**Unit Reports for Trustees**

**Report on Action and Outreach September 2024**

AFIA administration has occupied most of the time since January 2024. At the beginning of January I updated and made contact with the 12 plus organisations, and several individual clergy, youth and family workers and volunteers, who refer clients for AFIA caravan holidays. These include Intensive Family Support, Childrens’ Social care, and MSTCAN Childrens’ and Families Directorate, NDAS (Northumberland Domestic Abuse Services).

I sent them updated referral forms, and processed the applications.

I introduced myself to the caravan group booking contacts. Haven Berwick caravan bookings are done on line, then the national group booking person is telephoned with the name of the main guest. Cresswell Towers (Parkdean) are booked by a direct phone call to the group bookings contact.

AFIA nationally has now adopted a policy to which I contributed as a result of the Community of interest AFIA Zoom meetings. Safeguarding has been a part of the policy.

12 caravan holidays have been booked so far in 2024, benefitting 29 adults (this number includes children over 16), 30 children between 16-4, 3 children under 4 ( a total of 62 people). A further 13th booking is in the pipeline. I have sent booking confirmation forms to the sponsors, and to the beneficiaries, and kept them updated on information sent to me as the person win in whose name the bookings have been made for MU. My thanks go to Julian Brown, who has paid all bookings by return of email. I have kept records of all bookings, and AFIA finance.

For Action and Outreach, I have dealt with correspondence resulting from my funding applications. I composed a letter for Proctor and Gamble listing all the areas in which MU Action and outreach is involved. I have answered email and telephone enquiries about Action and Outreach.

So far I have given 9 talks on Action and Outreach related subjects to MU branches. When attending deanery or Diocesan MU events, I have encouraged branches to support AFIA and fill or contribute to Peoples’ Kitchen bags. I have delivered a few rucksacks, and items to fill rucksacks, for prisoners on the day of their release, to Norma Willmott.

I have met with the Diocesan president, and with the hospital bags co-ordinator for Northumberland North, Julie Lingham. I have received a list of Action and Outreach activities carried out by branches and deaneries.

Action and Outreach have enabled GP Services (NHS) refugee and asylum seeker social prescribing to provide baby equipment to 10 families. I have delivered adult clothes to ‘Walking With’ Refugee centre in Wallsend three times this year.

I have collected and delivered baby furniture, and / or clothes to a mid Northumberland mother and childrens’ refuge, R21, and to Ridley Villas, a mother and baby hostel in Newcastle, several times this year.

Following from our MU gathering in Benwell, our chaplain, Anne Marr, has continued the link with Benwell churches through the ‘Something wonderful is happening in Benwell.’ Community engagement through a café in St. James’ church. MU have already made a start with a gift to the kitchen of an air fryer and a slow cooker to ease the pressure on time and make catering safer. The cook-cum-churchwarden-cum-Anna Chaplain, is Shirley. Lakeland were very helpful and donated a £20 gift token as well as Anne Marr’s 15% discount on the card. Total cost: £129, with a pastry mat and dis-joint-able scissors thrown in.

Hospital bags have been supplied to the Northumbria NHS Foundation Trust through Sheila Walker (c 40 bags 3-4 times a year)and Julie Lingham (who have reported their deliveries), and to St. Nicholas hospital by Pam Taylor, and unbeknown other MU sources.

Diana has made contact with this year’s Girls Are Proud liaison worker for Changing Lives, Izzy Rowland. We shall have a planning meeting on 7.10.2024 at 12.00 at St. Margaret’s, Scotswood, for the Christmas party for the GAP clients, in which MU Action and outreach is involved.

I have kept a group of interested MU members informed regarding Action and Outreach activities. We meet before the MU Diocesan Council meetings at M & S café at Kingston Park for more detailed updates. I invited three interested members to attend the Spring Units meeting by Zoom. On 12. September 2024 10.30-12.15pm the face to face Units meeting at the cathedral took place. There will be an informal A & O team meeting at 12.00 before the 11. October MU Diocesan Council meeting. The date for the bag packing for the Peoples’ Kitchen items from MU branches who have made donations, but which are not able to fill bags themselves, is Sat. 9. Nov. 10.30-12.15pm. The Peoples’ Kitchen gift bag day at Church House is booked for 29.11.2024 from 9.30am -12.00, when the bags will be collected by the van.

Diana Macnaughton

**Faith & Policy Report for Trustees Meeting on 27.09.24**

Prayer is at the heart of all that MU works for, and The Faith department supports this for all MU members in the diocese and worldwide.

1. At the Cathedral, midday prayers at 12.00 are led by MU members on the first Thursday of each month. These have a varied number of people attending but are open to all members.

2. Anne Marr led the Eucharist Service at the Cathedral for The Annunciation and Mary Sumner Day this year. These services are open to all members and are well attended.

3. Footsteps in Faith has led us through many activities over the summer months. Starting with ‘Something Wonderful’ at Benwell and ending with our day at Morpeth. A selection of activity ideas were shared with all members to get them involved. Following our day at Benwell, the Mothers’ Union have continued a ‘Something Wonderful’ community project with the parish team. They have received a £5,000 grant towards their work.

4. Plans are currently in place for The Triennial Service of Celebration and Thanksgiving on Wednesday 11th December at 2.00 at St. Gabriel’s Church.

5. Each year we produce a Wave of Prayer service so that we can pray for our link dioceses from the Prayer Diary. This will be available later in the autumn.

6. A successful retreat was held this year, led by Rev. Robert Lawrance. The next retreat be held on 23rd and 24th June 2025, led by Canon Clare MacLaren. Details and application form will be in the Winter Journal.

7. A group of members are making kneelers for the cathedral. Work is progressing slowly. If anyone is interested in making a kneeler please contact Helen Cooper or myself.

8. Lorna Beadle and a team of members have continued to pray through the ‘prayer chain’ for many years. Lorna has now retired from this role and at present no one has agreed to continue the work. Please contact me if you feel you could lead this group. We express our thanks for the many years of service Lorna has given to Mothers’ Union.

9. Meg Johnson cares for our Indoor members. The diocese now send cards to those members whose membership contribution are paid. We ask branches to care for indoor members who do not pay for their subscription. Copies of Connected and Prayer Diaries are available if requested from me. Thanks to Meg for her continued work in this role.

10. We link with MSH through Faith Community Of Interest, with Zoom meetings, where Faith leaders in all dioceses link up. Ish Lennox is keen to liaise, to find out about the needs of members. Services are prepared and put on MSH website. Newcastle Diocese have contributed to 2025 Prayer Diary.

11. Our website is full of great information. Prayers and resources are available with the monthly prayers and suitable services from MSH. Anne Marr’s regular Chaplaincy Posts are inspiring reading, sent out by email for all members.

12. Sylvia Hickey links with Community Of Interest at MSH for Domestic Abuse. 16 days of Activism is 25th November – 10th December. This theme will be reflected in Midday Prayers at the Cathedral on Thursday 5th December. A white Ribbon Service will be held on Saturday 23rd November at 2.30 at Trinity Church, Gosforth.

13. We are still looking for someone to take leadership of the Faith & Policy department. This is an amazing role and please speak to me if you are interested and wish further information.

14. Thank you to everyone who has contributed to the work of Faith and Policy, but especially to Anne, our chaplain, who has been an inspiration to work with.

Jackie Moore

**Marketing and Communications Report September 2024**

The main point is to thank Elizabeth Dean and Anne Marr for all their hard work inputting information to the web site. I think the site looks very good with lots of up-to-date information. Elizabeth is correct in suggesting that there is a lot more going on (especially in the area of projects) than we hear about. So the plea is to get branches to send information on projects for the website and the Journal.

Thanks to Ann Blight for all her up-to-date pieces on Facebook, and to Barbara for her work on the Journal. The journal always looks very impressive.

I have handed over my stock of leaflets promoting Mother’s Union and the work of Action and Outreach so they can be included in the welcome packs for new clergy to encourage them to support MU. The Qcode cards about MU produced by Ann Marr are also proving useful especially with younger potential members

Special mention too should be made about “Footsteps in Faith”. I think it raised the profile of MU at the cathedral and in Morpeth. The personal stories were inspirational too. The quiz encouraged active participation and we all learned a thing or two about Northern female saints

It would be really useful to have information about branch activities in the lead up to Christmas sufficiently early to put on the website and on Facebook.

Linda Benneworth

**SAFEGUARDING REPORT**

**September 2024**

Mothers’ Union Core Safeguarding Training is now available. Trustees have received this training and over the next few months it will be rolled out to all Branch Leaders, (or Branch representatives), Deanery, by Deanery.

Initially this will be done by Zoom, but if needed a face-to-face session will be provided.

Information on dates for this training will be available very soon.

I welcome this opportunity to have at least one member from each branch given this training.

Sheila Walker

**Diocesan Members Report October 2024**

24 M.U. members met in April of whom only 11 were actual Diocesan Members. Opening prayers were led by St Nicholas newly ordained curate Rev Ruth Stradling (herself a new M.U. member). Our speaker was Canon Barbara Packer who gave her presentation on M.U. overseas. This gave members a greater understanding of the worldwide M.U. concept.

Midday prayers were led by Rev Diana Macnaughton a Diocesan Member and A&O Co-0rdinator.

As always our meeting ended with a light lunch and time to socialise.

Sylvia Hickey. D.M Co-Ord