

Peculiar Times!

Greetings! from the Mothers' Union Diocesan Trustees and Officers

Emergency Appeal, has now received donations in excess of GBP750,000, which is humbling, and a great tribute to the generosity of individual members and Dioceses throughout the world. The many positive comments have also been heart-warming and include "keeping MU in action is vital"; "it is the backbone of society"; "MU makes a little money go a long way".

Mary Sumner Day Resources from MSH

A resource pack for Mary Sumner Day on 9th August is now available from the main MU website. This includes two online services on the day itself – Morning Prayer and Evening Compline to avoid clashing with local service, as Mary Sumner Day falls on a Sunday this year.

Database verification

The membership database is being updated in time for the next mailing.

Mothers Union members in our diocese have produced a collection of prayers poems and reflections for a new Book of Comfort:

We pray that this Book of Comfort will be just that to all its readers. Available as a **FREE e-book** which can be downloaded to a smart phone, tablet or laptop. Download by clicking the link <https://bit.ly/3dC8Nln>

The Book of Comfort is also available as a paperback book from Lulu.com Price £7.73 order your copy by clicking on this link <https://bit.ly/2ZmLliJ>

Mothers' Union Profile through the crisis

The profile and reach of MU has been strengthened throughout the crisis. There were 10,557 unique downloads of our COVID 19 resources over the last 16-week period (most popular resource - prayer card templates with 1,067) produced specifically to resource members and supporters through these tough times and include patterns for items to support key workers, faith and prayer resources, specific resources packs for Easter, VE Day and Thy Kingdom Come, craft and bereavement support

Mary Sumner House

Sadly, about one third of staff will be leaving the Charity from the start of November 2020, through voluntary redundancy scheme. This will result in a saving of GBP 400-500,000 in 2021. At the end of 2019 the Charity was debt free, and in a relatively robust financial position, but with an ongoing issue in terms of free reserves (GBP229,205 at the end of 2019) The focus now is to rebuild reserves.

Virtual Mothers' Union

A virtual support programme will continue over the coming months. A number of events are planned to take place in the autumn as an alternative to the postponed Annual Gathering - designed to keep as you connected and up to date with the activities of the Charity and enthused and engaged with our future plans. There will be new resources for 16 Days of Activism.

Webinars will be happening in August via Zoom, for anyone who has an interest in the work within their Diocese. These will be an opportunity to engage with others with specific interests or expertise, who may be prospective future leaders and to support your area's activities.

The Steering Group for **Parenting** is very excited by the outcomes of the review, and is now starting to explore how MU can develop its work in this area in new ways, building on the learning, to reach out to new families

Away from it all Holidays

There is to be a new focus to provide holidays and activity hampers for Key Workers and their families. Mothers' Union has been awarded a grant of £20,000 to develop this new initiative.

Gender Based Violence

GBV is sadly emerging as a critical issue around the world in the wake of the Coronavirus Pandemic. We are delighted that, in recent weeks, we have been given a total of GBP40,000 from Trusts to support members in Myanmar, Uganda and DRC to educate victims about sources of support, and to increase support which members themselves provide in partnership with others

Within Britain and Ireland, we are liaising with the Church, Restored and Women's Aid in particular, to influence the Domestic Abuse Bill. MSH is working identify how members can engage, and understand how they would like to be kept informed on this and other matters as they progress. Watch this space for new resources to be used later this year.

Metamorphosis, continues to progress well despite the challenges of lockdown, and for the first time a virtual workshop was held at the end of June within Southwark Diocese, including the Clergy. Feedback has been very positive – for example

MU Live survey this year. For example: over 113,834 people benefited from the work of MU in 2019; over 29,751 vulnerable people received a gift from members to meet an urgent need, such as clothing for a refugee or supplies for a new baby, and work reached almost 8000 prisoners and their families, by providing a listening ear, safe spaces and resources for families, and practical support

For your prayers.

- ❖ We lift up all those who have lost loved ones in recent months. Praying especially for our diocesan President Linda Ginn at the passing of her beloved husband Richard.
- ❖ Safety and peace for all women in our Women's refuge and their children.
- ❖ Protection for all key workers and those returning to work.
- ❖ Blessings to all the clergy as the churches open and services resume, albeit in a new format.

May God bless us and keep us safe in the palm of His hand.