

## Keeping in Touch - Newsletter 4

Dear fellow members,

Greetings as the lockdown eases a little. Our churches may now open for private prayer and that is a step forward. The recent news reports following the death of George Floyd in America and news stories of racism and protests make us reflect on our Christian belief that all are equal and accepted in God's sight and our prayers are needed. What is happening during this time to further the work of Mothers' Union? Mary Sumner House send regular email updates to let us know what work is being done although all staff members not furloughed are working from their homes.



Some members have not been outside their home since the lockdown began. Please pray for confidence and support one another as people venture back out. We give thanks to God for his constant presence with us through every circumstance of life. We will all meet again soon. Stay safe and well.

I send my love and prayers to every member

Jean (Diocesan President)



### Future Planning

- Annual Report and Accounts - before the end of 2020, we will issue an Annual Report with a summary of the 2019 accounts ready for approval at the AGM.
- The Membership Database - thanks go to Terry Marshall, Membership Secretary, who has worked hard keeping this updated since 2016. Terry has stepped down from this role and a team comprising a member from each Episcopal Area, led by Elaine Swinhoe, will now work alongside Diocesan Secretary, Jo Sarkar, on the membership list - more details will follow later.
- Future publications - you are invited to complete a questionnaire regarding your views about a proposed new publication (replacing Families First and Families Worldwide) to be sent to individual members by post in the future. Please type the following into your browser to access the questionnaire: [bit.ly/publicationquestionnaire](http://bit.ly/publicationquestionnaire)

### Changes to Members' Details

We are keen to keep all our records up to date so please do continue to send details of any changes to your membership list to the Diocesan Secretary, Jo Sarkar, eg role in branch, address, phone number, email, death, moving away. Her email address is

[musecretaryleeds@gmail.com](mailto:musecretaryleeds@gmail.com)

Many thanks!

## Outreach Work

The Trustees recently held a meeting on Zoom with some of our Outreach Team which is led by General Trustee, Yvonne Hutson.

- AFIA holidays - The Primrose Valley Holiday Park, where our two caravans are situated, is dependent on information from the Government regarding the re-opening of holiday parks. Some things will be different when we can again offer the holidays planned. Families unable to have a holiday this year will be given priority in the future.
- Prison work - all our Prison Projects remain suspended for the foreseeable future.

### Urgent Appeal - Message from Mary Sumner House

Thank you for the £665,000 raised so far. Can you help to achieve the £1,000,000 target?  
We want MU to continue with all the wonderful projects worldwide in the future.

### Dates for 2021

- Golden Wedding Service at Ripon Cathedral 13<sup>th</sup> June 2021
- Time for Reflection at Parcevall Hall 27<sup>th</sup>-29<sup>th</sup> August 2021

## More 2019 News

### MU is Listening, Observing and Acting

#### Showing Christian care for the whole community in Cottingley

Contributions to tea money at services is given by the church to their branch of MU enabling the members to buy flowers to take to those in the community who are having a difficult time. The flowers are given on behalf of the church but taken by an MU member.

This is Faith in Action.



#### Reconnecting a community - MULO in the Yorkshire Dales



Despite a local campaign to keep a church school open, it closed and had a devastating effect on the village community. Social links between families and the church were damaged as the children were relocated to several other schools. The Mothers' Union members prompted their PCC to plan an exciting programme of indoor and outdoor events in the summer with the theme of "Reconnection". This will be an all age event which, if successful, could become an annual event. The aim will be to restore cohesion, build confidence and re-establish trust in that community.

## Facebook gets the message out for MU!



Members of Hepworth Mothers' Union, in the Huddersfield Area, were bowled over by the response to their appeal for clothes, cot sheets and blankets for newborn babies. Hepworth really got behind this appeal on behalf of Mothershare in Halifax which aims to provide parents and their babies with basic equipment and clothing to fight child poverty.

They never expected the amazing response which followed when they used the village's Facebook page to get the message out there - within hours the "likes" were rolling in. Not just clothes and linens but equipment, and even bags of nappies, poured into the church vestibule. "The way our village and our friends responded to the appeal was simply staggering and we had to do a number of deliveries." said Gloria, Branch Leader at Hepworth Mothers' Union, "A big thank you to everyone!"

## A New Triennium for Mothers' Union, 2019-2021

Sheran Harper, Worldwide President

***"Mothers' Union is as relevant today as it was 142 years ago as the call to support families globally is now even greater."***



2019 saw the beginning of a new three year period for MU with our newly elected Worldwide President, Sheran Harper, from Guyana, the first from outside the British Isles and the first Worldwide MU President to be invited to speak at the General Synod. Sheran is an inspirational person. She was born in the UK and grew up in Guyana where she studied Physiotherapy, undertook her Clinical Practice in London and then spent her working time with the Ministry of Health in Guyana. She then began to focus on her calling to serve Mothers' Union and eventually became the Worldwide Parenting Trainer rolling out the MU Parenting Programme across 23 countries. Married to Roger Harper for 31 years, they have two grown up sons.

June Houghton, Provincial President

June has been an MU member in Liverpool for 37 years. She had always thought MU was for "old people" but that changed as very soon she became Branch Leader and then Deanery Leader. She was then Diocesan Secretary for Liverpool Diocese for 13 years. She took on the role of Archdeaconry President and when invited by the Bishop to be Diocesan President, she needed time to think and pray about this and felt that she couldn't say no because God was calling her to do it. She spent 6 years as Diocesan President and says that, through other people, God showed her that she had the skills to take on this work and that Jesus is always walking by her side. The year 2019 as Provincial President has been a steep learning curve but she feels very much supported by the 12 Diocesan Presidents in the Province.



## Catherine Hilton, Zonal Trustee for York



Catherine is a retired teacher, who has worked in both primary and secondary schools, leading teams as Pastoral Head. She is on the governing bodies of two schools being currently the Chair of Governors for one. She joined Mothers' Union in 1997, has run a branch and led the Diocese of Manchester as their President for six years from 2013 - 2018. She was instrumental in introducing the "Just up your Street" initiative in Manchester, which enables members to grow in confidence in reaching out with practical projects in their communities. She has also worked to help a Congolese family of refugees to integrate into the community and helped set up the Diocese of Manchester as the sponsor for a Home Office Syrian Refugee Resettlement Scheme.

## Our new publicity postcard -

