

Mothers' UNION

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

Summer 2025

newsline

A publication about Mothers' Union
in the Diocese of Sheffield



Lighting the way for
generations to come

Commissioning
of our President

Jo-Anne, our new President writes...

Since my letter in our Spring edition, how lighter nights and sunshine, visible through the curtains on waking, enthuse me to get up, and get going. As a gardener I love the lifting of the spirit with the encouraging signs of new shoots and roots, and growth. Something that I pray is continued with our wonderful MU going forward.

I have just heard the report that we have had the warmest Spring on record, but our rainfall is down, empty water butts the giveaway! The joy this past weekend playing with our grandchildren, in their garden, with a trampoline, 'Come on Mama, you can do it!' Was the shout, amid their laughter, as I was unable to find my legs, to stand up, as they proceed to bounce me round... ha ha!, There is always a balance to find and strive for, in all we do, as we count our many blessings.

My time as your President so far has been wonderful and full on from our Commissioning, which was a lovely service, presided by Bishop Pete, to Spring Council and our Annual General meeting. Also Deanery Festivals, celebrating and reaffirming our work and branches locally, to the planning meetings that are held with Mary Sumner House and other Presidents across Britain and Ireland, of course to our own Trustees and Committees. It has been a real privilege to attend other Commissioning services across the Province on your behalf,

welcoming 'new' Presidents. Things really have gathered momentum, as we are finding out about the 150th Celebration of Mothers' Union and all the planned activities and events that are on the drawing board to shape our national activity, but capturing what we want to do, and local plans too! I find I often say, 'there will be more to follow' and this is true again. I am joining other Presidents in Liverpool for the Diocesan Presidents Conference at the end of the month, three days focusing on celebrating our founder, Mary Sumner, the aims and the vision for going forward, with membership at the heart.

I am delighted we have had notification of six 'Rise Up' Bronze Awards (Campaign against Domestic Abuse) for branches and churches in our Diocese, presented this Pentecost from MSH, the process is still open – do sign up! All our project work is important from AFIA holidays, Clewer Initiative, Refuges updates, to Read Aloud, Prison work and support, to Indoor membership, Overseas links and

connections - as we enthusiastically meet people and offer a welcome to, 'Join us Join in'. Something that we will be doing in July this year, when we have the privilege of Kathleen Snow, our Worldwide President's visit to join our Coffee Morning, meet members and hear all about our work, outreach and witness. I am sure that the next Newsline will record the event as always, giving a photographic record and insight to events! What a wonderful example our Spring 2025 Newsline was, with news about Her Royal Highness, The Duchess of Edinburgh as our Patron, to Bishop Sophie's move to Coventry, to our own Deaneries and their reports and tributes of loved members. I am excited to read the next instalment, valuing the round up it provides, as there is



There is always a balance to find and strive for, in all we do, as we count our many blessings.

so much more with Pope Leo's Inauguration, and a welcome to Revd. Leah Vasey – Saunders as Bishop of Doncaster recently announced. Thank you to our Editorial Team, all concerned in providing us with a fabulous publication and for you sending photos and reports to tell the story, enhancing and evidencing all we do!

I pray you have a wonderful summer and look forward to meeting you at some of the events, like Mary Sumner Day. Continue to wear your badge and invite others to 'Join us and Join in'

**Blessings as always
Jo-Anne**

Thoughts from our Chaplain

Once the Easter season has come to an end, the Church's calendar returns to Ordinary Time. The term "Ordinary Time" can make it sound as though there is nothing very noteworthy in this season, in which the default liturgical colour is green. When we consider that green is a colour associated with growth, perhaps this "ordinary" time might begin to seem a bit more special.



In any case, there are some key dates during this season. For Mothers' Union, this would certainly include Mary Sumner Day on 9th August. For every institution, the commemoration of the founder is an important occasion. As is the tradition in the liturgical calendar, Mary Sumner is remembered on the date of her death.

Mary Sumner knew that she was relying on a greater strength than her own.

To the uninitiated it may seem a bit strange to recall a sad occasion, rather than a more conventionally happy one, such as a birthday. Our Easter celebrations a few weeks ago give us a different perspective on this. As Christians we believe in the Resurrection. The life of Mary Sumner was rooted in this faith. Her work and her witness were aimed at revealing

the kingdom of God, especially through the medium of family life. Mary Sumner knew that she was relying on a greater strength than her own. It is because the love of God in Jesus proved to be stronger than death, that we can celebrate the date of 9th August with joy and thanksgiving.

Mary Sumner wants us to grasp how great is God's love for us and for the people we are called to serve. These words are from the first reading for Mary Sumner Day, from the letter of St Paul to the Ephesians: *"I pray that you may have the power to comprehend with all the saints, what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, so that you may be filled with all the fulness of God."* Mary Sumner knew that this knowledge and love transform ordinary life into something extraordinary!

Richard

Introducing our new Vice President for Sheffield and Rotherham Archdeaconry Angela Parker

It is a great pleasure and honour to accept the position of Vice President for Sheffield and Rotherham; this will be my second term in this position.

I was first elected when Norma Priest was Diocesan President which spanned the 125th Anniversary of the foundation of the Mothers' Union in 2001, and here I am again to be serving in the 150th Anniversary which is next year 2026.

I have been a member since 1984 (41 years) and have served as a Trustee for most of this time in one capacity or another. I am of course the Away from it All Representative which I will also continue to do.

It is always a pleasure to serve in any capacity offered in the Mothers' Union and I look forward to the future continuing to be of service to you and the Mothers' Union.

**Best Wishes
Angela Parker**



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

The Units of Action & Outreach and Fundraising & Communication have undergone a change as at the start of the Triennium there was no one willing to take on the roles of Coordinators.

The Units had been successfully meeting together during 2024 as there is such an overlap in the aims of both units.

They now meet three times a year with the object of the meetings to exchange ideas, to quantify and note any donations/fundraising that has happened and to plan for any future fundraising events.

With that in mind, anyone is welcome to join

us BUT it is essential that every Deanery is represented. The deanery representative, ideally would be the Deanery Leader plus others, will hopefully bring information of past, present and future plans.

Please let us know if you would like to come along or contact your Deanery Leader.

The next meeting is on Friday 5th September 2025 at 1pm at Sheffield Cathedral

How ARE we fulfilling our Mission in Sheffield Diocese and beyond?

AFIA

Our AFIA Rep, Angela has booked 9 holidays at Haven Sites for 15 adults and 22 children. We are now making bookings for 2026

All the 2025 holidays will be over during the summer holidays and each family will receive a hamper of food items before they go, from the Deanery in which the family live.

We have been able to fund these due to the generosity of ALL branches who have held events to raise funds for AFIA- Thank you!



Sprotbrough MU recently held what seems to have become an annual event in the village; their Cream Tea to raise funds for AFIA.

This year was a sellout, and the Church Hall was full. Over seventy cream teas were provided. There were stalls selling cakes, cards / gifts, plants, books and mystery gifts, alongside the ever-popular raffle, all of which

helped to swell funds. Needless to say, the main focus was on the cream teas with homemade scones provided by members!

Thanks to the hard work of members and good support from the community, a record breaking £840.00 was raised for AFIA this year. An enjoyable afternoon was had by all and certainly well worthwhile!

St Oswalds Millhouses held a Cream Tea in June when 60 people attended and everyone enjoyed it. Just over £600 was raised for AFIA.

St Francis Bessacarr raised £1,000 for AFIA from their monthly Soup Lunches and a Quiz Night

St Catherine of Siena held a Strawberry Cream Tea and raised £245 for AFIA.



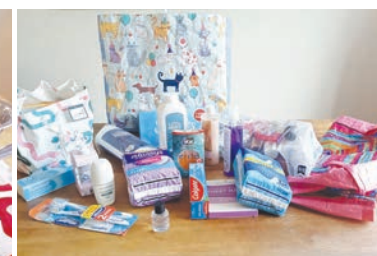
Women's Refuges

All branches across the Diocese are very generous and continue to support our 5 Refuges



Tankersley Deanery received a plea from Barnsley Refuge for towels as the emergency cupboard was almost empty - the need was quickly met.

Ecclesall & Attercliffe Deanery delivered 4 boxes with 6 Fair Trade Easter Eggs in each box to our 2 Refuges in Sheffield. They all have a small booklet telling the Easter story inside each egg box, so each child/family will know what Easter is about.



This was sent with love from the 4 Branches in the Ecclesall & Attercliffe Deanery.

Recent Donations to Sheffield Refuges from **St Catherine's MU and Bradfield (Ecclesfield Deanery)** included toiletries, kitchen items, blankets and bedding.

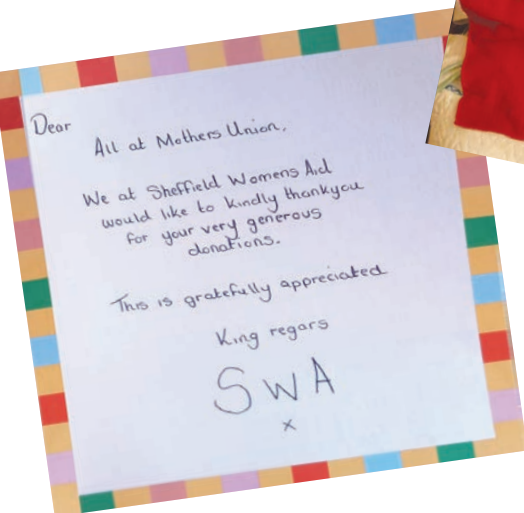
They received a thank you card from a member of staff from Women's Aid Refuge for the item. PHOTOS 11,11a

Wath Deanery, Barnburgh branch collects toiletries 3 or 4 times a year to fill toiletry bags for the Doncaster Refuge and provides Easter

Eggs and selection boxes for the children. Also the Knit and Natter group provide comfort blankets.

Rotherham and Laughton Deanery, Bramley delivered a car boot of donations from St Francis Church and Bramley MU in April and Rycroft donated staple food stuffs in May to Rotherham Refuge. Wales Branch supports Lighthouse Project.

DASH Deanery delivered 7 Fresh Start baskets to Doncaster Refuge. They also delivered a selection of electrical items, clothing, toiletries, teapots and tea towels.



How ARE we fulfilling our Mission in Sheffield Diocese and beyond?

RISE UP

Against Domestic Abuse

Award Levels Bronze, Silver and Gold

Congratulations to St Catherine of Siena, Millhouses St Oswalds, Barnburgh St Peter, Wath All Saints and Harley Mission who have earned Bronze awards for their support of the Rise Up against abuse campaign.

These awards recognise groups that are raising awareness and supporting local domestic abuse organisations through meaningful action. We are encouraged by the dedication shown.

Can your branch achieve a bronze award or even a silver award?

To achieve the Bronze award your branch or church should:

1. Put a RISE UP poster raising awareness about domestic abuse in an appropriate public place such as in churches, toilets, community centres, village halls etc.
2. Commit to pray for those affected by domestic abuse, including the victims, survivors, perpetrators, and those who work in the field of domestic abuse.
3. Make a connection with your local domestic abuse support organisation to see how you can support them. You could offer moving in and moving on packages.

More details can be found on the MSH website under Resources.



To achieve the Silver award your branch or church should:

1. Host at least one annual speaker from other organisations to speak about domestic abuse (e.g. Restored or other regionally appropriate organisations).
2. Speakers from Mothers' Union should ask for collections to go towards our RISE UP work.
3. Use the healthy relationship study materials.
4. Include information about abuse and helpful resources in church/branch communications (helplines etc.).
5. Preach about equality and mutual respect in all forms of relationships, including equality in relationships in youth work/children's work.
6. Reach out to churches without an MU branch and actively promote MU and the RISE UP challenge, therefore developing new member opportunities.
7. Attend the bystander webinar.

Read Aloud Project

The Literacy Trust provided DASH Deanery with books for 5 to 12-year-olds and these were divided between three MU branches who had shown an interest in getting books for children in their churches.

Barnby Dun, The Minster and Bessacarr St Francis branches were all supplied with books to be given to children in their Church Family on Mothering Sunday. If any other branches across the Diocese would like to use some books, please get in touch with Pat Simpson who will organise it through Megan from the Literacy Trust

Pauline Reynolds had received a thank you from Dr Nicola Ennis for the Wiggle Worms that had been donated from Sheffield MU.



Supporting Those in Need

We also support Baby Basics, Families First, Carver St Parish Nurses, CART (Christian African Relief Trust) .

Sprotbrough MU members knitted hats and cardigans to support new mothers and families who are struggling to meet the financial and practical burden of looking after a new baby.

Bradfield St Nicholas branch organised a collection on Mothering Sunday for Baby Basics.

Wath Branch also donated knitted cardigans and blankets for Baby Basics and Families First, Rotherham benefited from donations of assorted clothes. Bedding toiletries and kitchen items from branches in Wath Deanery. Ann Levick from Families First was delighted with the donations.

A recent trip was made to CART the Christian African Relief Trust, taking items donated by members of MU in Ecclesfield Deanery.

Congratulations to the ladies in High Green MU who gave 50 pairs of spectacles and to the member of Chapeltown branch who sent a beautiful handmade blanket.

All donated items were gratefully received by the ladies at CART and will be either sold in their shop to raise funds or shipped out to Africa to help families there.



Sheffield IMPC keeping members!

St Johns Goole MU branch closed in 2017 as no one was willing to take over the leadership. However, the group still meets monthly!

Most, but not all of the members decided to become Sheffield IMPC members, Indoor Members who are not attached to a branch. (We have 38 members across the diocese.)

The Goole group has attracted other members of St John's and people who don't come to church services. The subs are sent directly to the Diocesan treasurer.

The gathering meets in The Spire

Community Centre and always begins with a short worship time, often using prayers from MU Prayer Diary and we sing hymns, we have speakers, and some members speak on various topics they want to share and of course it ends with a social time of tea and biscuits.

DASH DL, Margaret and IMPC Rep, Lesley visited them and were given a warm welcome.

Yvonne Johnson



Outreach at the Cathedral Coffee mornings

Our Coffee Morning at the Cathedral on the first Friday in May was hosted by Ecclesfield Deanery. Jo-Anne, our president made a banner to raise awareness of Mothers' Union - Join Us Join In - why don't you come along to the next one and bring a friend?



Clewer Initiative

A project to end Modern Slavery working alongside South Yorkshire Police.

Some members in DASH Deanery donated 4 washbags containing essential items for victims of trafficking.



Mothers' Union Worldwide

One of our link Diocese, Kebbi in Nigeria has been undergoing unrest lately please continue to pray for them along with our other link Dioceses Central Zimbabwe, Lango in Uganda, Tamale in Ghana, and Guadalcanal in the Solomon Islands, also Sheffield Diocese Link with the Diocese of Bondo in Kenya.

Diocesan Member, Margaret Wood sent photos of two MU ladies: Auntie Adie 91 (no glasses) and Auntie Madge 92. Margaret has known them for years and they are both MU members in St. Mary's on the Braak in Stellenbosch, a town in the Western Cape province of South Africa.

Margaret also sent a photo of Gloria, who she met on her visit to South Africa in 2023 at the MU Thanksgiving Service then met her again last year when the new Bishop was Consecrated. She has a beautiful singing voice and wears her bra on top of her clothes with pride in belief in women's equality. The cloth for Gloria's uniform is very popular and MU Members always dress in their clothes to represent their club.



Mary Peglar, a very good friend of St Francis MU, Bessacarr, has lived in Africa for many years and has witnessed the wonderful work done by MU in Africa.

Mary is also a keen supporter of the C M S (Church Mission Society) and they have given their permission for this article to be produced in our Newsline to show the work done by CMS and MU together.

Andy Hart and his family went to work in Iringa, Tanzania, with CMS. They had to boil their drinking water for at least 10 minutes to ensure that it was safe to drink. It was very labour intensive for local Tanzanians, as wood for fuel had to be gathered, and then it was necessary for the water boiling to be supervised. While it is obviously beneficial to have safe drinking water, the smoke generated during boiling is not.

Apparently, more women and young children in Africa die from disease related to exposure to smoke from cooking fires than die from malaria. However there is another way of getting safe water which requires less work and has no smoke and gives water with a very good taste.

This process is called SODIS. Empty, clear

plastic or glass bottles are filled with water and left in the sun for 6 hours on a piece of metal painted black. This kills more bugs in the water than boiling for ten minutes. Plastic bottles are thrown away in huge number in Tanzania, so SODIS means recycling!

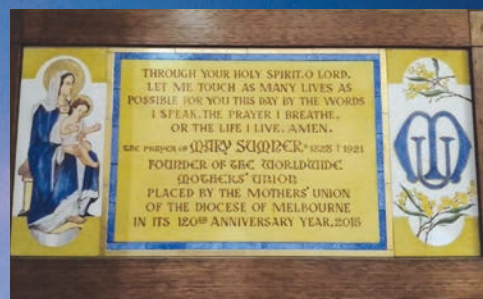
To introduce this simple technology to local people Andy trained MU groups in each church to go from house to house and train women in how to use the technology. They also went to schools to teach the children. This was an opportunity for evangelism. Each group learned how they could introduce Jesus into the conversation as the "water of life" and "quencher of thirst". Thus their MU groups, which are at the heart of the church are able to visit every household in the village with a solution to safe water, a way of reducing each woman's workload and the message of the Gospel.

For Andy, this has been the best development project we have been able to undertake, combining physical and spiritual outreach.

'Day 28, Water of Life' by Church Mission Society is Church Mission Society 2012 Published by Canterbury Press. Used by permission.
permissions@hymnsam.co.uk

Margaret Vivian writes

Round the World in 110 nights



Earlier this year Brian and I were privileged to make a grand voyage, a delayed celebration of our Golden Wedding. We boarded the Bolette ship in Liverpool on 4th January and returned there on 24th April, having landed on four continents and spending most of the time in the southern hemisphere.

We especially enjoyed many beautiful islands in the Atlantic, Pacific and Indian Oceans. Australia and South Africa were amazing, as was the spectacular scenery in the Chilean fiords. Splendid botanical gardens were the highlight at many of the ports where we docked.

From Cape Town I enjoyed a wonderful safari to Aquila game reserve, while Brian climbed Table Mountain. We both went to the Cape of Good Hope and Boulders Beach, where we saw African penguins.

In Melbourne Cathedral, I was pleased to find a version of the Mary Sumner prayer and the MU banners.

We are thankful for Christian fellowship on the ship and the services of an excellent chaplain and his wife.

Mothers' Union NEWS

Kathleen Snow was formally commissioned as Worldwide President of Mothers' Union by Archbishop of York at St Martin-in-the-Fields, London.

As Mothers' Union moves towards its 150th anniversary in 2026, Kathleen and her board will lead under the theme 'Join Us, Join In!' - a call to action to grow the movement in faith, fellowship, and funds to end poverty, injustice and violence for communities around the world.



ABOVE: Kathleen has been very busy and joined an Anglican delegation attending the inauguration of Pope Leo XIV.

LEFT: Pictured left to right: Kathleen Snow, Worldwide President, Stephen Cottrell, Archbishop of York, Bev Jullien, CEO Mothers' Union

She shares her reflections on the significance of the event and the spirit of unity it represented.

"It was a profound honour to be present at such a deeply spiritual and historic moment for the global Church. The inauguration of Pope Leo XIV was a powerful reminder of the shared hope and mission that unite us across traditions.

I was especially moved by the Pope's continued emphasis on unity, peace and mission values that lie at the heart of Mothers' Union's work worldwide.

He appealed for a united Church, to be "a sign of unity and communion, which becomes a leaven for a reconciled world". He also encouraged the faithful to "Look to Christ! Come closer to him..." and to "Listen to his offer of love and become his one family: in the one Christ, we are one."

It was a message of hope and encouragement, received well by the thousands gathered for the inauguration Mass, which took place in St Peter's Basilica and St Peter's Square. It was incredibly moving to be one of the people there.

Being part of the Anglican delegation, alongside leaders committed to reconciliation and partnership, reaffirmed my belief that when we stand together in faith and purpose, we can help bring healing and hope to a fractured world.

Mothers' Union stands in solidarity with the wider Christian family, working on reconciliation, supporting families, and upholding justice for all people - guided by faith, compassion, and community.

Sally Wood writes:

When I saw the email about the Commissioning of our new Worldwide President and her Trustees, I thought I could go to that and asked if any other trustees were going.

Sadly, no others were able to attend, so I thought I could go and also see an old friend that I haven't seen for ages. I rang her to make sure I could go and stay with her for the evening after the service and she said she would like to come to the service with me. So, I had a friend to sit with.

I went on the train to St. Pancras where my friend Diane met me, so we sat in the station and had lunch while we chatted and caught up with what our families had been up to etc. We then got a bus to Trafalgar Square where we found the church easily, St. Martin in the Fields. We had to wait for a while outside, which was ok as it was a lovely day, so chatted to more people and I said hello to Lynn Tenby who was our WW President from 2013 to 2018. We were then allowed inside and sat watching the seats fill up as I looked around for photo opportunities! I took a couple which were of Sheran Harper our WWP from 2019 to 2024 and Bev Jullien our Chief Executive Officer (CEO)

The more folk we have at services the louder the praise and worship and that's a very uplifting experience.

The service began with a lovely procession which sadly I didn't video, but I did video the procession as they went outside at the end of the service. It was a Communion Service too and my friend came up with me and had a blessing. The Archbishop of York took the service (and blessed my friend!)

and our Central Chaplain did the sermon, which was taken from the Gospel Reading in John Chapter 5 about Jesus calling his Father a Gardener and He being the Vine and we are the Branches.



She said that Jesus is the Vine and MU are the branches, without him we are nothing because we need to stay connected to him and so told us we should have as our Theme, Join us - Join In and be joined up.



It was a wonderful experience, so if you ever get the chance to go to a big service event for our Mothers' Union try and go, because the more folk we have at services the louder the praise and worship and that's a very uplifting experience. I'm sure there will be a chance next year when we celebrate 150 years of the MU. Watch Out for more information about this.

150 YEARS OF
Mothers' UNION
Join us, Join in

Editor's Note: There is such an occasion!

Next year Mothers' Union will celebrate its 150th Anniversary.

Put these dates below in your diary as a subgroup is overseeing the booking of tickets, transport and accommodation. If members would like to go please let your Deanery Leaders know.

- the MU National Celebratory Service at St Pauls' Cathedral on the evening of 10th June 2026, and,
- the MU Annual Gathering on 11th June 2026, at the Emmanuel Centre next door to Mary Sumner House

Provincial President

Christine Sharpe will be commissioned on Friday 25 July in York Minster by Stephen Cottrell, Archbishop of York. Christine Sharpe was Diocesan President for Manchester.

Connected magazine

If anyone in your branch is partially sighted and would like to receive the Audio CD of Connected contact emily.duff@mothersunion.org or let your Deanery Leader know.

Summer of Hope

and New Growth...
the 'Seeds of Survival & Seeds of Strength'

How delighted I was to receive my latest letter and find in the contents an envelope of seeds...

Getting straight to work planting, after reading about 'Hope', found through the MU literacy circle and Julianne, I set to sow.... In the quietness of the garden my thoughts went to the mustard seed, to Matthew 17:20;

Well, here we are with sunflower seeds, something a little bigger than a mustard seed, but still with the immense potential to affect change, to move and grow into

Provincial Chaplain

The second York Provincial Chaplain has been appointed by the Archbishop and we are extremely fortunate to have the services of Bishop John Thomson.

He was ordained by Bishop David Lunn and served his curacy at All Saints Ecclesall, where he was also Youth Chaplain. He then moved to South Africa. When he returned to England and was appointed vicar of St Mary's Church, Wheatley he was appointed Director of Ministry for the Diocese of Sheffield. He was additionally an Honorary Canon of Sheffield Cathedral.

Bishop John became a member of MU soon after his consecration as Bishop of Selby. Both he and Sue are enthusiastic and committed members, now retired to the Diocese of Carlisle. Bishop John will be commissioned in York Minster on 25th July.



something beautiful, generating more seeds after its flourish of colour fades...

Our hope and our challenge for the 150th year celebration next year is 'Join us, Join in'. Enjoy your seeds and reflection.

Jo-Anne

Spring Council

April 2025



Spring Council was held on a Saturday morning with the hope that members would attend and find out more about what was happening in Sheffield MU.

Jo-Anne presented her first meeting as President and encouraged everyone to Join Us Join in and demonstrating our Connections as everyone passed (and threw) 2 balls of wool around the circle. Everyone was included!



Commissioning Service

at Sheffield Cathedral, May 10th, 1pm.



DIOCESAN NEWS

MOTHERS' UNION
Province of Vork



Commissioning of Trustees for 2025-27

If anyone would like to join the MU Choir for the Mary Summer Day Service please email Pat Simpson.



Bishop Pete's sermon

from the Commissioning Service: based on Mark 6.34: Compassion

Introduction

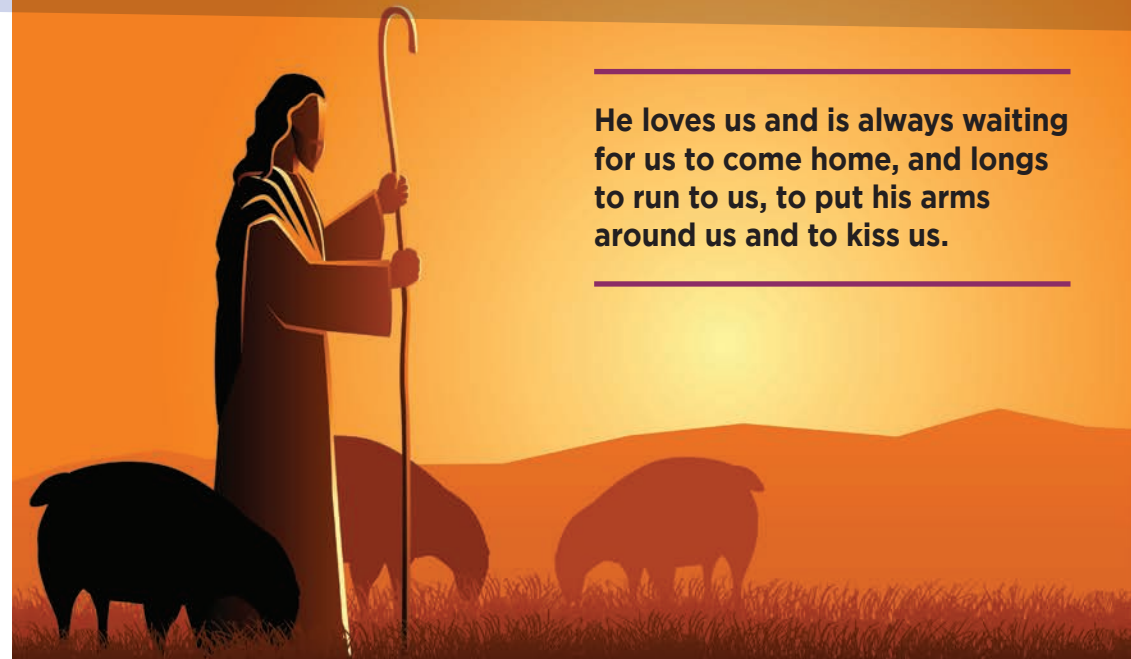
Well, Jo-Anne: obviously this sermon is addressed to you, personally, as you take up this new responsibility, as the President of the Mothers' Union in this Diocese of Sheffield. But actually this sermon is also addressed to every other member of the Mothers' Union who is present here today, and to those who are not members but have come along to support you this afternoon, and in fact to anyone else who might pick up on this message after today. This afternoon, I want to urge you to make a priority of compassion both for yourself personally in your interactions with others in the role of MU president, and for the MU as an organisation, in so far as you have been called by God to lead it. Please make a priority of compassion. Actually, that seems to me a message Mary Sumner herself would welcome. Compassion for those near at hand and compassion for those far away has been a clear hallmark of the MU pretty much throughout the almost 150 years since its foundation. Next year will be a major milestone, of course, and I hope compassion will be the hallmark of that anniversary too.

Compassion

So let me start with a bit of quiz trivia. How many times would you guess the word compassion comes in the four gospels added together? More than 50 anyone? Less than 20 anyone? Well, surprising as it might be, the answer is just 12. The word is sprinkled very sparingly across the four Gospels, like a rare and expensive spice. It's used very carefully, very deliberately, very sparsely. In fact, it's used five times in Matthew's Gospel, four times in Mark, three times in Luke, and not at all by John. Isn't that surprising? Not once in the Gospel of

Compassion for those near at hand and compassion for those far away has been a clear hallmark of the MU.

John! And here's the interesting thing: in Matthew, Mark and Luke, the word is only ever used in the closest possible association with the Lord Jesus. The word compassion only ever comes on the lips of Jesus in the course of a parable (that happens 3 times in all); or it comes in the words of the Evangelist about Jesus, to describe the reaction, the emotion of Jesus in the face of human need, as he reaches out in love and pity to those he meets (and that comes 9 times in all).



He loves us and is always waiting for us to come home, and longs to run to us, to put his arms around us and to kiss us.

Compassion in the Parables of Jesus

Take the parables, first of all: these are the three occasions when the word compassion comes on the lips of Jesus. You won't be surprised if I tell you that one of those occasions is in the Parable of the Good Samaritan, where Jesus uses it to describe the reaction of the title hero in Luke chapter 10, when he comes across the man who has been mugged and left for dead. 'A Samaritan', Jesus says, 'while traveling, came near him, and when he saw him, he was moved with compassion. He went to him and bandaged his wounds, having poured wine and oil on them'. And you won't be surprised if I tell you that another of those occasions is in the Parable of the Prodigal Son, in Luke chapter 15, where Jesus uses it to describe the reaction of the father to the returning prodigal: 'But while he was still far off', Jesus says, 'his father saw him and was filled with compassion;

he ran and put his arms around him and kissed him'. The third parable is less well known. It comes in Matthew, to describe the reaction of a master to his deeply indebted slave: 'Out of compassion for him', Jesus tell us, 'the lord of that slave released him and forgave him the debt'.

In the middle case, the Parable of the Prodigal Son, Jesus is exhorting us to believe that God regards us, his prodigals, with compassion. He loves us and is always waiting for us to come home, and longs to run to us, to put his arms around us and to kiss us. And in the first and last cases, in the other two parables, Jesus is encouraging us to see that we are called to regard one another, and especially those we encounter who are in need, in the same way, reaching out to them in love and pity.

Bishop Pete's sermon

from the Commissioning Service: based on Mark 6.34: Compassion

Compassion in the Ministry of Jesus

And in all the other nine cases in the Gospel, four others in Matthew, the four in Mark, and once more in Luke, the Gospel writers show Jesus, practising what he was preaching. So, when he encounters a leper, in Mark chapter 1, we're told, 'Moved with compassion Jesus stretched out his hand and touched him and healed him'. In Luke chapter 7, when Jesus encounters a funeral procession, in which a widow from Nain is going to bury her son, it says, 'When the Lord saw her, he had compassion for her and said to her, 'Do not weep'. Then he came to the coffin, and the bearers stood still. And he said, 'Young man, I say to you Arise. The dead man sat up and began to speak, and Jesus gave him to his mother'. Or to give just one more example, when Jesus meets two blind men in Matthew chapter 20, we're told, 'Moved with compassion, Jesus touched their eyes. Immediately they regained their sight and followed him.

In every single one of these cases, the same Greek word is used. It's one of my favourite Greek words, and not just because it's so hard to pronounce. It's splank-nis-thes. It means something like 'gut-wrenching care' - literally, the word has to do with the bowels.



We might say, his heart went out to them'. It was a physical feeling of pity and love. Jesus cared so much, he felt it in his stomach.

When the great crowd thronged about Jesus, he had compassion for them because they were like sheep without a shepherd.

And as I say, this word is only used twelve times in all four Gospels put together. It's a holy word, set apart for special association with Jesus. And our gospel reading this afternoon makes up the set.

When the great crowd thronged about Jesus, he had compassion for them because they were like sheep without a shepherd. He didn't look out at them and see a bunch of hell-deserving sinners, provoking his wrath. He didn't see a bunch of wasters, a bunch of scroungers, provoking his contempt. He saw people in need, lacking direction and purpose in life, and his heart went out to them. He didn't stop to ask if they deserved his help; he didn't berate them for bothering him; he just looked out at them and had compassion on them.



Compassion in our experience

And dear friends, it is just that way with each one of us as well. The same Lord Jesus sees us in all our need. He really doesn't regard us hell-deserving sinners, not even as failures and wasters and ne'er-do-wells. He sees the help we need with the challenges of life, and he has compassion on us. He doesn't tell us off, He doesn't scold us, He doesn't turn his back on us, as if our needs are trivial to him and He has more important matters to attend to. He reaches out to us in love and pity. That's the good news of the gospel and on a commission-ing day like today it's right to return to the heart of our faith, which is the love of God for each one of us, as taught and modelled by Jesus. That's the good news.

But of course, there is also a challenge. For this is the same standard of love and pity, with which Jesus calls us to respond to our friend, neighbours and family members in their need. Yes, that includes the ones who annoy us and irritate us by the things they say and do, it includes the ones who make choices which not only differ from the choices we would make but actually

cut across the choices we want to make. It includes the ones we regard as selfish or foolish or downright rude. It's especially when it is difficult or inconvenient that we are called to respond with compassion.

Jo-Anne, I hope compassion will be the hallmark of your tenure as the President of the Mothers' Union for the Diocese of Sheffield and, as I say, I hope it will particularly be the hallmark of any plans you have for the 150th birthday celebrations you may be organising next year. But since the Gospel writers use compassion so carefully, to emphasise that it was a hallmark of Jesus' teaching and a hallmark of Jesus' ministry, it surely follows it should be a hallmark of the life of every Christian, every disciple, every follower of the Lord Jesus, every baptised person.

I'm nearly done. One last thing. Lights for Christ. Compassion.

Here's that verse again. Mark 6.34: As Jesus went ashore, he saw a great crowd; and he had compassion for them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd.



We are pleased to welcome
**THE REVD
 LEAH VASEY-
 SAUNDERS**
 as the next Bishop of Doncaster

Leah is currently the Vicar of Lancaster at Lancaster Priory, a role she has held for four years.

Speaking about her appointment, Leah said: "It is a humbling and joyful thing to be called as the next Bishop of Doncaster. I feel deeply privileged to be joining the Diocese of Sheffield and look forward to serving alongside Bishop Pete, the senior team, and colleagues across the diocese and region.

"I am especially grateful to be following Bishop Sophie, whose faithful and wise leadership has left a rich legacy.

"Throughout my ministry, I've been shaped by a love for the Church in all its beautiful diversity. I've walked with communities as they respond to Jesus' call amid changing and sometimes challenging contexts.

"I have a particular heart for the north - its grit and grace

- and for working-class, post-industrial communities where I've seen God's Spirit move in powerful ways.

Editor's Note: Sheffield MU look forward to working with Bishop Leah who will be consecrated at York Minster on 16th September followed by installation at Sheffield Cathedral on the afternoon of Saturday 20th,



to which all are warmly invited.

Bishop Sophie Jelley was installed as Bishop of Coventry on Saturday 7th June

MU Coventry Diocese provided tea/coffee and cake for 1000 guests.

Faith & Policy

The Day Apart was held on Tuesday 13th May from 10.30am to 2.30pm. We had an excellent session on Prayer led by Rev Captain Ian Maher. There were four sections:-

The importance and practice of prayer
 Praying with the Bible
 Praying with the imagination
 Prayer using icons and prayers beads.

All those who came thought that we had a very worthwhile time together.

It was also good to join the midday communion service at 12.30pm.



Here I am, in hospital again! Peter and I are awaiting the birth of our first great grandson, Rupert. As I write this piece I hope to end it with the wonderful news of his birth. So we all live in the hope of something, don't we? I hope to be well and involved in the wonderful work which Mothers' Union continues to support.

Tanis writes: Hope never grows old!

One of the night nurses on the ward is from Nepal and when I said that we had been there she was amazed; so I greet her with clasped hands and say 'Namaste', which delights her. I hope that she enjoys her stay in our country:

I hope to be with you all again soon; I have missed everyone. I thank you so much for the many lovely 'get well' cards, flowers and most important, for your prayers.

**Love and God Bless,
 Tanis VP**

As we hope for a better world, with peace and good will, and an end to conflict in so many places, we have to keep on that journey of faith, and trust in our loving God. Whilst in hospital I have read our Mothers' Union 'Prayer of comfort card' many times.

P.S Our beautiful Great Grandson, Rupert arrived on May 30th by Caesarean Section. Weighing in at 8lbs 11 and a half ounces! We have since had a cuddle and I hope for many more! Lucy and Michael are delighted parents.

95 NOT OUT:

Sheffield's oldest preaching Lay Reader?

A celebration of Joan Wragg, MU member at St Oswalds

On St Valentine's Day she celebrated her 95th birthday in the Waggon and Horses pub in Millhouses, across the road from where she lives. She had invited not only her family, but also friends and the congregation of St Oswald's who turned out in strength to enjoy fellowship together in a different setting.

Two days later, she preached at St Oswald's during Morning Prayer. St Oswald's is currently in a vacancy but visiting clergy, visits to neighbours at Carter Knowle Methodist Church and a monthly Mattins led by two Lay Readers keep the worship going on a regular basis with developing spirituality, enthusiastic hymn singing, preaching from the lections of the day, and "Joys and Sorrows" being shared as intentions and prayer by members of the congregation each week.

Joan says she left school at 13, was first married at 16, and at one stage ran a bakery business employing 300 before being called to pastoral work, which led to becoming a Lay Reader 38 years ago. In addition to this, she serves as a parish member of the Deanery Synod

Is she the oldest serving Lay Minister in the Diocese?

Joan said:

"I get such a joy in my ministry. The Lord obviously is enabling me to continue, we hold weekly bible studies and fellowship meetings in my home, and we have a very united and caring church."

Editor's Note: Courtesy of the Sheffield Diocese Network magazine



50 years ago

Margaret Tupling



Following the lovely surprise celebration of my fifty years as an MU member at Whiston, I received a request from Elizabeth. Could I write something for Newsline about MU fifty years ago?

What a difference fifty years makes. Whiston Church had a bigger, thriving congregation which included a large number of young families with children attending 'Sunday Club'.

There had been a Mothers' Union branch since 1915 which by 1974 comprised mostly of more elderly members. Margaret Cook, who had joined more recently as a new Mum decided we needed 'something for younger mothers'. Mildred Morgan (Rector's wife and Enrolling Member) told her to 'get on with it', so she did! Twelve of us were invited and met, in Margaret's front room in March 1974 and formed, what became, a second branch which met in the evenings (E.M.U.).

The branch grew steadily. Meetings were

not vastly different from our current ones - a service (using the MU book) including the MU prayer, (which has been 'revamped' twice since) followed by a speaker (initially a number of MU speakers introducing us to the various groups etc) or a discussion. We learned about AFIA, IMPC, 'Overseas' etc. and the STAR scheme (Sheffield Temporary Accommodation for Relatives) - a group of ladies who provided accommodation for family members who could not, otherwise, easily visit their relatives who were being treated in Sheffield hospitals.

We enjoyed non-MU speakers such as clergy, reps from various charities/areas of interest and people who shared experiences of

50 years ago

Margaret Tupling

holidays abroad. Discussions included topical subjects and some years later the issue of the 'Ordination of women' featured prominently on the programmes of both afternoon and evening branches. Both branches of course, were involved in church garden parties and enjoyed meals out - nothing new there!

Having lived in this area all my life and been Rotherham/Laughton Deanery Leader, I have, by default, become custodian of a number

of Branch and Deanery diaries/record books etc. dating from 1912! The number of branches seemed to peak around 1938 when there were 24 branches in the 'Rural Deanery of Rotherham' which included Laughton-en-le-Morthen. We now have 4 branches in the Rotherham and Laughton Deanery, many of our members, including me, being rather long in the tooth! I wonder how long we will continue?

Editor's note: Congratulations to Norma and Margaret and other long serving members - you are the backbone of Sheffield MU- long may it reign!

Long Service Awards

RIGHT: Norma Priest received a certificate for 60 years of MU membership from Rev Tim Gill, vicar of St Mary's Ecclesfield and Canon Richard Parker, Chaplain at the Ecclesfield Deanery Service



BELOW: Margaret Tupling received her award and a cake for 50 years of MU membership at Rotherham & Laughton Deanery Service



MUe

We are delighted that Margaret Culloden has agreed to continue as the MUe Rep. Deanery Leaders will have catalogues for branches to look at. Margaret will have Diaries and Calendars at the Cathedral Coffee Mornings available to order and a selection of cards.



National Volunteers Week

June 2nd-8th

Dear Mothers' Union Members, Friends and supporters...

THANK YOU!

Thank you for all the time, effort and talents you give, for all you do to support the work, vision and outreach projects here in Sheffield Diocese. It is truly amazing and appreciated...

Dementia Friends

As a volunteer Ambassador for Dementia Friends, I was surprised to receive the 'thank you' card through the post from the Alzheimer's Society. In this year, 22 of our MU members have become Dementia Friends!

Jo-Anne

Editors Note: MSH are delighted to partner with **Enrichment for the Elderly** to deliver the Dementia Star awards, a popular and impactful workshop series on dementia care. The sessions are divided into Bronze, Silver, and Gold, to offer a progressive learning journey, with each session being interactive and engaging with practical insights and tools to enhance understanding and response to dementia.



What we have been doing in our Deaneries and Branches



Rotherham & Laughton Deanery Service was held at **Whiston St Mary Magdalene**. Refreshments and Fellowship were enjoyed after the service



Wath MU had a talk from Rachel from **Rush House**, which is a charitable organisation based in Rotherham providing a range of accommodation and support services including advice, independent living skills and training to young people aged



Also a talk from Tim, who told the history of the **Archer Project** based at Sheffield Cathedral and all about the work outreach and impact of the great works done. It was an excellent informative evening!

Tim spent 14 days living up on the streets of Sheffield and produced a book, with the narrative about the experience and stories of clients told in their own words ...

Bramley MU went to the Marina Fish and Chip restaurant in Rawmarsh for our annual lunch outing. Last year we enjoyed our visit to the Marina so much we returned this year.

Everyone who came enjoyed a lovely meal and had a very happy time together, as can be seen from the smiling faces in the photo.



St Catherine of Siena

Following a very interesting and inspiring talk by Liz from Dronfield Rotary Club to a Mothers' Union meeting. The church members collected food, toiletries, medicines and hobby items for a convoy to Ukraine from St Catherine of Sienna.

The Rotarians support refugees in England and displaced people and orphanages in Ukraine. Liz had visited Ukraine and Poland prior to her talk. A collection at our MU meeting also raised money to buy blankets.



Ecclesfield Deanery Festival was held on 11th June at St Mary's Church, Ecclesfield. The communion service was led by the incumbent and our chaplain gave the address from St. John 15: 12-17. Everyone thought it was a wonderful service. This was followed by tea and lovely cakes.



Members were presented with long service awards.

Welcome to...

NEW MEMBERS

None since last Newsline - we are challenged to increase our membership by **150** before the end of 2026! So spread the word, **Join Us, Join In!**

IMPC MEMBERS

Ecclesfield Deanery
Heather Johnson

WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

Norma & Arthur Priest

Jo-Anne presented Norma with a card at the Coffee morning as Norma & Arthur celebrated their 65th Wedding Anniversary on 4th June.



BIRTHDAY CONGRATULATIONS TO THE MEMBERS WHO CELEBRATE TURNING 90

Editors Note: In the Spring Newsline we congratulated Elizabeth Ranson from Abbeydale on her 90th birthday - we were a bit premature as Elizabeth doesn't turn 90 until later in the year!!

IMPC BIRTHDAYS OF 90 YEARS AND OVER

DASH Deanery

Joyce Durdy aged 100
Brenda Kershaw aged 93

Ecclesall & Attercliffe Deanery

Jean Wolfendale aged 92
Doreen Gill aged 91

Rotherham & Laughton Deanery

Joan Hesketh aged 92
Jean Dunhill aged 99

Wath Deanery

Betty Jones aged 92

Tankersley Deanery

Iris Jubb aged 106

REGRETS AND BLESSINGS

Patricia Allen

Sadly, Pat passed away on March 30th aged 90 after suffering Parkinson's for many years. Pat transferred to St. John's Abbeydale after the branch in Dore closed. Pat was a loyal member of the Mothers' Union and also supported other Children's Charities in the area.

Marjorie Cuttler

Sadly, Marjorie passed away on May 14th at the age of 90 after being housebound for the past 3 years and nursed by her close family. Marjorie joined **St. John's Abbeydale** in 1997, a regular attender and was for many years on the Committee. Her organisational skills were usefully employed by ensuring the rota for refreshments ran smoothly so they were always available at meetings and fund-raising events. Her presence has been missed.

Rest in Peace Marjorie.

Dates for your diary

JULY

Fri 4th	Cathedral Coffee Morning 10.15 - 12 noon Hosts: Trustees - WWP and PP to visit. In the afternoon she will meet with Trustees in the Chapter House.
Thurs 10th	Trustees: Sheffield Cathedral 10am.
Mon 14th	Strawberry Tea: Bramley St Francis, 2pm Everyone welcome - bring a friend
Fri 25th	Commissioning of Christine Sharpe PP 11am York Minster
Tues 29th	Afternoon Tea: Tickhill MU 2.15pm - Tickets available.

AUGUST

Fri 1st	Cathedral Coffee Morning 10.15 - 12 noon Hosts: Ecclesall & Attercliffe Deanery
Sat 9th	Mary Sumner Day Service Sheffield Cathedral 2pm
Sat 16th	Afternoon Tea in aid of MU Projects - Wath All Saints 2-4pm
Wed 27th	DASH Sponsored Silence in Aid of AFIA Doncaster Minster 10.30-2.30pm Come along!

SEPTEMBER

Fri 5th	Cathedral Coffee Morning 10.15 - 12 noon Hosts: Wath Deanery Followed by F&C/A&O Feedback 1pm
Wed 24th	Quiet Day Harley Mission S62 7UD 2-4pm

OCTOBER

Fri 3rd	Cathedral Coffee Morning 10.15 - 12 noon Hosts: DASH Deanery
Thurs 9th	Trustees, Sheffield Cathedral 10.00am
Thurs 30th	Autumn Council, Bramley 5.30 for 6pm start

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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.

Newsline Editorial Team:

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

Editor's Note:

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

Please submit contributions for the Winter Newsline by September 16th 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

Mothers' Union – Everything about Mothers' Union

www.mothersunion.org

MUeShop – Quote **Sheffield** when ordering

www.mueshop.org

Sheffield Diocese – Find out what is happening locally

www.sheffield.anglican.org

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.