

Autumn 2014

Mothers' UNION
Christian care for families
Diocese of Manchester

Cymbal

Supporting you and your church in working with families



United in Prayer

Exploring the Cross

A Relaxing Retreat

Resources Exhibition Reflections

www.mothersunionmanchester.org

Diary Dates

Nov 20th - Quiet Day in Cathedral from 10am
(see page 11 for details)

Nov 25th - Indoor Members Prayer Circle Meeting, Church House, 2pm
Also the beginning of 16 Days of Activism Against Gender

Dec 4th - Advent Carol Service at St Ann's Manchester, 1.30pm

2015

April 25th - Spring Council - St Thomas Centre, Ardwick Green

May 13th - Diocesan Festival

June 26th - Mothers' Union AGM - Royal Concert Hall, Nottingham

Sept 30th - Evening of Celebration - Royal Northern College of Music

Nov 10th - Provincial Service - Chester Cathedral, 2pm

Birthdays

CONGRATULATIONS to all our members who celebrated special birthdays including two members of St George's Mossley Mothers' Union who celebrated their 90th birthdays. They are **Gina Smith** (January 19th) and **Alice Shawcross** (August 29th).

Gina is floor manager of the Mossley Action for the Elderly Luncheon Club and does a lot of hospital knitting. Alice has wonderful hand-sewing skills and has made a Mary Sumner costume correct in every detail from a photograph. Alice travels on two buses to attend every Branch meeting. Both celebrated their birthdays with their families and with the Branch.

In Remembrance

Remembering **Joyce Rostron**, a much-loved member of St Margaret's, Prestwich Mothers' Union. Joyce had been a member of Mothers' Union for 56 years, during which time she had been Branch Leader. She loved Mothers' Union and was always the first to volunteer making cakes and supporting all the projects. She will be sadly missed.

Francis Rhodes died 12th July. Francis was a member of St John the Baptist Church Little Hulton for over 50 years and Enrolling Member of the Mothers' Union for many years.

Ada Grant, a member of Holy Angels Claremont Salford died on 2nd July 2014 aged 101.

Anniversaries

Congratulations to Irene and Michael Watson who celebrated their Diamond Wedding Anniversary on August 7th 2014.

Irene is a much loved member of St Michael's Tonge Mothers' Union, Middleton. Over the years, she has held various positions in the branch and is at present a key committee member.

BELATED congratulations to **Betty and Arthur Lamb** married at Bethel Congregational Chapel Bury on October 6th 1953. Truly an achievement to be celebrated

CONGRATULATIONS to **Jenny and Harry Martin** on their Golden Wedding

Anniversary. They were married at St Ann's Church Manchester on September 5th 1964.

CONGRATULATIONS to **Margaret and David Winstanley** who were married at St James's Church Brightmet on July 4th 1964. Both are active members of St Annes Church Tottington.

Margaret is a Mothers' Union member and a member of the church choir. David served for many years as Church Warden.

CONGRATULATIONS to **Meg and Chris Gough** who celebrated their Golden Wedding Anniversary on August 22nd 2014. Married at Longsight Methodist Church, Harwood, Meg is a member of Christ's Church Harwood.

□ From the President

Prayer is at the heart of all we do

AUTUMN is my favourite time of year! We have had the joy of sunshine and the beauty of the greenness and colour of Summer and now we get a reminder of the need to be thankful for God's providence.

How does Mothers' Union enhance your life? Friendships, relationships, fellowship, a listening ear, a prayer focus, support when we need it, opportunities to look beyond our own needs and give us the satisfaction that serving others creates within us ... these are just some of the ways that Mothers' Union affects the lives of members.

Sometimes it is difficult to appreciate the difference that Mothers' Union makes to lives overseas and at home. We give thanks for all that our amazing organisation achieves.

The Mothers' Union theme for 2015 is 'United in Prayer'. This develops the 2014 theme - 'Sowing the Future together' - by focusing on the centrality of prayer in the work of Mothers' Union across the world.

As we continue to plan for the future and grow together, prayer is at the heart of all we do. Through prayer, we unite with other members across the world.

From the beginning of 2015 our overseas

links will change. Over 100 new links have been added and we will have the exciting

opportunity to pray for many more people. While it is sad to change our links, we will still be able to remain friends with those to whom we have previously had close contact.

Staff at Mary Sumner House are currently developing themed resources to help us celebrate our new links, inspire us to pray and help us discern how and what to pray.

The future of Mothers' Union is in the hands of you and me. The organisation is dependent on its membership and we need to search ourselves for ways to maintain funds and increase membership.

I conclude with words from 1 Chronicles 29:

"Everything comes from you; all we're doing is giving back what we've been given from your generous hand ..."

"I know, dear God, that you care nothing for the surface - you want us, our true selves..."

"O God, God of our fathers Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, keep this generous spirit alive forever in these people always, keep their hearts set firmly in you."

Cath



Knowing your place at meetings

Barbara Baynham provides a handy guide ...

IN the Diocese there are two different ways to be a Mothers' Union member which both include the name Diocesan.

You can be a Diocesan member or a Diocesan Branch member.

Diocesan members receive Mothers' Union literature from the office and there are no branch meetings.

Diocesan Branch members receive literature by post but also have branch meetings four times a year, plus visits to local events, a summer outing and a Christmas meal.

Our branch meetings are held during the day at Church House (90 Deansgate in Manchester) and always include a light lunch of sandwiches and cake. We give a voluntary donation for this which goes to the Mothers' Union Overseas Fund.

We also have two indoor members. About half the members are not able to attend most of the meetings because of other commitments but enjoy receiving



news of the branch's activities and can keep in touch by phone or letters so their news can be included in branch meetings.

For this years fabric hands project every member including the indoor members sent in their hand, and we sewed them in a circle with their name on a tablecloth. We linked them together by a blue embroidered chain which represents the Mothers' Union.

We can now use this cloth when we have our meals at every branch meeting so every members hand and name is present. We are a very friendly and welcoming branch.

If you would like to join us, please phone Barbara Baynham on 0161 861 0477.

Bolton Archdeaconry Festival : No need to panic!

Christine Faulkner, Archdeaconry President reports on the Bolton Archdeaconry Festival - August 11th

THE venue for the Bolton Archdeaconry Festival was Christ Church Walmsley, Bolton and took the form of a Eucharist.

It was wonderful to see so many members from the Branches in the five Deaneries of the Bolton Archdeaconry.

The theme of the service was "Christ the Cornerstone" and the hymns and readings went along with this theme.

The preacher was the Archdeacon of

Bolton, The Ven. David Bailey, who gave an inspirational talk on Christ being the Cornerstone to every part of our Mothers' Union and in our Christian life.

The readings and the intercessions were taken by the Deanery Leaders. Everyone enjoyed the service and were able to meet up afterwards with friends from all over the Archdeaconry sharing a traditional 'cup of tea'.

Our thanks go to and Revd. Stephen Parsons and Kath Grieve for hosting the service - I know that Kath was panicking right up to the end of the service!

Exploring the Cross at Foxhill

Rev. Roy Chow, Faith and Policy Co-ordinator

TWENTY one MU members attended the **Weekend Retreat at Foxhill**, held between September 5th - 7th, which was led by the Revds. Alison Hardy and Denise Smith. The theme was 'Exploring the Cross'.

For a significant number it was their first retreat and completed evaluation forms indicate a high level of satisfaction with the venue and staff, and with the timetable and fellowship.

The addresses, chapel services, prayer stations and activities were also much appreciated.

'Exploring the Cross' gave us time to reflect and be challenged - as one respondent put it: "Thinking about the Cross turned everything upside down. It sounds crazy - but it's true!"

Prayer stations

During the silences people used the prayer stations set up throughout the building. (Unfortunately we did not have the whole building to ourselves over the weekend which meant our music station could not be set up while some other activities were a little on top of one another).

However, these areas helped us to reflect on some of the Stations of the Cross, or make pocket crosses, use crayons to colour crosses on paper etc.

Being blessed with fine and warm weather, the Saturday afternoon break



enabled groups to go either to the village of Frodsham or, for the energetic, to go walking in the surrounding hills.

At the **Diocesan Festival** on September 10th in Manchester Cathedral the theme was Holy Cross (the feast day of Holy Cross falling the following Sunday).

The preacher was The Bishop of Middleton, Mark Davies.

It was a joyful celebration of the Cross enjoyed by those who attended.

A Weekend Retreat display was on show and the Reflection in the service used material written by members during the Retreat.

A bookmark was given out at the end of the service containing some of the written material used.

It was however sad to witness that the number attending was certainly lower than in past years.

Mary Sumner House reports that an evaluation of Bye Buy Childhood has revealed "that many parents are still concerned about the commercialisation and sexualisation of children.

"One of the key concerns is 'pester power' and it has been decided that the emphasis now will be on tackling the issue of commercialisation."

☐ SEE PAGE 11 FOR FUTURE DATES

At the foot of the Cross

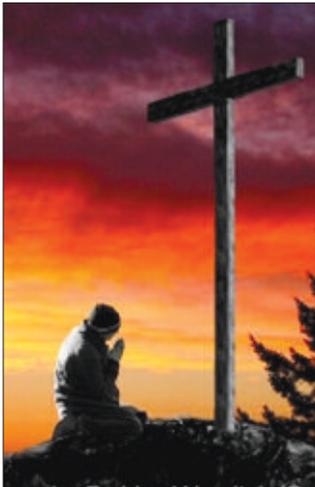
Diocesan President CATH HILTON reflects on the Foxhill Retreat

OUR primary focus was on The Cross

- The message of the Cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.
- God is love - a love that will not let us go - a relentless love.
- Self-sacrifice is the essence of love.
- Death on the Cross - the ultimate act of self-sacrifice.
- We are ransomed, healed, restored, forgiven.
- Before the Cross we are all equal - no privileges.
- Equal in the eyes of God.
- In God, the things that separate us do not exist or are of no account - we are all equally loved.
- The Cross is an invitation. The call is love.
- The Cross is the ultimate revelation of love.
- The Church is where we can nurture one another, encourage one another, show love and hospitality to strangers and friends alike.
- The Church - a place of loving self-sacrifice with the Cross at its centre. It is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me, and the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. (*Galatians 2*)

THIS poem was written at the Retreat by Miriam Hamilton (below), a member of Christ Church Walmersley Bury and it was given in the form of a bookmark to everybody who attended the Diocesan Festival at the Cathedral on September 10th

*We are called to love,
we are called to care;
Called to love
everyone, everywhere.*



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*Called to Love
From the depths of
our hearts to the
heights of the skies,
The One who decreed it
is the One who is wise.*

*So, let us be like him
and stretch out our hands
A very small thank you
for the price that He paid.*

*Giving His life so
that we might live
in all of its fullness.*

Right now we can begin.

*So, we pray Lord
for your guidance
and the tools that
we'll need.*

So make us wise Lord,



Great One that decreed.

*Great Lord of the Nations,
we bow at your knee.*

CHRISTIAN RESOURCES EXHIBITION

So many questions and answers

THE Mothers Union manned a stand at the Christian Resources Exhibition at Event City, Manchester (October 8th & 9th). The stand was colourful, the volunteers were enthusiastic and the visitors very interesting ... all in all, it was a tremendous experience.

We found ourselves promoting Mothers' Union to visitors from far and near, including St David's, Harrogate, Leeds, Southport, Preston, Coventry, Birmingham, Blackburn, Hull, Derby, Chester, Manchester and many more.

'What do you know about the Mothers Union?' was a good conversation starter and the answers were many and varied - "nothing ... not a lot ... I am a member ... I used to be a member ... we don't have a branch at our church ... I am not a mother ... I was a member but I left when I became divorced ... I am not married ... I am a man!"

As they looked at the stand the questions came thick and fast : "Please explain what do virtual babies do? What is in the Welcome Bag? Which prison do you support? What do you do there? What is a cross in your pocket? Look how small that knitted cardigan is and the sleep suit and the hats - where do they go? Who uses a Baby Nest? What is an Away From It All holiday?"

Also we were asked "I am really interested in your campaigning and would love to be a member - but I cannot get to



evening/afternoon meetings" so we suggested "How about getting together with a few friends in a front room or at the local coffee shop?" "What a super idea!" (We hope a seed was sown).

Then there were those who stopped without being asked because they knew what Mothers' Union does (those were usually the members) and they wanted to talk about their branch and what they did, and share ideas.

A huge thank you to all those branches who lent their 'Hands', which were so much admired and to all those members who gave samples of their talents to make the stand so meaningful and representative of the work that goes on in our diocese.

Thank you also to those who manned the stand and gave of their time. We certainly sowed many seeds and hope that they bare 'much fruit'.



WELCOME SUPPORT ...



THIS September the sun shone on Oxford Road. Many thanks to all our Mothers' Union members who have once again given generously to the Student Welcome Week project at Manchester University. Your donations enabled us to make up and distribute over two thousand Goody bags to new students over the course of the week.

The project is a big undertaking and an army of volunteers worked hard sorting out goods and putting bags together over three days, before providing soup and rolls and giving out the bags for the actual Welcome Week. It is fun as well!

We get lots of thanks from the students and many interesting conversations. Two international students came up to me to say how much they appreciated the fact that we care about them. I think this remark sums up why the project is so worthwhile.

Some of the students seem a bit lost in their new surroundings, so it's really good that the Chaplaincy offers a quiet place where they can sit and find someone to talk with and they can find a friendly face from Mothers' Union every Wednesday, as well as a free lunch!

Revd Angela Dand, Action and Outreach Co-ordinator



... FOR YOUNG AND OLD

*Oh what a night !
Fun - Fellowship – Food -
Entertainment and a
great result !*

MORE THAN 200 members of The Catholic Women's League, The Union of Catholic Mothers and Mothers' Union got together for a superb evening at Holy Cross College, Bury to enjoy each other's company in a most successful evening which raised more than £1200 for The Christie Hospital Oncology department for children.

Entertainment was provided 'in house' and each organisation did a 'turn' with our own Maureen Moore comparing and leading the whole evening with singing and dancing.

It was great to see the dance floor and the surrounding areas of the hall full of members dancing to great music, we were certainly 'United Together'.

After many meetings it was great to see the three organisations coming together to celebrate and have fun. Well done to all behind the scenes who made it all happen and special thanks to Holy Cross College for their support, even the staff were dancing with us!



'Just Up Your Street'

A PRODIGAL LESSON OF LOVE

The Victoria Community and Youth Centre, Whitefield has been opened by the hard work of the Tenants Association who saw a need for a place where residents - adults and children - could meet, have fun and learn skills.



We supported this project with items of craft, card, glue, shapes to make pictures and cards. Ongoing support has been taken up by All Saints Stand Mothers' Union.

One of the volunteers writes: "Many thanks to Manchester Diocese Mothers

Union for their kind donation of £100. The money has been used to buy arts and crafts materials for the youth club at our local community centre, owned and run by members of the Victoria Estate Tenants and Residents Association.

After many hours of negotiating for grants, support and help they were able to take over a closed church building. Volunteers man the centre where between 40 and 60 children come each week. They play games, learn new skills and have fun in a secure place.

The children enjoy games (very noisy!) and learn new crafts - how to knit, make jewellery, while the younger children enjoy making pictures with craft items and use 'sticker books'. The 11 to 16's are also catered for.

"I have been attending the youth club for just over a year now. Mostly, I have been helping with craft sessions. Often we have been using items that would normally be recycled, so it has been a joy to have an abundance of craft items and the children are making the most of them.

"Many, many thanks".

Debbie Winstanley

A holiday, away from it all ...

IN SUMMER 2013, the Trustees agreed that Manchester Mothers' Union would invite holiday applications from church families referred through our Manchester parish clergy.

The AFIA committee met to consider the applications in January this year. As a result we have provided funds for two caravan holidays, two parish weekends away, a quiet break at Rydal Hall in Cumbria and a camping holiday at the New Wine summer event - breaks for eight adults and fifteen children.

Did the families benefit from a break we were blessed to give them? The feedback speaks for itself.

From a family who went to Cumbria :

"I would like to thank you for such a blessed gift – we have had a beautiful

rest and have felt God's presence"

From a family who went to a Haven Holiday Park : ***"We had a lovely time together and came back refreshed. Thank you"***

And another family who enjoyed a Haven Holiday :

"I cannot express how much fun we had. To see the look on my children's faces as they fed wild swans and ducks who would wander into the area where they were standing was priceless"

Finally from the family who went to New Wine : ***"The family had an absolutely marvellous time and enjoyed every aspect of it"***

**Revd Angela Dand
Action and Outreach Co-ordinator**

United in Prayer

From Mary Sumner House

Our 2015 Theme: "United in Prayer" develops the 2014 theme - 'Sowing the Future together' - by focusing on the centrality of prayer in the work of Mothers' Union across the world.

As we continue to plan for the future and grow together, prayer is at the heart of all we do.

As we look to build the community of Mothers' Union, we unite with other members across the world, and particularly we are united in prayer.

Our theme for the year highlights the importance and centrality of prayer in all we do. As we embark upon the new Wave of Prayer, with over 100 new links added, we have the exciting opportunity to pray for many more people.

We are currently developing themed resources to help us celebrate our new links, inspire us to pray and help us discern how and what to pray.

As we work on these resources, let us ask God to illuminate the way he wants us to respond, equip us in our prayer life and take us forward on our journey with Him and in unity with members across the world.

When a believing person prays, great things happen.

Resources are available now by logging onto: www.mothersunion.org/content/2015-theme-united-prayer-resources

Mothers' Union members are making a difference here and worldwide.....

● The Make a Mothers Day appeal has raised £160,000 which will be boosted by Gift aid to approx. £180,000. A huge thank you to all our members, branches and churches who supported this project so generously.

● The Harvest Appeal has raised £9,939 up to going to press.

● The Wheels Appeal has raised £53,766.00 and donations are still coming into Mary Sumner House. This project supports the work in those countries where transport is difficult.

It enables members to continue the special work Mothers' Union does to support communities in their own and other villages. A bicycle is a Rolls Royce!

● Let us remember that as Mothers' Union members we have helped more than 441,000 people to lead better lives through the work of Community Development Co-ordinators.

● The Literacy and Financial project has helped over 130,000 disadvantaged people in Sudan Malawi and Burundi

● Bye Buy Childhood campaign has changed laws and made advertising safer for children.

● The Micro Credit Schemes are helping people to save and plan for the first time.

FUTURE DATES

(continued from page 5)

Thursday 20th November - Quiet Day in Manchester Cathedral from 10am to 2.30pm and led by Revd Eileen Short. Bring packed lunch and drinks provided. Cost £2.50.

Tuesday 25th November is the

beginning of 16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence. Information and pack available on Mary Sumner House website.

Thursday 4th December: Advent Carol Service in St Ann's Church, Manchester at 1.30pm.

Praying, Working, Caring

Inspiration from Songs of Praise St Georges Mothers Union, Mossley

A BAG of material and a single simple instruction ... *“Ask your members to draw round their hands on the fabric, cut them out and make what they can of them!”*

Inspiration finally came through hearing a Welsh village school motto on a Songs of Praise programme “The Roots of the past are the Branches of the Future”.

Like many other Mothers' Union Branches it just had to be a tree.

The meaning of our tree is this - a healthy tree needs strong roots and the names on the roots of our tree are the names of our 1927 Founder members, the leaves are our present members.

At Council, our Diocesan President Catherine listed some of the qualities needed by members to move forward. The first was to have enthusiasm, our Founder members had that, they formed a Branch! We try to emulate them.

Catherine then asked us to “Be enlightened and evolve. Nothing stands still. We have to evolve in order to meet today’s challenges and find new ways of engaging with parents and families”.

Much is being done but we need to encourage more members on the ground to sow the seeds of the future.

We need hands that pray, hands that work, hands that care ... to carry on the wonderful work that is being done in our Diocese and around the world.

To foster self-dependency overseas and in our own country, to promote Christian family life.

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The blossoms on our tree are areas where our Branch have tried to have some impact. We have only just begun.

☛ ‘We blossom and flourish as leaves on the tree and wither and perish but nought changeth Thee’

☛ Heavenly Father we pray that the work of those who have gone before us will inspire us to inspire those who follow after us. We ask that you keep us rooted and grounded in your unchanging love. Amen

BE AWARE OF NEW RULES

Time off at the right time ...

Faith & Policy Watch : October 2014

HERE is some of the information to be found in the Mothers Union Policy Watch document: ...

FROM the first of October, fathers or partners of expectant mothers will have the right to take unpaid time off work to attend anti-natal appointments.

Employees will be entitled to take up six and a half hours, for up to two appointments with their partner, although employers can offer more time if they wish.

Employers will not be entitled to ask for evidence, such as appointment cards, but can ask for declarations stating details of the appointment.

This new right is available as a 'day-one' right for employees, although agency workers will be required to have been doing the same job for the same hirer for at least 12 weeks.

European Union's maternity leave directive : Where Next?

A DIRECTIVE on maternity leave is at a standstill in the European Council due to blocking from a number of National Ministers, according to the European Women's Lobby.



Featured in October 2010's Policy Watch, the directive was adopted in first reading by the European Parliament in 2010 but given its lack of progress the European Commission has suggested the proposals be withdrawn.

This has been proposed in line with the Regulatory Fitness and Performance programme (REFIT) which aims to reduce regulatory costs and 'burdens' although the European Commission says that the proposal 'has not been withdrawn yet'.

The directive would make provision across the European Union for:

- The right to at least 20 continuous weeks of maternity leave, fully paid for at least six weeks after childbirth
- A minimum period of additional maternity leave for employed mothers of disabled children
- Paid paternity leave, granted on an equivalent basis – except with regard to its duration – to maternity leave.

To read the full directive go to <http://tinyurl.com/kxq4t2>

- Pray that decisions made on the maternity leave directive will support family life across the European Union
- Are you signed up to receive Faith & Policy watch direct to your e mail?

Sign up on the Mary Sumner House website or read online at www.mothers-union.org/content/faith-policy-watch

Messy Church : A clear picture

says Fr Patrick Davies, Manchester
Archdeaconry Chaplain

***Open your eyes and look at the fields!
They are ripe for harvest. John 4:35***

Harvest is a wonderful time of year when we see the rewards of our labour. Those seeds which were sown are now fruits ready for the harvest.

St Crispin's, Fallowfield, has always had a commitment to the care of the poor and oppressed. This is demonstrated effectively by members of the Mother's Union who help with our monthly Messy Church.

On the first Friday of the month, Messy Church has been exploring growth. Through planting seeds and growing vegetables and fruit, children have, through scripture stories, craft and play learnt much about the

importance of being good stewards of God's creation.

Our Harvest collection is despatched to help people who attend Cornerstones, a day centre in Hulme, Manchester, providing services to adults facing a wide range of social issues including homelessness, poverty, social isolation, poor mental health, and drug and alcohol addiction.

Cornerstones operate an open door policy and welcome people from all backgrounds with the aim of offering support and to improve their quality of life.

For more information and other details, visit www.cornerstonecds.org.uk

Through play, children discover that God's generous gifts to us are to be shared. Let us use this time of year to reinforce that command to be alongside the most vulnerable.



AND FINALLY : Smiling faces at Foxhill, where everyone agreed it had been a superb retreat.

End of Triennium Celebration

at the
Royal College of Music
Oxford Street, Manchester
on **September 30th 2015**



***Speaker:
Worldwide
President
Lynne Tembey***

Tickets £8

There are 650 seats for this extra special event - make sure you have one of them!

PUT THE DATE IN YOUR DIARY NOW

*and be part of Manchester Diocese
Mothers' Union celebration of
three more years supporting
and enabling families both
here and around the world*