



# February Newsletter 2023

## WORLDWIDE NEWS



### NEWS FROM LUSAKA

Members in Lusaka have been giving a "Bag of Support" to mothers at a clinic. Echoes the gifts we collect for our local women's refuges.

### "16 DAYS"

Members of Kigali Diocese in Rwanda took part in the "16 Days of action against gender-based violence", with many women attending a rally. Their theme was Galatians 6.2 "Carry one another's burdens and in this way you will fulfil the love of Christ".



**THURSDAY PRAYER** in the  
Cathedral and on Zoom 10.30am  
February 16<sup>th</sup> Theme: Chose Life

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83847809128?pwd=VVhXUGlNWkpaGkyMUdwWHQvcC9tQT09>

ID. 838 4780 9128/Passcode 338053

### ADVANCE DATES

MU Quiet Day – 28<sup>th</sup> March at St. Peter's Church Yaxley. (full details in next newsletter)

MU Diocesan Meeting and AGM– April (date and venue to be confirmed).

MU Diocesan Garden Party – 14<sup>th</sup> July 2-5pm in Bishop Stephen's Garden, Ely.

MU Annual Gathering – 22<sup>nd</sup> September in York (Tickets are free but must be ordered by contacting Ros, by the end of March, who will then send for a batch so that we can sit together).

Lady Day – 25<sup>th</sup> March. Please send details of any Branch or Deanery services to Hazel by 25<sup>th</sup> February.

## Ely Cathedral Branch

Gail Swanson

Ely Cathedral Mothers' Union gathered on Sunday 11th December between 3pm and 4pm, to hold a Wave of Prayer member-led service. Although there were only seven of us as it was an awful day weather wise!

We had a very special time and met to pray, sing hymns and light candles for our Diocesan Links in Zambia, Rwanda and Nigeria, and Karimnagar and Vellore in India, also for our own Ely Diocese. Our Wave of Prayer is a continuous expression of our commitment in prayer to each other around the World. The photograph shows gifts representing the different countries that were placed on a table: coffee from Ethiopia in Africa, tea from India, and an assortment of tropical fruits. Sadly, you cannot hear the African Youth Choir of Nairobi singing in the background!



## Sawston Branch news

Janet Martin

**Sawston Branch** gathered for the Wave of prayer in December and we also had a good number at the Deanery Advent service at Balsham this week. The Posada is progressing around the village and people are really enjoying having it and passing it on to the next household.

### ***From Irene Porter, Worldwide Officer***

*In early December we took part in the Wave of Prayer, it would be helpful to know how each branch found the experience.*

- \* Did you meet in church or a member's house?*
- \* Was your time slot convenient?*
- \* How helpful were the prayer notes?*
- \* Have you any suggestions for the next wave of prayer?*

*Please email me your thoughts and comments*

[irene.portermu@gmail.com](mailto:irene.portermu@gmail.com)

## News from The Anglesey Group Branch

Ann Langran



Our first meeting of 2023 was a combined Holy Communion Service with the regular weekly service at St. James' Church, Lode. This also coincided with Revd. Sue Giles' last service in Lode before her retirement. During the service Revd. Sue enrolled new member Maggie Field. After the service Mothers' Union provided a soup lunch for approximately

30 of the congregation to celebrate Revd Sue's retirement and thank her for all her hard work in the benefice over the past 10 years. We are sad to see Sue leave, not only as our vicar, but also a fellow MU member. We wish her and husband Jonathan a happy retirement in York!!

### COMMUNICATION NEWS – NEW YouTube VIDEOS.

Debbie Tye - Co-ordinator

We have two new YouTube video links to share with you for **DECEMBER AND JANUARY THURSDAY PRAYER.**

December 2022: "Peace" led by Sue Claydon. YouTube Link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3u3fZTa373U>

January 2023: "Transformation – Now!" led by Hazel Williams. YouTube Link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mYxPNy72kGs>

### JUNE PAYNE.

Many of you will remember June, and especially her reaching 70 years of MU Membership in 2022 and being presented with a certificate at the AGM in April. We are sad to inform you that she passed away peacefully on 29th December, aged 93.

June was born in March in 1929, and married Jim in 1951 at St Wendreda's, with their son John being born in 1956. She was employed by Cambridgeshire County Council, at County Hall, March, as Secretary to the County Surveyor, and later as Secretary to the Highways Training Scheme.

She joined Mothers' Union in June 1952, and went to her MU Branch at St Wendreda's Church where she worshipped regularly, but more recently had become a Diocesan Member. June adhered to the promises of the Mothers' Union, and her faith and values remained unshakeable and constant throughout her long life, with her support for the work of the MU and regular attendance at MU Meetings and Events, having been a witness to this.

### SHEILA DUNN

Shingay Deanery Mothers' Union were saddened to learn of the sudden death just before Christmas of Mrs Sheila Dunn from Arrington, aged 91. Sheila had been an active and loyal member of Mothers' Union for 62 years and will be sorely missed.

May they rest in peace and rise in glory.



Thank you for all the donations for Christmas. The Refuges and hostels were so pleased with your generosity and effort-

*“We will never be able to thank you and members of the Mothers’ Union enough for your continued support for the women, especially in these difficult financial times.*

*It means so much to these families to have the opportunity to use the vouchers to choose the things that they like or need rather than being given a food parcel, which they are also grateful for but often say how lovely it is to actual have the freedom of choice. This can also be particularly useful if there are any specific dietary requirements that have to be adhered to or simply a child's favourite cereal that Mum is able to purchase.*

*Wishing you all the happiest and healthiest New Year”*

This was from **Fenland Refuge**, who also received the sewing machine asked for in November-

*“The sewing machine arrived today – we have a new resident that has taken it in and is using it straightaway. She was so thrilled”*

**Cambridge Women’s Aid** – We have new contact details. Please use before delivering and to ensure there is someone available to accept your donations. The delivery address will be changing in March.

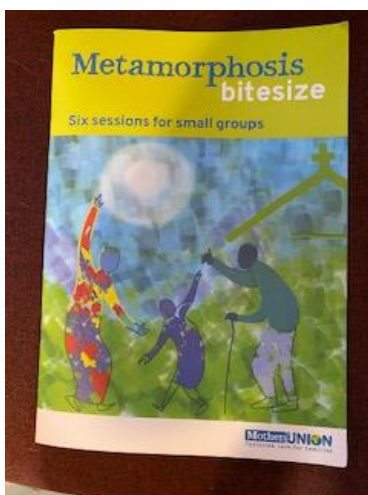
Please contact Liz - [housekeeper@cambridgewa.org.uk](mailto:housekeeper@cambridgewa.org.uk)

**Knitted Toys** – some years back we supported “Teddies for Tragedies”, and many members were disappointed when we stopped. I am pleased to say that there has been an amendment agreed, and we are able to do so again, providing we use new yarn and safety stuffing. The teddies will need to have a label stating this (which I will organise). However, I am not aware of any current outlets for these teddies within Ely Diocese, so if you know of one local to you, please let me know.

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## Changing Market Towns Conference

The Changing Market Towns project is planning a day conference for Saturday 25 February, to be held at the Neale-Wade Academy in March. There will be a programme of seminars and speakers, and a marketplace including a bookstall. It is not yet known how many people will attend, but there were over 100 at a similar event in 2018. If you do attend please visit the Mothers’ Union stand and say hello.



All **Branch leaders** will shortly be receiving a copy of Metamorphosis bitesize. This is a recent production from the Mothers’ Union and has been developed over the last few years from the initial course run in Wisbech (but then called Stories on the Street). Trustees felt it was well worth buying a copy for each branch as it can be used in lots of different ways in branch meetings, sometimes using only part of a section if time is limited. If your branch is concerned about leading, I am sure a trustee would be willing to attend and help.

**Ely Diocesan Mothers’ Union Charity no. 251394**

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## A REFLECTION

*Philip Baker (17<sup>th</sup> January 2023)*

Some of you may be aware that I was admitted to hospital just after Christmas, where I stayed for a few days into the new year. Fortunately, it turned out not to be appendicitis as initially diagnosed, but, after days of tests and scans, a serious infection of my kidneys. However, that is not the story! The story is what goes through your mind in situations like that; situations where you are suddenly reminded of your frailty as a human and the uncertainty of what tomorrow might bring. In fact, let us go not for “tomorrow”, but the next few minutes or seconds. And are we prepared for whatever this unknown future might be?

We are reminded in the Bible to be ready. Matthew had (as usual!) quite a lot to say about this in his Gospel. The one I expect everyone knows best is in 24:42-44 – “Be on your guard, then, because you do not know what day your Lord will come. If the owner of a house knew the time when a thief would come, you can be sure he would stay awake and not let the thief break into his house. So then, you also must always be ready, because the Son of Man will come at an hour when you are not expecting him.” Verses 45 to 51 following expand on the same theme, but I will leave you to look them up and not reproduce them here, as the point is already made – it is necessary to be prepared as we do not know what will happen next, but it just might be something as important as the Lord coming for us, and I cannot think of anything which would trump that!

So what does “being ready” mean in this context? I spent time in hospital dwelling on that question (especially before the doctors felt that they knew what the problem was and how to fix it!) so I can suggest to you what I think it means. I think it means feeling as confident as one can that you have lived in accordance with your understanding of God’s expectations of us. That you believe in God and His word as given to us through scripture That you love the Lord our God and our neighbours (who are all round the world) as we do ourselves. Quite an ask! I wonder whether any of us can really claim to feel comfortably “ready” against that measure? However, there is good news too. We believe in a merciful God, who, if we are truly sorry for what we have (or have not) done, will forgive us. So, as well as trying our best to be the paragons of virtue that Matthew sets out, we must also be always alert to our failings and asking God to forgive us. There is hope for us after all.

If you fetched your Bible to read the verses I mentioned above in Matthew 24, you could read the verses in 24 prior to those, 24:36-41 and also the section following, 25:1-13. In fact, why not just read Matthew, you will be well rewarded for the time it takes.



### **BHELPURAM LEPROSY CENTRE IN VELLORE, INDIA**

During the season of Christmas we extend our hands to people in need and offered them food, clothes (Sarees, Dhoties) bed sheets, essential toiletries (paste, brush, bathing Soap, Towel) etc.

11 inmates and 4 care takers are staying in the Bethelpuram leprosy centre – Keeraiathu village. The expenses of inmates is taken care of by CSI St. John’s Church, Diocese of Vellore. The members of the Women’s Board will visit the Leprosy Centre regularly to know the well being of the inmates.

Mrs. Malarkodi and Mrs. Sampathrani (Bible Women) will visit the Bethelpuram for prayer fellowship.

President of Women’s Board - Biscopina will hoist the Christmas flag every year in Bethelpuram Leprosy Centre.

