

Peculiar Times!

Greetings! from the Mothers' Union Diocesan Trustees and Officers

News from Mary Sumner House

Webinars are continuing throughout the autumn via Zoom. Topics include how to plan a project, identifying our strengths, how to capture the difference made by our projects, and fundraising. These are free, and open to all members, and recordings will be available afterwards. To find out more go to <https://www.mothersunion.org/mothers-union-member-webinars>

Members' addresses - so that you receive all future mailings from Mary Sumner House please remember to let our Diocesan Secretary Beryl Mee know of any address changes, new members and resignations / deaths.

Domestic Abuse

Mothers' Union is working to highlight changes needed to the Domestic Abuse Bill, such as:

- All survivors of abuse should be entitled to support and protection irrespective of their immigration status. Currently migrant women are routinely refused any support.
- Separate payments of Universal Credit should be made to each party to avoid the perpetrator receiving the whole payment and exerting coercive control over the victim.
- Advance payments of Universal Credit should be grants not loans to avoid worsening survivors' precarious financial situations.

Mary Sumner House will draft a template letter which we will be able to send to our local MPs to lobby for their support – these should be available during September.

There will also further resources available on domestic abuse for the 16 Days of Activism against Gender Based Violence and National Day (5th December) which will focus on the fact that 1 in 3 women globally suffer from domestic abuse.

News from our Diocese

A note from Keith our Diocesan Treasurer on Subs for 2021: Our subscription comprises the national subscription and our diocesan subscription. Last year, the national subscription was £14.50 to which your trustees added £5.50 to fund the costs of running the diocesan MU organisation and to provide additional support for children and families in our diocese. A month ago, MSH announced that the national subscription for 2021 will be £20. This is an enormous increase, but instead of having a separate subscription for Families First there will be a new publication combining Families First and the prayer diary which will be sent to all members twice a year included as part of the subs. I had to think very carefully about how we could manage our own finances in 2021. Since we have been in lockdown for most of this year, our expenditure is about £3000 less than expected, so I felt that we may be able to manage with a much smaller diocesan subscription next year. So, I recommended to your trustees that £3 should be enough during these difficult times. This was approved unanimously and that means the total subscription per member will be £23. This is a small increase from the £21 which has been in place for a few years.

Knee blankets and fiddle muffs – we have a stock of these, so if you know of anyone who would like one, or a care home which could accept them then please let Sandra Griffiths know on 01473 254653.

MUe Mothers' Union diaries, calendars and Christmas cards are now here! The new catalogue has a huge range of greetings cards with some lovely new designs, gifts, books etc. If anyone hasn't seen the catalogue yet and would like a copy please contact Clare Thomas (01473 832808 or clare.thomas@btinternet.com). If you can show a catalogue to friends outside of Mothers' Union who might like to buy a few cards or Christmas gifts that would really help our funds. If you would like us to bring the MUe cards to your socially distanced meeting or event do let us know! Or if you have a front garden with lots of passers-by where we could set up the MUe stall then please get in touch with Clare.

Face Coverings



This is the first batch of face coverings which our Diocese sent off to Mary Sumner House to sell. Our team of fantastic seamstresses – Alwyn, Anna, Anji, Cathie, Jeanette, Joyce, Sue C and Sue N – stitched a total of 96 face coverings. The pattern was quite complicated but created a high quality face covering with space for an additional filter, and they have proved to be very popular. Each face covering sold will bring £4 back to our Diocese – a welcome fundraiser while so many of our usual fundraising events have had to be cancelled.

Meetings – guidance is still that we should only meet up outside in groups of up to six. However for many branches it will be better to continue to not meet face to face. Each person's decision on whether to meet up should be respected as everyone has different circumstances. Do try to keep in touch by phone or post, or try Zoom if you have some members using the internet.

For your prayers:

- ❖ We lift up all those who have lost loved ones in recent months.
- ❖ We ask for wisdom in those who will influence others and make decisions in relation to the Domestic Abuse Bill
- ❖ We pray for peace to those who mental health has deteriorated since lockdown
- ❖ We pray for the teachers, school staff, children and students as they return to school and college for the autumn term.

May the calming peace of Jesus gently wash your fears away, may the power of God's Spirit fill your life with love, and God's healing grace pour over you with blessings from above.