

## Peculiar Times!

This newsletter comes from the Mothers' Union Diocesan Trustees and Officers

### Mary Sumner Day Service

This was a very special occasion as it was the first time we had been able to come together since the start of the pandemic. The service of thanksgiving for our founder and the work of MU over the past 145 years was well attended with members coming from all parts of our diocese. The repaired Diocesan Banner was on display and great to see (thank you, Penny).

The **Mary Sumner Award** award was launched at council in March 2020 and was to be given to the branch that gained the most new members for 2021. The cathedral succeeded in enrolling four brand new members and four members, who had transferred from other branches. This on top of their most successful fundraising events during lockdown, showing the indomitable spirit of Mothers' Union. They were presented with the glass award at the cathedral service. Congratulations to them.

The service in the cathedral was also the opportunity to thank **Keith Foulds** for all he has done over the past 13 years to keep our finances in such good order. Behind the scenes he has given so much time and expertise to the vital work of ensuring the diocesan accounts are secure and accurate. Keith was given an engraved plaque and garden tokens and Ann was presented with a bouquet of flowers.

The service was streamed online so if you were unable to attend you can now watch it on YouTube on both the Cathedral and on our website. The service sheet is also on our website, and hopefully you'll be able to see a picture of our upgraded banner.

### 'For Better, For Worse'.

At a recent mini-MU meeting at East Bergholt and Brantham Branch, six of us were discussing the topic of marriage and as a result a new chapter has been added to our book, 'For Better, For Worse', entitled **THE IN-LAWS!** This will include experiences of having an in-law as well as the way in which we have chosen to be a mother-in-law/ father-in-law. You can always send your contribution in as ANON, or give yourself a nom de plume for this chapter. I am still hoping for more contributions to the other chapters as well. Please don't think your memories won't be good enough. Every single contribution that has arrived has been wonderful. Closing date is September 10th.

*Jeanette Appleton 07768 418942*

### North Suffolk Area

We are delighted that we will be able to hold our North Suffolk Area Morning on 22<sup>nd</sup> September. This will be in Fressingfield, where we will start with a Communion Service in the church before moving across to the Sancroft Hall for coffee etc. Following time to explore the bric-a-brac, produce and MUe stalls we will hear from Anji Dawkins about Kagera in Tanzania. Everyone is welcome to attend this event whether or not you live in the North Suffolk Area.

Anna Vessey 01379 588389

### **Connected**

We have spare copies of the new magazine and also the 2021 Prayer Diary for anyone who didn't receive their copy, or for any new members who have joined this year. Please let Clare Thomas know (01473 832808 or [clare.thomas@btinternet.com](mailto:clare.thomas@btinternet.com)) if you would like copies. Please also ensure that any address changes are given to Beryl Mee or Clare Thomas so that the autumn magazine gets to you!

### **MUe**

The autumn / winter catalogues are now out, and all branch leaders should have received copies to circulate around members. There are some lovely gifts in the catalogue this year, and great presents for children too. If you get a second copy, why not show it to friends and family who might like to support Mothers' Union. All profits go to MU projects, and 10% of sales in our diocese come back to our Diocese to spend on MU projects in Suffolk. If you would like more copies of the catalogue please contact Clare Thomas (01473 832808 or [clare.thomas@btinternet.com](mailto:clare.thomas@btinternet.com)). We still have our own handmade face masks for sale, so if you'd like one made specially in MU fabric for the bargain price of £4 just let Clare know.

### **Making Christmas Cards for Prisoners at Highpoint**

Each year Diocesan Members make Christmas cards for prisoners at Highpoint Prison, near Newmarket. We recycle the pictures from used Christmas cards and remount these with a message from Mothers' Union.

Last year we were not able to meet face to face to do this, but this year we plan to meet at the home of Di Barker at Great Ashfield near Bury St Edmunds on Wednesday 8th September between 10am and 3pm to do all the sticking that is required to make these cards. We welcome help from any MU members. There is usually a 'Bring and Buy' where the money raised helps with the cost of glue sticks and envelopes etc.

If you feel you could help please contact Di Barker on 01359 241045 who can provide further details.



**Caroline Virgo, Director of the Clewer Initiative writes –'The power to end modern slavery already exists within local communities, we just need to harness it.**

What better way for the Church to use its presence, than to lead the way in helping communities pull together to keep slavery and exploitation out of their neighbourhoods or to provide support to victims. Our Diocese hosts a Network of Christians and professional agencies with the potential to achieve that goal.

The presence of modern slavery is not a reflection on the community itself, it can live anywhere - from busy urban neighbourhoods to sleepy villages; prosperous commuter towns, busy tourist centres, disadvantaged areas, and quiet rural areas. One of the biggest reasons for its presence is its ability to go unseen and undisturbed. That's why working at a community level is vital. By understanding modern slavery in a community context, we can expose it, make sure it's seen and find safe ways of disrupting it.

On 16<sup>th</sup> September a Clewer Conference for Diocesan Modern Slavery Leads will be held at Lambeth. Please pray for this conference and its outcomes.

MU Bristol is crocheting a linked chain to represent those affected by Modern Slavery in their city. If a Giant Chain has potential to be effective here then watch this space!

*Christine Ward*