

Peculiar Times!

This newsletter comes from the Mothers' Union Diocesan Trustees and Officers

Healing and Wholeness Service October 18th at 2pm St Michael and All Angels Martlesham. Bishop Martin Seeley is the President and Celebrant for this service. A wonderful opportunity for us to gather in church and pray for healing and wholeness across our diocese as well as for ourselves. We hope to have a livestream of this service on our musuffolk.org website. The new diocesan banner will be blessed at this service as well as our new publication, 'For Better, For Worse' which will be available after October 18th in paperback; price £4.53p and as a free eBook from our MUE rep and Lulu.com bookstore.

Annual Gathering 2021 If you missed the Annual Gathering 2021– Saturday 25th September, you can still view this event on the Mothers Union YouTube channel.

Part 1 of The Annual Gathering - <https://youtu.be/LMU-yzYwUPI>

Part 2 of The Annual Gathering - <https://youtu.be/am-XEMhBIQ>

Inspiring stories from how branches have been responding to the challenges of the last twelve months. See if you can spot the faces from our diocese!

Here in our diocese branches have been finding new ways of meeting. During the pandemic **Claydon and Barham Branch**, members with internet access met monthly on Zoom for meetings, starting with a service and Bible reading and prayers. One member started a Virtual Coffee Morning at 11-30am after our Church Service where we kept in touch. As the regular services started in Church, we have moved to Mondays at 4-00pm which has proved popular.

Claydon has two retirement apartment complexes. Regulations prevented residents from using their community rooms. So regular coffee mornings ceased. We arranged in August a Bingo and Afternoon Tea and invited Claydon residents by personal invitation. They enjoyed a home baked cakes made by our members along with Henley members, followed by a few games of Bingo then scones with jam and clotted cream. We were able to send £135 to Mary Sumner House for the Summer of Hope Appeal and give some cheer to all who came. We have been asked to do it again Phew. Two new members have joined us and one renewed member. All our Clergy and Readers are M U Members. Is this a record?

The **North Suffolk Area** morning was held in Fressingfield. Members met in church for a service of Eucharist then moved to the Sancroft hall for refreshments and a talk from Anji and Chris Dawkins. Linda Ginn led midday prayers and shared wonderful answers to prayer. Everyone present really appreciated being able to meet again after 2 years. A total of £290 was raised through the church collection and the stalls. This is being sent to the Summer of Hope Appeal. Clare also had a profitable MUE stall.

The I-Chameleon pop-up shop will be running from 21st to 27th October. We are very grateful for all the donations we have received. If you are near Halesworth between 10am and 4pm on any of those days please come in to see all the amazing things we have for sale. You can find us in the Thoroughfare close to the main car park.

Rushmere St Andrew's branch kept in close touch with all our members during lockdown. They also compiled three booklets and distributed these to all our members and members of the congregation. The first was "Prayers from the Heart -talking to God", second "The

Bible speaks to us - listening to God" and thirdly a more light hearted booklet "A Christmas Sparkle".

Members have been carrying on with their knitting despite 'Knit and Natter' being closed. Meetings started in July with the 'Wave of Prayer' and we have a programme arranged for each month this year. At our October meeting we are enrolling two new members which will take our membership up to 39.

Connected Autumn The autumn edition of our magazine Connected will be posted out to members in October, so if you don't receive your copy, please contact Clare Thomas on 01473 832808 or clare.thomas@btinternet.com.

Re-imagining Mothers' Union. Re-imagining coffee mornings are starting up round our diocese. It doesn't even have to be a morning event, have an afternoon tea of drinks in the evening. What we need to do is talk about:

- If you had one wish what would that wish for Mothers Union be?
- In the past year or so, what have we discovered about what we want to keep in Mothers' Union - and what don't we need?
- During this time, what are the ideas or actions you've seen in your diocese that we can build on for the future?
- What holds us back from moving forward – and why?

One branch who had a re-imagining coffee morning recently said they found the morning exciting and they were all fired up for the next year.

Global day This year we are coming together on Saturday 27 November, marking Global Day by wearing a purple scarf. We will gather, where possible, for a three-minute silence at 1.03pm (linking to the 1 in 3 theme). We want to make this as big as we can, combining the voices of our 4 million members around the world – calling for action on an international scale and in the countries where we live. For more information, visit [Global Day 2021 page](#) on our website. This links with 16 days of activism against gender-based violence.

Subs for 2022 Branch treasurers will be starting to collect in subscriptions for 2022 – the rate is £23. Members are now able to choose to pay by Direct Debit if they prefer, or by cash or cheque as usual. Ask your branch treasurer if you would like more information about this option, or look on our website (www.musuffolk.org.uk). **You will need to sign up by the 1st November** in order for Mary Sumner House to get everything ready to take the 2022 subscription in January. Contact Clare Thomas if you have any questions about the Direct Debits – 01473 832808 or clare.thomas@btinternet.com.

2022 Theme is 'Transformation – now'. Look on the main website for resources to help you transform yourselves, churches & communities: <https://www.mothersunion.org/2022-theme>. The pandemic has already transformed so much. Who knew that so many of us would start meeting on Zoom, use WhatsApp and FaceTime to keep in touch? Virtual coffee mornings and Afternoon teas have enabled us to continue fund raising. Perhaps we can look forward to increasing our membership in 2022. Start by asking friends and members of our family if they would like to be a Mothers' Union member. They can choose between central membership, diocesan membership or branch membership.

There will be a new **Blue Christmas service for 2021**. Why not approach your vicar about including this service in the Christmas services for this year in your parish. So many families have lost loved ones to COVID in the past year.

Praying themes For all our Indoor members, the lonely and isolated. Our link diocese of Jalingo, Nigeria, Lake Malawi, Malawi. Byumba, Rwanda, Lucknow North India.