



## Overseas Links News

### Swaziland:

Good afternoon, well it's just past noon here in Swaziland, what a very pleasant surprise, thank you so much for this mail. My laptop crashed with all contacts and I've been longing for your mail so to once again have and save your address.

Having said that, we are very well and still kept in the presence of the Lord, yes covid is really keeping us in lockdown and for our activities in the Mothers Union all of them have been either cancelled or postponed. We are facing a really terrible situation this side as well, the mothers are locked down and meet in families and yes you are right when saying it is like the first church...we are meeting in families and we are engaging ourselves in community projects to help the most vulnerable, amongst whom some of the members have lost their jobs due to the lockdown so it is really posing a great challenge.

We are fully behind the national standards and laws of all pre-cautions against covid. Some members have taken upon themselves to produce homemade masks, using their sewing skills and they make a valuable contribution to the community and society at large and its received with much appreciation.

We believe and trust that the Lord will keep us safe and keep us strong and give us the wisdom to triumph above these times and more to come. We are happy with this fellowship with you as it gives us much courage to know that across the seas we have sisters in Christ upholding the faith of King Jesus Christ and together with us in the body of Christ and in the Mothers Union.

Please pass on our love and greetings to all the sisters in Christ that side and we ask for your prayers in many ways that God may give us the strength to stand in his word and to fulfil our obligation as the Mothers Union.

Love and peace, till we talk again. Much blessings

Mrs. Lizzie Q Dlodla

MU President Swaziland

**Felicity Randall** has been keeping in touch with our links and has received the following emails from Swaziland and Tanzania; she comments that Swaziland sounds very familiar with what we are experiencing in the UK and that Tanzania is one of only two African countries that have not imposed a lockdown.

*Editor: Thank you Felicity for keeping us in touch at such a difficult time.*

### Tanzania

Hello Felicity,

Bwana Yesu Asifiwe, which means "Praise the Lord Jesus" Nice to hear that you continue with prayers as long as you pass through difficult situation.

My friend in Christ, even us we are still talking care of Corona virus, though in our country we are continuing with Sunday services all sessions within a week including MU services. But we still continue to offer education on how they can prevent from Covid 19.

Continue to pray for us because the situation for those in the villages is not good, but we believe that God is good all the time everything will be ok.

Send our greetings to all our brethren!

Be blessed my dear,

Grace - Ruaha Tanzania

## THE WORLD OF HOME SCHOOLING



Like so many people in these unprecedented times, my family has been thrown into the interesting world of Home Schooling. So every morning at 9am, we take the register, open the books and....maybe not!

My children, 7, 4 & 4, have really benefited from the presence of my husband, a gymnastics coach, as he is on furlough. I credit him with assembling a routine as he does daily exercises and gymnastic skills with the children. I am seeing improved cartwheels and headstands although I am not sure that the mattresses, used as a makeshift trampoline, will be fit for their original purpose again!

In fits and starts we attempt some of the work uploaded by the school on their website. This can involve playing online maths games and watching phonics based YouTube videos (very popular) alongside some written work in a provided workbook (not so popular).

Alongside this we have attempted maths skills in the kitchen (making pizza, gingerbread and other weight increasing recipes), story and science lessons with Granny and Granddad on Zoom and on YouTube geography lessons, watching Bear Grylls trek through rainforests and eating tarantulas.

In all of this I am grateful for many things. I am grateful for the quality time I get to spend with my family. I am grateful for the community connectedness that seems to have emerged; key workers and their roles, the support of others like MU members using their skills, abilities and prayers. Above all, I am grateful to God who is bigger than any pandemic and keeps his promise that "he will never leave you nor forsake you" (Deuteronomy 31 v 6). *Rebecca Paraschivu Administrator – MU Norwich Diocese*



### RAINBOW OF HOPE

Sandra Bendall Pakfield branch shares this original rainbow sign on her front door. Kindly made by a neighbour from bits and pieces she had to hand, the writing and clouds being painted with Tippex.

### Easter Day Witness and Celebration

There are four MU members living in our close. We had already come to the front of our houses to say the Lord's prayer together as the Bishop suggested and on Easter Morning his idea was that people should go outside their front doors and sing two Easter hymns, my reaction being 'I'm not going to sing in public!'

However my neighbours said they would bring their guitars and play if we would join them. They invited another neighbour and the MU member from across the road and her husband so we said "Yes" we would join them. Tony, my husband was asked to say a prayer which he was happy to do and we sang "Thine be the Glory" and "Stand up Stand up for Jesus".

It was very special to praise God together and to witness to our joy that Jesus was raised from the dead for us (and the others in our close). It was made even more special when a family saw us gathering and joined us and another neighbour came to hear us.

It turned an enforced 'non event' Easter, into a real celebration. *Ann Rae-Sims (Fakenham)*

### Betty Ellis (*deceased*)

Betty was a very active Mothers' Union member in Norwich Diocese for many years, and served as a General Trustee and Area Leader for West Norfolk where she made a huge contribution to the Baby Basics project with her enthusiasm and hard work. To many of us Betty was a very good friend, and we remember her with thanks and deep affection.

*Val.*

*Editor:* I learned of Betty's death via my Facebook page with a posting from Baby Basics singing her praises. It came as a great shock to me to learn this way. Betty and her husband David would often call on me when visiting or passing through Fakenham, and take me out to lunch, she will be deeply missed by many of us.

Dear Friends

We find ourselves in strange times. Though the lockdown is beginning to ease, many of us are still living very different lives; some are self-isolating or shielding and unable to see their friends and families. Many of us have experienced loss and mourning during these recent months.

In times of great change our faith can provide some of the consistency we crave, though even that has been subject to change with no public worship permitted in churches, and a move in many places to online services.

Whether you're tech-savvy and logging in to online church services, or happy to stay offline, we can take heart in certain truths about God; **God is eternal and God is faithful.**

You don't need an iPad to pray. You don't need a degree in computing to read your bible. You don't need the latest computer to ring a friend and catch up. God is with us through these difficult times, and we know he hears our prayers and our cries of lament. God will also be there when we finally meet together again, whenever that may be. In the meantime, continue to take care of yourselves, and be patient. Yours in Christ, Rev Andrew.



### In today's climate of frustration, hatred and fear we can use this lovely prayer by Mother Teresa of Calcutta

O God, we pray for all those in our world who are suffering from injustice:

because of their race, colour, or religion;

for those imprisoned for working for the relief of oppression;

for those who are hounded for speaking the inconvenient truth;

for those tempted to violence as a cry against overwhelming hardship;

for those deprived of reasonable health and education;

for those suffering from hunger and famine;

for those too weak to help themselves and who have no one else to help them;

for the unemployed who cry out for work but do not find it.

We pray for anyone of our acquaintance who is personally affected by injustice.

Forgive us, Lord, if we unwittingly share in the conditions or in a system that perpetuates injustice.

Show us how we can serve your children and make your love practical by washing their feet.

Amen

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