

DP Report for Council - 18th November 2019

(31.10.19)

New Trustees: At our June Council meeting, we welcomed Sandra Griffiths back on to the Trustee Board (working with the Ipswich Deanery, Wedding Fair and Women's Refuge), and Jeanette Appleton, new to Suffolk, covering Faith and Policy

Diocesan President activities: Since Trustees last met I have enjoyed visiting branches, attending 1 church breakfast, 3 Coffee Mornings, 3 Lunches, 4 Summer of Hope fund-raising garden parties, 2 Strawberry Teas, and a 100th Birthday Party. I've also been invited to speak to members at 11 branch meetings, 2 Deanery services and a "Songs of Praise" Festival service, engaged with 2 Cathedral Services, 3 Diocesan events (Diocesan Synod, and participated in 3 Mission and Ministry team meetings representing MU), spoken at 2 Wave of Prayer branch services, and joined in 3 thought-provoking and challenging Quiet Days. The Healing Service at Rendlesham was well-attended with over 60 members present). I have regularly touched based with my prayer partner, Chaplain and Spiritual Advisor. "Making MU Visible", I supported the Clewer Exhibition stand at the start of Freedom week and also helped with the stall at the Ministries Fair – both in the Cathedral. Much networking is also taking place in the higher echelons of the diocese, Beryl and I meeting up with senior members of the diocesan staff to raise our MU profile. Provincial activities have included attendance at a Cluster Day in Ely and a 3-day residential conference in Hertfordshire. I submitted articles for Families First, the local press, attempted Facebook and social media postings; sent material to the diocesan e-News, various parish magazines (where I have spoken at branches) , and the Provincial, website – it's been a really busy year!

General Meeting: Our diocese was well represented, with most of the Trustees and Officers present. Our coach party also included spouses, members and friends, in all 17 of us stayed in the hotel in Bournemouth organised by Beryl and Monica, with three more making their own way.

Our "ABC" Strategy: AFIA, Befriending and Clewer are all a 'work in progress'. Applications have been received for AFIA; Befriending initiatives such as *Meet up Mondays*, MU lunches/teas, and special events

have been organised to build/strengthen local community relationships; and the MU and Clewer partnership, together with the Rev Carol Mansell (Diocesan Lead), is gaining momentum.

Raising the MU profile: In the recent “I-Spy an MU Banner” competition, 50 banners were “spotted” across the diocese, photographed and posted on an MU Facebook album. The greatest number of entries were received from the East Bergholt Branch, with Campsea Ashe Deanery Branch a close second. A significant number of churches in our diocese were locked during the daytime, and this has been brought to the attention of the Mission and Ministry team. On behalf of MU I have also challenged the terms being used in the national *Growing in God* initiative. Their recent report is entitled “Churches, Schools and *Households*” – as MU, we stand for “Christian care for **families**”, building and developing relationships with people, not focusing on Census statistical terms of analysis which appear to be replacing the biblical nature and concept of family.

Fund-raising: Following the devastating cyclone in March 2019, around £3,000 has been donated to the Preliminary Disaster Fund Appeal for our linked diocese of Lake Malawi. All the money has been safely transferred to a named individual in the Anglican Council of Malawi, and a letter of acknowledgement expressing their sincere thanks and appreciation for our prayerful and practical support has been received. Our fund-raising priority will now revert “back on track” focusing on the general work of the Mothers’ Union, both here and overseas. Thank you to all who contributed so generously to this special one-off appeal.

A new triennium – with a new Worldwide Strategy (to be published in November), new theme for next year (“Building hope and confidence”), revamping the Membership Directory with a new ‘Friendship’ category, “Communities of Interest”, “Metamorphosis”, a new upgrade for computer systems, and preparations for hospitality for next year’s Lambeth Conference, we continue to remember in our prayers all the staff and those who work on our behalf at Mary Sumner House.

My heart-felt thanks go to all Trustees and Officers for their support and encouragement in this first year of the triennium. May God continue to richly bless us as together we seek to build God’s kingdom and show Christian care for the families and communities, here and worldwide.

Secretaries Report

Not a lot has happened over the summer month's but I have kept branch leaders and trustees up to date with any information that has come my way. I have been collecting items for this agenda and have contact with Linda on a regular basis.

I helped Keith by sending out the finance items that are distributed in August to each branch treasurer.

If anyone has, anything to go to branches if they send it to me will ensure it goes out promptly.

Beryl Mee – Diocesan Secretary

Social Policy Report

The Suffolk Anti-Slavery Network will hold an anti-slavery day on 18th October (clashes with our Healing Service) and a Freedom week. I will try to find out more about both and report back at the Trustees meeting.

Clare Thomas

MUe

Thank you to all branches and members who have sent us orders for MUe cards and items from the catalogue this autumn. We would like to visit each branch with our stall of cards, badges, books and more – so just let Penny or I know when would be a good time to come – it can be a normal branch meeting or a special event like a coffee morning or service. It is a great way for your members to see the MU items for themselves and buy just one or two cards of a particular design rather than a whole pack. Our diocese receives 10% back of all sales, so it all helps!

Clare Thomas (01473 832808 or clare.thomas@btinternet.com)

A.F.I.A. Report

A.F.I.A. has been able to help 7 school children, from 3 different schools, to enjoy a school Activity holiday.

Two families have had caravan holidays with Parkdean Resorts at Kessingland and Manor Park holiday park Hunstanton.

A family also had a day at Banham Zoo with the support of St Augustine's branch.

Some photos from a school activity holiday, the headteacher has given me permission to share them and said the pupil, 'gained in confidence and showed some leadership skills that we had not seen before'.

Do you shop online ? if YES have you been using the Easy fundraising raising website, they have over 3,300 stores online. Please visit their website to see how easy it is to raise funds for AFIA holidays.

<https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/stedsipswichmu/>

Even though the AFIA fund has a healthy balance, money is still needed as more schools and uniform youth groups get to hear about AFIA, we hopefully will be helping youngsters go on school trips, camps and days out.



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INDOOR MEMBERS REPORT FOR THE NOV MEETING

There have been a small change in the number of members in the Indoor Membership, but this is to be expected.

It was lovely meeting two of my members when I went to Bury Cathedral on Mary Sumner day.

I shall soon be writing my Christmas letter to them.

I am very happy to continue into the new year if you are all happy with it.

Monica Twaits

Ipswich Area Report

Ipswich Area Coffee Morning will have taken place before the Council meeting so will up date Council at the meeting.

Next year Ipswich Area Coffee morning will be on November 21st 2020 at St Michaels Church Martlesham.

Southwold and Reydon Branch have been buying Christmas presents for families at Peppercorn Lodge in Ipswich for many years and last year it was Fressingfield Branch.

I would like to thank Southwold and Reydon for the many years they bought the presents also to Fressingfield for buying the presents last year.

Ipswich Area is now going to take on buying the Christmas presents for the families at Peppercorn Lodge in Ipswich.

Thank you to members in Ipswich Area for your support these last six months.

Sandra Griffiths.

Ipswich Area Rep

North Suffolk Area

At the end of June the North Suffolk Area held a Quiet Day in Reydon. This was attended by 22 members both from the Area, and from further afield in the Diocese. The title for the day was, 'Jesus said, "I am the Vine"'. Andrea Skevington, the leader, used material from her excellent book of reflections. The whole day was both thought provoking and inspiring.

In September we held our annual NSA Morning. 38 of us met in Halesworth. We started the day with a Eucharist in the church led by Rev'd Jane Held and then moved to the hall for refreshments and stalls before we heard from our speakers. The main speakers were Julia Hancock and Clare Jessop. Julia is the Business Manager for Selig Suffolk. Selig is the Christian Trust which runs the Ipswich Night Shelter and Hope into Action. It was really interesting to hear how the Night Shelter functions; where the volunteers come from, who their clients are and what they are able to provide for them in the way of a meal, washing facilities, a bed, advice and most of all friendship. Hope into Action is a fairly new enterprise in Suffolk aiming to provide homes for the most vulnerable in society so that they can build positive lives in the community. Following Midday Prayers, Linda Ginn briefly told us about the Annual Meeting in Portsmouth which she had attended the previous week. We concluded the morning by enjoying a Bring & Share lunch together

At the end of October we ran our third I-Chameleon Shop in Halesworth. Six branches each took responsibility for manning the shop on a different day. We had a large amount of stock thanks to the generosity of members and friends but by the end of the week this had been greatly reduced. We raised the magnificent sum of £1,334.00 to support and empower families both in this country and overseas. A final decision on how this should be dispersed will be taken at our Committee Meeting later in November. We were also able to talk to visitors about Mothers' Union and sell MUE products. It was a busy but enjoyable week.

Anna Vessey

North Suffolk Area Representative

Faith and Policy report November Council 2019.

It was a pleasure to speak to so many branch leaders when I phoned round the diocese to explain the Blue Christmas service in October. I am sorry there had not been more time for you to plan this service for 2019, but first the service had to be approved by trustees. I attended my first trustee meeting on October 7th. It is most encouraging to hear that some branch will have a service in church this year, others during their December meeting and the rest are looking to have the service next year. I don't expect individual congregations to be large at each service, but if

just ten people come to each service, then the total number of people we have reached out could be well into the hundreds.

Ministries Fair St Edmundsbury Cathedral Nov 2nd

The theme of the Ministries Fair was Discipleship in Focus. Our display highlighted Mothers' Union's 2019 – 2021 ABC strategy: AFIA, Befriending and Clewer Initiative.

The event was advertised as *"A brilliant opportunity for people to be encouraged to taste and see the huge variety of possibilities available. It might even spark new ideas for some kind of ministry within or beyond the Church community not specifically featured at the Ministries Fair. Week by week we pray for our churches to flourish and grow. Such flourishing happens when we are a people who offer ourselves to God, serving in the countless ways that God makes possible."*

16 days of Activism against gender-based violence 2019

Once again, we focus our thoughts and prayers to the issue of gender-based violence. Sue Norrington has shared a resource she prepared for her branch which gives us a Bible reading and fact for us to pray over. Please download other resources from the central Mothers' Union website to use with your members.

<https://www.mothersunion.org/projects/16-days-activism-against-gender-based-violence>

Jeanette Appleton

Diocesan Members Report October 2019

I have sent out my 4th Mailing to Diocesan Members keeping them up to date with current MU news. It is a pleasure to receive notes and phone calls from members. One member has moved into a care home near her family in Bristol, three others have resigned recently and we have one new member. I have now received all the Diocesan Members subscriptions. If there are any MU ladies that you meet who do not have a branch close by, or cannot attend a branch regularly, please encourage them to become Diocesan Members.

When I talk to Diocesan Members I am so impressed with their faithfulness to Mothers' Union, often over their whole lifetimes. In August

we held a Cream Tea at my home in Peasenhall. Three Diocesan members were able to come along to this as well as members from my own branch and other branches nearby. It was a perfect day for a Cream Tea in the garden and raised £262 for the Summer of Hope Appeal.

Sue Norrington 28/10/19

Over 90 report

Margaret has a grand total of 73 on her list of 90+ 7 of these are over 100.

Margaret Rollins.