

Autumn 2023

# Focus on...

## ***Faith in Action***



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# Contents

4	From our Trustees
7	From our Diocesan Chaplain
	Just a thought
8	Obituaries
10	Raising the profile of MU
12	Mission Unlimited
13	Calendar of Intercessions
17	Autumn meeting & AGM
18	Branch updates
21	Hospital Project, Children Heard & Seen, BabyBasics, MU Enterprises
25	Prayer bookmarks, Quiz
27	Celebrations
28	Dates for your Diary



THE CLEWER  
INITIATIVE



**Children**  
Heard and Seen  
**BabyBasics**  
Milton Keynes



Ronald  
McDonald  
House  
Oxford

**Mothers' Union** works through **4 million members** in **84 countries**, fighting poverty, injustice and tackling family issues.

## From our Trustees



### *Dear Friends,*

How long is it since you last had a little packet of “Love Hearts” the little sherbet sweets which tingle in your mouth? For me it took me back to my primary school days as they were pocket money treats which cost just a few pence. Each member was handed a small packet as we entered the Barbican main auditorium for our annual gathering, a small gesture, given in love and welcome from MU in York diocese. They caused many smiles and immediately sparked lively conversations, both of which were features of the splendid day which followed. As a new member of the MU Oxford trustee board, when I was asked to write the trustees letter, I wondered what there would be to

say; but the annual gathering included so much, it was difficult to know what to leave out. Consequently, this trustees’ letter will be a bit longer than usual.

After a formal welcome from Bev Julian, CEO at Mary Sumner House, and opening prayers led by Bishop John Packer, York Provincial Chaplain, we were entertained to a fast-moving and amusing presentation from York diocese of some of their projects, including their annual involvement in a biker rally where they provide, along with other organisations, refreshments for up to 8,000 bikers! Two of the regular bikers were present, wearing their traditional leathers sporting Christian messages, as they helped on stage with the many props! The money they raise goes towards AFIA family caravan holidays.

Sheran Harper, World-wide President, was the keynote speaker. She gave a moving and informative talk about her travels on behalf of MU and highlighted just a few of the many amazing projects carried out by members in their communities. She spoke of the 500 members in Mombasa recently enrolled after 12 months of training! A project in Uganda supporting girls between the ages of 12 and 18 who are forced into child marriages, hit the media headlines after Sheran spoke of it at a provincial meeting. Another project

in South Africa involved alcoholics and the homeless - people rejected and forgotten by society but befriended and supported by MU members. She reminded us to meet people in need “where they are” and to do the same in response to declining membership. She also asked us to stand together with our diocese against gender-based violence and to support this for 365 days of the year not just 16.

*Connected* magazine will carry an article about our newly named campaign, “Rise up against Domestic Abuse”.

encouraged to use the MU app although it was admitted that the website is a challenge! A new one is promised in the year ahead along with a new database. Fund-raising and declining membership are major issues and we await new strategies for both. Income has been slowly declining over the last few years and there are serious financial issues to be addressed regarding the future of Mary Sumner House. Our structures and the way we work as a movement will have to adapt, as branches and dioceses struggle to find people to fill key roles. **We all need to address**

### **“Transformation**

**Now”** to increase membership and to grow funds.

In the afternoon, Bishop Emma Ineson encouraged us to build bridges - between the church and the rest of the world, between our clergy and MU members, and world-wide through our projects, and to be

prepared to stand between the gutter and the stars and to look to God. “Be joyful, keep the faith, do the little things” (St David) and remember that it is at parish level where things happen.

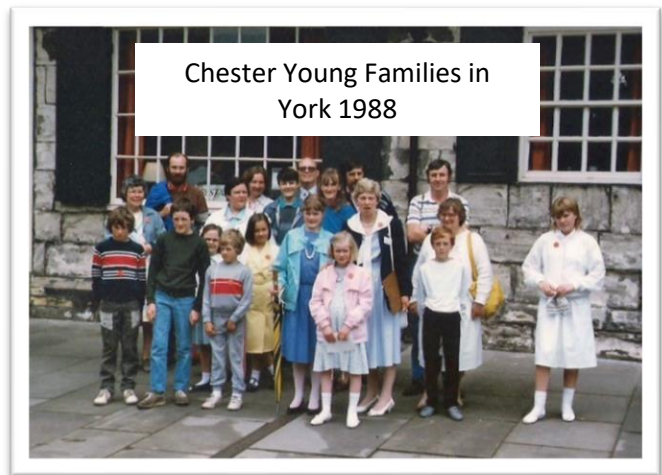


The rest of the morning was spent informing us of important news and updates. I have chosen just to mention a few. Consultations are ongoing with Buckingham Palace about a new patron. We are

The interactive session that followed emphasised different approaches for supporting our clergy and re-affirmed a great deal of what Bishop Emma had already mentioned. As we all know, clergy support for MU varies, but we need to keep the clergy well informed, be enthusiastic, and be prepared to get involved with shared projects in our churches and communities and above all to have a sense of humour. Following a “call to action” from Bev Julian and Sheran Harper, the gathering closed with prayer.

We then crossed York, braving a thunderstorm with hail, to the beautiful York Minster for choral evensong. Members filled all the seating either side of the nave, and led by the choir, we enjoyed a very special service dedicated to the work of MU. The archbishop of York, Stephen Cottrell preached the sermon, reminding us of the important role of women in the ministry of our Lord and how it was women who were present at many key moments.

As we left, I recalled the last time I was in York Minster representing MU. It was in the 1980s, when as young families rep. for Chester diocese, my family attended another special service. My husband carried our diocesan banner whilst our two young daughters and I escorted him. A young girl presented



a purse embroidered by my mother containing a donation from our diocese for AFIA. It was a special moment then to be in such a wonderful building, and it was as special again in 2023.

The next gathering will not be until 2026 when MU will be celebrating 150 years. In the meantime, we are encouraged to apply the words “Faith in Action” to everything we do and to continue the vision of Mary Sumner.

*Elizabeth Dawson*



## From our Diocesan Chaplain



*Dear Friends,*

At the end of August, I went to do my normal weekly shop. When I went to the Free-from aisle, I went to the place I normally go for certain items. I was horrified to find that it had been totally taken over by an amazing selection of Free-from Christmas foods. On checking some of them I discovered that the best-by date was for October and November.

I understand why the retail world wants us to start buying early for Christmas but I couldn't understand why they want us to start so early that the food will be out of date before Christmas. I wanted to shout out about the fact that we still

had Harvest, All Souls, All Saints, Remembrance to say nothing of Advent to come. Coming from a tradition that fully observes Advent and didn't start singing Christmas carols until Christmas Eve – or possibly a couple of days before that - I couldn't help thinking that we in the church need to make more of all these occasions, in our communities and further afield.

In a benefice of six parishes we have already had to plan our Advent and Christmas services so that we don't have any clashes – fortunately we do All Souls, All Saints and Remembrance as benefice services and we advertise them very widely.

It is my prayer that you will all have time to observe Advent, a time of preparation and expectancy and will have a happy and blessed Christmas.

*Mary Harwood*



## Just a thought...

### *In my Father's House*

*"In my Father's house are many rooms... I am going there to prepare a place for you... and I will come back and take you to be with me..." (John 14:2)*

Which room, what sort of room, do you hope to be in one day? I have a very clear picture of the room I would like to inhabit.

We are Londoners. Both sets of grandparents lived in old, rented accommodation, as did my parents and aunts and uncles (17 of them!) when newly married. Gradually, however, the young families moved out into the suburbs and into terraced houses on pre-war, newly-built estates.

From the front door, we would walk into the hallway with stairs to the bedrooms and bathroom with inside lavatory (such luxury!). In the hallway would be the door to the 'best room' or 'front room', later called the 'sitting room' and even later on, 'the lounge'. Next came the door to the back room, the living room, where the family ate and spent their evenings. Also, at the back of the house was the kitchen with a door to the garden.

The room I would like to inhabit eventually is God's kitchen. I wouldn't need anything grander. As long as I could hear the chatter and

laughter of members of my very large family in the other rooms, I would be quite happy to slip inside the back door and stand by the sink, washing or drying up with my mum and other people we loved, sharing family stories while some put the kettle on the gas stove for yet another round of tea or cut up slices of homemade cake to arrange on the best china plates. Comfortable in the kitchen of God's house, with my family around. That is where I would like to be. How about you?

P.S. Following my article in the summer issue of *Focus*, I invited everyone in my cul-de-sac to an open day. Five neighbours came to coffee in the morning and five to tea in the afternoon. My next invitation will be to anyone who would like to form a regular bible study group.

*Iris Lloyd*

## Obituaries

For several years, *Focus* magazine has not published obituaries but has encouraged these to be submitted to the Book of Remembrance which is displayed at the autumn meeting. Also, a list of members who have passed away during each triennium is printed at the back of the order of service for the first Lady Day service in a new triennium. Both these traditions will continue. In addition, the trustees have decided that obituaries for Past



Presidents will now be published in *Focus* and the list of members who have passed away during each triennium will also be published in the first *Focus* of a new triennium.

**Primrose Mary Gallimore (nee Wallace)**

**2 April 1939 – 25 May 2023**



Primrose Gallimore was for fifty years one of the cornerstones of village life in Stewkley. An active and constant member of the congregation of St Michael and All Angels church, and for a time a member of the Parochial Church Council, she combined this with local and regional leadership of The Mothers' Union.

Church was always important to Primrose. Her mother, who died in 1968, had been branch leader of her local Mothers' Union in Kent. This inspired Primrose to take

on the leadership of the Stewkley branch during the 1990's and eventually she served as Oxford Diocesan President from 2004-2009. In 2009 she participated in a worldwide Mothers' Union conference in Australia. Most delegates to this conference were accompanied by their husbands, but when John Gallimore discovered that the Australian authorities would not allow him to bring snuff into the country, he decided he could not possibly go and so Primrose, undaunted, went on her own. Primrose became an advisor at the Citizens Advice Bureau in Leighton Buzzard; she was a welcomer at Christ Church Cathedral in Oxford; and a volunteer visitor at HMP Grendon.

Those who knew Primrose will remember a determined, energetic lady, totally committed to the causes that she championed. Mothers' Union in the Oxford diocese will always be grateful for everything she gave to our organisation and our members.

**Barbara Teague**

It is with sadness that we mark the passing of Barbara Teague who was Diocesan President from 1995-2000. We send our condolences to her family and friends. An obituary will be published in the next edition of *Focus*.

# Raising the Profile of MU

## The MU Noticeboard Challenge

As you know, this is the first year that we have run the Noticeboard Challenge. All the trustees had an opportunity to vote on the entries and several of us struggled to choose the winner because the standard of submissions was so high. In fact, only two points separated the top three entries. So, everyone who took part should be congratulated. However, there has to be one winner and the winner is **Abingdon** (see photo below).

We hope that the entries will give you all ideas for your own noticeboard and how we can showcase the work of Mothers' Union; and that next year there will be more entries and that judging will be even more difficult.





Earley St Nicolas

Tilehurst St  
Michael



The Churn

*Jenny Searle*

Fundraising & Communications Coordinator

## Mission Unlimited

In May 2022 the Trustees announced the launch of the Diocesan Projects Fund, to which members can apply for help to fund activities within their churches and communities, which qualify under the terms of our charity aims and objectives. One of the first of these projects to receive a grant from the fund is 'Dignity through Dressmaking' which trains people in dressmaking skills, giving them an initial income and establishing them with a future work skill. Those of you who were able to come to our annual meeting at Benson in October will have seen their display.

About twelve years ago, Central MU launched a referendum to explore changing the overarching charity name. One of the suggestions was 'Mission Unlimited', which describes our work very well. However, there was strong resistance overseas to making any name change.

In Oxford diocese, we have decided to adopt the 'Mission Unlimited' name for awards made from our Diocesan Projects Fund, to raise the profile of Mothers' Union within our churches and communities whilst keeping our traditional name.

'Mission Unlimited awards' can be applied for by any diocesan or branch member to support any

project within your church or community for which the applicant acts as a champion. Full details of the application process are on the MU Oxford website under 'Diocesan Project Fund'.

*Rev. Lady Denise Brown*

## Our New Trustees

We recently welcomed three members to the Trustee Board as General Trustees. They are Elizabeth Dawson (see photo on page 4) from Abingdon Branch, Gill Pearce from Chesham (photo below), and Norma Clarke from Hughenden (photo to follow). Some years ago, Norma was a trustee and Unit Coordinator for Fundraising and Communications and now we welcome her return.





## Calendar of Intercessions 2024



1 <sup>st</sup>	Sheran Harper	Worldwide President
2 <sup>nd</sup>	Rev. Mary Harwood	Diocesan Chaplain
3 <sup>rd</sup>	Diocesan President – vacancy	
4 <sup>th</sup>	Norma Clarke, Elizabeth Dawson Gill Pearce	General Trustees
5 <sup>th</sup>	Finance and Administration	Coordinator Vacancy
6 <sup>th</sup>	Fiona Jones of Numberwork	Bookkeeping & Payroll work
7 <sup>th</sup>	Safety & Welfare Office	Vacancy
8 <sup>th</sup>	Webmaster	Vacancy
9 <sup>th</sup>	Tricia Campbell	AVP Oxfordshire & MUe Rep
10 <sup>th</sup>	Eve Madeley-Wyatt	Membership Secretary
11 <sup>th</sup>	Jackie Miles	Away from it All (AFIA)
12 <sup>th</sup>	Work with prisons including Bullingdon, Woodhill, Broadmoor Hospital, and Children Seen and Heard	
13 <sup>th</sup>	Hospital Projects including Ronald MacDonald House	
14 <sup>th</sup>	Parenting Group facilitators and participants	
15 <sup>th</sup>	Our overseas link Coordinators and Correspondents Maranda St John Nicolle and Rosemary Peirce	
16 <sup>th</sup>	Bishop of Oxford	Bishop Steven Croft and his wife Ann
17 <sup>th</sup>	Bishop of Dorchester	Bishop Gavin Collins and his wife Christina
18 <sup>th</sup>	Bishop of Reading	Bishop Olivia Graham and her husband Keith



20 <sup>th</sup>	Jean Vaughan	Action and Outreach Coordinator
21 <sup>st</sup>	Val Bolan	AVP West Berks
22 <sup>nd</sup>	Jenny Searle	Fundraising & Communication Coordinator
23 <sup>rd</sup>	<i>Focus Magazine Team</i>	
24 <sup>th</sup>	Rev. Rita Ball	Prayer and Spirituality Coordinator
25 <sup>th</sup>	Rosie Jackson–Kilham	Praying Fellowship and Oxford MU Facebook Page
	Iris Lloyd	Prayer Chain Coordinator
	Katy Kerr	Loving Life Trainer
	Gloria Richards	Memorial Book Administrator
26 <sup>th</sup>	Campaigning Work: Gender-based violence; Modern Day Slavery; Climate Change	
27 <sup>th</sup>	Rev. Lady Denise Brown	Diocesan Member Coordinator and Safe Guarding Officer
28 <sup>th</sup>	Kathryn Anderson	Provincial President (Canterbury)
	Julia Jameson	Zone G Trustee (Canterbury)
29 <sup>th</sup>	Bev Julien	MU Chief Executive
30 <sup>th</sup>	All Members, both Branch and Diocesan Members	
31 <sup>st</sup>	All Clergy in the Diocese	

## **PLEASE PRAY FOR OUR MOTHERS' UNION LINK DIOCESES:**

- In Congo: Kinshasa
- In Nigeria: Ahoada & Warri
- In Tanzania: Victoria Nyanza
- In Papua New Guinea: Port Moresby
- In UK: Southwark

Our Diocesan Companion Links – Kimberley & Kuruman (South Africa), Nandyal (South India) and Växjö (Sweden)

## **THE MOTHERS' UNION PRAYER:**

Loving Lord we thank you for your love so freely given to us all. We pray for families around the world.

Bless the work of the Mothers' Union as we seek to share your love through the encouragement, strengthening and support of marriage and family life.

Empowered by your Spirit may we be united in prayer and worship, and in love and service, reach out as your hands across the world.

In Jesus' name. Amen

## **MARY SUMNER'S PERSONAL PRAYER:**

All this day, O Lord, let me touch as many lives as possible for thee; And every life I touch, do thou by thy spirit quicken, whether through the word I speak, the prayer I breathe, or the life I live. Amen

## **A PRAYER FOR THE PRAYING FELLOWSHIP:**

O God, our heavenly Father, our strength and peace and joy, bless all who belong to the Praying Fellowship.

Give us your grace according to our need;  
help us to know and love and trust you more,  
to pray better and always to do your will.

Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

The diocesan prayer chain can be accessed at:

[muprayerchain@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:muprayerchain@yahoo.co.uk)

More information can be found on our website: [www.muoxford.org.uk](http://www.muoxford.org.uk)

## Autumn Meeting and AGM

It's early October, the sun is shining and we are gathering again at Benson village hall so it must be the autumn meeting and AGM. It really is amazing how quickly the year has gone and how much has happened.

The colourful displays showcasing our work had been refreshed. Not only Baby Basics and Children Heard and Seen, the regular MUe stall and Memorial Book; but also our first Mission Unlimited award being used to help fund work with asylum seekers and an additional display showing the entrants to the Noticeboard Challenge. The winner of the challenge was announced as Abingdon and Elizabeth Dawson received their prize on behalf of the branch. We will be running the challenge again next year and we hope the entries will give you all ideas for your own noticeboards and help to raise our profile in church and local communities.

Tricia Campbell chaired our meeting and after opening prayers, provided by members of Abingdon branch, she handed over to Louise Butler to chair the AGM. We accepted the annual report and accounts for the year ended 31 December 2022; and agreed to the appointment of an independent

examiner. We are still looking for a treasurer but have recently engaged a bookkeeper to help keep the financial records on track. Louise also announced that subscriptions for the coming year would remain unchanged because MU in the Oxford diocese have decided to absorb the increase in subscriptions made by Mary Sumner House.

The AGM was followed by a short summary of the annual gathering from Val Bolan. Then our guest speaker, Kelly Gillett, who is the manager of Ronald McDonald House Oxford, told us about the work they do to support the families of babies and children in the John Radcliffe Hospital. Kelly explained that they get no government funding and are totally dependent on support from organisations like McDonalds and Mothers' Union. The gifts of kitchen supplies and toiletries which we provide are invaluable and she thanked us most sincerely and said that we are welcome to visit to see the House and the work they do. She left with a pack of knitted hats for premature babies.

Unit Coordinators spoke about their reports and took questions, and a survey was circulated to gather views about the organising of the spring meetings. The results of this survey will be used to help the trustees decide how best to organise spring

meetings in the future. Midday prayers were led by Rev. Lady Denise Brown. During the break we enjoyed our packed lunches, browsed the displays and visited the MUe stall.

In the afternoon, Rev. Mary Harwood, our MU chaplain, presided over a service of Holy Eucharist. There was a retiring collection which raised £377.05 for our diocesan Action and Outreach projects.

When we emerged at the end of the service, the sun was still shining and it sped us on our way back home with a spring in our step, smiles on our faces and fond memories of our time together.

Full reports of the proceedings can be found on our website: [www.muoxford.org.uk](http://www.muoxford.org.uk) If you need hard copies of these reports, please contact the office.

## Branch updates

### Newport Pagnell

**CAMEO** – *come and meet each other* – is a new family focussed project taking place in the parish church in Newport Pagnell. It is a free weekly Stay and Play session supported and led by MU members.

The branch received a Mission Unlimited grant of £500 from MU Oxford which funded the purchase of new toys, books and playmats and other child friendly equipment. The weekly sessions are proving very popular, and the area allocated in the church has had to be expanded twice! Sessions are well attended by a wide variety of carers; mums, dads, grandparents and childminders who all value the opportunity to sit down for a coffee and a chat whilst the little ones play.

*Moira Evans*



## Crowthorne



Crowthorne branch celebrated its 130th anniversary on 12 July with a service of celebration in church when our banner was re-dedicated and our vicar was enrolled as a member. We followed this with a cream tea in the hall and our newest member, Rev. Laura Wheatley Downs, cut the special cake made by Gwen Stevens.

Sue Edwards played background music on the piano, members recalled their long-term membership of MU, there were photographs to remind us of present and past members and a very happy time was had by all.

We were delighted that many members and friends joined us for our special day. By coincidence our branch was founded 130 years ago on the same day in the same place.

The photograph shows members who came to the service with our vicar in the front on the right.

*Penny Rickards*

## Woodley

As I write this the rain has actually stopped, the wind has died down and the sun is shining brightly. What a difference a day makes!

I personally feel this as I am recovering from a hip replacement, seven months after a knee replacement. From being very uncomfortable and sleeping badly, I suddenly find the aching is less and can now use a stick instead of a crutch, at least indoors. It's certainly a steep learning curve to let others help, something I find I am not good at. A Martha rather than a Mary!

Our June meeting was a fish and chips lunch in celebration of King Charles, with two husbands acting as our waiters. An enjoyable time with much laughter and chatting.



We then had a very relaxed meeting without a speaker but entitled '*something you don't know about me*'. After a few panicky faces and comments of 'but I've not done anything exciting' we all managed to write something down and we then guessed the owner as each item was read out. What a revelation with much shared discussion and memories. We learned who had fallen in their fish pond and had to strip by the back door when covered in green slime, who had nearly bumped into the late Queen at Newbury races, who shook King Charles' hand when he arrived in the Scilly Isles on holiday, who had locked the car keys in the boot in bear territory, who swam with dolphins, and many more revelations. It proved fascinating and made us recall the lives we have lived

even if we no longer feel able to do as much. We could have stayed hours just sharing.

We also filled 36 toiletry bags for the maternity unit at the Royal Berks Hospital. They were very gratefully received and much needed.



We offer our congratulations to Jean and Mick Dyer celebrating their 60<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary on 22 September. Although Jean has recently had to go into a care home they were going to celebrate there with family and friends. Such an achievement.

We now look forward to our autumn meetings and Christmas tea. Our numbers remain relatively stable and we are a supportive group who genuinely care for one another and are aware of the world's needs, which we can pray for. So, we look forward to future meetings with enthusiasm and optimism.

*Margaret Boys*



## Action & Outreach

There was a fun day held for a group of Ukrainian refugees in Wendover Woods this summer. 28 youngsters were able to take part in the two courses run by GoApe, as well as adult helpers who were admitted without any charge thanks to a special deal done for us. Everyone had a great time, as you can see from the photos.



Norma Clarke joined us on the day and we also bought lots of bags of crisps to give out so we were able to chat to the families as we took them round. It was great to be able to help in building fun memories for the families while they are away from home.

Children Heard and Seen also had a weekend residential in the summer. The weather was good and many families came from all over the country to enjoy time together. I was able to go on the Saturday and help with craft, with children in the morning and adults in the afternoon. Abingdon branch and congregation made masses of cakes, delivered by Elizabeth Dawson, and I took some more on the Saturday. An artist worked with some of the children in the morning teaching them cartoon drawing, there was pond dipping and a climbing wall. Lots of great memories made for the families.

We hope to be able to help with a pre-Christmas trip for a group of young carers from Buckinghamshire, and would still welcome applications for AFIA holidays.

Baby Basics are in greater need each month. Between January and May they provided the same number of newborn kits as in the whole of 2022. Thank you for the donations of first-size knitted cardigans and the super toys brought to the autumn meeting. Rachel always goes away with bags of goodies!

We are again knitting stockings for Christmas and the pattern is available on our Oxford MU website. Some of these will be



for Children Heard and Seen but some will also be going to other charities we have helped this year. Thank you for your continued help.

*Jean Vaughan*

**BabyBasics**  
**Milton Keynes**

[childrenheardandseen.co.uk](http://childrenheardandseen.co.uk)  
[babybasicsmk.org.uk](http://babybasicsmk.org.uk)



In the last four months I have delivered 110 toiletry bags for ladies and 118 toiletry bags for men to the Ronald McDonald House where parents stay whilst their child receives hospital care at the JR. I have also delivered large amounts of tea bags, coffee, drinking chocolate and kitchen cleaning materials, so a huge thank you to all of you for sewing the toiletry bags and providing the much-needed toiletries and provisions.

Kelly Gillett who runs the House is incredibly grateful for everything she receives from us. I have had a plea from her recently that they would like packets of sanitary pads and if any branches, or members/diocesan members feel they can support this request then it might be a good idea to order the products and have them delivered straight to Ronald McDonald House, Woodlands Road, Headington, Oxford OX3 7RU.

We always need men's shaving foam or gel and also ladies' deodorant. Other items can be ordered in bulk from Amazon or Out

of Eden and sent direct to CMS House, Watlington Road, Oxford OX4 6BZ for me to collect on a regular basis.

The next branches on the list to provide toiletries are Wash Common, Windsor, Wokingham All Saints and Wokingham St Paul, but of course any contributions are always acceptable at any time.

If anyone requires further information about the products we provide or which branches contribute when, then please do not hesitate to contact me.

*Tricia Campbell*

## MU Enterprises

I am pleased to say that many branches are now placing £60+ orders for Christmas cards and other MUE merchandise, which is really good.

In my possession I have 120 next year MU Diaries, 30 calendars and 25 planners so please let me know if you require any of these items. Hopefully by the time you read this article I will have sold most of these at the recent autumn meeting.

Moving forward I continue to encourage members, branches and communities to place bulk orders through me. Any order over £60 can be delivered to the address of your choice and not incur postage

charges. This has to be the way forward as it is just not practical or cost effective for me to hold on to a large amount of stock.

Due to problems with lack of banking facilities for some branches and also only being able to pay 20 cheques a month into our CAF bank account before incurring charges, I am trying to encourage as many branches/members as possible to pay for their cards by BACS (online banking). I know this is not always possible but it is definitely the preferred option.

I will continue to place Christmas orders up until the second week of November but then I will be asking for all outstanding balances to be paid by the end of November so that we can finalise our stock and order figures by the middle of December.

Just to flag up to you that I will be in New Zealand from 18<sup>th</sup> January until the end of May next year but will still be able to place £60+ orders in the usual way, via email - the beauty of technology!

Please do not hesitate to contact me should you require any further information.

*Tricia Campbell*

[mue@muoxford.org.uk](mailto:mue@muoxford.org.uk)

## Focus on eNews

eNews is sent monthly by email to individual Mothers' Union members who request it. If you would like to receive it every month email: [membershipsecretary@muoxford.org.uk](mailto:membershipsecretary@muoxford.org.uk) and Eve will send you the latest copy and add you to the circulation list.

eNews is a great way for the trustees to communicate regularly each month, to keep you up to date with Mothers' Union news. You may also join from our web site: [www.muoxford.org.uk](http://www.muoxford.org.uk); just follow this link, scroll down and there is a large blue circle inviting you to Subscribe to our eNewsletter.

Touch the blue circle and you will be invited to sign up. Please join us on eNews today.

## Quiz

1. What country has the highest life expectancy?
2. Where would you be if you were standing on the Spanish Steps?
3. Which language has the more native speakers: English or Spanish?
4. What is the most common surname in the United States?
5. What disease commonly spread on pirate ships?
6. Who was the ancient Greek god of the sun?
7. What was the name of the crime boss who was head of the feared Chicago Outfit?
8. What year was the United Nations established?
9. Who has won the most Academy Awards?
10. How many minutes are in a full week?

**Quiz Answers**  
 Hong Kong  
 Rome  
 Spanish  
 Smith  
 Scurvy  
 Apollo  
 Al Capone  
 1945  
 Walt Disney  
 10800



## Pray with Us

*We pray for the work of the Mothers' Union in our diocese and throughout the world:*

- We pray for people in need of help because they are in danger of violence in their own homes.
- We pray for people who need help but don't know how to reach out and ask for it.
- We pray for the staff and volunteers of the Women's Aid Sanctuary in their work for women who are fleeing from situations of danger.
- We pray for children who are caught up in situations that they have no control over and that they don't understand.
- We pray for women who are lured into slavery by promises of a new life that never materialises.
- We pray for women who are used and abused sexually because of their captivity.

### A prayer for those who pray alone

Lord, you said that when  
two or three  
would gather together  
in your name,  
then you would be present  
with them.

I am praying by myself  
(or 'on the internet')  
but I am uniting myself  
with many individual Christians  
throughout the world  
who, though separate,  
are gathered together  
in another sense  
to pray to you,  
and I trust that  
you are with me now.  
Amen.

### A Prayer for Peace

For those who are fleeing:  
Sanctuary.  
For those who are staying:  
Safety.  
For those who are fighting:  
Peace.  
For those with breaking hearts:  
Comfort.  
For those who see no future:  
Hope.

*Rosie Jackson-Kilham*



RISE UP against domestic abuse is Mothers' Union's new campaign to raise awareness about domestic abuse.

The aim is to make sure that activism against domestic abuse and gender-based violence happens 365 days a year and not just during the 16 Days of Activism campaign in November and December.

The letters of RISE UP stand for **Respond, Inform, Support, Empower, Unite and Pray**.

Mothers' Union members and churches can work together to be a part of the change and get involved with the RISE UP challenge. There are bronze, silver and gold awards for branches and churches who take part and complete various actions. There are resources detailing what to do to achieve each level, just visit [www.mothersunion.org/riseup](http://www.mothersunion.org/riseup)



# CELEBRATIONS

In the Celebrations section of Focus we will publish the following:

- 90, 95, 100 and 100+ birthdays;
- 50 and 60 wedding anniversaries;
- MU long service awards.

Please include photos if possible & remember to get the permission of the individual concerned.

## Brenda & Mike Jenner (Newport Pagnell)

*Celebrated their Diamond Wedding Anniversary on 6<sup>th</sup> July*

Brenda and Mike Jenner are committed Christians who faithfully support the work of the MU. In fact, Brenda has been a member since June 1969 so in her 55<sup>th</sup> year of membership! Mike is a more recent member having joined in 2017. The branch laid on a special service in church and MU member Linda Ramsay made a beautiful celebration cake.



## Dates for your diary

**Saturday 25 Nov - Sunday 10 Dec**

**16 Days of Activism Against Gender-based Violence**

**Friday 1 December**

Abingdon Branch will hold a service for “16 Days of Activism Against Gender-based Violence” at 11am in St Nicholas’ Church, Abingdon.

Rev. Rosalind Rutherford (retired priest, St. Helen’s) will preach and all members from our diocese are welcome

**Monday 8 April**

**Lady Day**

**Saturday 20 – Monday 22 April 2024**

**Wave of Prayer**

## News from the Focus Team

**Copy deadline for Spring: 16 February 2024**

Letters to the Editor - please write to us about things happening in Mothers’ Union across the diocese and tell us what you think of *Focus* and the events you have attended. We’d love to have your feedback and any suggestions for further improvements. Please send all your contributions to [focus.editor@muoxford.org.uk](mailto:focus.editor@muoxford.org.uk)