

Dear Fellow Members,

Once again, I send my good wishes for your health and safety. As 2020 progresses, I look back and wonder where the months have gone. On 12<sup>th</sup> July, I was very emotional when able to attend a church service again and see the church family even though at a distance, no hugging or hand shaking, no singing but prayers and the Eucharist (bread only) and being in God's house. Thanks to a beautiful sunny morning, we were able to chat outside afterwards.



I am busy taking part in various Zoom meetings with our Trustee Board, with York Province (14 of us) and with Britain & Ireland (up to 70 people) as Mary Sumner House plan for the future. It is sad that the difficult decision had to be made to make some staff redundant. This is proving necessary with so many charities. Bev Jullien (CEO of Mothers' Union) has asked members to pray that this can be done in a fair and sensitive way. This restructuring is based on role requirements for the future of Mothers' Union in these challenging times. Bev also reiterates her thanks for the generosity of members in response to the Urgent Appeal which now stands at £762,000.

Thank you for all your efforts to support one another at this time. I continue to look forward to when we can meet again in branches and at our Council meetings and Diocesan services.

**STAY SAFE, KEEP SMILING and KEEP WEARING THAT FACE COVERING!**

*May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him,  
So that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.  
Romans 15:13*

With love and prayers  
Jean (Diocesan President)

## Mary Sumner Day - Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> August 2020



This is the day when we remember our founder, Mary Sumner, and her vision for our movement. As it falls on a Sunday and in the midst of a global pandemic it means that the day may look very different this year. Do look at the Mary Sumner Day Resource Pack sent by your Area President or on the MU website. Please note that you can join two services - Morning Prayer (8.30am) or Evening Compline (9.00pm) via the Mothers' Union Facebook and You Tube channels. **Service sheets for both services will be available on the MU website.**

### LIVING LORD

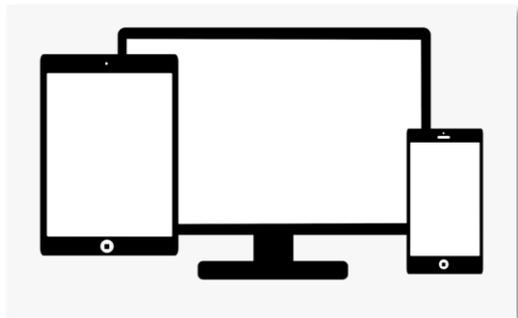
*You are the light of the world  
We light our candles in prayer  
As you guide us into the future  
We offer our hands to work for all  
Our hearts to care for all  
Our voices to speak to all  
We lay our prayers at your feet  
LIVING LORD. Amen*

*Written for Mary Sumner Day by Kathleen Wilson, Diocesan President of Durham Diocese*



## The Membership Directory - keeping it updated

An Area Representative is responsible for updating the list of members for your Episcopal Area. We have this team of people in place since Terry Marshall retired from his role as Membership Secretary. The accuracy of this list depends on everyone working together so that publications and correspondence go only to the right people i.e. those who are members.



I am aware that many members are using computer technology to keep in touch with family and church members including MU. The lockdown has meant more members are using email and communicating with all of you is more efficient if you can give your email address, if you have one, to your branch leader/correspondent. This helps us to contact everyone much more quickly. *All information is kept confidentially within Mothers' Union and not shared with other organisations.*

## News from Mary Sumner House

We may not be meeting physically and you might wonder what is happening in Mothers' Union centrally so here is some of the latest news. Sheran Harper, Worldwide President said "Sadly, our Provincial Presidents around the world have reported a massive increase in the struggles with mental health, gender-based violence, including sexual violence in homes with women and children being the victims. Many of these stories are still hidden but we are committed in taking a stand, standing together where we need to, our voices must be heard ... our actions must speak volumes and end these atrocities ... and above all we must pray without ceasing. These are injustices that must be condemned and removed from society ... from God's world." In practical terms:



- **Who do we touch?** Diocesan Trustee Boards took part in a survey in 2019 which showed that 113,834 people benefitted from the work of MU and over 29,751 vulnerable people received a gift from our members to meet an urgent need and our work reached almost 8,000 prisoners and their families.
- MU has partnered with **The Together Coalition** working alongside the NHS, Church, CBI and other charities such as the Guides and Scouts working to build a kinder, closer and more connected society through 2020 and beyond.

- **An AFIA/ Thank You Key Workers Appeal** has been set up offering AFIA breaks and Experience Days to Key workers. An application process will be administered through Mary Sumner House and you will read more about this soon.
- **Gender-based Violence** is emerging as a critical issue around the world in the wake of the Coronavirus Pandemic. MU has recently attracted external funding of £40,000 from Trusts to support members in Myanmar, Uganda and the Democratic Republic of Congo to educate and support victims.
- **Domestic Abuse Bill** - within Britain & Ireland, MU is liaising with others to influence this bill which will pass through the House of Lords in September. How members can engage with being informed on this and other Policy matters is soon to be looked at.
- **Modern Slavery** - work is on-going to highlight modern slavery in partnership with the Clewer Initiative.
- **Parenting** - a review has been carried out and a steering group is looking at how MU can engage with Parenting in new ways to reach out to families.

## LEARNING DURING LOCKDOWN using Tutorials (Webinars)

Mothers' Union is offering Tutorials (Webinars) via Zoom for members from August to November. Topics include Social Media, Planning Projects, Fundraising, Capturing Stories and Identifying Strengths. To register, visit the MU website and type "Webinars" in the search box or use the link below. Please consider increasing your knowledge in this way.



<https://www.mothersunion.org/mothers-union-member-webinars>

### When can Branches meet up?

Some branches are asking this question and it was discussed at the July Trustee Meeting. This is *not an MU decision* and it depends on what the parish decides. Each branch must follow the guidelines of its own parish and proceed with caution. Cleaning would be of the utmost importance before and after the meeting - chairs, tables, toilets, kitchen area etc. Hand sanitiser would need to be used on arrival and on leaving. Someone would have to agree to do the cleaning and it would all have to be put in place before meetings start back.

### Appeal by Leeds Diocese to support the Church in Sudan



The people of Sudan are currently facing health and economic crises and rampant inflation due to the global COVID -19 pandemic. The church there is responding but our financial help is needed above that already sent from the Leeds Diocesan link. (This Diocese has had a link with Sudan for 40 years.)

Bishop Nick tells us that **Mothers' Union in Sudan** are distributing food packs throughout the country. Many of you met Mama Samira and Mama Hewaya when they visited us last year.

#### Women's Fellowship in Sudan

- £25 could help buy an emergency food pack for one family
- £50 could help MU in Sudan by paying for fuel to enable safe food distribution

Please visit [www.leeds.anglican.org](http://www.leeds.anglican.org) to find out more and how to donate to help our brothers and sisters in Sudan.

With thanks and prayers  
Jean (Diocesan President)



Mama Samira and Mama Hewaya from Sudan with MU members from Leeds Diocese during their visit in 2019

## During Lockdown in Northowram - Virtual Meetings, Facebook and Food!

Judith Thornton reports: "We have 50 members, 36 of them are over 70 so we decided 4 of the younger members would ring 9 older members weekly to make sure they were OK and didn't need any help with anything. We have a WhatsApp group 'MU Support' so the 4 younger members could keep in touch. We found it easier if we had a Zoom meeting and invited another two members who would then contact more of our church community.

The Zoom meeting went so well that we decided we could Zoom with all our members and we set up a meeting on our usual meeting day. In May our organist played and the 21 members were put on mute so they could sing along to all the songs and not spoil the music. It was difficult to have any time to chat so in the June meeting Revd James Allison led a lovely service and talked about prayer. After time up we then split into three groups and had 40 minutes chat time. It is a lovely way to keep in touch with members.



The food bank box at church was lost due to lockdown and with the church building closed so two MU members decided to put boxes outside their front doors, a message was put on Facebook and the food started pouring in. We are now delivering up to six bags of food per week. Wonderful!



Away from it all 

