

A letter from your President

Rebuilding Hope and Confidence

**'I said, "I am falling"; but your constant love, O Lord, held me up.
Whenever I am anxious and worried, you comfort me and make me glad.'**

Psalm 94: 18-19



I have started practising the piano again, having a go at playing jazz, a style that takes me out of my comfort zone but is a challenge and helps me switch off and relax. Life, certainly at present, can be a bit like a piano, sometimes it's out of tune or the keys stick through lack of use, or the out of practice pianist plays wrong notes, like me. However, all these things can be fixed and everything can be in tune again and work together well. When we feel we are falling and things aren't happening in the way we would like or are used to, we can adjust and mend knowing we are being held warmly in the hand of Our Lord who loves us. We can be made whole.

Since the end of last year we could never have envisaged that we would still be in Lockdown with the prospect of normality, in whatever form, still a long way off. Some of us were fortunate to be able to spend a little time with family on Christmas Day, but many were not. How important to our well-being are our families, relationships and the ability to meet together face to face. I was reminded of this by our Provincial Chaplain Bishop John Packer, leading our worship at a recent York Province Provincial meeting, where he stressed the Mothers' Union fundamental concern for marriage and family life and we had prayers of thanksgiving for families and relationships. Our Mothers' Union family will always remain strong through prayer, our mission and our love for one another.

Our theme this year of "Rebuilding Hope and Confidence" is so important for us all and I want to express my sincere thanks to you for continuing to support each other and our local communities in whatever ways have been possible under the circumstances. I am so pleased to be able to tell you that we have supported around 1,750 people during the last three months, whether through Just Up Your Street or our individual branches. Just amazing and certainly builds up hope and confidence in this area, as does a delivery of homemade cookies from a little girl in our street a few moments ago.

We have all had some really difficult and sad situations to contend with and have had to get used to different ways of doing things that we never really thought possible. We have come through this and we will continue to do so if we remain positive and remember the constant love and support of Our Lord. Life is like a piano. It does matter how you play it, what dynamics you use, how you cope with sudden key changes and how willing you are to practice. Help us to rebuild hope and confidence in the special way only Mothers' Union members can. With my love, Christine x

Congratulations!

To Dorothy & Brian Bradbury from Saddleworth Branch, celebrating their Diamond Wedding Anniversary in February. Congratulations!

MSH Christmas Appeal

From the Mothers' Union Website 'Together, we raised an incredible £124,885 making Christmas 2020 a truly special one for women in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).' Further information and stories can be found here <https://www.mothersunion.org/christmas>

MU Manchester Shop

The online shop at MSH has reopened along with a new range of cards and gifts, so I am now able to take orders again. I do have a small quantity of Mothering Sunday and Easter cards, but am happy to order them in for you if necessary. If you would like a selection of individual greeting cards, rather than the pack of 5 the same, I am happy to make up a mixed pack and post them out, (postage to be paid for). All shop orders to be sent to shopmothers@gmail.com or leave a message with Andrea in the office. Kind regards, Frances Brough

Calendar of Events, Dates and Opportunities

27th February Start of the election process for the next Triennium.

7th March Deadline for the nine twelve week stand-alone General Lay Courses now available in the Diocese, applications open to March 7th, 2021. Please see details on the Diocesan website <https://www.manchester.anglican.org/development-and-training/general-lay-courses>

8th March 7.30pm Deanery Leader Zoom session - Please let Andrea in the office know if you are able to attend.

11th March Thursday Prayers online published 12pm Mothers' Union Manchester Diocese YouTube <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCr2EXWux8790mGsMHDF6LhQ>

14th March Mothering Sunday Resources are available from the Mothers' Union Website <https://www.mothersunion.org/mothering-sunday-resources>

15th March 2.00pm or 7.30pm Branch Leader/Correspondent Zoom Session – Please let Andrea in the office know if you are able to attend

16th March The National Parenting Initiative is holding an online Vision Event for those living in the Manchester area, Tuesday, March 16th 12.00-13.00. Find out more and register for this free event at Manchester Online Vision Event Tickets, Tue 16 Mar 2021 at 12:00 | Eventbrite<<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/manchester-online-vision-event-tickets-141264334427>>

20th or 23rd March Mothers' Union - Rebuilding Hope & Confidence - Preparing for future meetings MSH are running virtual 'Preparing for Future Meetings' sessions. These are 90 minute sessions with the opportunity to look at the challenges of getting members back to meetings, how we might encourage them to come and new thoughts and ideas for that fresh start. There is no charge for these sessions. There is a morning session at 10.30 am on Saturday 20 March and due to popular demand an extra date has been added for the 23rd March. Places need to be booked through Eventbrite following this link: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/rebuilding-hope-confidence-preparing-for-future-meetings-tickets-136304810357?aff=ebdssbonlinesearch> and numbers are limited.

We will also shortly be starting our next session in the series which is about sharing our stories, you can find the link to sign up here: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/rebuilding-hope-confidence-sharing-our-stories-tickets-135480877953?aff=ebdssbonlinesearch>.

8th April Thursday Prayers online published 12pm Mothers' Union Manchester Diocese YouTube <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCr2EXWux8790mGsMHDF6LhQ>

9th April Deadline for Easter Garden photos and Easter Art work. We would like members and friends to send in photos of their Easter gardens or Easter artwork. It's always such a pleasure to see Easter Gardens being put together in Church and we may not see that this year. The photos are to be collated into a video featured on our YouTube Channel. Further details to be issued.

24th April Spring Council on Zoom. Further details to be sent.

Future Dates For The Diary

- 18th September End of Triennial Thanksgiving Service** – 2.30pm – Manchester Cathedral – Bishop David presiding and preaching
- 25th September Virtual Annual Gathering** – The Annual Gathering due to be held in Belfast will now be a virtual event.
- 6th November Provincial End of Triennial Service** – 3.00pm – Liverpool Cathedral – Bishop Paul Bayes speaking

Just Up Your Street

In February Mothers' Union Manchester have supported Visit from the Stork with £180 to help with nappies, wipes and baby wash for the families they support throughout Greater Manchester. They have had many more referrals due to Covid and job loss and their funding is shortly running out. They are delivering around 50 parcels a week of baby essentials.

We have been able to support Christ Church Walmersley with funds from JUYS to provide 101 small gifts for residents at a local care home, where local charity, the Attic Project arranged for lots of goodies and the presents to be delivered by Santa (last year's mayor) and his elf (a local councillor).



MU Manchester provided each of the residents at HMP Forest Bank with a gift of chocolate, the Christmas wrapped cups of chocolate were left on each of the pad doors on Christmas Eve.



Cross in Pockets Romey, one of our trustees has been working on some new Cross in Pocket Designs. Here we have a beautiful Paddington, cricketer and a cleric. They are such a beautiful gift.

Please contact the office if you would like to learn how to make cross in pockets.



Mothering Sunday Bookmark

A bookmark that you can print out and use in your branches, childrens groups or church. It features a prayer written by Lynne Tembey, former Worldwide President, it can be found on the Mothers' Union Website along with other resources

<https://www.mothersunion.org/mothering-sunday-resources>

Prayer for Mothering Sunday

Loving Saviour,

Who experienced the love of an earthly mother. On Mothering Sunday we reflect and give thanks for Mother Earth, Mother Church and our earthly Mother.



You have supplied the earth with abundant riches. We pray that humankind be wise stewards of your bounteous provision for the needs of all. Help us to encourage everyone to care for your earth so that future generations will enjoy its beauty.

Thank you for Mother Church; for the opportunities to worship together, and, as a church community, reach out in love and acceptance to the lonely, the stranger, the refugee, all who are our neighbour.

We thank you for the love and nurture received from our own Mother. We are grateful that she set us on our way, protecting us from harm, directing us on the best way to live our life. We feel so blessed for her guidance which has enabled us to be the person we are today.

We ask you Lord to bring comfort and healing to everyone who this Mothering Sunday will be saddened, upset, or hurt by the memories of the day. All who have lost their mother recently or many years ago and yet the pain and deep sadness still remains.



All who have been abandoned for whatever reason by their mother. All who have been unable to have a child. All who have lost a child. All who have been hurt or abused. We ask you to enfold them in your arms and surround them with your love in their pain and sorrow.



We pray that you will give each of us the grace to be mindful of others, to be kind in our words and be sympathetic to others' situation.

Amen

Mothers' UNION
Christian care for families

Award for Worldwide President

Congratulations to our Worldwide President Sheran Harper who was appointed a member of the Order of Service of Guyana and awarded the Golden Arrow of Achievement for long and exceptional service in the Diocese of Guyana and in Mothers' Union locally and internationally.



Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them. May the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen.

It is with great sadness that we report the death of Ethel Cunliffe aged 102 years, a member of St Paul's Church Walkden. Ethel was a longstanding member of the Mother's Union for over 50yrs. We give thanks for her commitment and service.

It is with great sadness we advise of the death of Marjorie Bannister, a 92 year old Indoor Member at St. Michaels MU branch at Tonge cum Alkington. Marjorie was an active and very popular member until after her 90th birthday when she decided to become an Indoor Member. She was interested in all the MU activities and looked forward to getting the correspondence. She will be sadly missed.

You Tube Channel and Thursday Prayers

We would like to encourage you to subscribe to our You Tube channel. If we get to over 100 subscribers then we can change the link name from a set of random letters and numbers into something which is more relevant to us and so easier for everyone to find. Currently we have 52 so are just over half way there. Thursday Prayers was published on 11th February and is still available. Thank you to members from MU@8, St Mary's Davyhulme, Seven Saints team and St Mary's and All Saints Goodshaw for their contributions to this months service. If any branches would like to be involved with recording items, please get in touch.

Annual Forms and message from the Treasurer

To all branch and deanery leaders and treasurers:

Very shortly you will have the annual forms to complete. These will include the very important return which allows us to consolidate the accounts for the charity - every branch is part of Mothers' Union in the Diocese of Manchester so must be included. Please, if this form causes you any problems, do not hesitate to contact me, by email (barbaractaylor@outlook.com) or phone (0161 764 0483).

Until we have the information from this form we are unable to file accounts with the Charity Commission as we are legally obliged to do.

Barbara C Taylor, Diocesan Treasurer

THURSDAY PRAYERS

11 February 2021



The Promise of Spring

Mothers' Union in Action

We are always at our best when there is a crisis.. Recently Katie a member of our church family was diagnosed with Covid. She is in her second year at Carlisle University living in a shared house. An email to Carlisle DP Janice brought an immediate response she introduced herself to Katie and then local members got in touch and offered help and support as and when needed. Knowing love, care and support was being given to Katie has been much appreciated by her mother and sisters who were unable to be there due to lockdown. Marion Ball St Martins Castleton



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Mothers' Union Manchester



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Mothers' Union Manchester Diocese

90 miles = 238,565 steps by Rosemary Taylor

During November, I realised that 8 months of furlough and lockdown meant I was less active and my motivation levels were low, so I needed an incentive to get out and about.

I decided that if I committed to a charity event I would then have to be held accountable! I considered a number of charities, deciding I wanted to support locally and as our Benefice are supporting the Attic Project this was my choice.

My challenge? As we were approaching Advent I googled the distance from Nazareth to Bethlehem, which was 90 miles. That seemed a reasonable distance and one I would complete by Epiphany to fit with the theme. This was not as realistic as I may have thought!

It turns out that starting a challenge like this the same week as a new job, when the nights turn dark early and you can't go out in an evening is a slight disadvantage. I managed to fit a few short walks in during my lunch breaks midweek, and set myself further distances at the weekends.

By midnight on Christmas Eve I had completed 45 miles. Halfway there, but wondering how I was going to complete another 45 miles in 12 days. This was the point where I had to accept that my timescale was unrealistic and had to reassess. My decision was to complete the 90 miles as soon as I was able.

I was hampered again by a bout of vertigo and adverse weather conditions with snow and ice making the paths treacherous underfoot but the number of miles remaining was lessening and I could see the end approaching.

On Saturday 23rd January I headed off on my final walk with 4.02 miles to complete. By this time I had a good judgement on where I needed to walk to complete this distance. As I headed home, I kept looking at the distance recording app on my phone. With my house in sight the counter clicked over to 4.02 miles....but I had to walk an extra 0.2 miles to my front door!



The mission was complete and I felt a great sense of achievement....and relief!

I had walked 90 miles equating to 238,565 steps and raised £405 for the Attic Project.

I have currently spent £250 on basic food items such as pasta, milk, beans, tinned fruit, porridge and cereal which have been gratefully received and distributed to many families.

I will be donating Easter eggs to the project next month and giving the remaining money for their funds to buy fresh food. Thank you to everyone who has supported, encouraged and sponsored me during this adventure. Watch out for the next one! Rosemary Taylor

