

WAVE OF PRAYER 20 - 22 April 2023

Linking our dioceses of:
OXFORD and SOUTHWARK (England);
VICTORIA NYANZA (Tanzania);
KINSHASA (Democratic Republic of Congo);
AHOADA and WARRI (Nigeria);
PORT MORESBY (Papua New Guinea)



Philippians 4: 4-9

Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. Finally, sisters and brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things. Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me—put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you.

Our Worldwide President Sheran Harper writes:

This year some of us will be able to gather at a Spring Meeting and share together in the Wave of Prayer; others will meet as a local branch, and yet others – probably the majority of both our diocesan and branch members, will take part in the Wave of Prayer in their own homes. Whatever your situation the following suggestions can be used as a prompt for prayer and reflection as we remember our linked dioceses and their different challenges and joys. Something which is a challenge to us all across the world is global warming and the pollution of the natural environment so we are invited to reflect on how that affects family and community life wherever we are.

For **Oxford England** we name: Provincial President - Mrs Kathryn Anderson, Diocesan Chaplain - Rev. Mary Harwood, Diocesan Trustees, Bishops - Steven Croft, Alan Wilson, Olivia Graham, Gavin Collins.

Heavenly Father, we thank you for the work of MU Oxford – for the support of families with new babies and young children provided by Baby Basics; for our relationship with the Oxford hospitals through Ronald McDonald House; for our connection with Children Heard and Seen, and for the many local initiatives across the diocese which bring practical support and encouragement to families in need; we bring to you everything we do across our diocese in your name.

We pray for all who are struggling with increases in the cost of living and especially those in food or fuel poverty. We pray

for the local farming communities, those who are responsible for the day to day care of the environment, and for all those engaged in scientific research into disease prevention and new forms of energy provision. Please help us all to support and comfort one another as we trust and hope in you.

For **Southwark England** we name: Mrs Comfort Fearon, Rev. Esther Foss, the Diocesan Trustees: Bishop Christopher Chessun and his staff.

Dear Lord, we pray and give thanks to you for all our members in Southwark diocese. We call to mind the work of Away From It All (AFIA) holidays, enabling those who would otherwise not have a holiday to get away for a while; for the work of prison visiting – in visitors' centres and by providing Christmas gifts for prisoners' children; for those who volunteer in hospitals – setting up 'Tea at 3' sessions in premature baby units and by knitting clothes, octopuses and bonding squares.

We continue our commitment to support women and girls through 16 Days of activism against gender-based violence. Members work within their communities to raise awareness of the facts of gender-based violence, and work supporting refugees and women's refuges. We bring before you the future of our programme *Communicating English to Women*. Following the training on *Metamorphosis*, we plan to engage with young women and girls to enable them to value themselves, encourage their mental health and well-being. We hope to increase clergy participation in the diocese and to re-energise our work in prisons. We pray also that inactive

branches will become active and that branch leaders will find strength and vision to lead their members.

Pollution in the atmosphere brings risks of damage to health, especially for young children so we pray for those affected and for new solutions to bring an improvement in air quality.

For **Port Moresby Papua New Guinea** we name: Louise Werner and Mother Grace Meakoro, who have leadership responsibilities.

May Mothers' Union continue to reveal the love of God across the diocese in places where life brings special risks and hardships, and family life is threatened by unemployment, gang violence, poverty and disease. The worldwide parenting programme aims to strengthen family ties and to change public opinion on domestic abuse. We pray for members who help families in desperate need, in our care homes and day centres, visiting and praying with the elderly, and for those who train women to become self-sufficient. May our collaboration with other organisations in the diocese continue to bear fruit in improving literacy and community leadership. Where rising sea levels threaten island communities we pray for all whose homes and livelihoods are affected.

In the great continent of Africa Mothers' Union is a vital part of church life.

For **Kisangani Democratic Republic of Congo** we name: Rev. Mme Gertrude Mbongo Diela, Mme Martha Viera, Bishop Achille Mutshindu.

We give thanks for the opportunity to meet Bishop Achille and Rev. Gertrude during the Lambeth Conference and to strengthen our relationship with them; we pray for all those affected by the flooding and landslide in their area, further evidence of the damage of climate change.

It can take up to three days to reach some parts of the diocese because of the poor state of the roads, so we pray for safe journeys for Bishop Achille and Rev. Gertrude as they travel to minister to MU groups. We also pray for the upcoming Congolese elections.

With the Lord's help they have been able to continue their work to overcome the effects of violence, poverty and displacement for women and families across the diocese. We give thanks for the literacy and numeracy projects which will train and enable many widowed and uneducated women to run small enterprises, and for the financial support received for this and for the distribution of food and clothes to widows in the city of Kinshasa.

We have continued to meet and share God's blessings with mothers across the diocese and we thank everyone in Oxford diocese for your support and prayers.

For **Victoria Nyanza Tanzania** we name: Mrs Rahel Jeremiah, Seraphina Rusibamayila, Mrs Margretha Massawa.

Lord God, we seek guidance from the holy spirit in all things as we pray for peace throughout your church. We ask for prayerful counsel and discernment for Bishop Mathayo Kasagara, and for everyone who is tasked with appointing a new bishop for our diocese. We pray for the Mothers' Union, asking you to be with us in all we do. We pray for the nationwide savings and credit groups we have established with Tearfund and give thanks for the help we have received from the Bishop of Oxford's Outreach Fund.

For **Ahoada and Warri Nigeria** we name: Mrs Edna Ekpeye, Bishop Clement Ekpeye in **Ahoada** and Mrs Patience Ide, Bishop Christian Esezi Ide in **Warri**.

We remember all our sisters in Christ, across the dioceses of Warri and Ahoada as they work for Mothers' Union. We pray for all they do to support the poor, the disadvantaged and those who do not know the love and grace of our risen Lord. Strengthen their endeavours and may they know that we hold them and their work in our prayers.

Central and Worldwide Mothers' Union

Heavenly Father, we hold the needs of the whole world before you: the places where there is war, famine and destruction, the places where climate change is devastating lives, the places where women and children are oppressed. Strengthen our commitment to the worldwide Mothers' Union with whom we share vision and values.



We know that members everywhere are praying for us as we pray for them. We hold before you our archbishops, bishops and their spouses and all Mothers' Union leaders, workers and their families. We pray for them as they work to bring about change, and to tackle poverty, unemployment, sickness, violence and the lack of stable family life. All we are doing across the world to combat modern-day slavery and gender-based violence is offered to you for your blessing. May we all be strengthened by the love of God in Christ Jesus.

We name: Mrs Sheran Harper, Mrs Bev Jullien, our Worldwide Zonal Trustees, Archbishop Justin Welby, Bishop Emma Ineson.

We pray for everyone at Mary Sumner House and our Central Trustees and we thank each of them for their service and commitment. Our mission continues, supported by the power of God and the love and generosity of so many people who care about what we do.

We will walk in hope and confidence, trusting each other, loving each other and together we will rebuild the hope and confidence of families and communities everywhere - always reaching forward as God's hands and feet and reflecting a life filled with purpose and meaning, grace and love, peace and joy.