



**Keeping in Touch - Newsletter 5**

Dear fellow members,

I trust you are all safe and well and praying for the Coronavirus to be less prevalent in our world. As Diocesan President, I was privileged to be part of a recent online meeting when our Worldwide President, Sheran Harper, led the worship and spoke words of encouragement. So what better way to begin this newsletter than to quote from what she said:



“Together, Mothers’ Union will survive the Coronavirus pandemic. It has landed and caused challenges but we will cope with them. Strengths have been shown in lockdown such as family relationships being treasured again - we hope here to stay for always.” Sheran thanked members for their generosity in responding to the Urgent Appeal and the total now stands at over £720,000. She said “Have no fear. Mothers’ Union is God’s work. He will see our work to completion and perseverance will be the key to the future.”

Amen and God’s blessings on all members in the Diocese of Leeds.  
 Love from Jean (Diocesan President)



**Communicating - to make MU more visible**

Many of us were reluctant to use new ways of communicating but, during the COVID-19 pandemic, we have embraced these tools to communicate with family, friends and church community. The impact of a Facebook post is quicker, easier and more effective at getting our messages to members and the wider community than the methods we have been used to and it helps us to promote Mothers’ Union. We have seen that by holding a meeting via Zoom saves MU time and money. (No travelling for officers and no expenses to claim, no worrying it

might snow!)

We can do this! Please make contact if you are interested and would like to use social media but feel you don’t know how. Training will be available from the Diocese. Please email Jean or Jo on [mupresidentleeds@gmail.com](mailto:mupresidentleeds@gmail.com) - Jean, Diocesan President  
[musecretaryleeds@gmail.com](mailto:musecretaryleeds@gmail.com) - Jo, Diocesan Secretary



**St Chad’s Branch provided Easter cheer**

“We sent Easter cards to all members which were greatly appreciated and made some bunches of daffodils with a sticker saying they were from MU. These were left outside church for people to collect as they were on their daily walk past church.”  
 Elizabeth Johnson, Branch Leader, St Chad’s, Leeds Area

**Take photos - no excuse with mobile phone cameras!  
 We can tell our stories more effectively if we have pictures!**

## FACEBOOK - It's amazing who you can reach!



Sheila Crosby in the Wakefield Area encourages branches to use social media to get support and publicise Mothers' Union at the same time. Her branch received donations from different areas of the local community after a Facebook post. Sheila says:

*"Outwood MU support Pinderfields Hospital with toiletry bags for the Paediatric Ward and Burns Unit but with self-isolation during the pandemic, not many members could go out shopping. These packs are only intended as emergency packs until family members can provide for their*

*children/teenagers but family could not visit in the lockdown and stocks had been depleted.*

*I put an article about the MU toiletry packs in the church newsletter and our priest published it on Facebook and I had several bags of toiletries delivered to my doorstep from members of the congregation, friends, relatives, and people who do not know me or the Mothers' Union but wanted to help. The response was amazing - enough to make 18 baby bags and 20 Teenage/boys/girls bags. A wonderful affirmation of support for our project which is now out there in the local community! I did publish a message of grateful thanks to everyone for their support!"*



**Sheila Crosby - Branch Leader, Outwood, Wakefield Area**

## Showing off MU at Rawdon Branch



Members at Rawdon in the Leeds Area produced a display to show the church congregation everything they are involved in headed with this year's theme of "Building hope and Confidence" asking: *"Did you know that our members have been involved in a variety of outreach projects and also support and are personally involved in a variety of local events, charities, local schools and organisations?"*

**Anita Wood, Rawdon St Peter's, Leeds Area**

After lockdown, they will be able to update their list of forthcoming meetings and let everyone know what MU is all about. All branches could do this.

## Making a Mother's Day at Starbeck Branch

Members at Starbeck Branch in the Ripon Area did not one but two collections for the Make a Mother's Day Appeal 2020!! They sent money and bought ethical gifts worth £310 for the appeal.

**Jane Holliday, Branch Leader**

*What a great way to celebrate Mother's Day by making a collection in your branch to help women learn literacy skills, start a business, gain parenting skills and build peace in their community!!*



## “MU is a special thing”

*Celebrating  
over  
60 years  
of service*

Janet Martin was enrolled in MU in 1960 in London. Nick, Janet’s son, said that Mothers’ Union has quietly been a very important part of her life. *“My Mum was widowed when me and my brother were only four years old, so she received a huge amount of support from the Mothers’ Union at All Hallows, Twickenham. The MU has been a special thing for my Mum all these years and was important for me too. As a young boy I was always aware of the MU, even though I didn’t really know what it was! All the other mothers were like extra mothers to me.”* When Janet moved to Holmfirth, she threw herself into everything and was a very conscientious member, serving coffee after the church service and she went into schools to teach

knitting. Janet has been a member of Hepworth Branch for the last few years but is now in a Care Home and is an Indoor Member. We miss her very much for her enthusiasm and cheerfulness and the support she gave to us all. We often think of her and hope that she is being well cared for.

Congratulations to Janet Martin for 60 years of dedication to Mothers’ Union. The branch sent flowers to Janet and she received a Long Service Certificate and letter from Jean, Diocesan President.

**Gloria Styring, Branch Leader, Hepworth, Huddersfield Area**

## MUe News - 2021 Diary Update

Thank you to everyone who has sent a Diary order. Unfortunately, numbers are down on last year (I wonder why?!), but as a well-known supermarket says ‘every little helps’. MUe needs support at this time, to keep the business afloat, so this is just a gentle reminder that the deadline for orders was 30<sup>th</sup> June. I will not be ordering extra Diaries and Calendars, as the Diocese has to pay for goods ordered and we do not want to be left with lots of dated goods we cannot sell next year.



Similarly, with the prospect of few, if any meetings, in the foreseeable future. I will not be ordering any Christmas cards. There is a flyer available of the 2020 designs, which I can send to you if required, but can I ask you to order your own Branch requirements direct from MSH. (Don’t forget to mention Leeds Diocese in your order, though!)

There will be a new Catalogue available in early July. I will order enough and hope to circulate them somehow. We Reps do have a good stock of cards available for sale if you contact us.



**STOP PRESS** - We have just heard that Diaries have been delayed and will not now be available until mid-August, so don’t worry if your order does not arrive and if you haven’t ordered, you can do so now!

Keep Safe. Keep Well. Keep Smiling!

**Margaret Stears - MUe Team Leader**

## OUTREACH - PROJECTS DURING THE PANDEMIC

It has been sad that our Outreach projects have had to be suspended during this pandemic, but with faith, prayer and commitment we will get up and running again when the time is right! The Trustees have been meeting via Zoom during this time and it was good that at the last meeting we were joined by some of our project workers and officers to discuss the way forward when restrictions are lifted. In particular, AFIA holidays and prison work were on the agenda.

### AFIA

At the time of writing Primrose Valley, where our two caravans are situated, are hoping to be able to re-open in July so we may be able to offer some holidays this summer. However, it will probably be a different experience with all of the entertainment venues, swimming pools and restaurants remaining closed.

However, the seaside location would still offer a valuable break for the families who have been booked in. Extra safeguards and cleaning will be in place when holidays resume. Primrose Valley are refunding some of the site



fees that we have already paid for this season, so that will help towards next year's expenses -

very welcome as branches will have been unable to hold their usual fundraising events so far this year.

The Trustees are also looking towards applying for some outside funding and we trust to God that our holiday scheme will be financially viable well into the future.



### STOP PRESS UPDATE FOR AFIA

*Sadly, we have decided that the holidays booked for this summer have to be cancelled. Having received the revised regulations and check in procedures from Primrose Valley, we are not able to put these measures in place for our vulnerable families. Although lockdown is easing, precautions still need to be taken and we will work on putting these in place before we re-start holidays. All the families will be offered first chance to re-book for next summer. Please pray for them all as this is a further disappointment in an already stressful year.*

### PRISON WORK

Prayer and communication by email has had to be our offering of support to the prisoners, their families and the officers during this unprecedented time. Armley, Wealston and Wetherby Young Offenders prisons are co-ordinated by Carolyn Peuleuvé who hopes to resume baby bag deliveries when allowed. It was good to welcome Carolyn to the Zoom meeting and have her input.

New Hall women's prison at Flockton near Wakefield has a much larger group of volunteers working in the Chaplaincy, Mother and Baby Unit, Rivendell Unit and of course the Mothers' Union Tea Bar which is within the visitor centre. New Hall was represented at the Zoom meeting by Julia Tum, Barbara Kaye and Margaret France. The tea bar is normally open five afternoons a week and sells (very cheaply) hot drinks, snacks and pop to the visitors who are waiting for their visiting time to enter the prison. The prison authorities are hoping that they will be allowed to resume visits during July, but the visitor centre and therefore the tea bar will remain closed until all social distancing rules are relaxed. *However, on re-opening more volunteers will be welcome to join the tea bar rota so do get in touch with me, Yvonne, if you feel called to this work.*

Such valuable and much appreciated work goes on to support families who have met with adversity, do please continue to hold them all in prayer.

**Yvonne Hutson, General Trustee supporting Outreach**

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