

# Sheffield Mothers' Union Newsletter September 2020

## Our President writes...

Thank you for all your efforts to support one another at this time. I continue to look forward to when we can meet again in branches and at our Council meetings and Diocesan services.



**STAY SAFE, KEEP SMILING and KEEP WEARING THAT FACE COVERING!**

## Mary Sumner Day - Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> August 2020

This is the day when we remember our founder, Mary Sumner, and her vision for our movement. As it fell on a Sunday in the midst of a global pandemic, it meant that the day looked very different, although, as you can see, many branches managed to celebrate it with socially distanced groups. For those who were unable to meet, our Chaplain Rev Hilda, along with the Faith & Policy Unit, managed to provide a service that was distributed to all Branch Coordinators to share with their members.



**Our Wave of Prayer** followed on 20-22 August for **Central Zimbabwe** in Zimbabwe; **Lango** in Uganda; **Kebbi** in Nigeria; **Tamale** in Ghana; **Sheffield** in England and **Guadalcanal** in Solomon Islands. Again, groups managed to meet socially distanced across the Diocese and for those that were unable then members took part in their own homes.



## The Membership Directory – keeping it updated



At present the Data & Media Correspondent is responsible for updating the list of members for Sheffield Diocese. It would be good if, like some other diocese if we had a team of people in place the accuracy of this list depends on everyone working together so that publications and correspondence go only to the right people i.e. those who are members. I am aware ( as Data & Media correspondent) that many members are using computer technology to keep in touch with family and church members including MU. The lockdown has meant more members are using email. **Communicating with all of you is more efficient if you can give your email address, if you have one, to your branch coordinator.** This helps us to contact everyone much more quickly.

***All information is kept confidentially within Mothers' Union and not shared with other organisations***

## News from Mary Sumner House



We may not be meeting physically, and you might wonder what is happening in Mothers' Union centrally so here is some of the latest news. Sheran Harper, Worldwide President

said "Sadly, our Provincial Presidents around the world have reported a massive increase in the struggles with mental health, gender-based violence, including sexual violence in homes with women and children being the victims. Many of these stories are still hidden but we are committed in taking a stand, standing together where we need to, our voices must be heard ... our actions must speak volumes and end these atrocities ... and above all we must pray without ceasing. These are injustices that must be condemned and removed from society ... from God's world." In practical terms:



- **Who do we touch?** Diocesan Trustee Boards took part in a survey in 2019 which showed that 113,834 people benefitted from the work of MU and over 29,751 vulnerable people received a gift from our members to meet an urgent need and our work reached almost 8,000 prisoners and their families.
- MU has partnered with **The Together Coalition** working alongside the NHS, Church, CBI and other charities such as the Guides and Scouts working to build a kinder, closer and more connected society through 2020 and beyond.
- **An AFIA/ Thank You Key Workers Appeal** has been set up offering AFIA breaks and Experience Days to Key workers. An application process will be administered through Mary Sumner House and you will read more about this soon.
- **Gender-based Violence** is emerging as a critical issue around the world in the wake of the Coronavirus Pandemic. MU has recently attracted external funding of £40,000 from Trusts to support members in Myanmar, Uganda and the Democratic Republic of Congo to educate and support victims.
- **Domestic Abuse Bill** – within Britain & Ireland, MU is liaising with others to influence this bill which will pass through the House of Lords in September. How members can engage with being informed on this and other Policy matters is soon to be looked at.
- **Modern Slavery** – work is on-going to highlight modern slavery in partnership with the Clewer Initiative.
- **Parenting** – a review has been carried out and a steering group is looking at how MU can engage with Parenting in new ways to reach out to families.

## When can Branches meet up? (See our website for more details)

This is **not a MU decision** and it depends on what the parish decides. Each branch must follow the guidelines of its own parish and proceed with caution. Cleaning would be of the utmost importance before and after the meeting – chairs, tables, toilets, kitchen area etc. Hand sanitiser would need to be used on arrival and on leaving. Someone would have to agree to do the cleaning and it would all have to be put in place before meetings start back.

## News from around the Diocese

**Susan Cammack writes...** What an interesting afternoon I have had today: I wanted to find out about Love Bags, as my grandson is starting school in September! Tanis told me to look in in Newline!

Like a lot of people I do not throw anything away and have every copy of Newline since 2006. This led me to reading, looking, reminiscing at all these copies and seeing familiar faces some of which are no longer with us: the lovely Mary White, Dorothy Tait, Pam Prior and our dear friend Tony Sophianou and lots of friends we don't see anymore, pictures of the fantastic occasions we have shared together Festivals, General Meetings Branch meetings, all our Presidents, Norma, Pat, Sarah, Sheila, Pauline and Gill, the wave of prayer and lots more. I even started writing a list of dates of the General meetings as I can never remember which year we went where! In the summer edition of 2014 who is on the front page? My lovely Granddaughters Emily and Poppy.

So, if you still have your copies take time in these very unusual times to look back at this brilliant resource and give thanks for all the hard work that goes into producing it and for all the wonderful friends we have met through the Mothers 'Union.

### Judith Hilton, decided during lockdown that "she couldn't sit back and do nothing"



Judith suffers with Macular degeneration and is a member of the Macular Society as well as being a Mothers' Union member at St Georges Minster Doncaster. She said, "If I had the chance to do anything I would do it – and I thought that even if I can't get out anymore, I'll still have a purpose in life." Judith is part of a team of befrienders for the Macular society. She makes regular calls to people feeling isolated by their macular disease. "Talking to them makes me feel strong. You forget about yourself and think about your befriendeds, on their own, looking forward to the phone call."

Judith appears in the September Issue of Sideview, a magazine for members of the Macular society.

**Women's' Refuges** : these have all been extremely busy over lockdown and have been well supported across the Diocese: Sheffield, Rotherham, Barnsley and Doncaster with items of clothing, bedding, new start baskets, food and children's toys. Thanks go to all members and in particular those that are the contact for the refuge.

**Thanks to Rev Hilda and her husband Rev Alan Isaacson** for all their hard work producing services every Sunday for us to share with members. These will cease on a weekly basis, but Rev Hilda has promised she will keep us all in touch! We just hope her Licensing happens sometime soon!

**MUe Cards, Diaries and Calendars. Please take a look on the MU Shop website [www.mueshop.org](http://www.mueshop.org)**

You can place an order via Margaret Culloden to be delivered to your address and it will be postage free over **£30** instead of £60 until the end of October. Under £30, postage will be a reduced rate. **But the orders must**



**go through Margaret to receive this discount.** However, Margaret does have a good stock of diaries, planners and calendars, and Christmas card selection packs at home. If any branch/deanery is planning a meeting of some kind, she is happy to bring a selection of general greetings cards as well as the Christmas things.

### Regrets & Blessings:

Eveline Glover, St Wilfrid's Cantley; Cynthia Robinson, Goole;

Eileen Ridge, Joan Paddey and Joyce Lane, all from St Peter's Warmsworth;

Dr Anne Phillips, Former Hon Vice President.



**Birthday Greetings to Mary Whittaker, Dore branch** who celebrated her 90<sup>th</sup> birthday in September.

## Annual General Meeting

We are bound by law to have an Annual meeting every year but for some reason we have not done this in the past and hence we have had problems with the Charities commission. That has all been resolved now and our annual general meeting is booked for **October 7<sup>th</sup> 2020 at 10.30 am via Zoom**

Everyone who is a member of Sheffield MU is welcome to attend this meeting where we will review our activities of 2019 and formally accept the accounts for the year ending December 31 2019. This year because of Covid19 it will have to take place via Zoom. *(If you have not got a computer or tablet you can phone into the Zoom meeting using your landline. If you would like to attend the meeting contact our Secretary, Steve Bisby either by email [secretary@sheffieldmu.co.uk](mailto:secretary@sheffieldmu.co.uk) or give him a ring 0776 4486711.* The AGM will only be short and will be followed by the Autumn Council meeting. Next year our AGM will be in May 2020.

### Agenda for Sheffield Diocese Mothers' Union Annual General Meeting

October 7<sup>th</sup> 2020 10.30 by Zoom

1. Welcome
2. Prayers
3. Reports and accounts - to receive and consider the accounts for the year ended 2019 and the reports of the Trustees and auditors.
4. Appointment of Trustees and Officials

**Following the AGM there will be the Autumn Council Meeting for 2020.**

#### Autumn Council Meeting

1. President's report
2. Secretary's report
3. Treasurer's Report
4. Unit Reports
5. Deanery & Branch Concerns
6. Any other business

Please Note: The Zoom link and relevant papers will be emailed to those wishing to attend before the date.

## Subscriptions 2021

Sheffield MU Trustees have met and decided that **2021 subscriptions will be £23 payable on 1 January 2021**, £20 of this goes to MSH to support the central charity and the rest is for the running of Sheffield MU.

There is indeed a significant increase to our contribution to the central charity and it is a result of the uniquely challenging times in which we find ourselves and comes despite significant steps to reduce the financial burden centrally. Our Provincial Presidents and worldwide trustees for Britain and Ireland reflected long and prayerfully about the appropriate level of subscription to ensure that the movement can continue to be sustained and do feel that this price will reflect all the benefits you will receive as a Mothers' union member. However, Sheffield MU Trustees have decided to keep the cost to you down as much as possible and will have to dip into our reserves.

Our current publication Families First has been reimagined and as part of your subscription you will all receive, direct to your doormat, a new publication twice a year containing stories of members' work, together with faith resources and ideas and topics for local meetings! (If you subscribed to Families First last year at a cost of £10- you will be making a saving on your subscription!)

Together we want to continue to bring people into the warm embrace and fellowship of the movement. Members have lit up the way for so many to find the Lord for nearly 150 years, so let us continue to shine a light and support those in need as we move forward with faith, hope and confidence.



President Gill Fellows, Vice Presidents, Moira Leach & Liz Paver,