**Worldwide Council March 12th – 13th 2017**

This year’s meeting of Worldwide Council, held in Ireland, was truly exceptional. It was set within a whole week of meetings of the Worldwide Trustees and Provincial Presidents, and so was a global gathering of over 100 Mothers’ Union leaders from 26 countries. It was the first time for many years that so many leaders from across the World had come together, and was a rich and fruitful week. Within this, the Worldwide Council (including Diocesan Presidents) was a 24 hour meeting.

* The main purpose was to approve submitting a modernisation of the Worldwide Constitution, which will go to the Privy Council and Charity Commissioners, before final approval in May 2018 by WWC and the Trustees.
* The proposed revised constitution has been developed through worldwide consultation with members. After further opportunities for questions, all resolutions were carried unanimously.
* We also celebrated M.U. work worldwide, with posters from each Province, and lots of opportunities to talk with leaders from across the World.
* A new **video**, celebrating the faith activities of members, was launched, and is available on YouTube and through the Mothers’ Union website.

It was a huge privilege to be involved in this global meeting, and in the framing of the new Constitution. It will be much shorter and clearer than the current one, and aims to cut down on administration, so leaving more time for outreach. It is already influencing our re-writing of our own Newcastle Diocese Constitution.

Over the years, Britain and Ireland have borne the brunt of raising funds, both for the running of the global movement, and for major programmes both here and abroad. Now this is changing. Last year the total of contributions from outside these islands increased by more than 50%. Meanwhile, Provinces have also become more responsible for paying their own Community Development Coordinators (CDCs), so grants for this from Mary Sumner House have been able to be reduced drastically. This reflects the way in which Provinces are becoming more autonomous, and the leadership of the global Mothers’ Union more evenly shared. We can look forward to the future with excitement.

Our Worldwide President, Lynne, shared with us inspiring stories of Mothers’ Union projects which she has visited throughout the World, as well as looking back with thankfulness to our celebrations of 140 years, at our General Meeting and service last September.

Barbara