

**Transformation Now!**

August 2022, No. 34

www.musuffolk.org.uk

Charity No. 249726

**Mary Sumner Day Service**

Fifty-five members attended the service and £239 was given for Mothers’ Union work. Among those attending were two MU members who had enrolled together, many years ago, at Wickford MU branch in Chelmsford diocese. Now living in different parts of Suffolk, Joyce and Olive met again at the service and had a wonderful reunion.

Father Jo Delfgou preached about the amazing Mothers’ Union, which he has now joined and the theme of the readings were on transformation. So appropriate to our theme this year of Transformation Now!

 **Re Imagining Mothers’ Union**

Diocesan chaplain Reverend Catherine Forsdike, and Christine Ward recently attended the Re-imagining Mothers’ Union conference. They shared with trustees how every member can play a part in re-imagining Mothers’ Union here in St Edmundsbury and Ipswich.

Our worldwide president Sheran Harper’s opening words at the conference were: “Everyone needs to play their part. Not talk about it, not plan it, not dabble in it. Not maintain the status quo, or just change a few things at the periphery. But to be brave”. We are to ask ourselves, Where am I now? Where do I want to be?

Sheran ended by saying “The past is the past, learn from it and let it go, because it is only then that you can grasp the future that God has planned for MU. Transformation takes time, so calm down and give it time! But the time is right NOW! Right Now!”

To that end there are the following opportunities for members to get together so that everyone has the opportunity to share their vision for transforming and re-imagining Mothers’ Union in our diocese.

**Venues and dates:**

* Barham church hall Church lane Barham IP6 0PT Tuesday September 6th 2.30pm
* Ascension Hall Larchcroft Rd Ipswich IP1 6AJ Thursday 8th September from 10am
* Wickham Market Date and time to be confirmed (contact Linda.Ginn@mothersunion.org)
* Zoom meeting 14th September 7.00pm – 8.30pm (phone link provided)
* Zoom meeting Friday 16th September 10.00 am – 11.30am (phone link provided)

The zoom link will be sent to all diocesan members and branch leaders in order to keep this link secure. You can join by telephone if you do not have internet access.

**News from July council in Darsham**

A new look format for our council meeting was introduced last month, when we met at Darsham village hall. There were displays, with plenty of free resources for branches, under the themes inspiring new members and supporting existing members. Welcome packs have been made for every branch, with the aim of growing our membership by at least 60 new members for the beginning of 2023. Posters for your notice boards and ideas for branch meetings were available. There was no speaker and instead those attending and the members joining by zoom, joined discussion groups to share ideas on the theme, transforming Mothers’ Union.

**Funding for branches**: Trustees have committed to resourcing branches financially this triennium. This could be funds support to buy books for baptism families, running a parenting course. If you have a worthwhile project that needs some funds to get it started, please contact our diocesan treasurer Amanda Langan who will send you a grant application form for trustees to consider. There was plenty of positive feedback to the new look council meeting, and no negative comments!

**Summer of Hope Appeal** is well under way with Afternoon Teas, Coffee Mornings, Bring and Buy stalls all raising funds for this excellent campaign. This year’s Jubilee Summer of Hope is focusing on supporting the next generation of female leaders from the grassroots up: supporting women with skills, knowledge and confidence to shape the future and transform communities and families for the better. Fressingfield branch recently had an open meeting for an afternoon tea in a member's garden, which raised £257 for the Jubilee Summer of Hope Appeal. Many thanks to the 48 people who attended, donated, prepared, baked, served, hosted, fetched and carried. The food was wonderful, the company warm and friendly and the donations generous.

**Deanery leader elections:**

Each triennium there are elections for deanery leaders, nomination papers have been sent to all the branch leaders and branch contacts. Under our constitution where there is only one branch in a deanery a deanery hub is created with a nearby deanery. Deanery leaders can stand for two consecutive trienniums and then with permission from the Trustees can stand for further trienniums. Diocesan members can be nominated for this role. Please consider prayerfully if you are being called to this role in your deanery.

**Emergency Prayer chain:** Sue Doe is the new Prayer chair rep. Sue is a member of Whitton branch. Her contact details are susan.doe1@btinternet.com

**Subscriptions 2023:** The subscription for 2023 is set at £24.50. You can help reduce the workload of your treasurer by paying your subscriptions by direct debit. This also helps the work of Mothers’ Union centrally, as the subscriptions paid by direct debit go straight to Mary Sumner House in February of each year. This ensures that the grants, which pay the salaries of Mothers’ Union workers across the world, can be paid on time. Before direct debit was introduced some workers did not get paid for several months, as the money from subscriptions from dioceses across the UK could arrive as much as one year late. If you have any questions about how to set up a direct debit, please contact our Diocesan Treasurer Amanda Langan.

**Christmas cards for prisoners**.

East Bergholt and Brantham and Fressingfield are having activity meetings in September when they will be inviting members of their congregations, friends and family to join them making Christmas cards for prisoners. It is not too late to have a similar event in your branch, or add it to your programme for 2023. Contact Di Barker on 01359 241045 for more information.

**Clewer**

In 2021 Hadleigh MU decided to run the Clewer Initiative Lent Course about Modern Slavery on Zoom. As a church we hadn’t embraced much modern technology, one house group used Zoom for meetings but everything else either happened in person or, while in lockdowns, not at all.

We recognised Zoom wouldn’t suit everyone within the Mothers’ Union, but it did enable us to reach out to the wider church and in the end about ten of us met regularly, including someone’s sister who joined us from Devon!

The course was very informative, with some great videos and thought-provoking questions. We put together a display about what we had learned when the church had a post Lockdown exhibition and managed to keep this up for a few weeks after the event.

Once we were able to hold regular meetings again, we invited Christine Ward to speak to the branch about the work of Clewer to raise more awareness among the rest of our members.

There is still much we can do, we have really only taken the first steps in putting the issue higher up on the agenda, but it is a step in the right direction.

**Prayer:** Being a member of Mothers’ Union is about living out Mary Sumner’s personal prayer.

All this day O Lord, let me touch as many lives for thee;

and every life I touch, do thou by thy spirit quicken,

whether through the word I speak,

the prayer I breathe, or the life I live. Amen