

Spring 2026

150 YEARS OF  
Mothers' UNION  
Join us, Join in

in the Diocese of Sheffield  
www.sheffieldmu.co.uk Reg Charity No. 1063619

# newsline



A publication about Mothers' Union in the Diocese of Sheffield



Lighting the way for  
generations to come



# Jo-Anne, our President, writes...



**Welcome to the Spring Edition 2026, I hope you enjoy the contents of our unique publication, just as much as I do. I must admit the Autumn edition felt like a bumper special!**

So, as we launch into our 150th Year of Celebrations, all we have planned at Local, Provincial and National levels, there is something that you can get involved with. We are challenged to reach out to make 150 new members, take part in prayer and worship, demonstrating and talking about the sheer depth and breadth of all we do with our projects, and the impact it has. There will be Fundraising Challenges, Big Church takeovers, Mary Sumner Day service in August with a Family fun Picnic after. The Time Capsule will be visiting parishes and branches in our Diocese prior to traveling by bike to St Pauls Cathedral - just to name a few! All you need to do is look on the website for dates and times.

Come along 'Join Us, join In' and bring a friend or family member.

As I write my message to you, a photo celebrating the arrival of the 'new' MU 150th brooch I purchased was posted on Facebook, sharing the picture of it on my coat. It went viral and in hours had over 12,000 views, 371 likes and



21 followers, with many comments and interest from around the world, wanting more information to celebrate with us... it's infectious! !

That brings to mind our history, a small parish church in Hampshire, UK, a front room in the vicarage - Mary Sumner's dream about support, nurture and making a difference to family lives, right where it mattered! Well, I wonder if she envisaged what MU would look like years later. I wonder if she thought we would have witness and worship in 84 countries and a worldwide membership of 4 million! ??

So, I hope and share the invitation to come along in this very special year, as we shine a light, celebrate and throw wide the invitation to join in the FUN, come and look, as a warm welcome awaits. I look forward to meeting you ....

As we prepare to step out in faith into the future 'shining a light for future generations'.

**My love and blessings, as always,  
Jo-Anne**



# Our Chaplain

*“Now the green blade riseth from the  
perished grain”.*

The words of this hymn by John Crum sprang to mind for me today. By the time you read this it will be after Easter, but as I write, we are still in February. It is cool, misty and damp. Although the days are noticeably lengthening, they are still quite short.

For all that, the birdsong is already increasing in volume and variety, and the first flowering plants of the year, including the snowdrops, are appearing against an otherwise gloomy backdrop. Life is returning after the long sleep of winter, a reminder of the way in which nature's cycle coincides with the liturgical year.

Easter is all about new life celebrates the victory of the Resurrection of Jesus over the darkness of sin and death. When the Church begins its Easter celebration it will either still be dark, or otherwise the first glimmers of dawn will be appearing. When the first disciples set out to visit the tomb it was still dark. Even their own hearts would have been full of the darkness of grief. At first, they might not have noticed how the light was returning, a reflection of the way in which hope and joy were starting to enter their lives once more.

As we begin Easter this year, we shall already be over a quarter of the way into a year of celebration as we commemorate



one hundred and fifty years of our Mothers' Union. Although we have sometimes had to reckon with loss in terms of members who are no longer with us or branches that have closed, there are always signs of new life and reasons for hope and joy.

We are part of a lively, world-wide movement. Mothers' Union touches the lives of many people beyond its own membership, especially bringing the love of Christ to families in need. Easter is the victory of life and of the love of God. May that love and that life fill all your hearts as we celebrate this joyful season.

**Happy Easter!**

## How we CONTINUE to fulfill our Mission in Sheffield Diocese and beyond

### Away From It All

**Of all the projects Mothers' Union supports, AFIA is the only one that has no other funding.**

Last year, due to the wonderful fundraising of Sheffield MU members 10 families enjoyed holidays at Haven Resorts.

Here are some of the comments from the parents:-

*“The Haven Resort provided every activity and entertainment you wish you could afford to provide for your family at home but are unable to.*

*It gave the children fun things to do and tell their friends when they went home instead of being the ones left out.*

*The fun, peace and joy it gave us all, we were ready to face the future again on our return.”*

*“We had peace of mind knowing the children could play outside as cars are not allowed on site and it is quite secure.”*



### Membership

By being a member you are part of a worldwide movement making a meaningful difference in the lives of millions worldwide through our unique, faith-based and community-led approach to tackling poverty, injustice and violence. Thank you all for being part of Mothers' Union by paying your subs. These work out £2.66 a month! - The price of just a cup of coffee!

Some of the children's comments:

*“I love the little house; can we take it home?”*

*“I love the donkey rides with the happy bells.”*

*“We had so much fun making friends, going on the rides and in the swimming pool.”*

*“I didn't know there was so much water and sand- we loved playing in both.”*



Many of these families had children with mental and physical disabilities and really appreciated the chance to get away.



## Women's Refuges

All branches across the Diocese are very generous and continue to support our 5 Refuges. Rotherham and Barnsley Refuges have no storage, so MU branches respond to requests from these refuges.



Christmas was an excellent time for members across the Diocese to show their love and generosity with extra items

and gifts for the ladies and children in the refuges. Ecclesfield Deanery collected Christmas gifts.



**St. John's Abbeydale MU** collected a knitted blanket, towels, new pyjamas, small gifts for Christmas plus some toiletries.

**Barnby Dun** collected a bag full of essentials for a lady at the Doncaster refuge due to give birth.



**Rotherham Refuge** were delighted to receive 36 Advent Calendars and Christmas booklets for the children on behalf of Whiston Mothers' Union.



Moving On baskets are donated to the refuges, this one by **St Catherine of Siena**. When Julie, the team leader for the refuge came to give a talk to their meeting, she said, "The women love getting these baskets as they move into their new home."



## How we CONTINUE to fulfill our Mission in Sheffield Diocese and beyond

### Doncaster Royal Neo Natal Unit

Following an appeal on our Facebook page from a lady who volunteered at the Neo Natal Unit, after having a premature baby herself, Mothers' Union members

in **Sprotborough** branch and **DASH Deanery** rose to the challenge and knitted baby hats in a variety of sizes.



### Doncaster Homeless

**Barnby Dun** donated 100 items including hats, scarves and gloves to the homeless that attend a lunch at Doncaster Minster, and some lovely warm hats were knitted by Brenda, from Bessacarr Church Joy Club.



## Issy Mears (Prison Coordinator) writes about Sheffield Diocese Mothers' Union Involvement on Prisons

Eleven hundred cards were all addressed and signed by members and friends of **Sprotbrough** and **Warmsworth** branches. All cards were sent to the inmates at HMP Moorland with our love. A big thank you to all who helped!



## Outreach at the Cathedral Coffee mornings

Cathedral Coffee mornings continue to be supported by MU members and visitors to the Cathedral. This is an ideal opportunity for members to meet up with friends as well as to chat with visitors about Mothers' Union **#JoinUsJoinIn**



# St George's Military Chapel

## Sheffield Cathedral

**Our monthly Coffee Mornings bring us all so much pleasure and lots of very interesting people drop in for coffee and a scone.**

On one Coffee Morning not long ago, MU member, Nichola McDonald Bell introduced her father, Colin, to President Jo-Anne. Nichola told Jo-Anne that her father, now 92 years old, had worked on the ceiling in St George's Military Chapel of the Cathedral for five weeks - 42 years ago in 1982.

Colin told her that he was one of the two directors of "Decorative Treatment Ltd" and, in 1981, his company decorated the Burgess Room ceiling, in the Cathedral, after damage by water. After this successful job they were given the order to decorate St George's Military Chapel ceiling, after more water damage, as a gesture of good will from the architect.

The initials of all the contractors who took part in the operation were

carved into the wooden boss above the altar. The work on the ceiling panels was stenciled on after they cut their own stencils, and they used 50+ books of gold leaf!!!!

Congratulations Colin and team on your excellent achievement and thank you Nichola and Colin for sharing this lovely story with the Mothers' Union at their Coffee Morning and now in Newsline for the whole Diocese to see!!!!



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**This was a very skillful, brilliant job, resulting in the most beautiful ceiling, which Sheffield people can enjoy every day.**

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# Mothers' Union Coffee Morning



**Sheffield's Anglican Cathedral was a hive of activity! And buzzing in one corner were the ladies of the Mothers' Union. A stark contrast to much of Sheffield that day. It was only the morning after New Year's Day, what the Scots call Hogmanay, so most places were still closed.**



I had received my young relative, Rashi, at the station – just 21, very sweet and wide-eyed. We had met once, at her grandma's flat many years ago, when my late mother and I last visited Kolkata. Rashi was a little girl then, playing with a large toy tiger. She had flown from Kolkata a few days ago for a short holiday and was visiting various places. I was delighted that she'd taken the trouble to include Sheffield in her brief itinerary. Visitors on very short visits from India invariably landed in

London and didn't venture beyond. I cannot blame them since the capital has so much to see that it could take a year or more to do it justice! I felt I would enjoy getting to know her.

'Come and see a few places of interest in our city centre,' I said. The Millennium Galleries and their ground-floor café were closed, but we walked past Andrew Motion's inspiring poem 'What If?' on an outer wall of Sheffield Hallam University, looked inside the Central Library,

admired the Crucible and Lyceum theatres, enjoyed the Winter Garden and the Peace Garden, explored St Marie's Cathedral and gazed at the façade of Cutler's Hall before entering Sheffield Cathedral.

We executed something of a whirlwind tour of the Cathedral. Among the new sights, for me, was a large and welcome display of Christmas trees and a competition to decide on the best one.

# Mothers' Union Coffee Morning

Many belonged to local charities, including the Mothers' Union. Also new was a specially commissioned painting of the nativity by Sheffield artist Pete McKee. The Cathedral certainly reflected a festive cheer.

I was deliberating whether to pop into the Cathedral's café when Father Richard accosted us. His face beaming a welcome, he asked what we had seen in the Cathedral. He alerted us to the fact that it was Mothers' Union's first coffee morning of the year. 'It's all the more special,' he informed us, because 2026 is the 150th anniversary of this wonderful charity.' He pointed to a corner just before the café. Although a sign announced 'Mothers' Union Coffee Morning', the Mothers' Union ladies

seemed tucked away in the enormous hall, and their sign seemed a bit lost amidst so much visual stimuli and bustling activity in the Cathedral.

Young Rashi had not heard of them and I admitted that I only had a vague notion that they were a parallel charity to the Women's Institute, engaged in similar good work. 'Oh, then you should come and meet them!' said Father Richard.

We followed him to their corner, where he handed us over to a briskly efficient lady who introduced herself as Jo, President of Sheffield Mothers' Union. She immediately took charge, taking us to a table where two of her colleagues were serving refreshments. The coffee morning that day was

being hosted, we learnt, by Mothers' Union members from Ecclesall & Attercliffe Deanery. After a quick introduction, Jo asked for two coffees for us. With a mug each, Rashi and I joined her at an unobtrusive table.

Jo gave us some literature: pamphlets about Mothers' Union, a leaflet about their 150th anniversary, and an Newsline magazine, which was packed with news and cheerful photographs of Mothers' Union events from the various deaneries of the Sheffield diocese. But on that lovely coffee morning, Rashi and I received a verbal account of the organisation's impressive work and Jo patiently answered our questions.





150 years ago, Mary Sumner started Mothers' Union in her small parish church in Hampshire. Recognising the importance of the family as the bedrock of society, and the key role of mothers within it, she dreamt that mothers from all classes would unite to support each other and the family within the church. Today Mothers' Union is women-led but accepts male members and has grown into a strong international movement of around 4 million members in 84 countries. Its members continue to demonstrate their Christian faith and values through offering care and compassion to transform people's lives.

Mothers' Union offers outings to families who could not otherwise afford them, it supports families that struggle when a member is in prison, it supports training in parental skills and in domestic abuse awareness, it helps mothers to cope when babies are born prematurely, it comes to the rescue of a family that may find a member suddenly out of action in hospital, and so many other acts of kindness.

Relating to the vital service that Mothers' Union members perform, I love a quotation from 1 Peter 4:10, highlighted in Newline by Tanis, Vice-President of Doncaster Archdeaconry:

***'Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms.'***

It reminds me that one of my spiritual heroes, Swami Vivekananda, founder of the Ramakrishna Mission movement, said: 'It is a privilege to serve humanity for this is the worship of God. God is here in all these human souls.'

action, performing selfless service and embracing one's duties without attachment.

Rashi and I wholeheartedly wish Mothers' Union a wonderfully inspired and fulfilling 150th anniversary year. May there also be another 150 years of 'changing lives' and 'shining a light for future generations.'

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**Before the ladies finished their coffee morning, they sat at an adjacent table and engaged in communal prayer. Prayer together is always an uplifting experience, so Rashi and I felt blessed that we could be part of it in a small way. We left the Cathedral with a sense of peace and much to reflect on.**

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As Hindus, Rashi and I could see at once that Mothers' Union is an admirable example of Karma Yoga, one of the four principal yogas that lead to moksha or spiritual liberation. More specifically, it is the path of dedicated

**Dr Debjani Chatterjee**  
**MBE FRSL**  
Poet, Writer, Storyteller  
& Creative Arts  
Psychotherapist





## Baby Basics

### **Baby Basics has branches all over the country.**

Sheffield Baby Basics support vulnerable families by providing many of the essentials needed for life with a child 0-5yrs. Drop off: Albion House, Savile Street Sheffield: Monday - Thurs 10am - 2.30pm.

Doncaster Baby Basics support vulnerable families across Doncaster by providing a moses basket filled with items such as bedding, clothing, nappies, wipes, and a newborn soft toy as well as toiletries for mum. Drop off: Sprotbrough Methodist church : Wednesdays 10am - 12 noon (term time only)

Members are very generous and lots of items are donated to Baby Basics from across the Diocese. There were lots of lovely, knitted cardigans, hats and blankets from Sprotbrough as well as a variety of items from Barnburng and Wath.



## Rotherham Families First

### **Our President Jo attended the launch of Rotherham Toy Appeal by Rotherham Families First and made a contact with Rotherham Mayor, Cllr Rukhsana Ismail.**



Rotherham & Tankersley Deaneries donated children's jumpers, knitted hats and mittens all destined for Rotherham Families First with love. Wath Deanery also

provided a lot of bedding- single sheets and duvets are always welcome.



# MU...m's Project for 2026

Sheffield Mothers' Union are in partnership with Rotherham Families First to provide bags for mums who are going into hospital to give birth and have nothing to take with them are to be made up with the following items:

Face towel	Slippers
Flannel	Shampoo
Bath towel	Conditioner
Breast pads	Hairbrush
Sanitary towels	Shower gel
Nightie	Toothbrush
Paper pants/ pants	Toothpaste
Dressing gown or large shirt	Moisturiser
T shirt	Wipes
	Tissues

## Items to be provided by Families First are:

- 0-3months vests
- 0-3month baby grows
- Hats
- Scratch mitts
- Baby towels
- Nappies - *continued for further 3 years*

It is recommended not to add the nightie, dressing gown until sizes are known.

# Read Aloud Books Galore

**Back in November 2025, along with other 'Literacy Champions', I received a very comprehensive list of books from which I could choose for the Mothers' Union in DASH Deanery. This was from Phil, who is now in charge of 'The Literary Trust' in Doncaster.**

After I had chosen many interesting titles from the list, my lovely husband pointed out that I had ordered over 300 books; well, I was full of excitement and optimism. Amongst the books I'd ordered were 'A Christmas Carol,' 'The Nativity,' 'Christmasaurus,' 'Snowman's First Christmas' and many more modern books including one of my granddaughter's favourites from when she was a child, 'Peter Rabbit'



After a few weeks our order was confirmed but, due to demand, I could only have 247 books for DASH deanery, and these had to be collected from their distribution point in the Business Centre in Mexborough. Peter said it would be a lot of boxes!

Well, he was right there were a lot of boxes! We were met by Phil who has taken over from Megan following her move to the London office. We followed him up 4 flights of stairs (no lift), into a room bursting with books. We were in the 'Literacy Lab.' We were the first of the 'Literacy Champions' to arrive.

What a joy it was to be watching new books being placed into boxes for us. (These books are the tools for the future, giving children confidence and curiosity.)

# Project

Whilst we were watching, I couldn't help remembering where our car was, and not least the 4 flights of stairs!

The 'Literacy Lab' soon filled up with happy jolly people, all collecting their book orders. Soon our order was complete and made up to 300 by Phil's generosity and at his discretion. Before we knew it everyone who could, picked up a box (8 in total), and said, show us where your car is and we will soon have these packed into your boot. Well, this 83-year-old couple quickly, well as quick as we could, followed this wonderful group of people, down the stairs and into the car park, as if they were the embodiment of the Pied Piper of Hamelin. Christian love abounds in our country, which we just don't hear enough about it.

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**Some people take books for granted, but they can do so much; reading is the key to life. A book can take you to a different place and maybe help you to escape from a difficult background.**

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We had over 300 books to give out to children in our deanery, helping to make a difference. These books were distributed throughout DASH deanery to the Women's Refuge and branches at Barnby Dun, Bessacarr, Tickhill, Sprotbrough, Hexthorpe and Doncaster Minster.



A late request from Sheffield Women's Refuge and a church family for 60 books was efficiently handled by Phil, and they were soon received and delivered. A huge thank you to Phil and his team in Doncaster, what a difference they are making, encouraging literary skills which allows children to realise and release their potential.

Our 'Read Out Loud' project continues in Doncaster at a pace, thanks to the 'National Literacy Trust' and their 'Literacy Champions'. In 2025 thousands of books were given out in Doncaster; amongst those helping with this wonderful task were Mothers' Union members, WOW.

## Tanis Cockerham VP

*We continue to make Worry Worms to go with books for the project.*



## Carver Street Parish Nurses



Lead Parish Nurse Louise was warmly welcomed by Sue, BC of **St Catherine of Siena**, they enjoyed a wonderful meal together and shared inspiring conversations about the Parish Nursing project and the difference it makes in local communities.

# CART

Christian African Relief Trust

**The Chairman of CART came over to Bessacarr with his trailer and large empty boot to collect all the aid gathered by St Francis and Barnby Dun MU.**

There were rather a lot of things including 10 sewing machines, 2 hostess trolleys (to sell in the shop), a man's bicycle, bags and bags of men's and ladies clothes, numerous beautifully made blankets, kettle, toaster, 2 pairs of large curtains, shoes, children's reference books, tools, toys and tins of sewing threads, needles, pins, buttons etc.!!! The list could go on.

The Chairman is Glynn Stewart, and he is passionate about the work of CART and he has visited Africa and seen CART in action!! Thank you, Glynn, for all you and your team do to help people live a better life and to create work for them too.

If your branch wants to start collecting for CART the website with more information is [www.cartyorkshire.co.uk](http://www.cartyorkshire.co.uk)





# MU Live

**Mothers' Union members are having an impact on the lives of so many people in their communities.**

Like all organisations we have to be accountable for what we do and MU Live builds a picture of how and where we are working, how many people are reached and how lives are being changed and the impact we have on the Diocese of Sheffield

In 2025 we impacted the lives of 4,122 individuals with donations ranging from clothes, food, books, gifts, cards and holidays.

2026 has started off well with 448 items of bedding, crockery and clothes donated so far.



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## Another Special Christmas Tree

**One again we had a Mothers' Union Christmas tree joining others at the Christmas Tree Festival at Sheffield Cathedral.**

As we walked into the Cathedral our eyes fell on the beautiful sight of dozens of trees lining the walls with white fairy lights already twinkling and ready for us to decorate. Immediately it made us feel festive and looking forward to the job in hand. We had no concerns this year whether we had enough decorations, as they had all been carefully stored from the previous year and were mostly in good condition. The theme was blue and gold/yellow and silver/white and as well as some baubles and all were made by members reflecting the work of the worldwide Mothers' Union. Wiggle Worms scattered on the branches gave splashes of colour.



## Another Special Christmas Tree

The tree was of much interest to passers-by who had already finished their trees later in the afternoon and we were pleased to share information with them and point out the QR codes to scan for further information. We, in turn, were happy to hear about their organisations and to realise how much support there is for those who need it in Sheffield. It was a lovely afternoon and good

to see all the completed trees at the Coffee Morning a few days later. Some extravagantly decorated by corporate organizations and some with home-made decorations like ours but all beautiful. For Christmas 2026 perhaps we will incorporate Mary Sumner and the 150th Anniversary into the decorations to celebrate a special year.

***Thank you Susan and Pauline.***



## Faith & Policy

**Prayer and worship is at the heart of all we do, and we believe that they can be transformational and make a huge difference in the lives of individuals and communities.**

Our Faith & Policy Coordinator writes... More things are wrought by prayer than this world dreams of...

The prayer chain is still in operation, and we welcome requests for prayer for members, family and friends. Please ensure you have the permission of the person who needs prayer.

To request the MU Prayer chain please phone **07934665985** or email **margaretvivan@live.co.uk**

We have also a prayer leaflet available to download from branch resources on our website or from your branch leader.

### Diocese of Sheffield



### Prayer Leaflet 2026

#### 5<sup>th</sup> Objective

**To maintain a Worldwide fellowship of Christians united in prayer, worship and service.**



**Editor's Note:** Thank you, Susan Cammack for preparing the leaflet.



MU News

# MU News

## Celebrating 150 years of Mothers' Union

We invite you all to be part of the 150th Celebrations. Whether you're passionate about social justice, prayer, community outreach, or simply want to connect with people who care, there will be a way for you to Join Us, Join In!

*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.*



**Mothers' UNION**  
Christian care for families

National Programmes in  
Britain & Ireland



Away From It All  
(AFIA)

Modern  
Slavery



Prisons  
Work

Domestic Abuse  
(RISE UP)



Find out more at [mothersunion.org](http://mothersunion.org)

## MU News

# 150th Prayer

Chaplain Richard has written a Sheffield Diocesan Prayer for inclusion in the Time Capsule along with the York Provincial 150 prayer. Our prayer will form part of

## Sheffield MU 150th Anniversary Prayer

*Heavenly Father,*

*We thank you for this joyful time of celebration, as we draw inspiration from our founder, Mary Sumner.*

*As we meet in your name, we pray for the vision, guidance and strength of your Holy Spirit, that we may be empowered to serve. Especially we offer you our prayers for all the families of our Diocese and for all who are affected by violence or any particular kind of need.*

*Stir up, we pray, the gifts of all our members in the Diocese of Sheffield.*

*Help us to commit ourselves afresh to serve the people who most need our care, and to work for an increase in numbers and in faith.*

*Together with our sisters and brothers in this land and throughout the world, may we glorify your name, through Christ our Lord. Amen.*

all we do and say as it progresses round branches and places in its journey. The prayer can also be used in our groups / gatherings and meetings in branches,

## York Provincial 150th Anniversary Prayer

*Lord of all life,*

*We give you thanks for the 150th anniversary of the Mothers' Union.*

*We bless you for the vision of Mary Sumner to share the love of Jesus in support of family life.*

*We praise you for the mission and service of the Mother's Union across the world.*

*As we continue in the vision of our founder in this land, we especially offer to you our work of outreach in prisons and campaigns against domestic abuse, gender-based violence and modern slavery.*

*We pray that you will pour out your Spirit upon us, to bless, renew and refresh the work of the Mothers' Union in the Province of York.*

*Together and dispersed, may we bring glory to Jesus and hope to our communities.*

*We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*



# Events in Sheffield

## for the 150th Celebrations

### 14th March

**York Province Service** Manchester Cathedral 2.30pm - Did you go?

### 22 - 29th March

The Capsule travelled around Diocese to Deaneries - it might have come to you?

### 25th April

Spring Council - we will launch the **150th Celebration Raffle**

### 2nd June - 10th June

Wath All Saints MU member, Geoff Fellows will be accompanying our Zonal Trustee, Deb Lee to do a **sponsored cycle ride** from York to St Paul's Cathedral-350 miles. And on Wednesday 3rd will be in Sheffield.

### June 10th & 11th

30 Sheffield MU members are attending the **MU National Celebratory Service** at St Pauls' Cathedral and 26 are attending the MU Annual Gathering at the Emmanuel Centre next door to Mary Sumner House

### 13th June

**Bishop's Garden Party** at Bishops Croft - we will be promoting Mothers' Union - do join us.

### 12th July

Branches are asked to take over their church service to promote the work of MU.

### 25th July

Deaneries are holding Picnics and spreading the word about MU.

### 9th August

We are holding a **Mary Sumner Day Eucharist Service** at Sheffield Cathedral at 2pm followed by a **Diocesan Picnic** outside the Cathedral with fun and games Please spread the word and invite family and friends to come along ! #JoinUsJoinIn York Provincial Prayer Hour -Sheffield 7-8pm members are asked to light a Candle as part of the bigger 'Lighting the way for future Generations'

### 12th December - 7pm

Sheffield Diocese Fundraiser: Friends In **Harmony Concert at Bramley Church**

Watch this space for more events...

MU News

# 150th Anniversary Challenges

**Many people are taking on different challenges to raise money to support the life-changing work of Mothers' Union in Britain and Ireland and in the world's most vulnerable communities as well as raising awareness of Mothers' Union- Could you do something?**

Kathleen Snow, our WWP, is running 10km in 15 dioceses around the world in 2026 to support our movement's work of ending injustice, ending poverty and ending violence.



Her first 10K run was in her home Diocese of Fredericton and in early February she ran 10km in Bahrain.

If you wish to donate then here is the link <https://www.justgiving.com/page/kathleen-snow->



Former WWP Trish Heywood-Brown is inviting 150 people into her home for lunch over the course of the year.

President Jo-Anne has promised to raise £150 in Mothers' Union's 150th year by taking inspiration from her job as Dementia Lead at Darnall Wellbeing to raise awareness of dementia.

The Alzheimer's Society logo is a Forget-me-not Flower and Dementia Friend, Christine Brown from Sheffield has worked with other Dementia Friends to design crochet and knitted Forget- Me-Not badges. Joanne is selling these to raise £150 which will be split between The Alzheimer's Society and Mothers' Union.



# Who Wants to Ride Their Bicycle?

**Geoff Fellows, Wath All Saints member is accompanying our Zonal Trustee, Deb Lee to cycle 350 miles from York to St Paul's, London.**

Geoff writes... Mothers' Union 150 years celebration bike ride.

Quite some time ago I suggested to Gill that as part of the 150 years celebration of the Mothers' Union, it would be a good idea to do a bike ride from York Minster to Canterbury Cathedral. Well, it seems someone else had similar thoughts. Deb Lee from Carlisle has been planning a cycle route, but instead of going to Canterbury, it is going to St. Paul's Cathedral where there will be a service to celebrate MU.

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**Somebody told me to start acting my age, but as I never have, why should I start now?**

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So, at the beginning of June, we are cycling, via lots of cycleways and cathedrals, from York to London and taking the 'Prayer Capsule' with us. We are planning to take 8 or 9 days but haven't finalised the route yet. At the moment it is York, Leeds, Sheffield, Chesterfield, Nottingham, Derby, Lichfield, Coventry, Rugby, Oxford, St. Albans and finishing at St. Paul's. I don't know what state I'll be in when we get there, but I do know I'll have to do a lot of training before then. The



distance is about 350 miles. We are hoping that our accommodation will be using volunteer hospitality at the homes of MU members en route. Also, at some stage, I'll be chasing you all up to sponsor me, so look out for that. I have begun indoor training, but I do need to get outside and tackle some hills.

We will be starting in York on Tuesday 2nd June and cycling through the Sheffield Diocese on Wednesday 3rd June. If anyone wants to come and support us, please do. You might even know someone who wants to cycle with us which would be fantastic.

MU News

# Sheffield MU are holding a 150 Celebration Raffle

**150 Celebration raffle tickets in aid of MU projects are available for individual members, branches and Deaneries.**

These are allocated to branches depending on the number of members in each branch.

Tickets are £1 each and are in books of five.

All proceeds to MU projects.

Thank you too to the Diocese and Deaneries for donating the prizes.

Stubs should be returned to Gill Fellows or Pat Simpson by August 5 to enable the draw to be made after the Mary Sumner Day Service during the Diocesan Picnic

Perhaps if you are having an event this Summer they could be sold there or at your Church and to friends and family.



00000	Promotor: Mothers' Union, Gill Fellows 22 Coverleigh Road, Wash upon Dearne S63 7JL	00000			
Sheffield Mothers' Union 150th Anniversary Raffle	<b>150 YEARS OF</b> <b>Mothers' UNION</b> Join us, Join in				
Name: _____ Address: _____ Phone: _____	Sheffield Diocese Mothers' Union Charity No 1063619				
Please return all stubs and monies to Gill Fellows 22 Coverleigh Road Wash upon Dearne S63 7JL by Wednesday 5 August Licence No S21.0366	<b>150th Anniversary Raffle</b> <small>All Proceeds to Mothers' Union Projects in Sheffield and Worldwide</small>				
	<table border="0"> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;"><b>£1</b> Each</td> <td style="text-align: center;"> <b>First Prize: £100 Cash</b>  <b>Second Prize: Luxury Hamper</b>  <b>Third Prize: Food Hamper</b>            Plus many more Prizes...         </td> <td style="text-align: center;"><b>£1</b> Each</td> </tr> </table>	<b>£1</b> Each	<b>First Prize: £100 Cash</b> <b>Second Prize: Luxury Hamper</b> <b>Third Prize: Food Hamper</b> Plus many more Prizes...	<b>£1</b> Each	
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	<small>Raffle to be drawn after the Mary Sumner Day Service 9 August 2026. All winners will be notified by telephone. Prizes can be collected by contacting <a href="mailto:fund@sheffieldmu.co.uk">fund@sheffieldmu.co.uk</a> Licence No S21.0289</small>				

**Tickets will be available at the Coffee Mornings at the Cathedral, at Bishop Pete's Garden Party on June 13th. 2 - 5pm at Bishopscroft, where we will be promoting MU, or from Gill Fellows and Pat Simpson.**



## Deaneries & Branches

**Our branch meetings are a great opportunity for fellowship and to hear about the work of the wider Mothers' Union particularly across Britain and Ireland all for around £2.90 a month - less than a cup of coffee! Start saving for your subs next year now!**

Trustees have been busy meeting and planning the events for the 150 celebrations along with those that attended the joint Action & Outreach (A&O) and Fundraising and Communications (F&C) meetings. They joined for a lunch in February at the Holiday Inn in Doncaster and were entertained by a song from the senior leadership Team!



## Tankersley Deanery

On Wednesday 10 December we met in **St John's Penistone** for our Deanery Advent Service followed by a good spread of tea.

**Thurlstone St Saviors:** Our November meeting was card making with a dear friend of the church. He tutored us well. There were six of us at St Saviours.



## Deaneries & Branches

### DASH Deanery

#### Deanery Advent Service

This was a wonderful occasion on 4th December 2025 in Doncaster Minster and both the service and social gathering afterwards were thoroughly enjoyed by members and friends who came along.

The service was led by our Chaplain, Rev Canon Richard Parker, and readings were given by branch members as well as lighting candles on our Advent Wreath.

The special guest at our service was President Jo-Anne, who also gave out long service awards to many members who had served the Mothers' Union from 10 to 60 years. Judith Hilton of the Minster Branch received her 60-year-long service award. Well done Judith.



Two more special guests were the manager and children's officer of Doncaster Women's Refuge who were delighted to receive many Christmas gifts for ladies and children at the Refuge. These gifts were presented during the singing of the first carol and members came in droves carrying their gift bags, it



was a brilliant Christmas gift for our friends at the Refuge. Afterwards refreshments were served and President Jo-Anne was presented with a Christmas gift from us all, a beautiful, specially made MU apron. Jo-Anne put it on immediately and started serving members!!! Lovely!!

Chaplain Richard used this prayer to finish with by the spiritual writer, Henri Nouwen, that we might see that guiding light with through the eyes of faith:

*Lord Jesus,  
Master of both the light and the darkness,  
send your Holy spirit  
upon our preparations for Christmas.  
We, who have so much to do  
seek quiet spaces to hear your voice each day.  
We are anxious over many things  
look forward to your coming among us.  
We, who are blessed in so many ways  
long for the complete joy of your kingdom.  
We whose hearts are heavy  
seek the joy of your presence.  
We are your people, walking in darkness,  
yet seeking the light. To you we say, "Come,  
Lord Jesus!" Amen.*

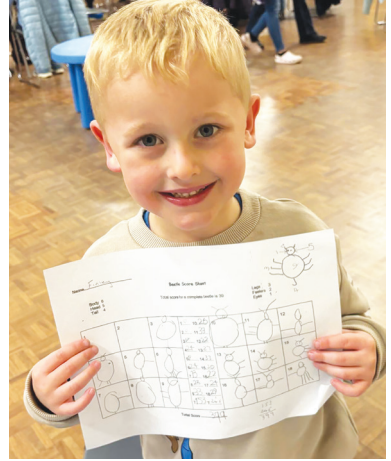
# Deaneries & Branches

## Bessacarr St Francis Beetle Drive

Our annual Beetle Drive was held in October 2025 and we were delighted to welcome families and friends. It was very enjoyable and several children were very excited about making good drawings of Beetles and shouting out "Beetle" when complete!!

We also held a raffle and served refreshments. A brilliant early evening entertainment enjoyed by all who came!!! Another fund raiser for MU projects!

Bessacarr St Francis started their Soup Lunches 25 years ago and they are still going strong.



### Hexthorpe St Jude

Angela Coates was unable to attend the DASH Deanery Advent Service at Doncaster Minster. So Father Michael presented her with her certificate for 10 years membership of the Mothers' Union at St Jude's Church.



## Deaneries & Branches

### Barnby Dun MU



Barnby Dun MU had a fun time at their Christmas Carol Event including a dance of the Sugar Plum Faeries!



### Doncaster Minster

**Judith Hilton received her 60 years long service award at the Dash Deanery Advent Service in December 2025 and she has been a loyal and hard working MU member for all those years.**



Way back in the 80s Judith was the Young Families Rep for the Diocese and she organized many events including a memorable day in Barnburgh Vicarage gardens complete with stalls, games, singing of Graham Kendrick's "Shine Jesus Shine" by Bessacarr Worship Group and a Bouncy castle. Judith was a member of St Michael's MU, Rossington for many years and is now a regular member at Doncaster Minster MU.

Judith celebrated her 90th birthday with flowers from her branch and her family surprised her with an 'At Home' in St Michael's church on her birthday when many people came to wish her a happy birthday.

## Deaneries & Branches

### Wath Deanery

**Wath All Saints held our AGM and it was interesting to be reminded of what we had been involved in during the year.**

The speakers topics included, Guiding, the Leprosy Mission, TWAM (Tools With A Mission), RUSH House, the Sheffield Blitz, a talk by our past president Gill, and the Archer Project. Members enjoyed fun evenings with playing beetle and having



quizzes. All relevant reports were accepted and further plans made for our 150th celebrations to keep all members up to date with

what is happening during the year. Revd. Charles chaired our meeting, Jean, Sue and Sheila were presented with flowers.

### Barnburgh St Peter

**Barnburgh St Peter member, Sue Gowens wrote the following article for their parish magazine! - what a great idea!**

Sesquicentennial!!

Not an easy word to say but simply means something has reached its 150th year since inception.

So. It is with the Mothers' Union - 2026 is our 'sesquicentennial' year - providing support for women and families since 1876.

Mary Sumner - our founder, following the birth of her daughter, realised how difficult a woman can find the burden of motherhood. So she planned a meeting of other women in similar circumstances to herself, from all walks of life, hoping

they would support one another, seeing motherhood as a profession!

This was quite radical in its day bringing all women together regardless of, 'class'.

But from these simple beginnings was the birth of what is today a global movement helping the world's hardest to reach communities to transform their lives.

At St Peter's we are a small MU group, but are very happy and proud to be part of the worldwide movement.

**The Mothers' Union motto for 2026 -  
Join us, Join in.**

## Deaneries & Branches

### Ecclesall & Attercliffe Deanery



**St Catherine of Siena** MU were pleased to welcome Jenny Jayne Mundia and Florence Mundia who were enrolled by Fr Richard, MU Chaplain.

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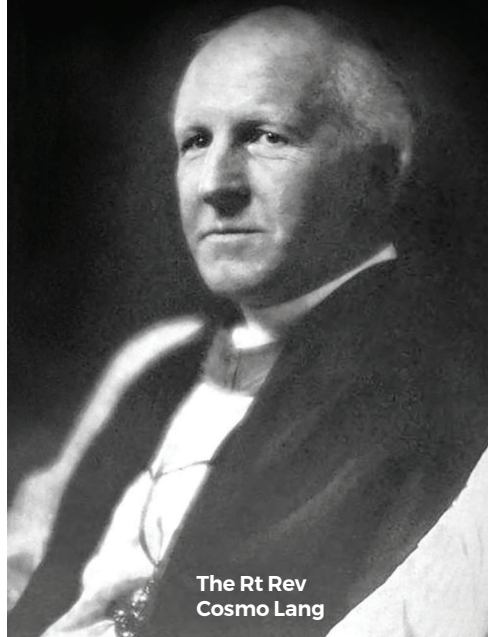
### Ecclesfield Deanery

Ecclesfield Deanery Festival and 100th anniversary of St. Nicholas Bradfield MU will be held at 11.00am at the church on Thursday, 4th June. Preacher - Chaplain Richard Parker

### Millhouses St Oswald's

Millhouses St Oswald's church was opened by the Archbishop of York, the Rt Rev Cosmo Lang on 4th July 1910 and held their first service on Sunday 10 July 1910, the following day the branch of the Mothers' Union enrolled three new members

Plans are to celebrate 116 years of MU at St Oswald's on Saturday 11th of July - so watch this space!



The Rt Rev  
Cosmo Lang

## Deaneries & Branches

### Rotherham & Laughton Deanery

#### Ryecroft MU

On Tuesday, 17th February, Angela Parker, Vice President, admitted Susan Grice to full membership of the Mothers' Union.

St. Nicolas Branch, Ryecroft is very happy to welcome Susan into their midst and know she will be an important addition.

Hopefully, our number will swell even more.



#### Whiston MU

Whiston Parish Church held a Christmas Tree Festival on December 6th until January 4th). The theme was "White Christmas". The MU tree was decorated with white crosses with the MU logo, a few pictures of MU projects on snowflakes.

Gill Bradbury put the finishing touches to the "white" tree that had been provided by one of our newest member Sally Dunkley.



# Growing Our Movement

## The 150th Membership Challenge



### Welcome to New Members

St Catherine of Siena: **Jenny Jayne Mundia**  
and **Florence Mundia**

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Oughtibridge Church  
of Ascension: **Helen Conlon**

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Ecclesfield St Mary: **Jennifer Wehre**

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Rycroft St Nicholas: **Susan Grice**

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Diocesan Member: **Beatrice Maina**

### Congratulations

to the members celebrating  
their 90th Birthday

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**Barbara Perry** 21 October  
Sprotbrough St Mary

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**Kate Walmsley** 4 November  
Sheffield IMPC

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**Elizabeth Ranson** 28 November  
Abbeydale St Johns

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**Hazel Rollins** 9 December  
Ecclesfield St Mary

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**Joan Lloyd** 17 December  
Doncaster Minster

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**Carmen Franklin** 19 December  
Chapelton St Johns

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**Judith Hilton** 9 January  
Doncaster Minster

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**Glenys Loxley** 24 February  
Ecclesfield St Mary

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**June Andrews** 3 March  
Wath All Saints

## Anniversary Congratulations

**Betty Salter**, a Barnby Dun member and her husband celebrated 70 years of marriage on December 24th, 2025. They received a card from the King and Queen and MU gave her a red rose tree with lots of love.



# Regrets and Blessings

It is with sadness we say Goodbye to a previous member of Abbeydale St John's branch **Sheila Wenninger**.

Sheila passed away at the age of 97 just before Christmas 2025 in a nursing home close to her daughter in Oundle. Sheila had been a Mothers' Union member for 57 years and was always interested in MU activities and news of members even when unable to attend meetings. Her faith was very strong and an example to all who knew her.

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**Margaret Boor** was a long-standing member of Wombwell branch and was very active for many years, she determinedly joined IMPC when she was no longer able to attend church and when Wombwell branch closed she continued as a Deanery IMPC member. Margaret really enjoyed the IMPC contact with letters and cards and was 97 when she died in January.

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**Mary Dixon** was also a Wombwell member who regularly joined in the branch meetings and enjoyed the friendship but lapsed her membership when the branch closed. Mary was also 97 and died 2 days after Margaret. RIP

**Patricia Hardman** had been known to the people of Millhouses St Oswald for many years but 20 years ago St Peters congregation joined St Oswald's to become one parish Pat eventually joined MU and became an Indoor member as she was housebound. St Oswald's MU will miss she rest in peace Pat.

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**Joyce Foster** was a member of Wath All Saints branch for many years. She is fondly remembered for her amazing baking, her sense of humour and wonderful smile. She will be greatly missed.

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**Annette Croot** was a member of Ecclesall All Saint's for a number of years and when it closed, she continued her MU membership as a Diocesan member. Annette passed away in January after an illness.

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**June Birkinshaw** Chapeltown St Johns

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**Mavis Bufton** Grenoside St Marks



# Dates for your diary

## MAY

Friday 1st	Cathedral Coffee Morning 10.15 – 12noon. Hosts: Ecclesfield Deanery
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## June

2nd-10th	150 Bike Ride York to St Paul's London
Wednesday 3rd	150 Bike Ride will be at Sheffield Cathedral
Thursday 4th	Ecclesfield Deanery Festival and 100th anniversary of St. Nicholas. Bradfield MU - 11.00am Preacher - Rev Richard Parker
Friday 5th	Cathedral Coffee Morning 10.15 - 12noon. Hosts: DASH Deanery
Wednesday 10th	150th Celebratory Service, 5pm, St Paul's Cathedral-streamed.
Thursday 11th	Annual Gathering 10.30 - 4.30. Emmanuel Centre London
Saturday 13th	Bishop's Garden Party - 2-5pm Bishopscroft - All welcome. MU Stall
Saturday 20th	Barnby Dun - Open Day promoting MU.

## July

Friday 3rd	Cathedral Coffee Morning. 10.15 – 12noon. Hosts: R&L Deanery
Saturday 11th	Millhouses St Oswald celebrate 116th Anniversary
Sunday 12th	Mothers' Union Takeover Church Service - spread the word
Saturday 25th	Deanery Picnics



<b>August</b>	
Friday 7th	Cathedral Coffee Morning 10.15 – 12noon. Hosts: Ecclesall & Attercliffe Deanery
Sunday 9th	Mary Sumner Day Service 2pm followed by Diocesan Picnic, Sheffield Cathedral 7-8pm York Provincial Prayer Hour at home.
<b>September</b>	
Friday 4th	Cathedral Coffee Morning 10.15 – 12noon. Hosts: Wath Deanery
<b>October</b>	
Friday 2nd	Cathedral Coffee Morning 10.15 – 12noon. Hosts: DASH Deanery
Saturday 10th	Autumn Council 2pm-4pm Bramley St Francis - All Welcome
<b>November</b>	
Friday 6th	Cathedral Coffee Morning 10.15 – 12noon. Hosts: Ecclesfield Deanery
<b>December</b>	
Friday 4th	Cathedral Coffee Morning 10.15 – 12noon. Hosts: Trustees
Saturday 12th	Friends in Harmony Concert Bramley Church 7pm - Sheffield MU Fundraiser

# Sheffield Diocese Mothers' Union

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**Provincial President:**

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**Our link Dioceses in the Wave of Prayer:**

Diocese of Central Zimbabwe, Lango in  
Uganda, Kebbi in Nigeria, Tamale in Ghana,  
and Guadalcanal in the Solomon Islands.

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**Newsline Editorial Team:**

Elizabeth Dean, Pat Simpson, Gill Fellows  
and Janet Howarth.

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**Editor's Note:**

Please can all photos be in 'jpg' and would  
you send them as attachments.

Please submit contributions for the  
Celebration Newsline by Wednesday  
2nd September to Elizabeth,  
newsline@sheffieldmu.co.uk or send to  
177 Allerburn Lea, Alnwick NE66 2QR.  
Please also send dates, items and photos  
for website.

**Useful websites**

Sheffield Mothers' Union - Our own website

[www.sheffieldmu.co.uk](http://www.sheffieldmu.co.uk)

Mothers' Union - Everything about Mothers' Union

[www.mothersunion.org](http://www.mothersunion.org)

MUeShop - Quote **Sheffield** when ordering

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Sheffield Diocese - Find out what is happening locally

[www.sheffield.anglican.org](http://www.sheffield.anglican.org)

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**Editor's note:**

The opinion expressed in each article is the opinion of its author and does not necessarily reflect the opinion of Sheffield Diocese MU.