**Thoughts from your President, Maxine Paul**

After, the celebrations for the Coronation, I had a lovely break cruising around Ireland in May and I am now feeling refreshed – thank you, Lord.

It was lovely to be able to join Thurrock Deanery for their festival service the day before my cruise and to see many of you at the May Council meeting two days after I got back, when we received the Community of Interest reps reports, secretary and treasurer’s reports which have already been sent out, as well as my own report which will come with the meeting minutes. We were then given an insight into the *Thrive* Domestic Abuse Survivors Support group run by the Epping Team Ministry and lead by one of our members, Phillis, which is going from strength to strength. Many thanks to Phillis and her team for what they are doing to support those coming out of abusive relationships. Please take time to do the survey highlighted below to help them and the national C of E team.

I have another President’s Challenge for you this summer and one for myself as well (see below) and I look forward to meeting yet more of you lovely members during this time. May God bless us all as we take up these challenges to bring transformation and hope to our communities.

**With love and blessings.**

**Maxine x**

****Coronation**

We hope all our members had a wonderful Coronation weekend. We’d love to hear how you celebrated to include in an article for the next edition of Roundabout.

**President’s Challenge**

Last year the President’s Challenge was to grow a sunflower, but this year’s is all about growing people! All members will receive a bookmark with their copy of *Roundabout* with the “Transformation-Now!” Prayer and some information about Mothers’ Union on the back to help us with transforming ourselves, our communities and our MU to grow in membership and be fit for the 21st century. Members are challenged to use the prayer and facts as creatively as they can. If your creativity means you need more copies, there are some spare ones available via Secretary Kathryn or there’s a copy attached which you can print for yourselves along with some ideas of how to use it. Please let us know what ideas you come up with!

**Wave of Prayer – 18th - 20th June**

Our time in the wave of prayer is coming up 18th-20th June. We are planning to have a livestream or pre-recording on Facebook for each of the 3 days so do check these out. Perhaps your branch could also hold a short service and use some of the resources Lucy has put together in *Roundabout*.

**Mary Sumner Day - 9th August**

We will be putting together a short service for branches to use for this year’s Mary Sumner Day. There will also be some services taking place across the diocese, including one Maxine is leading in Witham. If you are nearby we would love to see you there!

**Summer of Hope campaign**

A *Summer of Hope* resource pack has gone to all branch leaders following May Council and contains lots of fundraising ideas. Resources are also available to download at [www.mothersunion.org/soh2023](http://www.mothersunion.org/soh2023). Do consider holding your own *SoH* event - even if you are a small branch, you could have a little tea party amongst yourselves and invite a couple of friends or people from your community without asking them for any money.Or prayerfully make a few pompoms and give them away. That bit of fellowship or prayer is your contribution to their summer of hope.

Maxine has also set herself the challenge to visit every branch in the diocese during the summer. Hopefully she will see you if you are meeting or will leave you some *Summer of Hope* pompoms to find… If you would like to sponsor Maxine in her SoH challenge (there’s a sponsor form attached), please send any donations to Tricia.

**Come Together to End Domestic Abuse**

At May Council we had a truly inspiring presentation from Phillis Njugna of Epping branch about the Thrive Survivors project – a peer support group for domestic abuse survivors. The project is now looking to expand – first into Harlow and then on to Basildon. A copy of Phillis presentation has gone round to all branch leaders. Please keep them in your prayers as they start this new chapter.

Mothers’ Union are working with the Church of England to ensure we are all equipped to recognise and respond to domestic abuse. In partnership with colleagues that have been involved with Diocese of Melbourne and the Cumbria research project, Phillis and Revd Lee Batson of Epping have been invited to be part of the Church of England working group. A survey has been produced to help guide this work which they have asked us to circulate to all members. Click the following link to complete the survey: [Domestic abuse: What are our, behaviours, attitudes and cultures](https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/I5YH0B/) <https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/I5YH0B/>

**Understanding County Lines for Parents, Grandparents & Guardians**

County lines is becoming one of the most prevalent forms of modern slavery, affecting children and vulnerable adults across the country. The Clewer Initiative are offering an awareness raising session aimed at parents, grandparents and guardians of children and young people. The session will cover:

* What is county lines?
* Why should parents/grandparents/guardians be aware of the issue?
* How can we spot the signs?
* What can we do about county lines & how can we talk to our children about it?

 The courses will take place on the dates below:

* Thursday 1st June 10:00-11:00
* Thursday 22nd June 10:00-11:00

 If you would like to attend, please sign up using the link here: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/understanding-county-lines-for-parents-grandparents-and-guardians-tickets-601268358847>

**News from Mary Sumner House**

If you would like regular updates on central MU work, do sign up to the central e-newsletter available as a link at the bottom of the MU website homepage:

<https://mothersuniononline.org/p/1I8Y-G0K/sign-up-to-the-mothers-union-mailing-list>

*Metamorphosis Bitesize* taster sessions are being repeated for those who missed them on 2nd Tuesday of the month at 2pm. Zoom details as before. Starting in June.

The annual gathering in York takes place on Friday 22nd September. Please go to <https://www.mothersunion.org/annual-gathering-2023> for more information and to book tickets. Please let us know if you are planning to attend.

**Dates for the dairy**

* Wave of prayer 18-20th June
* Mary Sumner Day – Wednesday 9th August
* Annual Gathering in York – Friday 22nd September from 11am
* *Two Lads and a Laptop* concert - Saturday 7th October 7pm Emmanuel Church, Billericay.
* CDMU AGM in Chelmsford - Monday 13th November