MU Newcastle Diocese

Training Officer’s Report to Council – October 2017

We planned this year to review the Speakers’ list, but equally importantly to discover new ways to prepare programmes that we could do ourselves and which were more interactive.

At our training sessions across the country, the training officers have been looking at the essential functions of a branch under various categories:

*Prayer* *Helping members to know about Mothers’ Union* *Fellowship and caring for members* *Community Engagement* *Others:* To fundraise for Mothers’ Union projects For administration and organisation (subscriptions, contact person to facilitate local group)

To encourage members to take office in wider Mothers’ Union.

Mothers’ Union is not a branch meeting and it isn’t essential to go to a branch to be a member. We need to flag up that joining Mothers’ Union is not joining a monthly meeting, but becoming a part of an international community who care about family.

There is an increasing range of styles of meeting. There is more informality about meetings and flexibility in meeting times, places and content. The non-traditional groups seem to attract a wider range of ages, socio-economic groups, and genders. But still there are a substantial number of traditional branch meetings, with a speaker in a church hall and rows of chairs. It was suggested that the way that members meet together should reflect the needs of their community.

**Ideas for resources for branch/group meetings.**

There is a plan to have centrally produced ‘resource sheets’ for DIY style meetings available on the website. The annual theme resources are widely appreciated already. Most members like a format of Prayers, Activity, Information and Outcomes.

Part of this plan is to pilot a few DIY ideas across three or four dioceses and Newcastle has been chosen as one of them. The ideas will come to me late September or early October. If any of you could offer me a meeting time when you might have a flexible programme arranged, or if you have a gap, then would you ask me to come along and share an idea with you. Then early next year the successful ideas will go on to the website.

Arising from this and feeding into our new Speakers/Branch Activity directory I am planning a **half day** to look at programme planning ideas in more detail, and I am calling it **‘Branching Out’**. **It will be held from10.30am to 12.30pm at Church House on Friday 17 November.** This is a day for branch officers and regular members who have ideas and would like to share together to produce programmes which will reach out to the interests of everyone and to entice others to come and see what we are about. **It would be wonderful to have every branch represented**, **please come!**

**Please could you let me know who will come from your branch by Monday 31 October –**

jenniejonespcdc@hotmail.com **or 0191 2677829**

Jennie Jones

Training Officer

October 2017

(A riddle for you ! – Across the MU we have been using the word ‘sharing’ instead of ‘training’ for a while now. So what should we call our Training Officers? ‘Sharing Officers’ doesn’t seem to work! So put your thinking caps on and see what you come up with.)