

TRANSFORMATION – NOW! (formerly “Peculiar Times”!)

(DP's prerogative: at last, we seem to be moving away from those 'Peculiar Times' of covid – a new chapter starts....)

Dear MU Members and Friends,

The hottest day of the year, and I am enjoying sitting in the shade, the fan blowing cool air on my face, and an iced coffee by my side! What more can one want?

Some sad news: It is with a heavy heart that we announce that Jean Haste has died. She has been an MU member for many years – a Branch Leader, Deanery Leader and latterly, the Emergency Prayer Chain Co-ordinator organising the rota for anyone who requested prayer during their time “of adversity”. She's had a wonderful ministry with us, a faithful prayer warrior and so often present at Council and other MU event - her Christian faith shone through and she will be sorely missed. Her funeral will take place at Waldringfield Church on 12th July at 10.30 . As we give thanks for her long life, we will be upholding her family and friends in our prayers.

MSH News: Since last writing, I have attended the residential Diocesan Presidents' Conference at High Leigh and asked to mention the following: a huge thank you to all who have paid their 2022 subs – MSH are particularly grateful to those who paid via DD. Please pray for our next Council meeting when we will be thinking about the future of MU here in this diocese and, as summer has arrived, setting 2023 subscription rates and updating the Direct Debit mandate forms for new subscribers. The new DD scheme is proving very beneficial all round.

The **Summer of Hope campaign** this year will be spread across 70 days from 1st June – 8th August 2022 focusing on 10 different themes. Lots of resources and ideas are available on the website to help with local fundraising...

Marion Pope, who has been faithfully working at MSH for the last 13 years or so, is due to retire later in the summer. She has done an amazing work with Development (amongst other things) and will be very much missed. We wish her well.

Connected magazine: The next issue of Connected will be mailed out in September and Clare will receive another 30 spare copies. When those have gone, extras will cost £2.50 each – do use your copy to tell others about the work of the Mothers' Union, here and overseas. **Please make sure all data amendments to members' contact details are up to date and that any changes are sent to Clare by the middle of August.**

Do you know about the MU **Metamorphosis** programme? The presentation by Alison Fernandes given to the DP Conference is now available, and explains everything! It's time-constrained, so if you want it forwarded on to you, do email me promptly An exciting opportunity to grow in the Christian faith....

Do think about attending our **Mothers' Union Annual Gathering** on the 23rd/24th September 2022 in Belfast. Planning is well advanced, and MSH is very keen that there are 400+ members from outside Northern Ireland in order for the event to be financially viable. Tickets: £15 for the Gathering, £15 for the Saturday evening Concert, or a combined bargain price of £25 for both events. All the details for booking tickets for the Cathedral Service, the Annual Gathering and the Concert are available on the Mothers' Union website:

<https://www.mothersunion.org/annual-gathering-2022> You'll also find other practical details there.

From our Diocese: Clare is happy to order more copies of the **“Book of Comfort”**, or **“For Better, for Worse”** (our very own eBook publications – see website for details) – getting married, recently bereaved, Christmas present....?

Outreach: so many opportunities!

We are looking for more **Community of Interest Leads** (within, and outside the MU) to help us as MU members to engage more fully. The COI Leads encourage, sustain, support and inspire us with their specific focus on an area of interest. As members of the Mothers' Union, all of us have a God-given role to play in the places where God has put us - whether this be through our prayers, befriending new clergy, helping the local ministry teams, being the ears and eyes in our local community or through active engagement – age and ability are no barrier!

Could you be one of our “Community of Interest Leads”?

Christine Ward (former DP) at cmward1@btinternet.com is our Diocesan Lead in our Community of Interest for Clewer. We receive information from Amy Bishop (amy.bishop@churchofengland.org), the Business Support Officer for The Clewer Initiative, and she runs training courses on County Lines which might be of interest to MU members. The car-wash app has been redeveloped, updated, has different content and is now easier to use. Check it out.

We are looking for two volunteers to take responsibility for the Sudbury Area and North Suffolk Area and for three more General Trustees. We also need Community of Interest Leads specifically to help us with Communication, Development and Faith. Below are mentioned other areas where we need help, inspiration and encouragement:

- the Ukrainian Refugees - Paul Taylor (taylspaul@gmail.com) is our Diocesan Lead, and has produced an amazing leaflet (see attached). MU representation is present in all areas, except Laxfield and Lowestoft.
- the Homeless: Norwich Diocese (Jan.Sheldon@smartinshousing.org.uk) are leading the way with St Martins [*'more than a home for the homeless'*], and if we could find someone with imagination and creativity, we here in Suffolk could follow Norwich's example - each year, on a given day in October/November, a "snapshot" count of rough sleepers in a specific localised area is undertaken by volunteers.... Interested?
- the Prisons: can we find new ways of working to support our prisoners and their families? Our Christmas card endeavours are much appreciated, but how can we expand on this?
- the Women's Refuge are being supported by the Ipswich Area, and just recently Sandra has been given permission to purchase things like savoury snacks, (crisps, etc), biscuits, individually wrapped chocolate, sweets and squash... how much they appreciate the thoughtfulness and prayer which underlies the giving – thank you to all who contribute items, gifts, and money, etc.
- for the families who struggle, whose lives "have met with adversity" – AFIA is there, administered by Val.

Cathie (McGregor, former VP) is now our Community of Interest Lead for social outreach which includes all the craft work, the making of toys (do checkout the MU policy to make sure that what you produce (sewing, knitting, etc) meets with current guidelines) and other social issues. Clare too leads on all the DBS and Safeguarding training and input which our Trustees are currently taking place. Do please keep Safeguarding at the top of your Agenda when engaging in MU activities – we need to be constantly aware and watchful, and report anything unusual to Clare.

Or in a wider context in our Diocese – As an MU member have you thought about **taking on a leadership role** within the Diocese? Lay vacancies for Bishops Council, Diocesan Board of Patronage and Vacancy in See Committee are not restricted to Diocesan Synod members, but to any lay person. Do pray about these vacancies, and if you feel that this is a service you can offer, please contact Lorna Todd at lorna.todd@cofeSuffolk.org.

Upcoming Activities – see website and Diary of Events for more details -

The North Suffolk Area Quiet Day will be at St Peter's Church, Westleton on Thursday, **23rd June** at 10.00 am.

Re-imagining Conference (**8th-10th July** in Liverpool) - or more appropriately being called the "Transformation Now!" Conference: there will be 87 delegates attending from 53 dioceses. In preparation, grouped sessions have been selected prior to attendance. Do pray for guidance and wisdom for Catherine (MU Diocesan Chaplain), and Christine (COI Clewer Lead) as they work along with others to discern the future of MU for us.

Our Wave of Prayer runs from **16-18th July 2022** – the time we specifically remember our linked dioceses of Lake Malawi in Malawi, Byumba in Rwanda, Jalingo in Nigeria and Lucknow in India. Our grateful thanks to Janice who has put together our WoP service information for branches (already circulated). Birmingham Diocese support Lake Malawi, and following the recent DP Conference, am arranging to meet up with the Malawi Bishop in Birmingham when he comes to the Lambeth Conference (**16-27th July**) – if you would like to come with me to Birmingham, do let me know. Chris and Anji Dawkins, our Diocesan Kagera Link Co-ordinators have also asked if MU members would like the exciting opportunity to help with hosting Bishop Dartington's visit to Lambeth by offering hospitality, transport to and from the airport, travelling around Suffolk etc. – or if you have an MU opportunity which he could come and visit when he comes to Suffolk, do contact Anji (kagera@cofesuffolk.org)

Mary Sumner Day service at St Mary's, Hadleigh on Tuesday, **9th August** at 11.00 am and Ipswich Deanery - Tea & Cake Afternoon on Weds, **August 10th** at 2.00-4.00 pm at St Mary Stoke – do come along.

And finally, just to let you know I wrote to **the Queen as Patron of MU**, on your behalf, sending good wishes from St Eds and Ips MU on the occasion of her Platinum Jubilee, and we have had a nice letter back! I'll show you at Council! If there is anything in this newsletter that you would like to know more about, or want to get more involved with, please get in touch with me at linda.ginn@mothersunion.org - I'd love to hear from you! With love Linda