

**Mothers' UNION**  
Christian care for families

Diocese of St. Edmundsbury & Ipswich

# PATHWAYS



Linda (DP) Sheran (WWP) Cathie (DVP)  
Coventry Cathedral May 31st

**SUMMER 2019**

**'Listen, observe, act - in step with God.'**

## PRESIDENT'S REPORT



Hello Fellow Members!

What an amazing day!

I have just returned from a wonderful, inspiring  
“Thy Kingdom Come” service in Coventry Cathedral.

A coach-load of us left Martlesham Heath at 6.30 in the morning on Friday, 31st May to join with MU members, not only from our Canterbury Province but also from around the world, live-streamed on Facebook. We met Sheran Harper, our new Worldwide President, and there really was a feeling of being part of this worldwide organisation (all 4 million of us – though not all were necessarily tuned-in! ) – but we were coming together to celebrate and share our faith. It was truly awesome - in the real sense of the word!

This initiative from the Archbishop of Canterbury began in 2016. Christians from across the world and across all church traditions are being called to engage in a focused period of prayer between Ascension Day and Pentecost – to rediscover the great New Testament story of how the early Church began. The key focus, particularly during this time, is to pray that our family, friends and neighbours will come to faith and know the difference that Jesus can make in our everyday lives. On arrival, everyone was given a paper cut-out fish. We were asked to write down five names - family members, friends, neighbours, work-mates, etc. and these were then gathered up by the children and placed in a huge net in front of the Altar – a symbol of our prayers before God.

Everywhere in Coventry there are reminders of the past - it is now a special place of forgiveness and reconciliation. So, once again we are reminded that reconciliation with God is made possible by the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Just how wonderful is that?

We do indeed have a gospel to proclaim! Let us rejoice and be glad.



Since the start of the year the Trustees have met together on six occasions, many of which have been to sign off legal documents, MSH and Diocesan legal policies and protocols – things like GDPR and Safeguarding. All but one of these have now been completed.

Each member of the Trustee Board has been busy doing “their thing” – whether it be speaking at or attending branch, deanery, area or diocesan meetings, synods and events, or designing and printing publicity material for circulation enabling us to keep in touch with everyone. Others write letters, send cards, or are already making Christmas cards together for the prisoners. We encourage prayer, underpinning everything we do. We have an exciting “new take” on AFIA as part of our Diocesan Strategy for this triennium, and a new focus on the Clewer initiative. We have Quiet Days and Coffee Mornings, Bring and Buy stalls and getting involved with craft-work, ordering and sorting out the MUE, and of course over-seeing the money... And then as Trustees we have an eye to the future – new ways of working, thinking banners, planning events like Mary Sumner Day, the General Meeting and holiday in Portsmouth and learning about Communities of Interest, new membership initiatives and 16 Days of Activism - we’ve all been really busy.

We are now looking for Organisers for the Sudbury and Ipswich Areas, a permanent person for MUE (ordering and selling MU products) and Trustees to take on responsibility for the work of Action & Outreach, and Faith & Policy. Wouldn't it be wonderful if we could find someone to help us with promoting baptisms (perhaps drafting a new booklet for our churches?) or new ways of encouraging couples to marry in church? How can we help the bereaved, address loneliness (*Meet-up-Monday* - see You-Tube clip) ... so much needs doing, so few of us, and we need your help, your ideas, and your prayers! – Do really think seriously whether God is calling you.....

**Love Linda**



## KEEP ME TRAVELLING ALONG WITH YOU !

Most of you will be familiar with the hymn 'One more step along the world I go' by Sydney Carter, which illustrates life as a journey. It never actually mentions God, but the 'you' to whom it repeatedly refers is, undoubtedly, God who is called on to be our companion and guide. Our Christian lives are a journey of faith on which God promises he will never leave us or forsake us. More than that he promises he will go before us.

*"The Lord himself goes before you and will be with you; he will never leave you or forsake you. Do not be afraid." Deuteronomy 31v 8.*

Earlier this year at my church's weekend away the teaching focused on Abraham and his journey of faith. God called Abraham to follow him, into the unknown, to a place 'that I will show you'. Abraham was called to step out in faith. We, like Abraham, each have our individual journeys with God but they are always lived out in the company of others, with family and friends, who may or may not share our faith, and with others in the Christian community, in churches and in MU.

This year our MU theme is 'Listen, Observe, Act - in step with God. As the MULOA team has visited different branches and as we have listened to each other and observed what is happening in our areas some ideas have been thrown up about how we might take action. Taking action always requires faith, as individuals or as a group, because we can never be absolutely certain that what we are doing is God's will for us. One of my favourite prayers which reflects on this is by Thomas Merton.

*My Lord God, I have no idea where I am going.*

*I do not see the road ahead of me.*

*I cannot know for certain where it will end.*

*nor do I really know myself,*

*and the fact that I think I am following your will*

*does not mean that I am actually doing so.*

*But I believe that the desire to please you does in fact please you.*

*And I hope I have that desire in all that I am doing. I hope that I will*

*never do anything apart from that desire.*

*And I know that if I do this you will lead me by the right road,*

*though I may know nothing about it.*

*Therefore will I trust you always though*

*I may seem to be lost and in the shadow of death.*

*I will not fear, for you are ever with me,*

*and you will never leave me to face my perils alone. **Viv B***

## 'BRANCH RETURNS

Thank you for submitting your annual branch returns for 2018, which have been essential in compiling the following totals of the donations that you have made during the year.

Twenty four branches knitted in excess of 1496 seafarer's hats and 696 baby hats were received from 16 branches. In addition, 30 cardigans, 42 baby quilts/blankets and some baby socks and mitts were donated.

The two 'Women's Refuges' which we support received generous donations of toiletries, some being presented in beautiful fabric bags. Toiletries were also sent to the hospital in Ipswich.

At Christmas branches gave gift tokens and sent toys and gifts for the mums and their children plus other items including linen, knickers and socks.



Amongst other donations were twiddle muffs/dementia blankets, 'Cross in my pocket's', bottle and drip bags for hospital patients receiving chemotherapy and fingerless gloves.

There were boxes sent for 'Link of Hope' and Seafarers, plus cakes made for bereavement services. There was a most generous response for the Night Shelter which ran over the winter. It is impossible to quantify this, but anyone who saw the 'room' stacked with donations at St Mary Stoke last autumn should feel proud to be an MU member.

The information provided, also shows a wide range of support for projects local to individual branches including 'Basic Life', Food Banks, IWNS, Find and others.

Thank you for collecting this information and whatever your branch donates 'well done', together we have and do make a difference. Please continue to note your donations during the year and send a breakdown with your branch report next year.

With love and prayers for your continuing work.

**Cathie McGregor Vice President June 2019.**

## NORTH SUFFOLK AREA REPORT

A Quiet Day will be held on Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> June at St Margaret's Church, Reydon, IP18 6PB. It will run from 10.00am to 3.00pm. Andrea Skevington is to lead the day which is entitled, 'Jesus said, "I am the Vine".' Andrea is a Christian writer who lives in Suffolk and the title comes from her latest book of reflections. Further information about Andrea can be found through the MU Diocesan website. The day will consist of three talks, each followed by a time for quiet reflection, and conclude with the Eucharist. We will be pleased to welcome members and non-members, men and women from across the Diocese. Drinks will be provided but please bring a packed lunch.

The North Suffolk Area Morning will be held in Halesworth on Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> September. It will commence at 10.00am with a Eucharist in church and then move to the hall. Following time for refreshments and browsing stalls our speaker will be Julia Hancock from Selig (Suffolk) Trust. Selig run the Ipswich Night Shelter and also Ipswich Hope into Action. The morning will end with a Bring and Share lunch.

From Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> to Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup> October we will, once again, be running a pop-up shop at I-Chameleon in Halesworth. All good quality donations of bric-a-brac, household goods, preserves, books, toiletries, toys etc will be most gratefully received. Please contact me if you would like them collected.

**Anna Vessey** *North Suffolk Area Representative*



## A.F.I.A. REPORT

Since my last report in Pathways, AFIA has been able to pay for two school pupils to attend PGL school residential trips.

I have also sent out two holiday request forms, hopefully I will receive them back and be able to book holidays for the families.

After a MULO A presentation at Hadleigh a guide leader asked for information about AFIA and if we could help two guides attend residential trips. I have sent the guide leader an AFIA leaflet and grant form.

I need members' help to promote AFIA, if you know of a Youth Uniform group in your parish please tell them about AFIA and how we can help pay for camps or trips that some of the children involved cannot afford. Also, if you or a member in your parish is a governor or has connections at a local school please tell them about AFIA.

Sadly, there will be children who cannot experience a school trip because the parents do not have the money. Well, AFIA has the money we just need the children, so please help.

If you need any leaflets, please contact me.

**Val Jeffreys 01449 721346**

Email [afiamusuffolk@gmail.com](mailto:afiamusuffolk@gmail.com)



## SOCIAL POLICY REPORT

Mothers' Union nationally is working in partnership with the Clewer Initiative which is trying to detect and combat Modern Day Slavery. You might think that nothing like this happens in Suffolk, but in fact agriculture and hand car washes are two of the most likely areas where people may be forced to work in poor conditions for low pay or without safety equipment. Five MU members from our Diocese attended a conference on Modern Day Slavery at the St Nicholas Centre, and we will continue to be involved and learn how MU members can help. If you have a smart phone there is a great app to download from their website <https://www.theclewerinitiative.org/>

### MUe

We would like to visit as many branches and deanery/area events as we can, to bring the stock of MUe cards, badges and gifts to your members and visitors. We will also continue with group orders, so please send any orders on our Diocesan order form to Clare Thomas. Remember that all MUe sales generate income for our Diocese! Just contact Clare Thomas on 01473 832808 or [clare.thomas@btinternet.com](mailto:clare.thomas@btinternet.com)

### PRAYER CHAIN

Please do remember that we have a small team of MU members who are delighted to offer prayer support to you or those you may know who are facing challenging circumstances - maybe illness, loneliness or bereavement. All requests are confidential and you need only give a Christian name and minimal information, as the Lord knows all the details. Please contact the co-ordinator **Jean Haste 01394 212089**



“Wireless communication is nothing new.  
I’ve been praying for 75 years!”

i-SPY MU

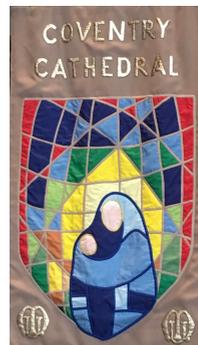


### Take Linda's challenge ! How many MU Banners can you spot?

Whether you are staying in Suffolk this summer or travelling further afield, why not see how many different MU banners you can spot?

It's a great opportunity to get younger members of your family, children or grand children maybe, to look inside churches and see just how many places have MU. If possible take a photo of each banner or a least make a note of where you have seen them and what they look like. We could display them at the November council meeting and give prizes to those who find the most !

Below are two pictures of banners, one is at St Felix, Rendlesham where our service of Prayer, Praise and Healing is being held on Friday 18th October and the other is at Coventry Cathedral and was photographed at the "Thy Kingdom Come" Service on 31st May.



Linda's idea of i-spy MU Banners made me wonder when and why banners were first made. Naturally I 'Googled' it and came across an article, 'Mothers' Union Banners-a neglected British Folk Art' by Bob Trubshaw, who seems to have done considerable research.

You can find it here [https://www.hoap.co.uk/m\\_u\\_banners.pdf](https://www.hoap.co.uk/m_u_banners.pdf)

Many banners date back to the earliest days of Mothers' Union when it was common for ladies to undertake church needlework and for churches to use banners in walks of witness. Women's suffrage may also have had an influence. **Viv Buckle** (Pathways editor)

## **YOXMERE BENEFICE BRANCH MEETING MAY 2019**

This meeting was hosted by Katherine Riches and we welcomed Revd. John Kemp as our Speaker. Katherine is due to celebrate a very special birthday in June but members were delighted to congratulate her on being 99.9 years old at this meeting. We cut a cake and wished her well. Our Diocesan President Linda Ginn presented her with some flowers. Katherine has a long association with MU in various places as Branch Leader and as a member. (Photo Back Cover)

## **DIOCESAN MEMBERS**

It has been a pleasure to meet with a group of Diocesan members today for the annual card making workshop. Thank you to Di Barker for hosting the day and making lots of cups of tea for the 10 participants. Thanks to those who prepared the necessary materials so that we could start work straight away. The result of the day was a magnificent 1,421 Christmas cards completed and ready to be sent to Highpoint Prison, for distribution to prisoners in December. This day is also a triumph for recycling, as used Christmas cards are cut and remounted onto new card printed with a message from MU. The day was full of laughter but those present were also aware that the cards being made by any of us could be the only one a prisoner received for Christmas 2019. Please come and join us next year to help with such important MU work. (Photo Back Cover)

**Sue Norrington**

## **PATHWAYS**

The next issue of Pathways will be available at the Council meeting on Monday November 18th at St Mary Stoke in Ipswich .

The deadline for articles is Monday 4th November.

Please do send me details of what your branch has been up to, as it will be an encouragement to others, and remember to get permission for inclusion in Pathways from the people in any photos you send .

**Viv Buckle 01394 610971 [vivbuckle@aol.com](mailto:vivbuckle@aol.com)**

## DIARY OF EVENTS

Wed. 26th June 10am -3pm NSA Quiet Day St Margarets Church  
Reydon IP18 6PB led by Andrea Skevington

Monday 15th- Friday 19th July Wave of prayer

Friday Aug 9th - Mary Sumner Day -  
11am Diocesan Service of Holy Communion in the Cathedral

Friday 23rd August 2-4.30pm Cream tea for Summer of Hope Appeal  
at Farthings , Sibton Road, Peasenhall. IP17 2JF

Thursday 12th Sept. 10am -12noon Ipswich Deanery Coffee Morning  
Ascension Hall, Larchcroft Road Ipswich IP1 6AR

Monday 16th - Thurs 20th September Diocesan Holiday and General  
meeting in Portsmouth - staying in Bournemouth.

Thursday 26th Sept 10am NSA morning in Halesworth . Speaker  
Julia Hancock, Selig Trust. Refreshments available.

Monday Oct 7th 9.30 for 10 am Trustees Meeting Barham Church  
Room

Friday October 18th Praise, Prayer and Healing Service at St Felix  
Church Rendlesham - with Eucharist - Time to be confirmed.

Thurs 24th - Wed 30th October i-Chameleon Shop Halesworth

Sat November 2nd 10am-noon Ipswich Area Coffee Morning  
St Mary Stoke, Ipswich. IP2 8DA

Monday November 18th 9.30 for 10am Council Meeting St Mary  
Stoke, Ipswich. IP2 8DA

Tuesday 19th November MULO session BSE Cathedral Room 7pm

Monday November 25th - Tuesday 10th Dec 16 Days of Activism  
against gender based violence.

