



The banners take a lot of work and skill to make so it's nice to see them appreciated by members other than from their own branch. You may have missed the Mothers' Union Canterbury Diocese banner as it is getting fragile and was unfortunately not paraded around. It may be that it requires some restoration to make it last for several more years.