



# COMMUNICATE



## Happy Anniversary!

This year is an exciting one, as we celebrate 150 years of Mothers' Union!

Did you watch 'Songs of Praise' on Mothering Sunday? It was filmed in Liverpool and gave an opportunity to find out a little more about who we are and what we do! If you didn't manage to see it then you can catch it on BBC iplayer.

Our national celebrations take place on the 10<sup>th</sup> June 2026 with Evensong at St Paul's Cathedral at 5pm. All available tickets are now on general release.

The following day, the 11<sup>th</sup> June 2026, there will be the Annual Gathering at the Emmanuel Centre which is next to Mary Sumner House!


If you haven't got your ticket for either event and you want to go, please get them soon as ticket sales will close on 16<sup>th</sup> May, 2026.

Mothers' Union have produced a prayer book 'Lighting the Way' – 150 prayers written by members from all over the World – along with a celebrity or two, as well as some members from our Diocese! The prayer book is available through the MU online shop or speak to Hazel & Raymond who can order it for you, through MUE.

As always, I have so enjoyed visiting Branches and Deanery events - please do remember to invite me to yours, it's always great to share in fellowship!

As usual, we have our calendar of events for 2026 at the back of the magazine which will be updated as we go through the year.

Thank you for all that you do.

With Love, 

Helen Lynett, Diocesan President

# Who's Who in MU

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<p><b>Nicky Vaughan</b> Vice President 01788 510213</p>  <p>drawers51@gmail.com</p>	<p><b>Sylvia Rowley</b> Diocesan Treasurer 01604 413829</p> <p>sylvia.rowley@ntlworld.com</p>	<p><b>Sue Merrifield</b> Vice President 01536 238320</p>  <p>donandsuemerrifield@gmail.com</p>
<p><b>Ruth Gould</b> Trustee 01604 846508</p>  <p>ruthgould139@btinternet.com</p>	<p><b>Diocesan Mothers Union Website</b> <a href="http://mothersunionpeterborough.org">http://mothersunionpeterborough.org</a></p> <p><b>Mothers Union Website</b> <a href="https://www.mothersunion.org">https://www.mothersunion.org</a></p>	<p><b>Hazel Goodman</b> Trustee 07967 838614</p>  <p>hazel@chestnut.clara.net</p>
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<p><b>Diocesan Members Coordinators</b></p> <p>Archdeaconry of Northampton: Barbara Haynes 01933 222612</p> <p>Archdeaconry of Oakham: Kay Short 07887 526535</p>		<p><b>Indoor Members Coordinator</b></p> <p>Hazel Goodman 07967 838614</p> <p>hazel@chestnut.clara.net</p>
<p><b>Cards for Members</b> Pam Handley pamartinhandley@btinternet.com</p>	<p><b>Prayer Chain</b> Julia Freeman 01780 720869</p>	<p><b>MU Safeguarding Officer</b> Sue Merrifield 01536 238320</p>

## Diocesan Quiet Day

Our Chaplain, Revd. Deborah, will be leading our Diocesan Quiet Day at St. Peter's Church, Church Street, Irthlingborough. NN9 5SG  
Saturday, 9<sup>th</sup> May 2026  
10.30am for 11am start, finishing at 3pm.

Please bring your own lunch ~ refreshments will be provided.  
It would be helpful to know numbers ~ please let Jean Rose know if you are coming!  
Cost £5

## **Celebrating 150 Years of Mothers' Union: Join Us, Join In – Lighting the Way for Generations to Come**



2026 marks 150 years since Mothers' Union was founded in the small parish church of Old Alresford, Hampshire, by Mary Sumner - a home-educated young vicar's wife with a powerful vision. She dreamed of women, regardless of class or status, coming together in faith to support one another and strengthen family life within the church.

From that small flame of an idea, a global movement was born. Today, 150 years later, Mothers' Union has grown to around 4 million members in 84 countries, working to improve the lives of individuals, families, and communities around the world. At the heart of all we do is our belief that faith and compassion can transform lives.

“Let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.” (Matthew 5:16)

And shine a light is what our members do. Whether someone finds themselves unexpectedly in hospital, a family is grappling with a parent going to prison, a baby is born prematurely, Mothers' Union members are there offering care, support, and love without judgment. We speak out against injustice, create safe spaces for conversation, and run parenting support groups - all helping to build stronger, more resilient communities.

All of our work is guided by our three core pillars of transformation: Ending Violence – promoting peace and safety, Ending Injustice – advancing gender justice and Ending Poverty – fostering self-reliance and resilience.

Our global programmes include literacy and savings groups, parenting and resilience training, and domestic abuse awareness campaigns. These initiatives are rooted in local communities - we listen first, then respond with practical, faith-led action. Every day, globally, our members carry out thousands of quiet acts of service that bring hope and healing.

Mothers' Union today reflects the diversity of the modern world. We are a movement that continues to evolve, welcoming people of all backgrounds and identities. While we are a women-led movement, men are welcome to join! 150 years of courage, care, and community, and we're just getting started – so why not join us?

To find out more about what's happening near you or how to become a member, visit our website <http://mothersunionpeterborough.org> or email: [Peterborough.diocese@mothersunion.org](mailto:Peterborough.diocese@mothersunion.org) - we would love you to join us and join in!

*If you would like a copy of this article for your church magazine, please contact me and I will email it to you!*

*Heba*

## Bibles for Five Wells Prison

It was mentioned at the November 2025 Forum, that HMP Five Wells would like some copies of the Action Bible for their prisoners. When we had our AGM at Wollaston & Strixton Mothers' Union we had some money in the fund and so decided to buy a couple for the prison. As I also sit on the DCC, I mentioned this at one of our meetings, as St Mary's Church Wollaston were looking to increase their Mission Giving, and were looking for a suitable recipient, it was a question of right place, right time – thank you God! The PCC agreed to give £150 to the project – oh good, I thought, another 6 Bibles! Then the PCC suggested we take it to the congregation and see if we could fund match the money. Well, I was astounded that by January we had received £511 in total, so we ordered 28 Bibles for the prison.

Once they had arrived, a congregation member donated another 20 copies of the New King James version, so on Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> February, all the men in church were called out to hold a Bible, but oh not enough men, so some of the ladies held them too, and all 48 were blessed by Revd. Canon Margaret Johnson. Such a wonderful occasion of God moving people's hearts to give to a great cause.

*Jean Rose*



### Easter at HMP Five Wells

For Easter at HMP Five Wells we have provided 200 Prayer cards. The cards will be distributed to those attending services over the Easter period.



As light dawns on Easter Sunday, we discover anew the joy that Jesus has conquered death. In doing so, Jesus gives all of us, His brothers and sisters, a way to eternal life. Thank you God for Jesus. Thank you that we live in hope not fear; Thank you that you light the path before us; Guide us in your ways that we may walk in your goodness and grace. Amen.

**Peterborough Diocese**  
**Mothers' Union Prayers**  
**July to December 2026**



**July**

In this our 150<sup>th</sup> birthday year may we celebrate Mothers' Union and all its works and projects as we ask others to join us and join in. Father God, bless our efforts to help those in need that we see in our communities and as we do, so we grow your Kingdom. In Jesus name we ask. **Amen**

*9<sup>th</sup> July 2026 7pm AGM at St Mary's Church Wollaston*

**August**

We pray for our Celebration Service at Peterborough Cathedral on Mary Sumner Day. May our words and worship be pleasing to you Almighty God that we shall touch lives for Christ as Mary Sumner did 150 years ago. **Amen**

*9<sup>th</sup> August 2026 Mary Sumner Day*

**September**

Our international organisation links us to members across the world and we give thanks for our Christian families in Rumbek in South Sudan, in Soroti in Uganda, in Aba Ngwa North and Oyo in Nigeria and in the North Eastern Caribbean & Aruba in the West Indies. May our prayers bring answers to the problems they face whether it be unrest or natural disasters. **Amen**

*21<sup>st</sup> – 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2026 Wave of Prayer*

**October**

Please pray for our Mothers' Union Trustees as they seek to prepare the way forward to the next triennium starting in 2028. We pray for the succession planning, that there will be willing volunteers to carry on the work of Mothers' Union in this diocese. We ask your blessing Almighty God, on the work of AFIA and the Lunch Bags, and all that we undertake in the local prisons. **Amen**

*6<sup>th</sup> October 2026 Vice-Presidents Meeting 20<sup>th</sup> October 2026 Trustees Meeting*

**November**

As we mourn the loss of those who died in war on Remembrance Sunday, so we also celebrate Jesus Christ who rose from the dead to open a way to eternal life to all who believe in Him. Thank you, Jesus, that we can spend eternity with you. **Amen**

*14<sup>th</sup> November 2026 10am Eucharist & Forum at St Mary's Church Wollaston*

**December**

This month we remember those whose lives have been affected by violence and coercion, so their homes become places of fear and uncertainty. Father, we ask that you pour your peace over all affected in this way. Ease the pain and suffering by bringing resolution. In Jesus name we ask. **Amen**

*25<sup>th</sup> November – 10<sup>th</sup> December 2026 16 Days of Activism against gender-based violence*

## Diocesan Projects...

### Pencil Cases

Thank you to everyone who has been busy making pencil cases in support of our new Diocesan Project, working with the Phoenix Resource Centre.

It's not just MU members making them, other supporters of our project are busy making them too – maybe we will reach 7,000 after all!

Patterns are available on our website.

*Thank you!*



### School Foodbag Project

More Branches are starting to provide foodbags for their local schools to help families over the school holidays. Thank you!

The project has always been available for primary aged children, eligible for Free School Meals.

At our last Trustee meeting, it was agreed that we would expand this, opening the project up to secondary aged children. Age should not be a factor where food is needed – after all, in this Diocese we always pride ourselves on seeing a need and acting upon it.



Recently, Sue Merrifield and Hazel Goodman represented the Frances Lunch Project by receiving a cheque from Tesco's Community Champion for £499.08p.

This was raised through the sale of books donated to the Store's Charity Bookstall.

This will go towards providing much needed bags of food for families in Kettering area.

## More miracles in Antigua

As many of you know I first met Ephena Matthhew in 2020. It was a miracle that in wishing to visit the Caribbean I chose Antigua and stayed on the south of the island in English Harbour. This was the birthplace of the MU diocesan President who came to meet me on my arrival. We had much in common as she had come with her family to England as part of the “Windrush” immigration and settled in Leicester. Ephena trained as a nurse in Leicester and nursed in our local hospitals for 20 years. She returned to Antigua with her husband but has returned every year to England to continue to nurse for a few months and visit family. Many of you will have met her on such visits. I am delighted that this year she took up her role as one of our worldwide trustees. This is an important and busy role for MU. She will be joining us for the 150 year celebrations in London and in Durban. I was blessed to be able to escape the cold this winter as I again spent a month in Antigua. I worship each Sunday with Ephena and her MU colleagues and attend their MU meetings and social events. The pictures show her receiving an award by the Governor General, the Queen’s representative.

*Jill Cannings*



**150**   
**YEARS** Join us, Join in

## Patience is a Virtue

A lot of life seems to be waiting for things to happen – waiting for workmen to come, waiting for hospital appointments, and waiting for a new Vicar to arrive.

My friend broke her thumb slipping on ice last winter, she spent a lot of time waiting for the plaster to come off, only to discover, her finger had been broken as well, and she needed a lot of physiotherapy to get the whole hand working again. It took months, months of patiently doing exercises, and praying and hoping it would all come right in the end. Fortunately, she now has a hand that does all it could before the accident.

I have spoken about my husband before, and you'll be pleased to know that he has now had both hips replaced and is progressing really well. But oh, such a lot of waiting, waiting for a proper diagnosis (we were originally told the problem was in his back), waiting for appointments, waiting for X rays and scans, and then the frustrating time of waiting to go down to the operating theatre, and it being delayed by 3 hours! Another of my friends has a serious cancer and was waiting on results from just before Christmas, then waiting on a meeting of the doctors involved to decide on a course of action, and then being told she has to have an 'urgent' appointment for which she is still waiting – 2 months after being told it was urgent. She has a marvellously calm attitude to it all. She strongly believes everything is in God's timing, and if she has to wait a bit then the wait will make the result even better.

In Mothers' Union, we wait for speakers to acknowledge if they are coming and what they will talk about (sorry Midge!), we wait for Mary Sumner House to respond to an email and hopefully, we wait anticipating the enjoyment that will unfurl at our next Branch, Deanery and Diocesan meetings.

Through all the waiting, we can either let ourselves get really chewed up, anxious, nervous and fearful, or we can trust in God, and believe it's all in his plan and his timing is perfect, so there's no need to worry.

I love the song 'Take Courage' by Kristene Di Marco, and you can hear it by following this link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LJoABwNMzvM>

It speaks of God's faithfulness during the waiting times – "take courage my heart, stay steadfast my soul – He's in the waiting".

We just have to trust and believe He has our best interests at heart, as the Bible tells us, hang on to the hope and cultivate that fruit of the Spirit which is patience.

*Jean Rose*

Planning for **MU Sunday 'Takeover'**? The following resources are available from [mothersunion.org](http://mothersunion.org)

Mary Sumner talk, presentation, and leaflet.

MU timeline.

Social images.

Key Messages toolkit.

History of MU leaflet, presentation, and talk.

## Photos from around the Diocese

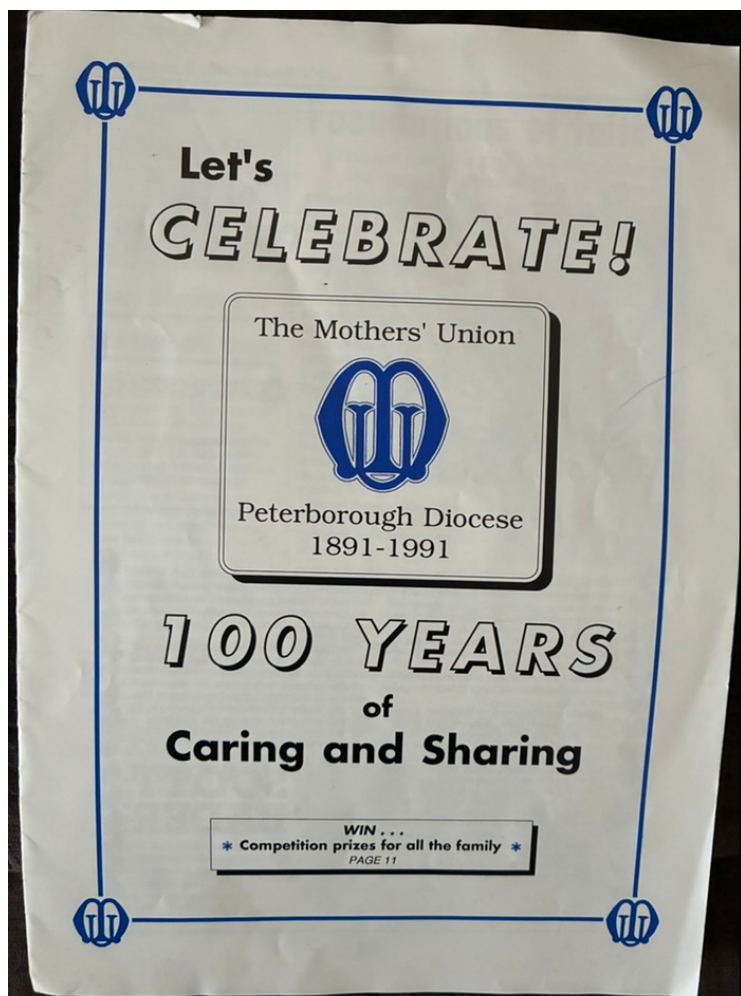
### Christmas Tree Festivals



Rothwell



Irthlingborough



### Our 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary *Souvenir Programme*

Just a reminder to please take photographs of your celebratory events across the year!

One of our members from Irthlingborough recently came across this lovely reminder '100 Years of Caring and Sharing'.

Inside, it features photos of members as well as articles about current programmes of the time as well as the odd advert – one of them is for Scott Bader who allow us to use their car park for our Forum meetings!

## Kettering Deanery Service for Lady Day

On March 25<sup>th</sup> we held our Deanery Lady Day Service at St. Andrew's Church Kettering. This was included with our usual Wednesday Morning Communion Service which starts at 10am. The Lady Day Service was led by Sandra Reid, Lay Worship Leader and Mothers' Union Member. Brian her husband played the organ and a very moving reflection was given by Maggie Price, again both of whom are Mothers' Union Members. Penny Knight from Holy Trinity Church, Rothwell gave the reading and Hazel Goodman from St. Peter and Paul's Church led us in the intercessions. Rev Tom Houston and George Brett (curate) officiated with the Communion Service.

We were hoping that after the Service that we would be able to watch the Installation of Dame Sarah Mullally as the new Archbishop of Canterbury, as originally we had been led to believe that this would be held at 11am. Unfortunately, this was changed to 2.30pm so we had to make do with coffee and a chat before we all enjoyed a ploughman's lunch provided by St. Andrew's Church Mothers' Union Committee.



*Hilary Whitwell*

## We saw You...

We saw you as a baby, meek and mild in your mother's arms.

We saw you as a little boy, teaching the world of love divine.

We saw you as a man, Satan trying to whisk you away.

We saw you as our Saviour, hanging on a tree so high.

We saw you in majesty, of angels from above.

We see you now, as we live this life, and walk the path you trod.

*Catherine Galvin*



A F I A

Away from it all



**Could you be an **Away From It All** Co-Ordinator?**

**If so, we need you!**

We are seeking two members to work together and co-ordinate this much-loved MU project... If you think this is something you could do (and would like to do) then please get in touch, I would. Love to hear from you!

*Helen*

### **Where has the time gone?**

It is hard to believe that at our Spring Forum in 2027 we will be electing our next Diocesan President for 2028 - 2030! Wow! Why is the election so early? It's partly to shadow some of the things the current DP does, for example attending the Provincial Conference. Election papers will be distributed with the November 2026 mailing.

Our Winter Forum in 2027 will see the election of Vice Presidents and Trustees for 2028 – 2030. Election Papers will be distributed with the April 2027 Mailing.

For all Officers, the term of office is for three years with a maximum of six years. For some, their six-year term of office will naturally come to an end at the end of 2027. Just a reminder that everyone has to be re-elected!

Why am I mentioning it now? Well, in time past I have spoken about succession planning and so it's good to start thinking ahead!

### **'Communicate'**

You may recall that I sought a new Editor for 'Communicate'. I first took on the role when Jill Cannings became DP in 2019. I feel that the time is right to make way for someone new!

I am delighted that Hazel Goodman has volunteered to take on the task ~ Hazel has a great deal of publishing experience which she will bring to 'Communicate'.

Please send in your articles for the next edition of ComMUnicate  
by 6<sup>th</sup> October 2026 to [hazel@chestnut.clara.net](mailto:hazel@chestnut.clara.net)

Hazel Goodman  
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Kettering  
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NN15 7BG

*Thank you!*



Diocese of  
Peterborough

## Calendar 2026

Date	Event	Location / Notes
9.5.2026	Diocesan Quiet Day	10.30am–3pm, St Peter's Irthlingborough
2.6.2026	VP Meeting	7pm – 9pm on Zoom
10.6.2026	150 <sup>th</sup> Celebratory Service	5pm Evensong, St. Paul's Cathedral
11.6.2026	'Annual Gathering'	The Emmanuel Centre, London (Next to Mary Sumner House)
23.6.2026	Trustees Meeting	7pm – 9pm on Zoom
9.7.2026	Forum AGM	7pm – 9pm
18.7.2026	'Day of Celebration'	In Branch or Deanery
9.8.2026	Mary Sumner Day Evensong	3.30pm Peterborough Cathedral
5.9.2026	Deanery Leader Coffee Morning	Wollaston
21- 23.9.2026	Wave of Prayer	In Branch or Deanery
6.10.2026	VP Meeting	7pm – 9pm on Zoom
20.10.2026	Trustees Meeting	7pm – 9pm on Zoom
14.11.2026	Eucharist & Forum	10am
	Deanery Meetings	
21.11.26	No More 1 in 3 / Global Walk	10.45am Peterborough Town Centre
25.11 - 10.12.2026	16 Days of Activism	In Branch or Deanery

*Reminder.* All members are invited to attend Forum meetings.

Refreshments are provided – please bring your own lunch when applicable.

### **Car Parking for Mothers' Union at St Mary's Church Wollaston**

We are grateful to Scott Baders for allowing us to park in their car park which is adjacent to the church.

There is limited parking at the SB Commonwealth Hall (1<sup>st</sup> turning on the right when entering the SB property), further parking is available by following the roadway around past Wollaston Hall to the end of the road. There will be a few minutes' walk back to the church from this parking area.

*We look forward to seeing you there!*