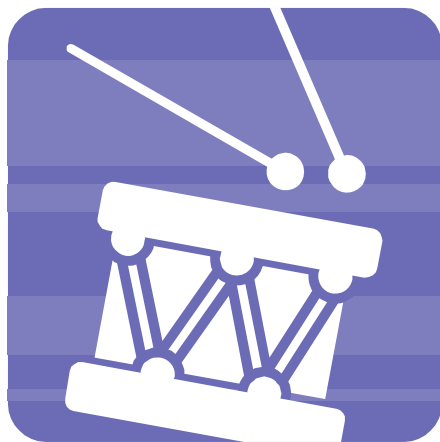


CYMBAL

Newsletter of the
Mothers' Union
in the
Manchester Diocese



Spring 2009

An Evening of Celebration

Come along to the Bridgewater Hall on 1 June - and bring your spouses and friends! This is going to be a wonderful evening with music by Smithills School Senior Band. The Speaker is to be The Revd Mrs Celia McCulloch. Your favourite hymns will be sung, and also in the programme will be Celebrity Guests, a Catch-Up of the past year's activities and Bishop Nigel as Conductor of the Band. A further surprise item is planned. All in all, it should be an Evening to remember.

Members will have the chance to choose their favourite hymns from a list which your Branch Leader will have – please let us have your requests by the end of April.

Margaret Morris

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

16 April	Thursday Prayer at the Cathedral
23 April	Quiet Day at the Cathedral
23 April	Rochdale Deanery Festival at St Ann, Belfield
5 May	Rossendale Deanery Festival at Goodshaw
7 May	Speakers' Evening
14 May	Thursday Prayer at the Cathedral
14-17 May	Salisbury Link Visit
21 May	Bolton Deanery Festival at Christ Church, Heaton
25 May	Whit Walks in Manchester
1 June	Evening of Celebration at Bridgewater Hall
10 June	Walmsley Deanery Festival at St Peter, Belmont
11 June	Thursday Prayer at the Cathedral
18-19 June	Mothers' Union AGM at Croydon
3-6 July	Flower Festival at the Cathedral
8 July	Oldham West Deanery Festival at Oldham Parish Church
9 July	Thursday Prayer at the Cathedral
4 August	Diocesan Eucharist at St George, Mossley
10 August	Bolton Archdeaconry Festival at Bradshaw
10-24 August	Shop & Office shut
13 August	Thursday Prayer at the Cathedral
9 September	Rochdale Archdeaconry Festival at Oldham Parish Church
10 September	Thursday Prayer at the Cathedral
26 September	International Year of Child Service at Cathedral
7 October	Diocesan Festival at the Cathedral
8 October	Thursday Prayer at the Cathedral
17 October	Autumn Council at Ardwick
12 November	Thursday Prayer at the Cathedral
19 November	Quiet Day at the Cathedral
3 December	Advent Carols at St Ann, Manchester
10 December	Provincial Service at Sheffield
21 Dec - 4 Jan	Shop and Office shut

From the Diocesan President

By the time you read this, Jennifer and I should have returned from a visit to our link diocese of Maseno West and we look forward to being able to tell you all about it. A couple of days ago I really felt that we were stepping out in faith but it is now all coming together. We have heard from Stella, who visited us in 2007, and know that the provincial office has arranged for us to be met at the airport. Having said that, I am still apprehensive about spending time in a culture so different from our own.

Often we have to leave our comfort zone, don't we? For many of our members at the present time this involves the changes taking place under pastoral reorganisation. Parishes, deaneries and even archdeaconries are changing. Mothers' Union is an organisation which follows church structures so many of you may find yourselves grouped with other parishes with branches, or maybe with parishes who do not have a Mothers' Union presence at all.

Both these give us the most incredible opportunities – as long as we are prepared to step out in faith. Maybe, where a branch meets in the afternoon, an evening branch for those who have been unable to come. Or a group which will promote the work of Mothers' Union whilst engaging in a parish or deanery project, but only meeting as a group two or three times a year, or keeping in contact through e-mail.

Please be imaginative; engage the clergy (it is our role to support them in their ministry); use every opportunity to promote the work of Mothers' Union – in 79 countries, in these islands, this diocese and your own locality. We **do** a huge amount – but do we **tell** others? Every single time I am invited to speak, I can guarantee that someone will say afterwards "I had no idea the Mothers' Union did all that". (And / know I have been able to tell them only a fraction!!)

Fortunately we have wonderful publications to help us. When you have read Families First (and if you haven't ordered, do please try it) pass it on – ideally to someone even younger! Read Families Worldwide day by day and use that information to tell others what is going on. (Have you seen mentions of Manchester in the 'York' page of the new edition?)

More importantly, we do not have to do it alone. At Worldwide Council last week the chorus of a hymn was:

Be not afraid. I go before you always.
Come, follow me and I will give you rest.

With love
Barbara

ELECTIONS

As 2009 sees the end of a triennial period for us in branches, deaneries and archdeaconries there is a window of opportunity to inject new blood into the Mothers' Union in Manchester Diocese, which will bring in new ideas, vision and vibrancy. If you are asked to consider taking on being a leader, secretary or treasurer do not dismiss the suggestion but pray about it. If you feel unsure seek advice and get to know what will be involved, and remember all those who do take up a position will be offered training courses later in the year, or early 2010. God may be calling you and if you respond positively you will be given the skills and wisdom to cope.

Sally Sargeant

THURSDAY PRAYER

Please note that the next date will be 23 April, the third Thursday, to avoid a clash with Maundy Thursday. Members are also warmly invited to the weekday Eucharist which is celebrated daily at 1.10 pm in the Cathedral.

REMINDER

The Speakers' Evening is being held on Thursday 9 May in the Mayfield Suite at 90 Deansgate. It starts at 7.00 pm and will be over by 9.15 pm. Would any other teams wishing to take part or obtain further details please contact Judith Hilton at the office.

Jean Williamson

Salisbury Link Visit

The visit by our Link from the South takes place on 14-17 May. I have now heard that we are to have 20 visitors from Devizes and 16 from Bradford-on-Avon, making a total at the time of writing of 36. They are still hoping that more will join them. I should have more information after their Archdeaconry meeting at the beginning of March and hopefully will be able to report this to our Spring Council. If there is anyone willing to be a Hostess and hasn't let me know, please do so as soon as possible. Thank you.

Molly Marsh

Link correspondent

WEBSITE

At their last meeting, following a presentation by David Marshall, the Diocesan Communications Officer, the Trustees agreed to go ahead with setting up a Website for Manchester on the Internet. It will be linked to the Diocesan Website and when it is in operation it will enormously improve our communication – both to existing members and others who may be interested. The launch is planned for later in the year: more details later.

Margaret Morris

Chaplains' Corner

Mothers

'Mothers, what would we do without them!' is the usual saying when this subject is raised. Yet all of us have our own particular fond (or not so fond) memories of our maternal link. I can very much remember the sacrifices that my mother made towards our family in my childhood days. My parents ran a fish and chip shop, yet she went out at 5am in the morning to clean offices in the centre of Manchester. I am the eldest of four and at this time my siblings were very young. Then, I took her extra activity as something which was quite normal, but thinking about it since, I now see that it was out of necessity that she worked as a cleaner as well as working in the shop and being a mother to us all. She demonstrated her dedication to the well-being of our family by working extra hours and bringing home extra income. Looking back, I now know how blessed I was to have such a mother.

That was some fifty years ago but times have now changed – and perhaps for the better. Mothering is something which not only females do but also fathers. Last November I became, for the first time, a grandfather. Watching this new family of my youngest son and his wife with their new child, I wonder at the way in which they share the mothering tasks. When work commitments allow it, my son will relieve mother, his wife, of the baby so that she can have some free time of her own. It gives him quality time also with his son as well as caring also for his wife.

In this day and age when there are various kinds of 'house parents', it should be a reminder to us of the many different ways in which God mothers us. God is dedicated to our welfare and well-being and this is demonstrated by the fact that he gave us his Son, a Son who through suffering, death and resurrection unites us eternally with our heavenly parent. We call God 'Father' for that is what he is, but we also need to acknowledge the fact that God has a mothering instinct towards us.

How often do you reflect on the ways which God has mothered you – perhaps you should think of these as the ways God gives you his blessings?

Count your many blessings, name them one by one;
Count your blessings, see what God has done;
Count your blessings, name them one by one,
And it will surprise you what the Lord has done.

Roy Chow

As I write this article, I have recently returned from a short holiday in Zanzibar. Our son is working there temporarily and we went out to see him. I was very fortunate to be able to visit a Mothers' Union project there at Machui. Only 3% of the population of Zanzibar are Christians and many of them live in the Machui neighbourhood. The Churches there have a cattle and a water project and Mothers' Union run the piggery.

Approximately four years ago, Bury Mothers' Union Deanery wanted to raise money for a project and, after consultation with Mary Sumner House, they chose this piggery to sponsor. The Zanzibar Mothers' Union first built a pigs 'nursery' and having bought some sows and boars, were able to give the piglets to local people for income generating projects. The pigs are then used for breeding, families' food or sold to hotels for pork meat. They have developed good stock, cross breeding for good health and producing healthy piglets. The project is now self supporting and the local people are benefiting. There were about twelve pigsties in all, some with only four pigs or piglets, others with as many as ten. One man told me that this was his only family income. Another lady told me that she could now afford to send her children to secondary school on the mainland. *(I was told that you could tell which pigsties were owned by Mothers' Union members – they were the ones with the best roofs!)*

It was a privilege to share their dreams with them. The cattle project is supported by their links with the Anglican Church Diocese of Ely. Unfortunately, the water project had come to a halt as the contractor had 'run away'. Apparently, this is fairly common practice in Zanzibar. Everyone was very happy, in spite of the rain and deep red mud that we were walking through. My sandals have not yet recovered! I do have several photographs which I am happy to e-mail to anyone who would like to see them. Peggie Gathergood also has copies of them all.

I was then taken back to the Cathedral area where Mothers' Union helps run another project of St Monica's Hostel and Restaurant. I was taken to the shop where clothes and crafts, made by members are sold. We then had lunch together and shared news of our Mothers' Union activities. There is a small diocese of 140 members in 6 parishes. The Mothers' Union members then went home and I was taken round the Cathedral with its very moving history. It is built over the old slave markets/cells. The font has been placed where the children of slaves were snatched from them and slaughtered. The altar is in a highly raised area which is where the slaves were flogged to demonstrate their resilience, before being sold.

The Diocesan Secretary and a previous Archbishop were both waiting to greet me and were very interested to hear what was happening in Manchester. Next stop was the new Diocesan buildings, where I was introduced to several officers and the new Diocesan Resources Officer, who is going to join Mothers' Union. I was then taken back to our hotel for a welcome swim on a very hot and humid day!

It is difficult to explain how privileged I feel to have shared this day with the Christians of Zanzibar and how humbled to be treated so much like royalty. I went into their homes and churches, was given drinks and food and met some of the most wonderful families.

* * * * *

Thank you to everyone who provided gifts for the hostels at Christmas time. I have had one letter of thanks and I expect that some deaneries have had their own. I would like to encourage deaneries to keep in contact with their particular hostels throughout the year – perhaps use a worker there as a speaker at meetings.

We have had news from Phoebe Kayeeye in Nord Kivu. They have had a Relief Fund Grant of £5000. This will go some small way to helping her and Bishop Enoch cope with the number of displaced persons that have flooded into the area.

I have read some very disturbing facts from Nyanza province in Kenya. According to a Reuters' report, Elders there are promoting Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) as a preventative for HIV/AIDS. Parents, grandparents and even girls themselves are believing this and having the procedure done. They also believe that FGM will decrease a young girl's sexual desire. None of this is true. The fact is that frequently, several 'operations' are done with the same knife – thus increasing the chance of spread of infection. Secondly, research has shown that FGM has no bearing whatsoever on sexual desire. The staff at Mary Sumner House are going to 'keep an eye' on the situation as at present it does not appear to have come to the notice of Mothers' Union workers there.

Thank you to everyone who has continued to knit and sew. At the time of writing, I am still in need of knitted baby blankets and the sewn 'angel pockets'. The Maternity Units are most grateful for your kindness and I have had several letters of thanks. I can provide patterns for anyone who needs them – apart from the blankets, which need to be knitted at approximately 24- 28 inches square.

By the time you are reading this, Barbara Taylor and I should have been on a visit to Maseno West, one of our link Dioceses in Kenya. This was the journey that had to be postponed last year due to the fighting in Kenya. We should have loads to tell you when we get back!

Jennifer White

PROVINCIAL SERVICE 2008

November 11 has been a special day since the end of World War 1 and in 2008 it became extra special as this was the date of our Provincial Service which was held in Bradford Cathedral. A group of us travelled on the train some getting on in Manchester, others joining at Rochdale and Smithy Bridge and for once there were no problems with the service. We had an enjoyable journey and yes we did manage to stop our chattering for the 2 minutes silence at 11.00am.

On arriving at Bradford Interchange it was decided we would have a light lunch which we enjoyed (especially the bacon rolls) and then came my surprise. Some one had let the cat out of the bag that 11th November was my birthday, you can imagine the reaction when Happy Birthday to You sung by such good singers as all Mothers Union members are ! !

The service at the cathedral was inspiring : our first Hymn "Be Still" was led by a choir from Glenaire Primary School. How lovely it sounded with such young voices. Newcastle Diocese presented a pageant showing how branch life had changed since Mary Sumner's time. We were again moved to tears when Mrs Roberta McKelvey spoke of situations and people she had met on a visit to our African members. We hear about orphans, HIV and aids so much but the suffering of our members overseas seems never ending. We should thank God for our safe existence here.

The service ended with "Go Forth and Tell" which always sends us on our way rejoicing. We did not have far to go to St Peters House for tea and cakes and we were welcomed by dancers from Kala Sangam which is a South Asian Arts Organisation. The four key areas of the company are Arts in Performances, Education, Health and Youth and bring the different ethnic communities in Bradford together. We rounded of the day with a meal in the Midland Hotel before returning home. What a wonderful way to spend a birthday sharing worship, fellowship and having fun with so many people.

Marion Ball

Heywood & Middleton Deanery Leader.

Provincial Thanksgiving Service 2009

Let's help to make this year's Provincial Service, on 10 December at the end of the Triennial, a real celebration and give thanks for all the work which the Mothers' Union is involved in. If you would like to go to this Service please 'phone Judith at the Office and put your name on the list. There is a good train service from Manchester Piccadilly to Sheffield, or if going by car it is suggested that you park at Meadowhall and catch the tram to the Cathedral.

Margaret Morris

NATIONAL FAMILY WEEK

At the end of May there is a new initiative to celebrate Family Life in the U.K. One of the aims of the Mothers' Union is to support family life. To mark the launch of this project it is proposed to hold "The Biggest Ever Family Picnic" (with an attempt to get into the Guinness Book of Records). If you and your parish would like to be associated with this, log onto the website www.nfw.co.uk and register. You will then receive further details.

Margaret Morris

NOVEMBER QUIET DAY

Canon Albert Radcliffe gave an interesting talk on the life of William Temple on 13 November last year, which enlightened those present on the achievements of a great and enthusiastic man who lived his life helping the less well-off and working for a just society.

The future Archbishop was born in 1881 into a home of Christian privilege. His mother Beatrix was a strong character and his father Frederick was to occupy the see of Canterbury. William was educated at Rugby School and Balliol College, Oxford. He was ordained priest in 1909 - there were no women clergy in his day. From 1910 to 1914 he was Headmaster of Repton School, after which he returned to being a fulltime clergyman. He subsequently came here to Manchester as its Bishop in 1921, going on to become Archbishop of York in 1929 and in 1942, during the war, Archbishop of Canterbury.

William Temple said that people could not remain unaffected by the social conditions in which they found themselves. Between 1908 and 1924 he was the first President of the Workers' Educational Association and he joined the Labour Party. He was deeply involved in the Ecumenical Movement and in 1942 along with the Chief Rabbi Joseph Hertz, founded The Council of Christians and Jews, which helped to bring the two faiths closer. He was a leader of the Life and Liberty Movement and said that the Church was the only society which existed for the benefit of those who were not its members. He was instrumental in helping fashion the Welfare State.

William Temple, Philosopher, Writer, Teacher, Theologian and Social Reformer, died in 1942 from gout, an illness from which he had suffered all his life. He was a national and international figure of great repute: Canon Radcliffe considered him to be one of the greatest men of his era. One of his most famous sayings was: "Worship is the submission of all our nature to God".

Beryl Reid

Hulme Deanery

INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF THE CHILD

2009 marks the 30th anniversary of the United Nations' International Year of the Child. To celebrate this there is to be a Service in the Cathedral on Saturday 26 September. Put this in your diary – more details will follow.

WHIT WALKS

Monday 25 May is the date: Manchester City Centre is the venue. The event is Christians walking through the city proclaiming their faith. Do come and join us as part of your parish Mothers' Union in the Diocese. The colours for decorating your banner are lemon and gold. The sun sometimes shines on us, the rain sometimes dampens us, but our enthusiasm never wavers. We meet outside the Cathedral on Fennel Street at 9.30 – 10am: see you there!

Barbara Hill

CATHEDRAL FLOWER FESTIVAL

I hope that by now you have heard whispers of the Flower Festival in the Cathedral on 3 – 4 July. The Mothers' Union are hopefully depicting our work and our presence in Manchester and around the world in a display in the Lady Chapel. Do come and visit us and enjoy a few hours browsing through this lovely building, enjoying the beauty of the flowers.

Barbara Hill

FRESHERS WEEK

After a hugely successful Freshers Week last year, when we distributed 2,137 bags to grateful students, can I again appeal to your generosity? I wonder if you could start saving for this year's Freshers Week in September – the usual things: tea, coffee, pasta, rice, toiletries, also mugs and kitchen utensils. These last items are for international students, who find it difficult to travel with bulky articles.

The students are overwhelmed that we should be giving them *free* goods! This year we are also planning to promote a small recipe booklet with easy meals and helpful hints. Thank you so much, in anticipation, for all your kindness.

MARY SUMNER HOUSE

Following the closure of the hostel at Mary Sumner House because of Health & Safety regulations, members may be interested to know that plans are afoot to re-order the building, converting the top floor for use as offices and providing additional space for conference and meeting facilities for hire. This would boost income and enable our Society to develop its life-changing work at home and abroad. Members will still be able to use the Princess Mary Room and a new lounge on the first floor.

OBERAMMERGAU

Fr Richard Lindsay will be leading a visit to the Holy Land and the Oberammergau Passion Play next year for ten days from Wednesday 12 to Friday 21 May 2010. At the time of going to press there are a few vacancies. If anyone would like more details, please contact Fr Lindsay on 01457 832 219, or by email: mossleyparish-church@talktalk.net

CONGRATULATIONS

Two of our members are celebrating their Diamond Weddings at this time and we would like to offer them and their husbands our warmest congratulations. **Hilda and Jack Greenfield** of All Saints & Martyrs, Langley marked their 60th Anniversary on 2 February, and on 9 April **Violet and Jess Bradshaw** will celebrate theirs at St Mary, Droylsden. In these uncertain times they give us an eloquent witness to the enduring strength of a long and happy marriage.

CENTENARIAN

Violet Gregg, of St Andrew's, Ramsbottom, died recently. She was 101 years of age and was a long-standing member of the Mothers' Union. We give thanks for her long life.

LARGE PRINT COPIES

If you know anyone in your branch who has difficulty reading Cymbal why not arrange to have a larger copy made for them? This is easily done on most modern copy machines and almost all Parishes possess one. Or, telephone Judith in our office for advice.

MARRIAGE EXHIBITION

It is planned to hold an Inter Faith Exhibition about Marriage at the Cathedral during National Marriage Week in 2010: the dates are 7 – 14 February. Please put this in your diary – more details later.

TRIED AND TESTED

Have you a favourite place for a Day Out? The Mothers' Union magazine "Families First" runs regular pages with readers' comments on various resources headed "Tried and Tested". In the summer they plan to feature Family Days Out recommended by members. If you or your branch have any good ideas they would like to hear from you – but please contact the Office first to get their guidelines from Judith.

THE POWER OF THE WORD

A woman had just returned to her home from an evening church service, when she was startled by an intruder. She caught the man in the act of robbing her home of its valuables and yelled: 'Stop! Acts2:38!' (Repent and be Baptized, in the name of Jesus Christ, so that your sins may be forgiven.) The burglar stopped in his tracks. The woman calmly called the police and explained what she had done. As the officer cuffed the man to take him in, he asked the burglar: 'Why did you just stand there? All the old lady did was yell a scripture to you.' 'Scripture?' replied the burglar. "She said she had an Axe and two 38s!"