

The Journal

Sit back & relax
with ownership at
Creswell Towers

Winter 2022

Holidays and Awaydays with AFA
See page 10



Mothers' UNION
Christian care for families

Charity number 249971

Diocese of Newcastle



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SAVE THE DATES!



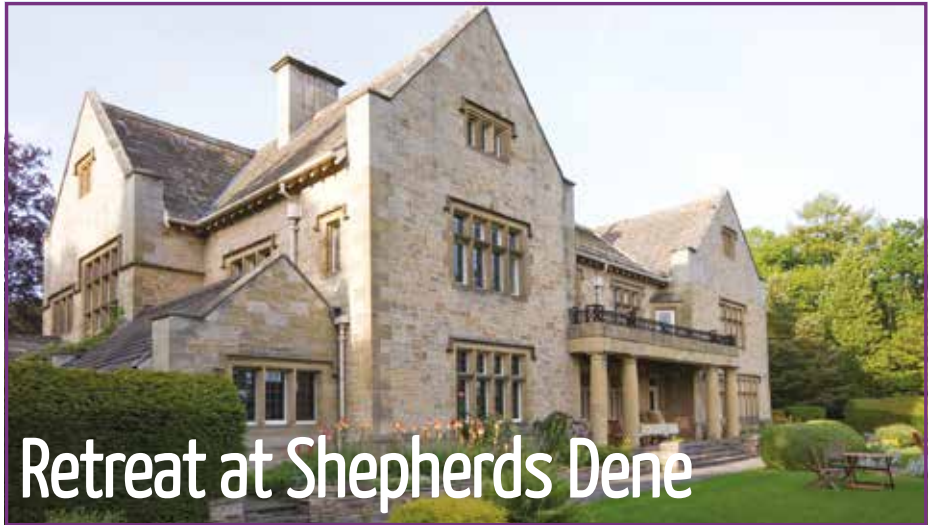
The **Annual Gathering and Service 2023** will take place in **York** on Saturday 23rd September.

The service will be in **York Minster** (pictured) led by the Archbishop of York.

On Sunday 24th we will have the opportunity to meet with our **Worldwide President, Sheran Harper.**

What an amazing opportunity, so close to home!

More details later.



Retreat at Shepherds Dene

Monday 19th-Tuesday 20th June 2023

Our retreat gives us the opportunity to enjoy the beautiful surroundings at Shepherds Dene, with time for fellowship and fun as well as well as times of silence and reflection.

Our leader will be our Chaplain, the Revd Anne Marr. Her reflections will follow the theme 'Shades of green ... Aspects of Godly Gardening'.

DETAILS

The residential cost will be £120. The daily cost will be £30, with an additional cost of £23 for the evening meal on the first day.

For further information please contact Jackie Moore, whose contact details are alongside. Please complete the booking form and return to Jackie (at 30 Cotswold Gardens, Newcastle upon Tyne NE7 7AE) with a £20 deposit for residential or £10 for each individual day.

BOOKING FORM

Name Branch

Address

Telephone no.

Email

Dietary requirements

I require transport/ have transport and can take passengers

I am non-residential and shall attend on Monday / Tuesday / both days

I will / will not stay for the evening meal on Monday

President's Letter



REIMAGINING has now begun. We were asked to put forward three actions Newcastle would focus on next year. They are:

- **Fundraising** – to enable us to continue helping the many lives we touch each year and to maintain our sustainability.
- **Improve working relationships with the clergy** – We both work for the good of the church – it should be a partnership and they can help us to raise general awareness of the purpose of MU with the general public.

- **Increase awareness through our local community work** – many branches said they would like projects to focus on and maybe liaise with partners. Our A&O can help with this. The Bitesize Metamorphosis could be useful in forward planning.

I'm extremely proud of the work we do in Newcastle Diocese and the number of people we help. By paying our tributes we enable a great deal to be achieved. We have members all around the world who can be mobilised quickly and know their

area and needs. In this country we are serving in many areas continuously and can make decisions quickly in order to support others. We were heartened by all your ideas and enthusiasm at Council. As we progress in Reimagining these will become our focus and will be further explored at our Spring Council meeting. By addressing our bulky systems I feel sure our amazing charity will move forward and become more sustainable.

Thank you for your support.
Love *Margy*

How can we reimagine Mothers' Union?



At Diocesan Council at Kingston Park on 14th October, we had a good attendance.

After our business meeting, we heard about the 'Reimagining' Conference (see page 11), and then had our own discussions in groups about how Mothers' Union could change in order to survive and flourish in a modern age, with all our busy-ness and constraints. We focussed on the three areas outlined above by our President, Margy. The results will be collated by the Trustees who joined each group. To join in the process, please will you answer the following question:

'What do I most value and enjoy about my Mothers' Union membership?'

Please send your (short!) answer to Linda Benneworth (email address on page 2)

Kneelers needed for the Cathedral!

Mothers' Union have been asked to make kneelers for the chapel of the Resurrection at the cathedral. We hope to make eight separate kneelers for the alter step, using MU colours. We are looking for design ideas initially and then people to embroider and put it all together... all ideas and help welcome. If you feel you could join the group and support this please contact Jackie Moore or Helen Cooper.

Jackie



Her late Majesty, Queen Elizabeth

From our Chaplain

QUEEN Elizabeth II was not only our Patron: she was also in one sense our 'Chaplain in Chief'.

Her words to us all through her 70 Christmas broadcasts have been inspiring and encouraging reminders of Christ's presence in the world.

This Christmas we shall miss her voice but we shall also remember and give thanks for the example of faith she gave us all. 'Forgiveness' was one theme she kept referring to and as we approach another Christmas, it is perhaps a timely gift and a fitting tribute to recall her words:

'Although we are capable of great acts of kindness, history teaches us that we sometimes need saving from ourselves - from our recklessness or our greed. God sent into the world a unique person - neither a philosopher, nor a general (important though they may be) - but a Saviour, with the power to forgive. Forgiveness lies at the heart of the Christian faith, it can heal broken families, it can restore friendships and it can reconcile divided communities. It is in forgiveness that we feel the power of God's love.' (2011)

'Above all, we must retain the child's readiness to forgive, with which we are all born and which is too easy to lose as we grow older. Without it divisions between families, communities and

nations remain unbridgeable. We owe it to our children and grandchildren to live up to the standards of behaviour and tolerance which we are so eager to teach them. It is particularly at Christmas, which marks the birth of the Prince of Peace, that we should work to heal old wounds and to abandon prejudice and suspicion. What better way of making a start than by remembering what Christ said: "Except ye become as little children, ye shall not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven".' (1984)



St Cuthbert's, Blyth: symbols of office

'For me, the life of Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace, whose birth we celebrate (today), is an inspiration and an anchor in my life. A role-model of reconciliation and forgiveness, he stretched out his hands in love, acceptance and healing. Christ's example has taught me to seek to respect and value all people of whatever faith or none.' (2014)

With thanks to Her late Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II, for her faithful witness to the love of Christ. God save the King.

Anne Marr



Wallsend Branch tribute

JUBILEE CONGRATULATIONS

Our Secretary, Sandra Davison says: 'I made a Congratulations card for Her Majesty the Queen on the occasion of her Platinum Jubilee, on behalf of Mothers' Union. I thanked her for her loyalty and service to the country and for being Patron to Mothers' Union. I was elated and humbled to receive a reply from her and wanted to share it with you all.'



MOTHERS' UNION RETREAT: HIDDEN FIGURES

SHEPHERDS DENE 20-21 JUNE 2022

THE house made us as welcome as ever, the rooms comfortable and the food as good as always. And there was plenty of time for rest and relaxation, with craft and prayer sessions offered on Monday afternoon for those who didn't fancy going for a walk. I actually sat in the sunshine making a cross-stitch MU badge/keyring and hearing all about the colonies of bees at St Francis' in Heaton. And we shared prayer times together, with a Eucharist each day, and Night prayer led by Barbara Bailes on Monday night and Morning Prayer led by Sheila Auld on Tuesday morning.

Canon Peter led us in four sessions, each majoring on a well-known Gospel story and illustrated by a work of art. In each he identified a 'hidden figure' whom we may not have considered before. The first passage was from St Mark's Gospel, chapter 14:43-54, the story of Jesus' arrest. The hidden figure was the "young man wearing nothing but a linen garment," following Jesus but running away when they seized him and leaving his garment behind. This young man's life must have been changed by what he saw that day, even though he was only on the edge of the action. Who might have brought us in from the edge? Might we have done more to bring someone in? God, who notices, is at work in those at the 'edges'.



The second session began with the reading of Luke 10, the story of the Good Samaritan, probably one of the best known stories in the bible. But how many of us ever think of the innkeeper, the person the Samaritan trusted to care in his absence for the victim he'd helped? Whom do we trust, and are we trustworthy ourselves? God challenges us to grow in trust of one another.

In session 3, on Tuesday morning Canon Peter shared with us his experience in a Sea Scout Jamboree which was almost wrecked by



torrential rain and a stomach bug that hit a lot of the campers; as a former leader in both Scouting Association and Girlguiding I really felt for the organisers! The particular passage read was the Feeding of the 5,000, the hidden figure the boy who was willing to share his packed lunch with Jesus. As the motto of both Associations is "Be Prepared", Peter felt that the boy would have been a Scout if there'd been such things in the 1st century! What that boy had to offer wasn't very much, but he trusted Jesus to make use



of it. Do we sometimes feel that what we can do isn't worth it because it isn't enough? God helps us, when we trust one another, to grow the gifts we have amongst us.

The fourth and final session focused on St John's Gospel chapter 6, the rather uncomfortable story of the Prodigal Son. We were challenged to consider the positions of the two sons, and the father, and grow from there. The hidden figures were the servants detailed to make the preparations, to act as messengers, as go-betweens... That is what God is calling us to be, servants, messengers, go-betweens -

between the edges and the centre
between those who are trusted
and those left out in the cold
between those who feel they have
much and those who feel they have
little



Perhaps as Mothers' Union we might identify with an even more hidden figure, the mother of the boy with the packed lunch, for she probably provided it. Are we each doing everything we can to supply the wants of others?

Lesley Wright

For the booking form for next year's retreat, please see page 2

Family Fun Day at Kirkley Hall

JACKIE Moore (our Faith & Policy Coordinator) with Karoline Wellborne (Children & Young Families Coordinator) arrived at Kirkley Hall early to set up for our Family Day.



Jackie had made a cardboard Noah's Ark in Geordie and she had lots of small animals to go with it and it wasn't long before children peeked from a distance and then came to see what they were and started playing with them. We were supported by Margy Tasker-Brown our President and Dorothy Davies from Cullercoats.

We were in the refreshment kiosk area and when more families arrived we were able to circulate and have small chats with the adults.

At midday we stood together and Jackie read the story of Noah's Ark in Geordie with each of us joining in, speaking as a character in the story, and prayers followed.

We were lucky as torrential rain caught us as we were ready to leave feeling happy that Mothers' Union had been a welcome presence to some that day.

Anne Blight VP

Left to right: Margy, Jackie, Karoline and Dorothy Davies



Visit to Frogmore House and Gardens

ISAW in the MU news that Frogmore House and Gardens were being opened on 31st August for Mothers' Union. Although it's a long way from Northumberland I have an aunt nearby and so booked tickets.



Lakes and wooded mounds

It was a very interesting day. Frogmore House and gardens are open three days every year for charity. It was originally lived in by Queen Charlotte (wife of George III) who bought it in 1790. Queen Victoria also had a great influence on the gardens.

We were also able to go inside the house which was very interesting. Some of the walls included flowers cut out by Queen Charlotte's daughter, Princess Elizabeth, as well as some of her paintings. Queen Charlotte had the gardens designed with lakes, wooded mounds and there are bridges and paths winding all around. Originally the land had been flat. Queen Victoria also built a tea house in the grounds.

Although the house has not been lived for many years in 1987 was turned into a place used for events by the Royal Family and opened for Charity events.

It was good to see so many MU members. Everyone was very friendly and there was a great atmosphere. We spent the whole day there exploring the gardens and house.

Alison Ball, Upper Coquetdale Branch



Mothers' Union at Frogmore House

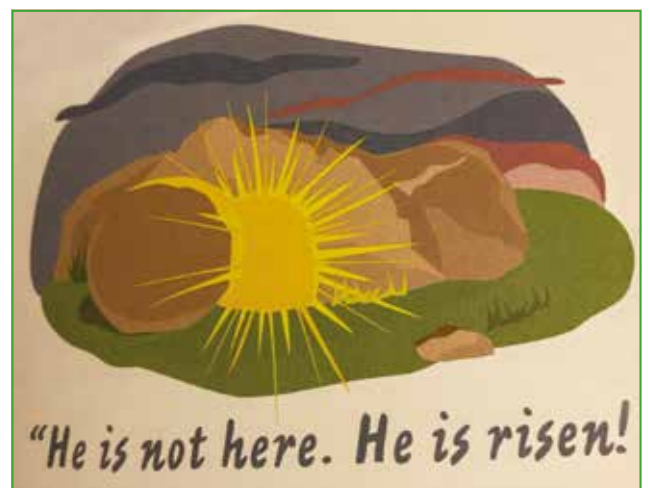
Visit to Oberammergau

22 of us met at Manchester Airport in May 2022. Some of us were from Glasgow, Dorset, York, North York Moors, and of course Newcastle-upon-Tyne!

The Passion Play was amazing – it brought the Bible to life. We felt that we were in the market place, the Temple, the Mount of Olives, and the Garden of Gethsemane. We could almost feel Jesus' pain, and Mary's anguish. It was a marvellous experience. The actors were so authentic and passionate, the choir sang beautifully, and the orchestra was the 'icing on the cake'.

Thanks to Revd Sue Rushton for all her hard work in organising and leading the trip, the daily prayers and the lovely Sunday evening church service.

Susan Armstrong, First Mothers' Union Internet Branch



"He is not here. He is risen!"

A Christmas Day "Special"

I N OCTOBER 2021 I asked Harbour Refuge Manager Sarah what our Internet Branch could do to support the women there over the Christmas period. She told me that what was worrying the mums the most was how they were going to provide as near normal a day as possible for their children, especially when it came to a proper Christmas dinner, a highlight in most families' calendars. So we agreed to provide a complete Christmas day menu for each of the sixteen family units that make up the Refuge.

I went to the Tesco superstore at Kingston Park and asked if they would put together my complete list of (mainly fresh) food. Initially I was told that they did not do that type of order. However, I just went on talking, explaining what I wanted and why. On hearing this the Customer Service member of staff to whom I was talking suddenly became very interested. The result was that they did put together a complete order for collection a few days before Christmas. When we arrived everything was ready for us, plus the fact that Tesco refused payment and donated everything free of charge – what a bonus!

On 23rd December we delivered fifteen conventional bumper gift bags containing a large chicken, stuffing balls, 'pigs in blankets', potatoes, broccoli, sprouts, carrots, gravy mix, a Christmas cake, mince pies, a box of special biscuits, tinned fruit, and a MU Christmas card signed with a member's name to personalise it. The sixteenth bag contained Halal food for one Muslim family.

Our mammoth task was supported by two other MU branches, from St Mary's Ponteland and St Columba's Wideopen. A number of ladies from both branches donated to the project, making it financially achievable.

This October, I asked the Refuge how we could help them this year. They have asked us to repeat exactly what we did in 2021, so that is what we plan to do, again with the help and support of Ponteland and St Columba's. I am not expecting to find another supermarket willing to donate everything, but who knows? I live in hope, so watch this space!

So, what happened to the money donated by the three branches last time? Well, by agreement with all the members, that money was put into a special fund that our Internet



Branch has started – we hope to equip a special Sensory Room for the children at the Refuge – there they will be able to find peace, spending time-out safely with minimal adult intervention. The room will also be used to provide counselling and therapy for children from Domestic Abuse homes. It is so vital to educate them with regard to healthy relationships; without specialised support and training many will grow up damaged and may well turn to drugs or alcohol in their teenage years. Sadly many victims will themselves become perpetrators of domestic abuse in later life. This project can truly be labelled "Transformation Now".

At present we have just over £2,200 in this fund. Anyone willing to fund-raising on behalf of this project, please do get in touch. The work fits in exactly with the way in which we are, rightly, encouraged to move MU forward to fit in with the demands of the 21st Century.

Sylvia Hickey
(billandsylviahickey@btinternet.com)

Support for refugees and asylum seekers this Christmas

Mothers' Union is supporting the most vulnerable young mothers and women seeking safety from war – this time not refugees from the cruel war in Ukraine, but the ongoing conflict in Syria. In Syria opponents or just critics of the regime are imprisoned or made to 'disappear' (murdered); bombing has destroyed their homes.

These young mothers arrive with no warm clothes, in flipflops. In some cases they have no underwear. Mothers' Union is supporting them through boxes for new babies provided by a GP practice, and small food hampers worth



Knitting for premature babies

£10 each to provide some Christmas cheer for the 25 families in cramped accommodation in the heart of Newcastle's party street, Osborne Road.

If you wish to contribute, please contact Diana Macnaughton (contact details on page 2)

Bedding for the Northumberland Refuge

With the winter rapidly approaching Margaret Crawforth delivers much needed new bedding to the North Northumberland Refuge. New duvets, and covers, sheets and pillows and pillowcases should help make life more comfortable for those who have left domestic abuse situations.



Toiletry bags



Ten more Toiletry Bags, packed by St Bede's MU were delivered to the Northumberland Women's Refuge by Jennifer Snowdon last week. As usual the refuge was delighted.

ANNUAL GATHERING 2022

BE THOU MY VISION...

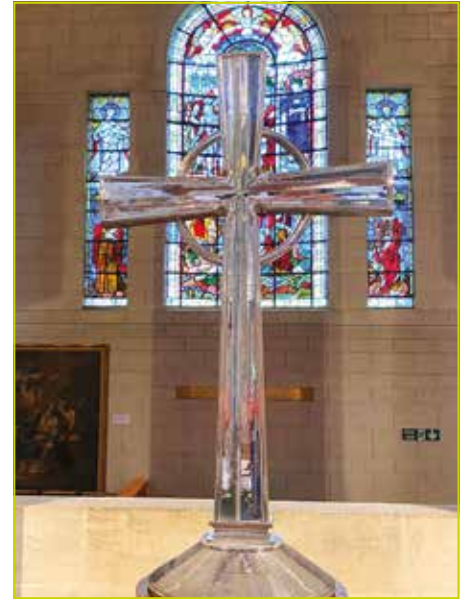
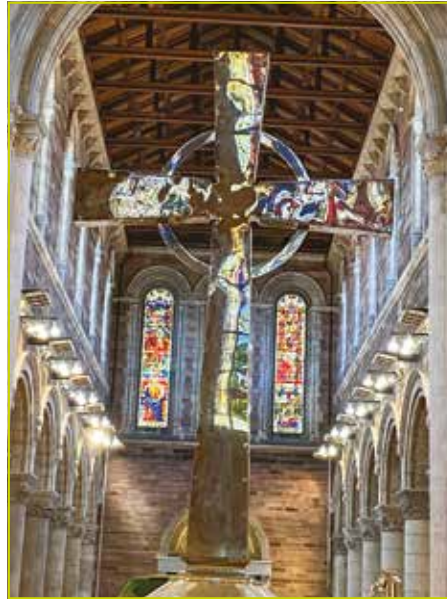
THESE were the first words 750 of us sang together in St Anne's Cathedral at the Mothers' Union Annual Gathering in Belfast.

The large metal **Sanctuary Cross** shone – transformed by the colours it reflected from the **Window of the Good Samaritan**. The window is from the former parish church where the new Cathedral now stands. The cross was gifted by the Cathedral's branch of Mothers' Union and it seemed to be reflecting the vibrancy of the words we were singing. It is the most photographed item in the building.

St Anne's is a tangible living space – a tribute St Anne, mother of the Virgin Mary – which warmly welcomed our gathering. The Cathedral took almost a century to build from its foundation stone in 1899, through two wars and the times of 'the Troubles'. Its most recent addition is its slender stainless-steel **Spire of Hope**.

The Services of Celebration were led by the Bishop of Connor, with several other bishops in attendance, The Kerygma Choir led our musical praise. The Rt Revd Andrew Forster, Bishop of Derry and Raphoe, preached, stepping in as a late replacement for our MU Central Chaplain. He is locally well-known for his engaging sermons and his local 'fan-club' was out in force.

He reminded us that MU is the most significant movement in the Anglican Communion, which



has transformed the church and continues to do so across the world. From the OT reading of Ecclesiastes, he emphasised that *'God has made everything suitable for its time; moreover he has put a sense of past and future into our minds' (Eccl 1.11)*. The gospel story reminded us how the disciples were transformed by Jesus' ministry (Luke 9.20). There is indeed a time to plant, to build up, to keep, to sew, to speak... and ours is a time to discern where transformation is leading us... to recognise how God is active in our own time.

Bp Andrew observed: **'Transformation is never easy** – it is demanding and takes time to be fulfilled, both within us and also around us.' Our very presence as MU is a challenge to the church, like reflected light, or sometimes like

being a stone in a shoe. We cannot always know how our actions might bear fruit but 'small actions can open doors,' and **'every small skill makes something beautiful'**.

The light reflections from the MU cross are most surprising from behind, out of normal view. It was a reminder that the Light of Christ can be reflected in the 'hidden' and unexpected places behind the ceremonial show: the colours radiating into a grey world, just as the window story of the Good Samaritan exemplifies.

When we sing and pray 'Be Thou my Vision...' may we look upon our world with hope and reflect God's radiance in our own allotted corners through our local and global projects.

Anne Marr, Diocesan MU Chaplain

A TRIP TO BELFAST

23 MEMBERS from our Diocese attended the Annual Gathering event in Belfast on the weekend of 24th September. For most of us, our journey began on a cold and wet Thursday morning in Newcastle.

It was a welcome relief when the coach appeared and people boarded into the warmth of the interior. We were soon rolling through the green but damp fields of the Northumberland countryside. We had our first stop at Gretna Green for a break and a welcome cup of tea, then we were off to Cairnryan, the port of Stranraer. The coach boarded the afternoon ferry and we had a pleasant crossing over the Irish Sea to Belfast. Our driver Andy whisked us to our hotel





ON Saturday evening we were treated to an exciting, vibrant choral concert by the Clare Choral – a choir of about 45, led Sheela Greer, herself a fine Mezzo-soprano.

The music included both spiritual and secular items, sung with breath-taking verve, clarity and precision, including well-known songs such as ‘Danny Boy’ and ‘Climb every mountain’. At one point they led us in singing ‘Love Divine, all loves excell’ and ‘In Christ alone my hope is found’: what a lovely and fitting finish to our two days of meeting together with members from all over Britain and Ireland!

Barbara Packer

in time for our evening meal followed by Compline led by Revd Anne Marr.

The next morning, Friday, after breakfast we visited the Titanic Museum – what an experience! Our coach then took us on a tour of the city before attending the afternoon Celebration Service at the Cathedral.



On Saturday morning we set off to the Gathering followed by the Concert in the evening.

On Sunday we were up bright and early to attend morning prayers, led again by Revd Anne Marr, before leaving to catch the afternoon ferry. The crossing was “a wee bit choppy” this time but all went well and we were soon heading towards home.

Next year on 23rd September the destination for the Gathering will not involve a sea crossing, as it is York, with the service in York Minster on the same day. I hope many more of us will be able to go! See the ‘Save the date’ notice on page 2!

Anne Cairns, VP Lindisfarne



THE GATHERING

THE Gathering took place in the Waterfront Hall of the magnificent International Conference Centre in Belfast (pictured).

Our conference was opened by our **CEO Bev Jullien**, who gave us a warm welcome which included a minute’s silence in memory of our late Queen and Patron. We were greeted by June Butler and Iris Sutor, the Provincial President and Zonal Trustee for All Ireland and, by video, by Provincial Presidents from all over the world. “You are the salt of the earth (Matthew 5) said David McClay, **Bishop of Down and Dromore**, in his welcome.

Iris Sutor introduced MU All Ireland with a film outlining their work. Then Bishop Andrew Forster encouraged us in his welcome to be “a guiding star”.

We watched and listened to our **W.W.P. Sheran Harper** on screen thanking us for our work on behalf of our wonderful organisation.

She encouraged us to continue ...

- to plant seeds of hope which would ‘Transform and Flourish’.
- to stop injustice closer to home
- to know and believe that ‘We make a difference’ and that Transformation is needed at this time.
- to work towards making our work relevant in a changing world.

She told us of work in other parts of the world, and particularly in Trinidad where they work with a group called “Boys to Men”, which breaks the cycle of boys growing into a life of crime.

The Mary Sumner House staff then gave their updates:

Richard Miller (finance) urged members to stay with us, and to use Direct Debit if possible for our subs.

Adam Sachs (communications) spoke of new ways of working together, including Zoom, which have been



hastened by COVID. His slot included a presentation of Newcastle’s First Internet Branch, a project and discussion group which meets entirely on Zoom and works to support victims of Domestic Abuse (see page 7).

Bev Jullien, our CEO, said that our new focus is on Domestic Abuse, and that resources for the 16 Days of Activism are on the website.

Midday Prayers followed, with the Archbishop of Armagh, and then a break for lunch with a chance to catch up with folk and explore the M.U. shop and displays in the ‘Marketplace’ about projects across Britain and Ireland, as well as about our work overseas.

The afternoon session focused on ‘**Transformation now**’. Bishop Emma, Central Chaplain, in her address on film, said “Transformation is God’s Work”; she encouraged us to allow Him to transform us so that we can transform those around us.

Steph Nunn, the new Head of Membership, shared ideas for re-imagining Mothers’ Union, with the help of a group of members and videos of projects in Britain & Ireland. Sheran led a “Call to Action” to renew the fight against injustice, finding practical ways to lift families out of poverty. We must each take our part.

The Bishop of Connor closed the day in prayer, leaving us with much to think about; it was so inspiring to be with a large group of likeminded folk.

Anne Blight, VP Northumberland Archdeaconry

AWAY FROM IT ALL

Heartfelt thanks for a great and memorable holiday - and to think it was arranged and provided almost as soon as it was requested, when we scarcely hoped that a place would be available at the height of the season - we were swept off our feet with excitement.



We had a wonderful time! We had not been to Cresswell Towers before, nor had we seen the beautiful beach that is literally five minutes from the site. When the children sampled the ice cream and I the coffee we were the happiest people on the planet! How could we ever thank you enough for these unforgettable days, that we will treasure as precious memories - the benefits go well beyond what I'm able to express. The children (14 and 7) have deepened their bond of liking, communication and trust with me ...



*From a refuge manager:
Thank you so much for the holiday booked for Jonny and Kathleen, the children are on cloud nine and so are parents. They say they had the best time.*

The Pendower Project

THE Pendower Good Neighbour Project is a well-established group set up 15 years ago in the deprived area of Pendower to the west of Newcastle.

The present project manager is Kathleen Dunn who is in charge of a small group of paid staff and a larger group of volunteer helpers. The project has no Government funding and relies on grants, fundraising and donations. It is a registered charity. It offers a wide range of services and

activities to some of the most deprived households in North Tyneside. It offers activities for all ages and circumstances, employed, unemployed, single parent families, children, grandchildren etc. On average, at any time it is operating with about 4-500 clients on its books.

Margaret Crawforth says 'I have worked with the project for over seven years as AFIA Rep, and they have been very grateful for MU help to them all.'



Reimagining Mothers' Union



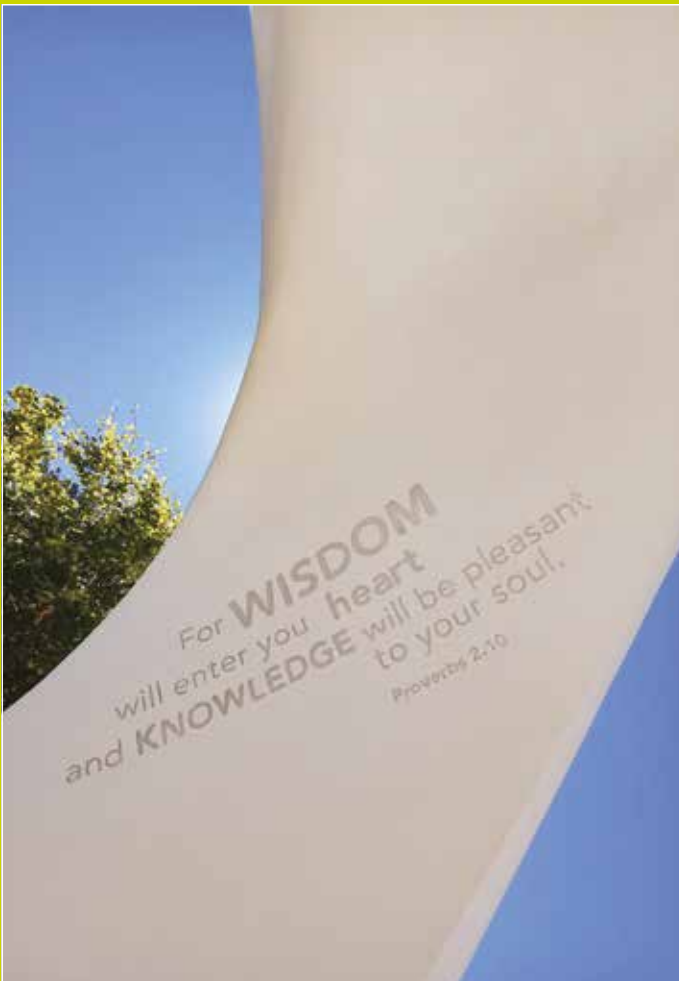
The national conference 'Reimagining Mothers' Union' took place on the beautiful campus of Liverpool Hope University. Some Bible verses were inscribed on the gateway to the university campus.



We enjoyed meeting, working, and partying together. Diana Macnaughton was the only delegate from Newcastle Diocese, but soon made friends with many richly gifted, fun loving and wise MU members. Our Worldwide President Sheran Harper shared the conference with us and our officers from Mary Sumner House.



The conference on 'Transformation Now' was intense but spiced with fun.



We anchored our debate in a study of the Bible, and prayer. Our relationship to our Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer God provides the strength and the wisdom to guide our action as MU.



MU delegates from Eire, Northern Ireland, Wales, Scotland, and England met to reflect on the barriers we face to change, and how to develop new structures fit for contemporary needs. We discussed how to engage with our communities, serve with and through our churches, and how best to partner with other organisations to support families and individuals.

AROUND THE DIOCESE



St Bart's in Bloom

St Bartholomew's Church, Long Benton was beautifully adorned with floral contributions from the various Church groups as part of the late Queen's Platinum Jubilee.

Two of our branch members created a lovely display on our behalf using our beautifully refurbished banner as the backdrop. It stood in pride of place beside the pulpit at the front of the Church.



Greatly encouraged by their efforts, we invited a member of the Church flower group to our September meeting, where she patiently guided us through the basic steps in creating a table decoration. It was so enjoyable that we are planning to invite her to another meeting next year to take us to the next level. Watch this space!

News from St George, Cullercoats

Many thanks and best wishes to Brenda Mennear (left) on her retirement at the beginning of this year as Branch Leader for a three year term, and welcome to Ann Lilley.



Our branch marked May Summer Day this year with a service of Holy communion. Afterwards Members helped to plant a rose named Elizabeth in the church grounds to mark the Platinum anniversary of the reign of our patron and late Queen Elizabeth II.

Anne Lilley, Branch Leader

No more 1 in 3 at St Bartholomew's

In November 2021 St Bartholomew's Longbenton MU branch held a three minute silence in the busy local shopping centre in Forest Hall in support of the 16 Days of Activism against Gender Based Violence and Abuse.



We invited our church congregation to join us and many of them did – along with people from other local churches when we told them of our intentions and invited them to join us also.

After contact with our Local Authority, Council members and employees of the local authority also joined with us to show their solidarity with the cause. At the end of the three minutes silence lots of shoppers came and asked what it was all about and we had some very interesting conversations. People were genuinely shocked at the size of the world-wide problem of abuse against women and girls, and bringing that to their attention was the whole point of our "demo".

St John's, Whorlton – 125th Anniversary

On Wednesday 5th October it was a privilege and a pleasure for West Deanery Mothers' Union members to join St John's Whorlton Mothers' Union branch as they celebrated their 125 years Anniversary.

The Revd Matthew Hunter presided at the service of Holy Communion, and in his homily he reminded us of the initial timidity of our founder Mary Sumner in giving her first address to mothers, even requiring her husband to speak for her.

The eventual formation of the Mothers' Union began in 1876 and

St John's Branch was formed in 1897, one of the earliest branches. How wonderfully this organisation has grown in these intervening years, truly a powerful, global force for change.

We were then treated to tea, including this Celebration cake. It was a most enjoyable occasion and a great tribute to past members, remembering all their hard work, commitment and service for those many years. We wish them many more years to come.

Jacqueline Rainford



Anne Blyth cuts the anniversary cake

Taking part in the Great North Run

Many of you will know that my husband, James, has had some major cancer surgery in recent years.

As a way of regaining a little bit of fitness, he decided to do the Great North Run in September in aid of the Northern Head and Neck Cancer Charity. We managed the run together, with no serious side effects and were even able to smile at the end! If you are interested in reading more about James's story, the training and the run then visit www.justgiving.com/fundraising/james-and-leahan. We have been bowled over by people's generosity (including many friends in Mothers' Union) and have raised over £4,000, which will make a difference to people's lives. Thank you!

Leahan Garratt (Benwell MU)



Holy Sepulchre, Ashington enrolments

It was my delight to attend Holy Sepulchre Branch in Ashington to enrol three new members into Mothers' Union. Elaine King, Joanne Winn and Julie Lingham.

I read out the MU Aim and Objects and Reverend Chris Grocock formally enrolled and welcomed them. The Branch Leader, Reverend Lorna Beadle, presented them with their membership cards, then proceeded to preside at the Eucharist which followed. I look forward to meeting up with them again at a branch meeting in the near future.

Joan Howard, Morpeth Deanery Leader



Left to right: Revd Chris Grocock, Joan Howard, Morpeth Deanery Leader, Elaine King, Joanne Winn, Julie Lingham and Revd Lorna Beadle, Branch Leader.

Benwell's games afternoon



On 13th August Benwell MU hosted an informal afternoon with Bingo, board games, information about MU, bring and share lunch and friendship.

24 people attended and we raised £100 for MU causes. Most importantly, it was really super easy to organise and we had a lovely afternoon spending time together.

*Leahan Garratt,
Benwell MU branch contact*

Northern Deaneries Sharing Day

The Alnwick, Bamburgh, Glendale and Norham Deaneries were due to gather together in June 2020 at All Saints, Rothbury.

Finally we made it on 20th June 2022! It was so good to get together and chat and catch up after a long enforced break. Hosted by Upper Coquetdale we met in All Saints Church for a short service. The theme was "The Environment" and Anne Marr, Area Chaplin, had sent us an interesting reading entitled re-Genesis which we followed with "If the Earth were only a few feet in

diameter" (page 59 United in Prayer and Worship). Alison Ball, Branch Leader, led the service.

Liz Cummings then gave us a short talk about reusing/recycling and was delighted by the enthusiastic response of all MU members.

We all agreed that much more should be recycled (some parts of the country do so much better), so Alison suggested we, as a group, request a visit to the Northumberland County Council Recycling Centre to stress the point.

Liz showed us some useful ideas for making something useful out of something we might throw away:

- Compost Scoop, seed trays, plant labels or a watering can all from a plastic milk bottle
- Elastic bands from old rubber gloves
- Pan scrubbers from plastic net bags
- Veggie/fruit bags (when buying items loose) from old net curtains.

Others joined in with more ideas e.g. using plastic bread wrappers as pedal bin liners.

We all do really care about the planet; after all it is God's wonderful creation, so we must do everything in our power to protect, care and nurture it for the future generations.

After lunch which we had in the church and the village, we went to visit an Eco-house in Rothbury where one of the MU members lives. This was fascinating and we had a tour of the garden and the house. There were many features that were explained to us which make the house eco-friendly and environmentally friendly. There were bat boxes built into the house and wall, including some with special entrances for inexperienced bats!

Alison Ball, Branch Leader, Upper Coquetdale

Eco ideas table.



Long Service Awards at Christ Church, North Shields

We were delighted to have Vice-President, Anne Blight, at our meeting on Tuesday, 7th September. After leading an act of worship, she presented Long Service Certificates.

The photo shows, Maureen Fryer and Susan Ogden (45 years) Dawn Meadows and Revd Dorothy Robinson (35 years) and Jean Scott (50 years). Linda Frazer (35 years) was unable to attend.

An amazing total of 245 years of service to Mothers' Union!
Susan Ogden, Branch Contact



Mary Sumner Day Service at St Francis



The service was led by Revd Yvette Daniel's our curate, wearing the MU vestments and using the MU vessels.

On the photo also are branch members Jenny Trotter, Maureen Webster and Elizabeth Brown.

Jackie Moore, Faith & Policy Coordinator

Dorothy Henderson RIP



Our beloved Treasurer, Dorothy, died very suddenly on the morning of Sunday 29th May 2022.

Dorothy took over from Jean Barras as Treasurer early in 2016, at the start of my term as President. It was a joy to work with her throughout my Presidency, from 2016 - 2021. She continued to work with Margy and the new team until her death.

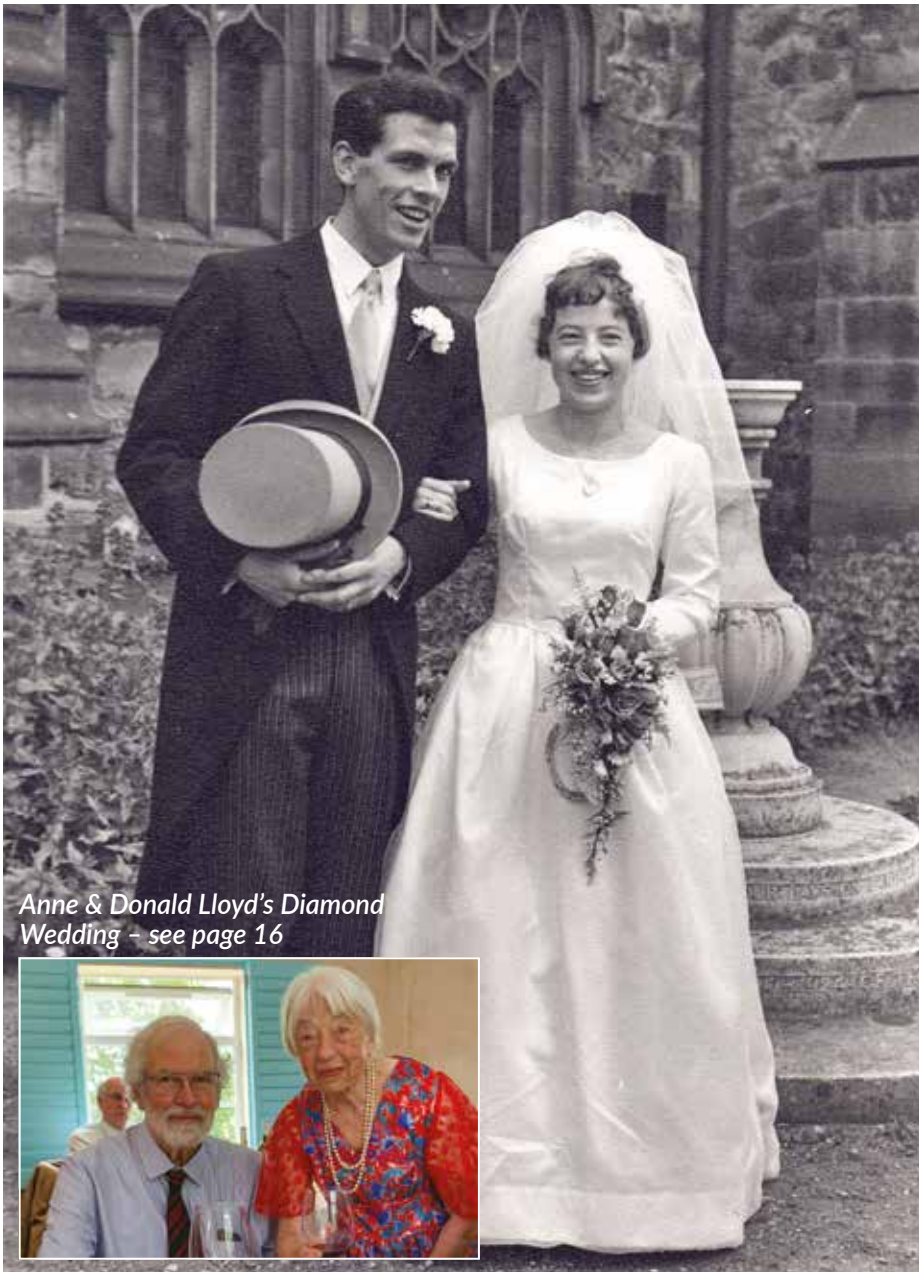
Dorothy had a 'can do' attitude to Mothers' Union finance, believing that Mothers' Union money was there to support those in need. She was always willing to go the extra mile to make sure that opportunities were not missed, for instance in booking holidays promptly and coming to Awayday venues to pay entrance fees with the MU bank card.

Alongside this, she was meticulous in her work on the Mothers' Union accounts and provided regular clear summaries and explanations to both Trustees and Council, to enable those less financially literate to understand our financial position and make appropriate decisions about our spending.

Dorothy's M.U. work also encompassed being Secretary and then Branch Leader at All Saints, Gosforth. Her gift for friendship led her to offer to accommodate a family of refugees from Ukraine shortly before her death. Her children (Alana, Elisa and Terry) and grandchildren were also very important to her.

Dorothy's death leaves a huge hole in many lives, at Church, in Mothers' Union, and in the family.

Barbara Packer



Anne & Donald Lloyd's Diamond Wedding - see page 16

Edna Maddison RIP

We were all shocked and saddened by the sudden death of Edna Maddison.



Edna was a Mothers' Union Diocesan Trustee for a number of years, she was formerly MU leader for Morpeth Deanery and latterly during the last Triennium had been Diocesan Members Coordinator. During this time she was also responsible for organising the collection and delivery of emergency hospital bags to NESCH in Cramlington, a role she continued to fulfil.

Edna was always cheerful and faithfully attended all MU Diocesan events whenever possible.

She will be greatly missed.

Sheila Walker

CALENDAR OF EVENTS 2023

JANUARY

13th Trustees meet on Zoom at 10am

FEBRUARY

2nd Paying in day at the Cathedral
19th Deadline for Spring Newsletter
(copy to Barbara Packer, please)

MARCH

17th Trustees meet on Zoom at 10am
31st Diocesan AGM and Council meeting at Kingston Park at 6 for 6.30pm

JUNE

19th-20th – Retreat at Shepherds Dene (see page 2)

SEPTEMBER

23rd Annual Gathering and service in York, with possible further events on 24th (see page 2)
Every 1st Thursday, Cathedral Midday Prayers, followed by Holy Communion in St George's Chapel

• BIRTHDAYS • ANNIVERSARIES • DEATHS •

BIRTHDAYS

80th Valerie Harper
Holy Saviour, Tynemouth

80th Pauline Blight
St Peter, Monkseaton

90th Ann Hardy
St Oswin, Wylam Indoor Member

90th Sheila Sidney-Wilmott
St Francis, Heaton

90th Jean Cuthbertson
Holy Nativity, Chapel House

90th Mildred Robson
Christ Church, North Shields

90th Margaret Devlin
Holy Saviour, Tynemouth

90th Sheila Park
Holy Saviour, Tynemouth

WEDDING ANNIVERSARIES

GOLDEN WEDDING
Jean & Frank Skinner
Diocesan Member

Margaret & David Riches
Amble

Gordon & Sheila
Wightman St George, Cullercoats

DIAMOND WEDDINGS
Anne & David Lloyd
Holy Cross, Fenham

Yvonne & Ronnie Holmes
Holy Cross, Fenham

Diane and Michael Nicholson
St George, Cullercoats

DEATHS

Jean Goudie
St Mary, Monkseaton

Tina Tompkins
St Mary, Monkseaton

Kathleen Farrer
Holy Saviour, Tynemouth

Mary Rose
St Mary, Monkseaton

Geraldine Taylor
St Oswin, Wylam

Dorothy Henderson
All Saints, Gosforth, Diocesan Treasurer

Edna Maddison
St John, Seaton Hirst

NEW MEMBERS

Welcome to our new members, including:

Brenda Graham
Christ Church, North Shields

May Meilleur
Christ Church, North Shields

Margaret Walker
Christ Church, North Shields

Elaine King
Holy Sepulchre, Ashington

Joanne Winn
Holy Sepulchre, Ashington

Julie Winn
Holy Sepulchre, Ashington



Margaret Devlin (left) and Sheila Park share a 90th birthday party at Holy Saviour, Tynemouth

Mothers' Union in Newcastle Diocese is a charity formed to serve families either in a family group or as individuals and walk with them by support through challenging times in their lives.

The charity is 100% volunteer led, all monies raised go into the many projects Mothers' Union develop and deliver.

If you would like to contribute to the work that Mothers Union is active in both in Newcastle Diocese and Worldwide you can contribute to our Virgin Giving site:

www.uk.virginmoneygiving.com/charity-web/charity/finalCharityHomepage.action?charityId=1008779

Mothers' UNION
Christian care for families
Diocese of Newcastle

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