

SEPTEMBER NEWSLETTER 2021

Faith In Action, September 2021

Jean Webb, Coordinator jmw35n@gmail.com

I hope everyone is looking forward to a bit more “normality” in our lives, and being able to meet together again.

If you have been wondering how to support the Afghans who are coming to this area, “**Love In A Bag Cambridgeshire**” are collecting, and aim to have collection points across the county. Their Wish List is similar to the items we would put in Welcome packs for the refugees and hostels.

Shampoo and conditioner, toothbrush and paste, soap/shower gel, deodorant (and sanitary products).

Extras – a selection from perfume/aftershave, cosmetics, baby/face wipes, tissues, hairbrush/comb/accessories, hand cream/body lotion, stationery, socks, underpants.

No scissors/tweezers/razors or other sharps. No food or perishables

All items must be brand new, and in sealed packaging for hygiene. Please put in a bag or Rucksack, and label for man/woman. Include a handwritten note to show someone cares.

In Ely, there is a collection point at The Kings Arms in St Mary’s Street. .

“Love In A Bag Cambridgeshire” has a Facebook page.

100 Afghan families are going to the Peterborough area in the next three weeks. Mary’s Child (see below) is helping with the re-homing. Jean will take a car load when they are ready to accept.

If this appeal becomes oversubscribed, the bags will be passed on to other agencies supporting the homeless.

I’m very pleased to announce that we have a new charity to support in the north of the diocese. Based in Peterborough (the south of the River Nene is in Ely Diocese) **Mary’s Child** offers Love, Care and Support to families and individuals. This fits so well with our M U aims to support those whose lives have met with adversity.

We can support in all the ways we currently support the Women’s Refuges and Hostels in our area, with toiletries, household items, baby and children’s equipment and knits, as well as offering larger furniture and domestic goods. Mary’s Child seeks to support all areas of need, assisting with debt, benefits, housing etc. and would welcome any professional help and expertise.

Above All, Mary’s Child asks for our prayers for their work.

More information is on their website www.maryschild.org.uk

Is anyone aware of any charities that have aims similar to ours, that collect postage stamps and old postcards? Sadly our outlets have closed recently. Many thanks to Joanna Sanders who has been forwarding them for us for many years.

Finally, thank you for all the recent donations. You have kept Maureen and I busy in recent months!

Sherly, the Dementia Nurse at Hinchinbrooke was very pleased to receive soft twiddle muffs and lap blankets. She sent this thank you, to all who have contributed.

Jean

Dear Jean,

Thanks a lot for bringing in the lap blankets and muffs.

We are very grateful for what you are doing for our patients.

You and your team take care and be safe.

Kind Regards

Sherly



Re-imagining Mothers' Union

The views of all Mothers' Union members are really important to help shape the future of our organisation.

Across our membership, we know that there are many exciting and interesting ideas and initiatives that can help build our future – so to gather the thoughts and experiences of as many members as possible, we would like to invite you to host a Re-imagining Mothers' Union Coffee Morning/afternoon tea or discuss the questions at one of your branch meetings in September or October.

When Covid-19 hit in March 2020, the way we lived our lives changed. We couldn't do some things that we had previously taken for granted and we did things we had previously never dreamed of doing – and in different ways.

Now as the restrictions on our lives are easing, it is a good time to reflect on what we have learned during the pandemic and take this as a positive way of re-imagining what Mothers' Union could and should be like going forward, to make belonging to this organisation important to all our members and attractive to potential members.

Three key questions for Mothers' Union are:

- **In the past year or so, what have we discovered about what we want to keep in Mothers' Union - and what don't we need?**
- **During this time, what are the ideas or actions you've seen in your diocese that we can build on for the future?**
- **What holds us back from moving forward – and why?**

Please send your feedback to Hazel Williams by the end of October at the latest so that I can collate it to send on to Mary Sumner House. I am happy to have individual replies too.

Food for thought.

I expect that everyone reading this will know of Delia Smith, either as a kitchen hero or through her connections to Norwich City football club. Not everyone will know she is a catholic (attending daily mass and prayers), is 80 years old and has written a book titled “You Matter”, due to be published next March. I discovered this courtesy of The Times newspaper and Andrew Billen, who wrote a piece in the paper’s “Comment” section recently.

In her book she says that we need to step back from the chaos and get to know ourselves better: that everyone is unique and has a special place. She claims that we under-estimate what human life means and what it is and why it is. We have this immense universe in which it takes millions of years for light to reach this little place we call Earth, yet it has human life – the only life we know about in the entire universe.

In her estimation the only way we can find meaning is to look at who we are and she describes it thus: “You have only just met me. If you really wanted to know me you would need to spend time with me, otherwise you wouldn’t know me. Therefore, human beings need to spend time with themselves in order to know themselves.”

I think that is self-evidently true and suggest that, by extension, it must be equally true to state that to know God you need to spend time with God. I have found reading the bible from cover to cover is one way of doing that. I am now well over three-quarters of the way through (actually on day 313 of 365 day reading plan) and the time spent reading and then considering what I have read must add up to over 150 hours in total. In that time I have made many discoveries about what the bible is and, from the different approaches taken by the writers of the many constituent books, a “picture” of God as a being (albeit a very different being from any encountered on earth).

Throughout the bible we are told we must love our God. Easy to say, but it is hard to love someone you do not know. So, getting to know him is just a step to the big prize of loving him. There are many ways of spending time with God and getting to know him better, such as meditation and prayer, but the important point to understand is that the effort is worth it. Without spending time with God there is no way to know God and without that knowledge one cannot love God. So “thank you” Delia for your forthcoming book and, as I started this piece – food for thought!

ELY DIOCESAN MOTHERS’ UNION**QUIET DAY**

Led by The Rev’d Michael Banyard, Diocesan Chaplain

Tuesday 14 September 2021 10 – 2.30

St Mary’s Church Burwell

Mike writes: “In the Bible you can find many interesting and diverse questions. This day is a great opportunity for learning and reflecting on some key biblical questions. These may well impact all our lives today.”

Please bring your own picnic lunch. Tea/coffee will be provided in mugs (mugs are cleaned in a dishwasher) Please bring your own mug/cup if you prefer. Face masks will be needed.

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MU Thursday Prayer on Zoom (start at 11am)

Time: Sept.16th 2021 10:45 am

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87298227811>

Meeting ID: 872 9822 7811

Presented by Catherina Griffiths – The Gift of Harvest

Annual Gathering 2021– Saturday 25th September, 11am – 2.30pm

The content for this event has been shaped by the member steering group and is coming together - the day looks as if it will be informative and inspiring.

Basic information about the event can be found on the Events page of the website (www.mothersunion.org/get-involved/whats-on/general-meeting-2020).

A more detailed programme, worship resources and joining instructions will be added to the MU website shortly.

It is with sadness that we have to announce that Marjorie Nash has died aged 90 years. Her funeral was on Monday 9th August 2021 at St Peter's Church, March. A number of members of Mothers' Union attended. Marjorie was a very active member of St Peter's Church, past leader of St Peter's Mothers' Union and an Archdeaconry Vice- President in Ely Diocese Mothers' Union. She was very well known within the Mothers' Union family and had been a member of St Peter's Mothers' Union for 54 years and so will be sadly missed. We offer our condolences to her family and our prayers and thoughts are with them at this sad time.

Regards
Pat Case

Barbara Midgley's husband Jeremy, also a MU Diocesan Member, died suddenly on 14th July. The funeral was on 3rd August in St Mary's Church, Houghton. Please remember Barbara and their son Jonathan, a lay clerk in the choir at Ely Cathedral, in your prayers.

Many of you will have seen the recent diocesan website announcement that Julia Flack died of a heart attack on 24th July. She was an honorary vice-president of Ely Diocesan Mothers' Union when her husband John was Bishop of Huntingdon. He now lives in the Wakefield Diocese after retiring from being an honorary Assistant Bishop in Peterborough diocese. We offer our condolences and prayers to her family.