



June Newsletter 2023

Bishop Stephen

Sad to be saying goodbye to Bishop Stephen as he prepares to leave Ely and become the next Bishop of Lincoln. Bishop Stephen is a Diocesan Member of MU and is a faithful supporter of our organisation. It is great that we will be able to enjoy our Diocesan Garden Party on 14th July in his lovely garden before he leaves. Wishing him God's blessings for his future ministry and thanking him for all he has done in the Diocese of Ely.

MU Diocesan Garden Party
14th July 3-5pm in
Bishop Stephen's Garden, Ely.

Bring your own packed tea.

Fizz and soft drinks provided.

Raffle prizes will be gratefully received and there will also be an opportunity to buy MU cards and see a display about our worldwide links.



Revd. Paula Spalding led the Burwell group in making 'May Baskets' from paper and hearing about the many traditions that are linked to May. The traditional maypole dancing and flower crowns to celebrate Spring are common in this country but flying kites, eating flavoured porridge or May Day cake and making bonfires are also common across the world. Barwick in Yorkshire has the distinction of the largest Maypole in England, standing 86 feet in height.

If your branch has had an interesting and enjoyable session do send me something for this newsletter. We would love to hear from you, with or without a photograph.

Following our Diocesan Day ay March I received this from our speakers, Angela and Jocelyn , from Mid Cambs and Fenland Refuges respectively –

“We just want to say a HUGE thank you for allowing us time at your AGM to talk to you.

We were over-awed by the generosity that everyone showed us. We know domestic abuse is a difficult subject for many to discuss due to their own traumas and experiences, so we were delighted that so many wanted to ask questions.

There was a query around funding that your treasurer (I think) asked, and I (Angela) would like to respond. Our manager Carolyn confirmed that we are funded by Cambs. County Council and that helps us run the refuge. However, all other fundraising for the Cambridgeshire refuges has to be done by us. Funds that are raised through national donations are put into a big 'pot' and eventually divided up between refuges that need extra items or funding

Joc wants to point out that 78% of children from abusive households are aware of the abuse –not 78% of all children as may have inadvertently been said.

I have attached some posters that we promised to send over to you, we would be grateful if you could distribute these to your groups so they can print off and put them in appropriate places in your meeting areas. Refuge NDAH is A3 and Warning signs I believe is A4 size.

Once again, we send a huge thank you to you all.”

I am sure all who heard them speak will feel that hearing about the work of Refuge affirms our commitment to continue to do so. The posters mentioned will be sent as attachments in a separate mailing. Please use them if you can, and especially during the 16 Days Of Activism Against Gender Abuse which begins on November 25th.

With the 16 Days in mind, may I commend to all who enjoy the Inspector Lynley novels by Elizabeth George (and others!) to read “Something to Hide” out in paperback this year. Set in London, it is not easy bedtime reading as its about FGM, but thought provoking and enlightening.

My thanks as ever, for recent donations of domestic items, which have gone to the young people’s hostel in Ely, and to Whitworth House in Cambridge.

Domestic Abuse Survey (to share with members)

Mothers’ Union are working with the Church of England to ensure we are all equipped to recognise and respond to domestic abuse. In partnership with colleagues that have been involved with Diocese of Melbourne and the Cumbria research project, we have developed a baseline survey which will allow us to further understand our current culture, behaviour, skills, and knowledge in terms of recognising and responding to domestic abuse.

The link below will provide you access to the survey, which is open to all to complete and completely voluntary. The survey is constructed around 15 multiple choices questions and takes 10-15 minutes to complete, with no personal identifying information required. You are able to specify if you are a Mothers’ Union member in the survey and there are helpline numbers at the beginning and end. Link to the survey: <https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/15YH0B/>

Astonishing textile art at the Cathedral: eight million stitches



'Threads through Creation' is an astonishing, uplifting textile art exhibition showing at Ely Cathedral from 14th June to 26th July.

The show consists of twelve HUGE silk panels (2.7m high, up to nearly 4m wide) re-imagining the creation story from the bible. You'll find the extraordinary scale, vibrant colours, complex designs and spectacular stitching truly breath-taking.

It's one of the largest textile art projects by a single artist, ever. Jacqui Parkinson has a national reputation for large scale work – this is touring twenty cathedrals. She spent three years on the panels, using miles of thread - and eight million stitches!



It's beautiful, highly enjoyable, a lovely thing to take friends to - and great fun for children too.

See more at www.creation-threads.co.uk and www.elycathedral.org. (Admission charges apply – see the cathedral website.)

COMMUNICATION NEWS – NEW YouTube VIDEO. Debbie Tye - Co-ordinator

We have a new YouTube video link to share with you for **MAY THURSDAY PRAYER: "Being a Disciple"**. Led by Ros Wright, Ely Diocesan MU Secretary.

YouTube Link

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wvp8YPDFfXo>

Ely Diocesan Mothers' Union
Charity no. 251394

<https://www.facebook.com/MUElyDiocese>

/

Ros 01223 861846

roswright1@gmail.com

Hazel 01638 743897

hwill66@icloud.com

THURSDAY PRAYER in the Cathedral and on Zoom
10.30am
April 15th

Theme: Mothers' Union – Supporting God in Prayer and Humility

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83847809128?pwd=VVhXUGINWkpaeGkyMUdwWHQvcC9tQT09>

ID. 838 4780 9128/Passcode 338053

I am often able to bring you news and pictures from Rwanda, Zambia and India, but Nigeria is still proving to be difficult. After searching through various Facebook and website pages I have come across a news item from last year, relevant to voting and elections to be held this year.

The Anglican Mothers' Union Executive released a communique, signed by the Mothers' Union President, Mrs Angela Eberechukwu Ndukuba, wife of the Primate, Church of Nigeria. Mothers' Union were concerned about voter's apathy, none collection of voting cards, voter's education and other points that could lead to non-credible and fair elections. There was also mention of the inflation rate, which in August 2022 had increased to 20.52%. Mothers' Union also noted that this was causing untold hardship in the country. They called on the government to promote the creativity industry, agriculture and technology to create employment, especially for the youth. They also called for action against the wanton killings in the country, abduction, insurgency and terrorism.

Strong words from Mothers' Union, Nigeria!

A REFLECTION

Philip Baker (24th May 2023)

A week or so ago as I write this piece it was Christian Aid week and we were being reminded of our obligations to help our brothers and sisters who are, through no fault of their own, in places where they are in danger and in need. As if to ensure that I did not miss the point, I then attended an excellent presentation by our own Sue Claydon to the Anglesey Branch, which is one of my neighbours, on the plight of women in Africa. I feel sure I was being prompted to write this month about the challenges facing our fellow humans, many of whom are also Christians (not that it matters), in places far from our relatively safe and prosperous homes.

Paul wrote in his first letter to the Corinthians, 12:12-17, "Christ is like a single body, which has many parts; it is still one body, even though it is made up of different parts. In the same way, all of us, whether Jews or Gentiles, whether slaves or free, have been baptised into the one body by the same Spirit, and we have all been given the one Spirit to drink. For the body itself is not made up of only one part, but of many parts. If the foot were to say, "Because I am not a hand I do not belong to the body," that would not keep it from being a part of the body. And if the ear were to say, "because I am not an eye, I don't belong to the body," that would not keep it from being a part of the body. If the whole body were just an eye, how would it hear? And if it were only an ear, how could it smell? "

All this means to me that all people on earth are part of a whole. Every person contributes something to the existence of the whole. And the whole would not be complete without every single person on the planet. We are all interdependent and all are equally important to our Lord God. Extending Pauls analogy, should a part of our body, our throat for example, develop a problem, become sore perhaps in our example of a throat, then the rest of our body attempts to do something about it to make it better – take a calming medicine possibly . In the same way I suggest we are called on to help those people, those remote parts of our body, who are in some kind of need. We are not expected to stand by and think that it is someone else's problem, it is not, it is ours! Think of how amazing it would be if everyone acted in accordance to that principle – there would be no refugee crisis as there would be no war, no starvation as all the food would be shared, no poverty as everyone's contribution would be rewarded properly and no-one would be either super-wealthy or destitute. We can but dream.

An awareness of the issue and a willingness to take action is needed and that is what the Mothers' Union does – promote awareness and do something about it. However, we must not be complacent, there is more to be done and more that we could do, even with the limited resources available. One thing we can all help with is sharing the dream by talking about it to others (possibly over tea and cake?)



Balsham Branch news

Two rugs were made in red, white and blue to commemorate the Coronation of Charles 111. The first photo is a rug/blanket knitted by our Balsham Branch's Treasurer Janet Andrews and the second photo is knitted by Janet's sister-in-law Celia- not a MU member- but a very good knitter.

The wool was supplied via a MU member from Linton whose daughter is a wool sales person and provides all our wool. She delivered the red, white and blue wool to her mother for us to make relevant garments commemorating the Coronation.

We have just had our May meeting - not many of us but a good meeting on the history of Balsham.

Best
Joanna



Two Bags of lovely baby and toddler knitting from members of the **Three Rivers Branch**. Thank you they will be much appreciated.

Below are pictures about Barwick Maypole Festival (see front page).

In 1972 ladders and ropes helped raise the 86 feet high maypole although now they use a crane and ropes. They still have to paint it each time and carry it into the village.

