

Issue 2/20

April - June 2020

Mothers' UNION
Christian care for families
Diocese of Canterbury

Newsletter



Building Hope and Confidence

New Members

Canterbury & Ashford Archdeaconry

All Souls, Cheriton

Barbara Mills

Congratulations

Canterbury & Ashford Archdeaconry

Hawkinge & Acrise Fellowship

60th Wedding Anniversary,

Barbara & John Bell

DIOCESAN DAYS OF PILGRIMAGE

We hope for some dry weather on 16th May for our Mothers' Union Diocesan Prayer Pilgrimage. A walk from Goodnestone Church to Canterbury Cathedral (8 miles). This will be led by Chaplain Rev. Lesley Valiant.

There is an opportunity for some of us as greeters of pilgrims to the Cathedral and others helping with the refreshments team on Saturday 30th May for the Diocesan Day of Prayer and Pilgrimage. Please contact Susan Bradley if you can be available.

FROM THE EDITOR...

Some members have been asking about the identity statement of the Mothers' Union.



It is - Mothers' Union is a global, women-led, volunteer movement. United in our diversity and living out our faith, we support individuals and families to transform their lives. Embedded in the Church and community, we have unprecedented reach that gives a voice to the stigmatised and vulnerable around the world.

David Horwood

Front Cover Photo:

The joy in being grandad helping to show the importance of what dads add to parenting, and remember Fathers Day is Sunday 21st June.

Dear friends

“Stay woke” is a phrase used by the younger generation. Derived from stay awake, know once you are made aware of an issue and how it is impacting yourself or ethnicity and culture you are being called to action.



We are to stand up to the world driven by greed and selfishness. We are reminded of the importance of good stewardship. I was told of the worst case scenario where wars are fought over sovereign access to water! Gus Speth a former Dean of Yale University said “the top environmental problems are selfishness, greed and apathy, and to deal with these we need a cultural and spiritual transformation and we scientists don’t know how to do that!”

Following on from Care for God’s Creation family Lent course and our speaker at spring members’ day we have learned that we can make simple choices that help the environment. We might even calculate our own carbon footprint. Many councils have recognised a climate and biodiversity emergency and Maidstone Archdeaconry members have sent submissions to their local borough council survey. The UK has become the first G7 country to legislate itself into becoming a net zero carbon area by 2050 and KCC has followed. The General Synod however has announced its aim for all church work to reach net zero emissions by 2030.. Stay Woke!

I thank everyone for supporting Mothering Sunday within our churches and to the central MAMD Appeal. We in turn have been supported with focussed prayers in the Canterbury Diocesan prayer cycle and many of you will have watched BBC TV Songs of Praise feature on the Mothers’ Union project work.

On your behalf, I would like to thank our guest contributor Lorraine for her very moving personal story of maternal mental health. We may all be affected at some time with poor mental health or be caring for a family member. There is practical support through the healing work at the Living Well, Nonington and through following those NHS tips for our own healthy wellbeing. It would be timely also, as Father’s Day approaches, to remind our menfolk that It’s not unmanly to struggle and to break their silence when anxiety, body image and low self esteem seem to be prevalent issues.

Grace and Peace

Marianna Poliszczuk Diocesan President,

email: marianna2@compuserve.com

Campaign Against Gender Based Violence

Following the Silent March through the heart of Canterbury on Saturday December 8th which several of our members attended, the Canterbury and Ashford Archdeaconry held a service to mark the end of the 16 days. This was held at St Paul's Church Canterbury with Rev. Mark Griffin officiating. The resources from MSH were used and hymns chosen to focus the attention of those present. Rev. Hannah Thomson gave a very informative and moving Homily giving staggering statistics of gender violence both near to home as well as around the world. Prayers were led with the use of hand- prints and quiet time to reflect.

It was a very inspiring service, and those present vowed to double the number of those attending another year. Thanks to Rev. Griffin and Rev. Thomson for their time and energy formulating the service.

Sue Spillett, Branch Leader St Martin's & St Paul's, Canterbury

Campaign Against Gender Based Violence - Silent March

Back in December, 12 MU members with banners and also wearing orange joined with the members of Soroptimist International to take part in a Silent March in Canterbury.

I felt the march was very powerful personally, but also for those whom we passed as they read our banners campaigning against Gender-Based Violence. Thank you to those who braved the cold and took part.

Rita Pengelly, Canterbury & Ashford Archdeaconry President .

Editor's Note: UK Government Domestic Abuse bill proposes the legal duty for Councils to provide emergency safe houses and reversing the cutbacks with additional investment in refuge beds.



Copy for the next Newsletter to be with the Editor, David Horwood, by Friday 24th April 2020. Please let me know what is happening in your area. Send to: 27 Abbey Gardens Canterbury CT2 7EU or email: boycieboycie@icloud.com.

Canterbury & Ashford Archdeaconry

City Centre Canterbury Mothers' Union held a silent auction, which I have never been to before and enjoyed the experience, followed by a very scrummy afternoon tea, with lots of chatting and fun. Thank you to the dedicated members for all their hard work, and for raising the grand sum of just over £200.

St Dunstan's Mothers' Union held a regular film and lunch fund raising event and I was able to go along and join them and was so happy I went; the film, *The Warsaw Ghetto*, was a very moving and uplifting true story of a very brave Polish girl who rescued a large number of Jewish children during the German occupation in World War Two. The film was challenging and inspiring. The soup was delicious and it was great to meet up with our members. I would highly recommend this event.

I pray for God's continued blessings on you as you seek to follow Him in your service to each other and our beloved Mothers' Union. Your love and commitment is an example to us all. *Rita Pengelly, Canterbury & Ashford Archdeaconry President*

St Stephen's Church, Canterbury

Nutkins Toddler Group

This Toddler Group comes under the umbrella of St Stephen's Canterbury MU with four leaders and myself with one leader an MU member and a second one seriously considering membership. We were lucky to receive a donation of £400.00 from one of our local councillors. This came about because she feels toddler groups are essential to help mums with their little ones. She remembers trying to find

somewhere to take her

son when very young.

The leaders used the money to provide polo shirts as a uniform with their logo on, provide a sensory tent, an activity centre, a parachute and craft activity materials together with publicity leaflets to promote them. We relaunched the new look Toddler Group at the beginning of January and numbers have increased, particularly after the councillor put an article in the local newspaper together with the attached photo.



Margaret Horwood, Overseer of the Nutkins Toddler Group



Mothering Sunday Gifts

A group of Mothers' Union and Pastoral Group members from St Stephen's Church Canterbury got together to make small boxes, decorated them, put a small chocolate heart in them with the message 'God bless you on this Mothering Sunday'. These were blessed and handed out to all the ladies at the Sung Eucharist on Mothering Sunday.

Margaret Horwood - Branch leader



The Living Well

Canterbury Diocesan Centre
for Healing and Wholeness

Footnote to article – I am of course aware that our NHS resources for mental health in crisis are at full stretch and that when we are really under par mentally doing any of the above can be nigh on impossible, if that's you can I urge you to share that with somebody – please begin in a very small way to reach out for help, for often there are others who long to help and who will be prepared to walk the path with you even if they ever so slowly – help and hope is always possible. The Living Well holds public healing prayer services on Tuesday and Thursday mornings at 10.30am – all are welcome. We also offer lots of other opportunities for help and our full programme can be found on our website www.the-living-well.org.uk

Registered Charity 112379

Tel: 01304 842847 Email contact@the-living-well.org.uk

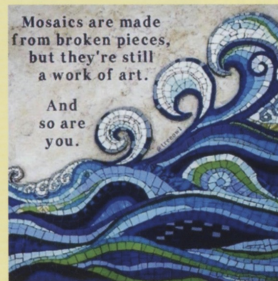
The Living Well, Vicarage Lane, Nonington, Kent, CT15 4JT

Ageing - A Work of Art

*Aches and pains are here to stay,
they seem to change day by day.*

*The list of ailments seems to grow
as the body starts to slow.*

*You can't be young, weak or prissy -
Getting old is not for sissies!*



Together in Prayer
April - May - June 2020
Mrs Sally Waters, Lay Reader
St Stephen's Church, Canterbury

Loving God, we pray today for those who are confronted by the sadness, ambiguity and confusion of mental illness, and for those upon whom they depend for attention and compassionate care. Look with mercy on all whose afflictions bring them weakness, distress, confusion or isolation.

Provide for them homes of dignity and peace; give to them understanding helpers and the willingness to accept help. We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

O Holy God, we all live in communities where there are people whose lives are challenged by substance abuse, mental illness and brain disorders. The families of people living with serious mental health issues often feel overwhelmed and isolated by the many challenges these issues create.

Holy One, create in us a tenderness to the needs of all, an openness to everyone's gifts, and a commitment to the struggle for justice. We offer this prayer in the name of the Risen Lord, who makes all things new. **Amen**



Together in Prayer - April

Alleluia Christ is Risen! He is Risen indeed, Alleluia!

He lives! He lives! Christ Jesus lives today!
He walks with me and talks with me along life's narrow way.
He lives! He lives! Salvation to impart!
You ask me how I know He lives? He lives within my heart.
(Alfred H. Ackley 1887-1960)

This is our core belief. Jesus Christ is Risen and He lives within each one of us. At this Easter time let us pray that God will give us the strength and the courage to make this abundantly clear to everyone we meet in our daily lives.

Prayer:

Heavenly Father you sent your Son into the world to show us how to live. Help us, always to follow his example; may we show your love and compassion to everyone we meet; may we live our lives in accordance to your will; and may we celebrate, every day our joy in his resurrection.
In our Risen Christ's name we pray. **Amen**



The Ascension

St Luke records the Ascension of Jesus in the first chapter of his second book – ‘The Acts of the Apostles’. Jesus was talking to his disciples, and concluded by saying that soon the Holy Spirit would come upon them and they would be witnesses for him in many lands. And ‘after he said this, he was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid him from their sight’ (v.9)

‘The head that once was crowned with thorns
Is crowned with glory now:
A royal diadem adorns
The mighty Victor’s brow.
The highest place that heaven affords
Is his, is his by right,
The King of kings and Lord of lords,
And heaven’s eternal Light.’
(T. Kelly 1769-1854)

Prayer:

Ascended Christ, we acknowledge you as King of kings, Lord of lords and heaven’s eternal Light. We pray that you will reign in our hearts and direct us as we travel on this earthly pilgrimage. Help us from your throne above to work tirelessly to spread the Good News and hasten your Kingdom on earth.

Lord, hear our prayer. **Amen**



Together in Prayer -June

Be Kind

The Rev. Lorraine Apps-Huggins' article in this newsletter, reminds us that many people with whom we come into contact are struggling and it is not always obvious. Many people go about their daily business, they smile, seem happy and yet 'inside' they are really struggling.

'Never judge a book by its cover' is a very good adage and so be observant, look for little signs that all may not be well, but above all be kind to everyone, because your smile, your words, your actions may have a healing effect on someone.

Help us to help each other, Lord,
Each other's cross to bear;
Let each his friendly aid afford,
And feel his brother's care.
Up into thee, our living head,
Let us in all things grow,
And by thy sacrifice be led
The fruits of love to show.
(Charles Wesley 1707-88)



Prayer:

Heavenly Father, in your love make us vigilant and observant to what is going on around us; give us the insight to notice when things are not quite right. Help us to be compassionate to those who are struggling; give us the love to walk beside them; give us the understanding and empathy needed to help. And when things are not quite right with us encourage us to share our burdens so we too can feel your healing touch and be reinvigorated to do your work on earth.

In Jesus name we pray. **Amen.**

Building Hope & Confidence

Rev. Lorraine Apps – Huggins, Chaplain to The Living Well, Nonington Canterbury Diocese Advisor in Healing and Wholeness

I think I was asked to write for this magazine some six months or more ago and so I am happy to have remembered in the midst of such a full life to sit at my desk and write...

I recently became the Lead Chaplain at The Living Well Canterbury Diocese Centre for Healing & Wholeness. Having worked there for some 18 months previously as an assistant chaplain I might have thought it would not be such a big step up – but the challenges are real, constant and engaging.

One of the key concerns for any medical and /or therapeutic body today is the number of younger people suffering with poor mental health. From low level anxiety to recognised disorders and life threatening behaviours, UK society has been noting the increased number of sufferers for some years. One in four adults will suffer some mental health problem during their life and it is believed that the statistics have increased recently to one in three teenagers – and you can only truly be a teenager for 7 years, that's a lot of sufferers in a short span of time.

At The Living Well our work is with adults of every age, so we don't meet with the teenage sufferers of poor mental health. But often we meet with the parents or grandparents who can be experiencing knock on effects and sometimes have desperate worries for their younger family members or who may be discovering in themselves behaviours and patterns of thinking that have been absorbed into their everyday life that are quite unhealthy and may have even contributed towards their young person's ill health. This can easily produce feelings of guilt and a desire to sort their own inner issues out. And of course we meet those who quite separately are experiencing poor mental health, sometimes rooted in a known cause and sometimes from 'out of nowhere'. We also meet those whose needs are physical and/or spiritual and these are often interlinked.

My own experience - I suffered post-natal psychosis entirely unexpectedly after the birth of my first child. I was 29 years old, had a good pregnancy, was delighted in becoming a mother and whilst my marriage was not healthy and would later break down there was no rationale for my descent within 2 days of giving birth into a psychotic state. Thankfully because of the willing help of my own family, and because I was not a danger to myself or my daughter I was able to remain at home during my poor mental health. I chose specifically not to have medication for the hormone induced psychosis, so I was able to continue to breast feed and bond with my baby. But I do remember the world was suddenly a disordered, confusing place.

Of course parenthood 'surprises' most people first time – the incredible experience, coupled with feelings of incompetence, wonder and the miraculous tip most new parents into a heightened and often openly spiritual state of awareness.

The child's tiny fingers, seen in other babies previously but not in your own child's hand become an awesome doorway to unstructured thoughts of God and the numinous. Thoughts of gratefulness, of deep love and respect for human life and of a sort of holy fear can fall upon even the least expecting of persons. Being new parents is a 'holy time'.

But with psychosis present those thoughts for me were heightened yet further. So I was extremely anxious about this tiny little child that I now needed to care for – how was I going to be able to protect this little beautiful girl from all the horrors and dangers of the world? The 2 year old Jamie Bulger had just gone missing from a Merseyside shopping mall and the media was full of it– the world was a dangerous and horrible place for little ones to enter into. Outside on the street where we lived – a bustling street of quirky shops – drugs could be purchased easily, fights could break out in any number of local pubs, drunks and homeless could attack you on street or bus (indeed this had happened to me at 7 months pregnant whilst on the local bus), and knives could be brandished at local shop keeper in smash and grab jewellery raids - another crime that had happened in the previous year. So my sense was that the flat in which we lived above the shop in which my husband worked was reasonably safe – but downstairs at street level was hell. In fact the 2 storey flat seemed to me to hold both earth at first floor level and heaven at top floor level - with hell at ground floor level. This powerful imaginary psychotic condition meant that I had no desire to leave the flat – to go downstairs to the ground floor and out to the unsafe streets was to enter hell. First floor of the flat was reasonable, safe enough, but the space I valued the most was my bedroom on the 2nd floor where my new baby daughter and I could be far from the madding crowd and safely in a heavenly type of place and space. This imagined reality thankfully gradually disintegrated into a more realistic approach to my surroundings – but even so this meant that I did not leave the home for 2 weeks at all and was very fearful when I first did take my daughter outside on the street...

There was more to the psychosis: in particular I did not want to sleep, I wanted to stay awake to keep watch over my new baby and I had to be almost forced, 'sent to bed', in order to rest and to be well again. I was quite unwell, for approximately 3 weeks and not truly fully myself for approximately 3 months. The experience was very distressing and as I said earlier unexpected, nobody else in our family had suffered post-natal psychosis or depression. This sense of the abnormal added to the anxiety of being unwell – would I ever be ok again?

One of the most useful descriptors during those early weeks for my mental capacity came from one of the visiting ante-natal nurses. She described my mind as being like a room with cupboards, with draws and filing systems in which all the objects within the cupboards, all the files in the filing cabinets, all the decorations, pictures and ornaments of the room had all been dislodged, displaced, emptied out into a huge pile in the middle of the room. What I had to know was that in this chaos and disruption of my life all that I owned, possessed (that made up me) was still present in the room. It was simply that the mess needed to be put back, the pictures replaced on the wall, the clothing hung up in the cupboard, the files replaced in order

- nothing was missing it was all there, it just needed sorting out gradually and would return to order as that happened. This simple picture was so reassuring to me that I felt I could work with this, a messy room was not a problem and least of all because of the reassurance that nothing was missing. I was still the person I had believed I was before any of this mental illness struck and I could and would return there with a bit of tidying up and re-ordering! This young ante-natal nurse gave me a simple picture that brought me hope when I really needed to know my healing was possible.

I don't think I am any the worse for my experience and whilst I would not want to revisit it (not likely to give birth again at my age now!) I do know that poor mental health can happen to any of us and we should not be anywhere near so fearful, so anxious about it as we are, for this only adds to the condition. We can be made well again given time, care and hope, and if you add love to that equation even in our unwellness we can survive.

Of course some mental health problems arise and then go, some episodes reappear, and some conditions are lived with constantly. I would say that we all have some thoughts processes or behaviours related to our thinking that are unhealthy - none of us hold perfect mental health in the same way as none of us hold perfect physical health (or spiritual). Some of our poor mental health we can improve upon personally, and some of our poor mental health is a corporate and/or cultural condition and can only change corporately and as society changes around us.

NHS tells us five good ways to help our daily mental wellbeing are be active and get some fresh air, learn something new, give something away (a smile is fine), connect with others, and take notice - be observant. I wholeheartedly agree with all of these and have noted that if you walk to church, listen to a good faith building talk, have a sociable time with others and then act upon some of what you heard during the week you are already making headway! In fact scripture points us to all of the above as a healthy part of being an active Christian in our community. We are encouraged to be giving, loving, aware, open and if we just start with one of these biblically aligned NHS suggestions we may find some respite from our own inner voices or angsts if they are not doing us much good at the present...

Scripture tells us to look to all that is pure, noble and true and think upon these things....
Philippians 4:8

⁴ Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: rejoice! ⁵ Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. ⁶ Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. ⁷ And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

⁸ Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable - if anything is excellent or praiseworthy - think about such things. ⁹ Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me - put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you.

Peace to you for 2020, with prayer and reassurance found in Jesus, Lorraine.

Dates for your Diary

Please remember in your prayers:

Wednesday 1st April	Finance & D S Meeting
Sunday 12th April	Easter Sunday
Friday 24th April	Copy deadline for Diocesan Newsletter
Saturday 25th April	Teaching Day, in St Leonard's Church, Deal, 11.00am - 4.00pm. The theme will be 'To live and work to God's Praise and Glory.' Tea and Coffee will be available but please bring your own packed lunch. The day will be led by Sandra Goodey, Rita Pengelly and Rev. Wendy Jackson-Hill.
Thursday 30th April	Cathedral Prayer Time, 12 noon St Gabriel's Chapel
Wednesday 6th May	Trustee Board Meeting, Diocesan House 10.00 am to 1.00 pm
Saturday 16th May	Diocesan MU Pilgrimage
Friday 22nd May	Thy Kingdom Come Service at Coventry Cathedral
Thursday 28th May	Cathedral Prayer Time, 12 noon St Gabriel's Chapel
Saturday 30th May	Diocesan Day of Prayer & Pilgrimage, Canterbury Cathedral
Monday 15th - Friday 19th June	Leadership conference - High Leigh
Tuesday 16th June	Maidstone Archdeaconry Reflection Day
Wednesday 24th June	Annual Meeting & Summer Fair, 10.30am to 2.30pm at St Paul's Church, Canterbury
Thursday 25th June	Cathedral Prayer Time, 12 noon-1.00pm St Gabriel's Chapel

The Lambeth Conference will start on 23rd July to the beginning of August

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' Union.

In Memoriam

Canterbury & Ashford Archdeaconry

Holy Trinity Church, Margate

Nora Reeves

Whitstable Team Fellowship

Pam Anderson

Pam had been a very long time member of the Mothers' Union - as was her mother before her. She served with great enthusiasm as a very able and involved member of the Whitstable Team Branch (and its predecessor) and latterly the Whitstable Team Fellowship. She was at one time our 'Enrolling member' and the Deanery President for Reculver Deanery MU for 6 years. She helped with any new development in our MU including the move to become a Fellowship a few years ago. Pam remained totally committed to the work of the Mothers' Union at home and overseas.

Hawkinge & Acrise Fellowship

Joan Brisley

Maidstone Archdeaconry

Minster in Sheppey

Edna Illingworth

St Michael's Church, Sittingbourne
Afternoon Branch

Florrie Court

Holy Trinity, Milton Regis

Marjorie Lacy

Back cover illustration: Mothers' Union Global Framework adopted at Worldwide Conference at the start of the Triennium.

The overall global changes we aspire to make are in the areas of gender justice, peace and safety, self-reliance and restored relationships with God, each other, the environment and the stigmatised.

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Registered Charity No. 250124

MOTHERS' UNION GLOBAL FRAMEWORK: OUR UNIQUE IDENTITY & ROLE

