

# Mothers' UNION

Christian care for families

Diocese of Carlisle



M.U. News  
Spring  
2023

From our Diocesan  
President  
Deb Lee

Dear MU Member

It is lovely to recall the Commissioning Service of a year ago. So many of you sharing the joy, having a wonderful sing after so long of not meeting or singing and a powerful feeling of "the Spirit is with us". Since then, things might not have gone as we would have wished. Maybe a friend or family member is no longer with you or you don't feel as young as you were.

According to the prophet Isaiah (49 v6), God's chosen people were to be a light to the nations. Personally, and communally, we are charged to live lives that reveal God's glory by making a difference in the world. That is a big challenge but one that chimes with our calling as members of the Mothers' Union.

The end of the first year of the triennium is a time to reflect on what we have done and whether we are being a "light to the nations" and living how God wants us to live. One of the first things that happened was the Mothers' Union re-imagining conference, which was helpful timing. Marion (the new secretary) and I went. We were challenged to consider what needs to happen to keep the good work of the MU going for another 150 years as we all get older and struggle to attract younger members. We have adopted some of the ideas in Carlisle diocese. Change is always diffi-

cult and can cause upset and distress. While everyone enjoys the fellowship of a branch meeting, we know that some branches and Deaneries are struggling to find folk to take on the admin roles. We will try to support you and your members, if you find yourselves in this situation. Please contact your deanery team, Carole or Helen (the Vice Presidents), Marion or me.

Remember..

*"Brothers and sisters, don't get discouraged in doing what is right."* — 2 Thessalonians 3:13

*"For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."* - Jeremiah 29:11

So lets look to Philippians 3:13 *"Brothers and sisters, but one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead"*. That's not to forget the wonderful Mothers' Union members who have gone before, they are the roots, trunk and branches of our Mothers' Union tree. We have to be the new leaves!

With that in mind we have a couple of exciting things coming up.

Firstly our Bishop James is to be enrolled on Sunday March 12th at 10am, in his Parish Church of St John's, Keswick. Everyone is welcome and you have already been sent a prayer to pray that Sunday (and ask your vicar to include in your own service!). The following Sunday is Mothering Sunday and I am hoping that many of you will have found at least one person to be enrolled on that Sunday, linking the concept of "mothering" with the fact that anyone who agrees with our aims can be a member of MU. We will have launched our website by then, please encourage folk to use it!

Secondly, one of the ideas from re-imagining the MU was to work with like minded organisations. Deaneries were asked to consider who might fit the bill and we have 2 exciting new projects as a result. Milnethorpe with Heversham have linked with Kent Estuary Youth. Calder Deanery has linked with Time to Change, that support people, particularly women, whose lives have met with adversity. We have agreed to jointly fund a caravan at St Bees for AFIA! We will be asking branches to fund raise to buy towels, toys, toiletries and food. Everything else is provided by the site owner. We will

hear more about these two projects in the next newsletter and how the members got on with being interviewed by the Kent Estuary Youth! What can your deanery come up with?

By the time you read this it will be Lent, the Psalm for the First Sunday in Lent (Ps 32) "*Happy the ones whose transgression is forgiven, and whose sin is forgiven.*" So I will end with the reminder that you are both loved and forgiven by our Lord.

Thank you for all you do,  
Deb

## From our Chaplain

Blessings and peace to you all this new year.

I begin the year with news that I am moving on from my current post in a few weeks, to a new one in Blackburn Diocese.

Accordingly, I have resigned as Chaplain to the MU of Carlisle Diocese.

It has been a privilege to serve as a MU Chaplain. It is a ministry that I have valued both locally and at a national level, meeting Chaplains online across the UK, Ireland and some even further afield.

Thank you for your support and prayers over the last four years.

As I move on, I continue to hold your President, Trustees and all members in my prayers.

Lucie

*We would all want to thank Lucie for her time as our Chaplain over the last four years. We have greatly valued her work and her letters in this magazine. We wish Lucie, Ramsey and their family well in their new parish and assure them of our prayers over the months ahead.*

**MOTHERS' UNION CARLISLE DIOCESE  
QUIET DAY at RYDAL HALL**

**Wednesday 19th April 2023 10.00 am - 3.00 pm**

Cost £30 including *Coffee & Lunch*

Leader - Revd Steve Carter

The retired Vicar of Dalston, now living in Carlisle

Names and Cheques, as soon as possible,

to Barbara Kelly

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01228 514013

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Branch: \_\_\_\_\_

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Tel no: \_\_\_\_\_

E mail: \_\_\_\_\_

## VP and MUE

Hello my name is Helen Belton and I am from the south of the County and live in Kendal. Many may know me for my role with MU enterprises selling cards at Council and Sharing days. Plus, many other events over the last six years at which I have been selling MU cards and products.

Last year in Belfast Deb asked me to consider the role of VP and not knowing anything about it I initially said No, but God has other plans and since meeting with Deb again and I've finally said Yes to the role of VP for Carlisle Diocese.

This gives opportunity for someone else to come forward and take over the MUE role. It is a rewarding, exciting and wonderful experience knowing that we support and care for our Mothers Union friends and families throughout the world. Please give some prayer and thought to this role I will be available to support you during this transition. If you have any questions or would like to know more, please contact me on mue2023feb@gmail.com or phone 07779564343

I will also be at the Council Meeting in Flookburgh on 8th March, come and talk to me.

Love and prayers, *Helen Belton*

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## The Aims of the Mothers' Union

To encourage parents in their role to develop the faith of their children

To maintain a worldwide fellowship of Christians united in prayer, worship and service

To promote conditions in society favourable to stable family life and the protection of children

To help those whose family life has met with adversity

To promote and support married life

## Annual Gathering in Belfast 2022

Last September about ten Carlisle Diocese MU members and some friends gathered in Belfast. Here are some photos from those few days. We had a great time of refreshment, fun and fellowship. Oh, and an Annual Meeting!



We had a great time together and an inspiring day at the Annual Gathering in the Waterfront Hall in Belfast. We were welcomed by Bev our CEO and watched a video giving us an overview of MU in Ireland

Our WWP, Sheran's keynote pre-recorded address was so inspiring with Stories of Change: 'Boys to Men' in Trinidad & Tobago, 'Storybirds' in Peterborough and Prison Visitor Centre in Rochester.

We had encouraging updates from staff at Mary Sumner House. During lunch break we could look at MUE stalls, read news about Policy and Advocacy, Literacy and Financial programme news and buy All Ireland mementos

After lunch Bishop Emma gave a pre-recorded talk about Transformation being God's work, allowing God to transform us so we can transform those around us. Our own DP, Deb, was on the stage, with two others, giving practical answers to questions about how MU can help transform communities.

A truly uplifting and encouraging day.

We also enjoyed visiting the Giants Causeway and the Titanic Exhibition





## MU Annual Gathering 2023

Friday 22nd September 11am - 3.45 pm

will be held at York Barbican

(doors open from 10.30am)

and

Evensong, at York Minster 5.30pm - 7pm:

Evensong is open to the public, so you are encouraged to get there early. A prayer will be dedicated to the Mothers' Union and the Archbishop of York will preach to the congregation. Tickets for the Annual Gathering are available now and are priced at £23.50 including VAT (the cost of ticket is set at a minimum to cover costs only, this year there is no grant from the hosting city to reduce this cost). Book early to avoid disappointment, indications are that York will be a popular destination and this gathering will sell out!

September seems far away, but this notice about the 'Gathering' on the MU website indicates that we may need to book early for our tickets. Some members may well have plans to travel independently whatever, or indeed intend to have a few days away. Some might wish to go but only if transport can be arranged or shared. With the races being on the next day our options may be more limited. please let your Branch Leader know as soon as possible if you wish to attend.

## Prayer Pages

*How great is your name, O Lord, our God.*

May our eyes be opened  
to the wonder of the daily miracles around us  
and our sense of mystery be deepened.

May we be aware of the light that shines in the darkness,  
and that the darkness can never put out.

May we be blessed with companions on the journey,  
friends who will listen to us and encourage us with their  
presence.

May we learn to live with what is unsolved in our hearts,  
daring to face the questions and holding them  
until, one day, they find their answers.

May we find the still, quiet inside ourself  
where we can know and experience the peace  
that passes understanding.

May love flow in us and through us  
to those who need our care.

May we continue to dream dreams  
and to reach out into the future  
with a deeper understanding of God's way for us. Amen  
(*The Iona Community, from the Iona Abbey Worship Book*)

***Lord, bring justice to our world, that your people may live  
in the joy of your peace***

Thanks be to thee, O Lord Jesus Christ,  
for all the benefits thou hast given us,  
for all the pains and insults thou hast borne for us.  
O most merciful redeemer, friend and brother,  
may we know thee more clearly,  
love thee more dearly,  
and follow thee more nearly; for thine own sake. Amen.  
(*Prayer of St Richard of Chichester*)



***Watch over my loved ones this day, O Lord,  
and keep them safe.***

Father God, we give you thanks for the people in our lives who have encouraged us.

It may be in what they said, or left unsaid. What they did, or the way in which it was done.

We acknowledge, that often in small but important ways, they have changed our lives.

And we confess to our own shortcomings. Forgive our apathy and selfishness. The words of love we fail to speak, and the words of criticism we speak too readily.

Almighty and most merciful God, who has given us a new commandment that we should love one another, give us also grace to fulfil it. Make us gentle, courteous and forbearing. Direct our lives so that we may look to the good of others in word and deed.

For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen  
*(From the BBC Daily Service Prayer Book)*

### ***Mothers' Union - An Easter Prayer***

May the grace  
of our Lord Jesus Christ  
be with us this day.

May your love  
be shared among us as  
we enjoy the gift of fellowship.

May we remember  
to give out the grace and forgiveness  
that you have freely given us.  
And may we always give thanks  
for your sacrificial love.

I praise and thank you, Lord, for your goodness to me.

I pray that you will always stay close to me. Amen

## Trustees Prayers

The following prayers were used in our worship at the start of the last Trustee meeting. You may like to use them at a branch or deanery meeting

Father, we come together today to worship you, to listen to you and each other, to give thanks for what you have done for us and to share with you our hopes for Mothers Union. Help us to make good use of our time together and, when we go to our homes, come with us in our hearts, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen



Gracious God , we put our trust in you.  
Give us open hearts and minds to discern  
your perfect direction for our

Mothers' Union in Carlisle Diocese:

Affirm us in your love that we may be bold  
to seek your face.

Strengthen us with resolve to embrace new  
ways with confidence.

Unite us in heart and mind that we may move  
forward with gladness.

Inspire us in our faith that all things are possible  
with God.

Transform us into a people empowered by  
the Spirit, overflowing with hope, to effectively  
serve our communities. Amen

# Mothers' UNION

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Diocese of Carlisle



## The Enrolment of Bishop James

Bishop James will be enrolled as a MU member on Sunday 12th March, at 10.00am, at St John, Keswick. All are welcome to attend, but please let the Diocesan President know if you are coming. There will be a Bring and Share lunch afterwards.

A prayer for Bishop James and our membership to use that day

Heavenly Father, we thank you for the witness of Bishop James, as he is enrolled as a member of the Mothers' Union. We pray for all members, past and present, in the Carlisle diocese who strive to build a world where everyone prospers.

We ask you to keep guiding us, so that the Mothers' Union can continue to support those whose family life has met with adversity. Strengthen our members, so they do not tire of serving you. Encourage them to encourage others, so that your Kingdom comes, here on earth.

We pray for MU members and leaders in all countries and ask this through your Son, our Saviour, Jesus Christ. Amen

(Adapted from a prayer from Malawi in Dear Lord)

**We have raised over  
£106,100**

Thank you to all our members and friends who generously donated towards the 2022 Christmas Appeal. Once again, we were part of the Big Give campaign, where donations made on that platform were

doubled. Through your help, Mothers' Union has raised over **£106,100** for vital projects in South Sudan. The generous donations will be used to run our Literacy and Trauma Healing programme in 48 communities across South Sudan over the next two years.

**Thank you for  
supporting our  
Christmas Appeal**



### **What are these programmes and how are they run?**

The key to effective functional adult literacy programmes is the participatory approach using interactive bible studies and learning activities. Each of the literacy circles contains up to



30 participants and are led by community volunteers trained by Mothers' Union. The MU facilitators use participatory tools to initiate discussion and help bring out the knowledge and skills of the participants, as well as challenge some of the cultural norms whilst learning the alphabet of

their local language and gradually learning to read and write. This approach enables each literacy circle to become a safe place where all participants feel secure and trust each other to share deep and important issues affecting their lives including topics such as, gender-based violence, women's rights, understanding of traditional practices, health, hygiene and household responsibilities. It enables women to use their voice, often for the first time and speak up freely, helping to promote female leadership.

This programme also encourages participants to share their experiences of violence, and with the help of their facilitator, take part in trauma healing exercises to help them begin to heal. Already around 70% of participants in the literacy circles feel they now have coping mechanisms as well as being involved in advocacy activities for peace in their communities. This is compared to around 45% participations in other similar programmes.

*'I used to feel terrible, went to the doctors and they didn't know what was wrong with me. I had to take Panadol all the time to help me feel a bit better. But since hearing from the GBV Officers that what I'm experiencing might be trauma, this has really helped me to understand that I'm not going mad and that there is a reason for feeling like this.'*



Participant in Juba diocese.

### **Thank you**

Decades of civil unrest and violence have caused huge amounts of hurt and trauma for the South Sudanese people. The money raised during the Christmas Appeal 2022 will enable Mothers' Union to continue to run these life changing programmes.



**Thank you for all your continued support helping communities around the world.**

(Taken from MU website,  
Photo Credit: Taking Pictures, Changing Lives Foundation)

# MUe Catalogue

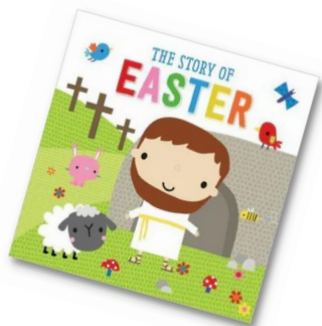
Keep a lookout for the new Easter Spring / Summer catalogue. If you do not receive one by post, ask your branch or deanery leader if they have one.



There are many cards, gifts and books. Also a range of Coronation commemorative items.

Such as teatowels, aprons, bags and mugs.

There are also many MU branded items and prayer books and children's books



## Sharing Day 2023

Sharing day this year will be held at Houghton on Tuesday 16th May. The day will start at 9.45 for 10.15am to finish at 3.30pm. Please bring lunch with you.

Bishop Rob will be attending. Adam Sach, head of Fundraising, Communications & Retail at Mary Sumner House, will talk about Overseas work also what MSH is doing to remain viable.

From our own diocese we will also be hearing about supporting and encouraging new members, AFIA projects. Also what MU is doing for under-fives and what more can be done and much more.

## Give a gift of Perseverance this Mothering Sunday

This Mothering Sunday, our love, prayers and strength as a community mean so much to women and their families around the world and here at home.

Your **Gift of Perseverance** this Mothering Sunday can give desperately needed support to women, families and communities in Burundi and everywhere we work, while at the same time helping you celebrate someone you admire and who inspires you.

By choosing one of these gifts, you could make the difference between a young person missing out on school or creating their new life at university. You could give a mother much-needed relief from hardship and poverty, and help her on a new path to grow and flourish with confidence.

You can dedicate your Mothering Sunday gift to a loved one that has passed or send it to someone this year. Order your gifts today online or via your branch or deanery leader.

We have recently lost some longstanding MU members and office holders

Jean Black died in January. She was a long standing member of Council, former Deanery leader for Carlisle and branch leader of Bowness MU.

Jennie Atkinson sadly died in January, Jennie was a past branch leader of Aspatria MU branch.

Marilyn Mattinson sadly passed away in January. Marilyn was a past MU leader of Netherton branch. Also from Netherton Mary Minchella passed away towards the end of last year, Mary had been a member for 64 years, she was 95. Mary had been the treasurer and leader of the branch in her time and worked tirelessly for MU until her health failed.

Please hold their families in your prayers.

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## Carlisle MU Polo Shirts

Ladies polo shirt - blue or white - £15

Ladies fleece jacket - navy - £20

Ladies bodywarmer/gilet - navy - £19

Ladies sweatshirt - blue £17

If you would like to order any of these please contact

Wendy Houghton on  
01900 813675 or

07967003478

Marion and Deb modelling the polo shirt, bodywarmer and jacket.





## Partners



In January 2023 Kent Estuary Youth (KEY) and Milnthorpe with Heversham Mothers' Union Branch were excited to report that we have agreed to partner with each other in mutual support of our aims and activities. KEY is an independent youth work charity established by the Christian Churches in the Kent Estuary. As an international Christian Charity, MU members seek to advocate for and support families worldwide. We are not all mothers or even women; there are many parents, men, women, singles and grandparents involved in our work.

For each other we can be 'listening ears', 'extra hands', craft and gardening partners, sharers of experience in intergenerational projects, fundraising helpers, etc etc. We shall be talking soon about the best way forward. If you have ideas to share, please contact [secretarymu@outlook.com](mailto:secretarymu@outlook.com) .

## St Paul, Seaton

In September St Paul's MU celebrated their 30th Anniversary. We held a Service in Church, joined by members from other branches in the Deanery. During the service our Diocesan President Deb, gave out



long service certificates, including several to founder members. Three new members were enrolled ( and 1 more in December). The service was followed by refreshments in the Church Hall, with plenty of time for chatting. We look forward to many more years.



## Penrith Branch

In response to the request to provide a warm space over the winter time we at Penrith held a Soup and Puddings lunch once a month, from November to March. These have gone down extremely well, catering more for people looking for company than necessarily needing somewhere warm. MU members have made 4 soups and 4 + puddings each month all different and all homemade, a great commitment to share Love, Comfort and Hope in our community.

For the December meeting our new evening group were tasked with finding out different Christmas Traditions in a selection of MU Overseas Countries. One member who is from Canada emailed a Provincial leader in Canada, who in turn forwarded the email to the 32 branches in the country. To date Tess has had 16 replies from Canada and we had an entertaining time going over the traditions and projects, many of which involved Turkeys!! We are now looking at how we may use some of the ideas in our own Church.

## Netherton MU

At one of our meetings last year we had 'A History of Gin Afternoon'.



It was a very enjoyable time and all who attended wanted to know when the next one would be!



## **Aspatria Branch**

We were very sorry to lose Jennie Atkinson to cancer recently. She was Branch Leader for 6 years until the current threesome took over, and remained a faithful supporter and committee member. At her funeral the Archdeacon described how on his very first visit as priest at St Kentigern's, when he was standing alone and feeling rather apprehensive, it was Jennie who approached him and made him feel at home. This was typical Jennie, a welcoming friend who we will all miss. A really nice touch at the funeral was an amazing display of photographs of Jennie from all stages of her life, showing the size and closeness of her family.

While we missed the Deanery Advent Service, which was cancelled, we did enjoy a good sing at our December branch meeting. This event hasn't happened for some years, partly due to Covid and partly due to holidays delayed by Covid, so it was appreciated when it did happen. Ann King gave us background snippets of information about each carol before we sang it, and accompanied us in her usual professional way. We even managed (most of) the Twelve Days of Christmas, having been inspired by an explanation of its meaning. Naturally we followed the singing with tea and tasty nibbles.

In January we brightened the dark days of winter by visiting Dobbies Garden Centre for one of their Afternoon Teas, which had some delicious diet busting cakes, especially the blackcurrant mousse ones. We also met up with one of our members who left the branch last year when she moved away to a bungalow. She hasn't found a local Mothers' Union branch and misses the companionship of our little group.

Judy Wood

## **DEADLINE:**

All items for the **SUMMER ISSUE**, and please remember to send photos as well as newsy items, **TO BE IN THE**

**EDITOR'S HANDS NO LATER THAN**

**19th MAY 2023**

**NOTE** - If at all possible please send by email. Thanks.

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