



NOVEMBER 2020

NEWSLETTER

God counts on us.

Only God can create, but we are called upon to value that creation.

Only God can give life, but we are called to transmit it and respect it.

Only God can make growth happen, but we are called to guide it and give it direction.

Only God can give faith, but we are called to be signs of God to one another.

Only God can give love, but we are called to grow in caring for each other.

Only God can give hope, but we are called to enable people to believe in themselves.

Only God can give power and energy, but we are called upon to get things going.

Only God can give peace, but we are called to build bonds that bring people together.

Only God can give happiness, but we are invited to laugh.

Only God is the way, but we are called to show it to others.

Only God is the light, but we are called to let it shine forth in the world.

Only God can make miracles happen, we are invited to offer our five loaves and two fishes.

Only God can do the impossible, but it is up to us to do what is possible.

Author unknown

I have taken part in a number of Zoom meetings organised by Mary Sumner House to keep up to date with all that is happening in this time of change for all of us. This prayer was used by Catherine Kyte at the start of our meeting about Metamorphosis.

At the start of this second period of tighter restrictions maybe we will be able to cope better knowing that it is time limited. It is good that now many are able to listen by phone or use Zoom to join their church services. *'Only God can do the impossible, but it is up to us to do what is possible'*

My thoughts and prayers are with you all
Hazel

Please remember that one way of supporting the MU is to buy our cards. As well as birthday, sympathy and other cards we have a full selection of Christmas cards (as shown in the October newsletter) and a few diaries and calendars. Margaret Martin or I can always find a way of getting them to you. I also have the most recent brochure I can send if you do not have one.

I also have for sale copies of 'PRAYING IN EVERY SEASON', containing 72 prayers that reflect the times and seasons throughout the year. The cost is £3.50. Copies of 'DEAR LORD' a collection of prayers and poems from Mothers' Union members across the world are also available at £3.00 per copy.

I am reminding people as they are lovely presents for friends at this time of limited shopping.

NO MORE 1 in 3

#NoMore1in3 #1in3NotMe

@MothersUnion

Did you know that 1 in 3 women worldwide have experienced **domestic or gender violence**? Mothers' Union as a leading Women's Organisation believes this fact is unacceptable and from November 25th - December 10th every year we join the global 16 days of activism campaign against domestic and gender violence. This form of abuse has been very much in the public eye this year with a significant increase in domestic violence as a result of the control measures against Covid 19.

Usually Ely Diocesan MU are active in holding a banner witness outside Ely Cathedral while leading a silent vigil for the victims inside the west door. We also have a display of campaign literature, further information and a prayer tree in the cathedral during the time of the campaign which is the work of the Cathedral MU Branch members. The Diocesan MU Trustees are also involved and last year there was a further display showing the different ways MU members are involved all through the year with supporting victims in local Women's Refuges. The Cathedral are unable to let us hold our silent vigil and because of the new restrictions introduced on November 5th there will be no display either.

We know many branches have similar ways to show their support for this campaign in their own parish churches. We do hope that despite the restrictions every MU member will be able to support. This year as part of our Campaign, MU are holding their first Global Day of Action, in supporting the 16 Days of Activism around the world, on Saturday 5th December. Mothers Union have produced a set of resources which include prayers, a service, bible verses, a template letter to send to your MP, a smart tea cosy knitting pattern and ideas for fund raising (in our limited time of social distancing) I am preparing material from this website for all our members which will include a service which we hope will encourage you to support this excellent cause. This will be sent to you soon meanwhile do look on the MU website www.mothersunion.org. We do hope there is something for everyone.

MU Thursday Prayers 19th November

We are, due to national restrictions, unable to meet in the cathedral. We will however be meeting on Zoom. **The ID is 827 7838 0218** (no password) and it would be good to see as many of you as possible. **Zoom will be open from 10am** which will give time to sort out technical difficulties anyone may have and even maybe time for a short chat.

If you are able please join us on **Thursday 19th November the prayers are from 10.30am-11am** when Jean Webb (co-ordinator of our Faith in Action team) will lead our prayers and on Thursday 17th December when we will be led by Angela Jones, who runs the Edward Bear Mother and Toddler Worship Group.

It is always a good time to keep up to date with what is happening in different areas of the MU in the Diocese. Last month it was good to hear the prayers and talk from Sue Claydon on Peace. Thursday prayers are also sent out with the Newsletter for those unable to take part on Zoom.

God bless - Helen Banyard (co-ordinator Praying our Faith)



Many people attended Susan's funeral. A few in person and a lot on Zoom from both this country and across the world. Below is a Reflection from Philip which continues Susan's series of Reflections throughout her treatment this year.

Philip will write a personal note later about donations made in Susan's memory and his appreciation for all the support offered to him. He adds that there are indications that the total collected for the MU Diocese will be a "substantial" amount.

Hazel

REFLECTION FOR NOVEMBER

You are like a light for the whole world. A city built on a hill cannot be hidden. No-one lights a lamp and puts it under a bowl; instead he puts it on the lampstand, where it gives light for everyone in the house. In the same way your light must shine before people, so that they will see the good things you do and praise your Father in heaven. Matthew 5: 14-16 (Good News Bible)

My dear Susan was one such light and, if the number of messages I have received from her friends and colleagues all round the world are any guide, she was to a great many people (including me), bringing them to faith or helping them to a greater faith. No-one was in doubt what Susan stood for and represented, it shone through everything she did.

When one considers that everyone left behind when a loved one dies goes through the pain of the loss, it is amazing how unprepared one is for the depth of emotion when it happens. Perhaps nothing can prepare one for the sheer finality of the separation; the realisation that so many possibly mundane but pleasurable shared moments will never again happen. And the uncertainty of what will happen in the future – I believe that I will one day be reunited with Susan, but how and in what way? At first, in spite of huge support from family and friends, life seemed to be pointless at times, just a passing of time until my time also was up. But through prayer I came to realise that as my time is not yet come my Lord in heaven must have a further purpose for me on earth. But what? Lacking inspiration I resolved as a first step to read the Bible and hope for guidance to light my path ahead. I had only just started when the Sunday Collect was:

Blessed Lord, who caused all Holy Scriptures to be written for our learning: help us so to hear them, to read, mark, learn and inwardly digest them that, through patience, and the comfort of your holy word, we may embrace and for ever hold fast the hope of everlasting life, which you have given us in our Saviour Jesus Christ.

A coincidence? I think not. My selected reading plan then gave me the verses from Matthew at the top of this piece. A further coincidence?

If Susan was a light in this world, the highest tribute I can pay her is to attempt to continue that light and to try to live up to her example, with the Lord's help, until I have concluded the tasks set for me. Perhaps we should all take a step back from time to time and re-examine what we are doing and how it aligns with God's great design?

Philip Baker (2nd November 2020)

November Update from Faith In Action

Thank you to those who responded to this year's appeal for vouchers for the Refuges and Hostels. Details are reprinted below, for anyone/branch still considering this form of Christmas Giving, together with suggestions of preferred /local shops

Knitting News! Our Wish List this month –

Clothing for 6-9, and 9-12 months babies

Mitts for babies of all ages

Adult hats, scarves and mitts/gloves

Soft Twiddle Muffs



We currently don't have outlets for new-born baby hats and blankets. I am sure they will be wanted again, just not at the moment. If you have some ready, could you please hold on to them for a little while? Thank you.

Jean Webb (Faith in Action Coordinator)

The charities and agencies we wish to support this Christmas

Cambridge Women's Aid (CWA) **Any shop**

contact direct 01223 350764

refuge@cambridgewa.org.uk

Fenland Refuge ***Aldi preferred.**

Contact : Pat Case 01354 660742

patcase.uk@gmail.com

Mid-Cambs Refuge ***Lidl, Iceland ,Tesco**

Contact: Liz Elson 01480 211726

jimelson@talktalk.net

Whitworth House **Primark/Any**

Contact: Jo Wibberley 01223248728

jowibs.mu@gmail.com

Timestop (Peterborough) **Any**

Contact: Margaret Martin,01345 654434

oldtoad.martin@talktalk.net

50 Backpacks **Morrisons/any**

Deliver/post to 5, Bridge Street, Wisbech PE13 1AF

**Aldi and Lidl Vouchers can only be purchased online.*

Many of you will know Esther Yabbacome who was leader at Downham Market. She and her husband David have been MU members for many years, and Esther has held a number of posts in other diocese.

Esther is 66 and is now in a care home. She is now unable to stand or sit and has poor communication.

Please keep Esther and David in your prayers at this difficult and sad time for them both.

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We had hoped to be meeting in Ely Cathedral today, 2nd Lockdown cancelled that plan. Please join in with these prayers when you can. You will need to print them off if joining the Zoom meeting as they will not be on the screen.

Let us start by saying-

The Thursday Prayer.

Heavenly father, you have called us apart to share in the world wide fellowship of Christians united in prayer. Take our prayers, we humbly ask, fill them with your love and power and use them in the cause of your glorious kingdom, though Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Our reading this morning is from Matthew 22:34-40

The Great Commandment

But when the Pharisees heard that he had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered together. And one of them, a lawyer, asked him a question to test him. Teacher, "which is the great commandment in the Law?"

And he said to him, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And the second is like it: You shall love your neighbour as yourself.

On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.

Our theme this month is AFIA , the "Away from it All Holiday" scheme, and the following section has been prepared by Di Sabel who is the Bookings Officer for Afia. Di has not had the easiest year to start in this post, with all the uncertainty, having to rearrange bookings several times, and ensure all the families were made aware of new regulations. We thank her for all she has done for families and for the M U.

Psalm 100 A Psalm for giving thanks.

1. Make a joyful noise unto the LORD, all ye lands.
2. *Serve the LORD with gladness: come before his presence with singing.*
3. Know ye that the LORD he is God: it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.
4. *Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, and bless his name.*
5. ***For the LORD is good; his mercy is everlasting; and his truth endureth to all generations***

We are thinking of the Away From It All holidays scheme. All dioceses in Britain and Ireland play their part, albeit in different ways. Some dioceses own their own holiday caravan, and a rota of members service it between each use, how much more they have had to do this year! A few diocese run holidays weeks i.e. in a large house, for several families at the same time, what a commitment that must be! Here in Ely we hire mobile homes at Searles Leisure Centre at Hunstanton and Searles generously give us a discount. We are

able to book accommodation suitable for the size and needs of the family. There are plenty of free activities to keep the children occupied, and the beach is just a 5 minute walk away. We also provide each child with some pocket money.

Here in Ely we are pleased that we have managed to provide holidays for 20 people this last Half Term, having had all the holidays booked at Easter cancelled. It is good that we have been able to make use of this school break. We received this feedback –“It was the best! We had some really great times. I can’t thank you enough for sorting it for us, it really was the best!”

The varied problems that are out there, despite COVID rearing its ugly head, are still there and we need to make sure we are able to keep up this important link through the AFIA holidays which support many of the different aspects of social life and, especially support vulnerable children. We give thanks for all those who have given generously of their time and money for these holidays to take place.

So we pray:

Heavenly Father, we give thanks that we were able to provide several families with holidays.

We give thanks for the support we receive from Searles Leisure Resort.

We give grateful thanks for all those who work there and provide for our families. They support in various ways but importantly those who we come in contact with at the end of the telephone are very special.

Lord in your mercy

Hear Our Prayer

Lord of all hope, we pray for all the Away From It All holidays and thank you for the blessing they are to so many families here and in other Dioceses. Families who are struggling, and carrying heavy loads. We pray for all those who volunteer, and all those involved in these holidays.

We pray for the families who enjoy these holidays that they will return refreshed and more able to continue their daily lives.

Lord in your mercy

Hear Our Prayer

God of compassion, we embrace our mission to share your love through helping those in adversity. May our efforts to help those whose lives have met with adversity be a source of hope and relief as they battle through times of hardship.

You are a loving God who gives us rest. Lift their burdens that they too might receive respite.

Amen.

Mothers Union Faith In Action Pocket Prayers)

Lord in your mercy

Hear Our Prayer

We say together from Psalm 145 v 14

The Lord upholds all those who fall and lifts up all who are bowed down.

Now we come to our intercessions, and today, we pray for:

The world-wide work of the Mothers’ Union - particularly at this time, with so many challenging situations and circumstances, For Sheran Harper, our World Wide President, and Chief Executive Bev Jullien.

We pray for all who work in Mary Sumner House, and remembering those who have been made redundant with the necessity of streamlining due to Covid.

We pray for all Provincial presidents and particularly Kathryn Anderson in our province of Canterbury.

We pray for all our MU members in this diocese - for Hazel Williams our Diocesan President and for our

diocesan Trustees. We pray for our branches, all members and supporters, leaders and committees, for the work they do to support those in need.

We remember before you Lord, our worldwide links in Lusaka (Zambia), Shyogwe (Rwanda), Sokoto and Ikka (Nigeria), Karimnaga (India) and the Diocesan Links with Kigali and Vellore. May they know your presence is with them.

We think of those members of our branches who particularly at this time need our prayers

May God bless all those for whom we pray. **Amen.**

We join together in the Mothers' Union Prayer

Loving Lord, we thank you for your love so freely given to us all. We pray for families around the world. Bless the work of the Mothers' Union as we seek to share your love through the encouragement, strengthening and support of marriage and family life. Empowered by your Spirit, may we be united in prayer and worship, and in love and service, reach out as your hands across the world. In Jesus' name. Amen.

We will say again the Thursday Prayer

Heavenly father, you have called us apart to share in the world wide fellowship of Christians united in prayer. Take our prayers, we humbly ask, fill them with your love and power and use them in the cause of your glorious kingdom, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

So let us think of members everywhere, as we give each other the blessing of The Grace

May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with us all, evermore. Amen.

Jean Webb
Faith In Action coordinator