

Peculiar Times!

Greetings! from the Mothers' Union Diocesan Trustees and Officers

A Prayer for Lent

As the days lengthen, and the earth spends longer in the light of day, may we spend longer in the light of your presence, O Lord.

May the seeds of your Word which have been long buried within us, grow like everything around us, into love for you and love for other people, a visible declaration of your lordship in our lives. Grant, Lord, that there may be a springtime in our lives this Lent. Amen

The Clewer Initiative is currently producing five hard-hitting mini films and an accompanying devotional course for Lent 2021.

Entitled *Women in the Shadows*, it focuses on the suffering facing women and girls who are trapped in sexual exploitation, forced labour and county lines drug smuggling and the ways in which different organisations are supporting and helping victims and survivors. It is hoped that many churches and communities will use the films and devotional material as their focus for Lent this year.

To sign up to receive the course email clewerinitiative@churchofengland.org

Christmas appeal update from MSH

It is with great satisfaction we can report that that the 2020 Christmas Appeal raised an incredible **£124,885** overall. These funds will pave the way to a better life for countless women, uplifting and empowering them through education.

For more information please visit www.mothersunion.org/christmas

Following a Zoom Meeting at which the **Book of Comfort** was recommended, Clare Thomas received an email from a member in the Peterborough Diocese requesting a link to the book. She responded to this and received the following message in reply.

Thank you so much for sending the file. I have downloaded it. What a wonderful book. I only just browsed a few pages and found a lovely prayer which is so appropriate for these times.

Isn't MU wonderful. One click of a button and I have made contact with someone who values and supports the same aims as me and shares in the fellowship of MU. Take care and stay safe.

Its great to know that all the hard work and prayer that went into compiling this book of prayers, reflections, photos and paintings is being used and appreciated beyond our own diocese.



This year the **World Day of Prayer** (5th March) focuses on Vanuatu. Information about the islands, including a short video, are available at www.wwdp.org.uk

Mothers' Union Sunday (14th March)

You may like to consider buying an ethical gift in memory of your mother or anyone else who has been a considerable influence on your life. A leaflet with these gifts has been sent out from MSH or they can be viewed, together with worship resources, at www.mothersunion.org/mothering-sunday-resources

A Message from Clare Thomas

The new MUE catalogue is out and full of lovely new cards and gifts. If you would like a copy please give me a ring on 01473 832808 or email me on clare.thomas@btinternet.com. You can send me an order by post or phone. Cards are also available singly – most are £1 each – or you can have a mixed selection eg ten different birthday cards for £10 or five different get well cards for £5. If you place an order on the MUE website please, please ensure that you include our Diocese name – St Edmundsbury & Ipswich on the order so that we get the 10% commission back.

Are you looking for someone prepared to give a Zoom talk to your Branch?

Linda Ginn (DP) is now able to give talks to branches via Zoom. Contact her by email at dpmusuffolk@gmail.com

MSH are also willing to do Zoom talks for branches covering several subjects. Contact Kathryn Anderson at MSH on Kathryn.Anderson@mothersunion.org to discuss subjects and dates.



A Message from Jeanette Appleton

As Social distancing is still going to be in place on March 25th, our Mothers' Union Lady Day service will be available on the musuffolk Facebook page and YouTube. Thank you to everyone who came forward to record the different elements of the service.

'**Connected**' is the new magazine for all members, and will be posted out directly in April. So it is really important that we have the correct addresses for everyone! Please ensure that any address changes, new members and resignations are given to Beryl Mee promptly so we can keep the membership directory up to date.

Sandra Griffiths has received the following letter of thanks from Gemma Saxton at the **Selig Suffolk Trust**.

I am writing to acknowledge our receipt of your generous donations from the Mothers Union collections.

We exist to serve our community by building a better tomorrow for all of the night shelter guests and Hope into Action tenants that we serve. Your donation will be very helpful in enabling us to continue our work. We are very thankful.

Our newly renovated building is now open. It provides a venue for our night shelter and a resource hub for our Hope into Action tenants. Since the shelter opened in the middle of November 2020, we have accommodated ten guests. 8 of them have already secured longer term accommodation. We are enjoying working with our guests in our new permanent home and they are grateful for our new facilities.

We have three Hope into Action homes and are in the process of opening a fourth. In the last 12 months, despite all the challenges of Covid, five of our tenants found employment and have moved out to live independently.

We look forward to sharing positive reports on our progress in the future. On behalf of our volunteers, staff, guests, tenants and trustees please accept our sincere thanks for your donation.