

Monthly Newsletter – March 2023

Thoughts from your President, Maxine Paul

I have been meeting with loads of members at various events during February – there's been 2 members events, a branch visit to Waltham Abbey, Redbridge Deanery Tribute Day and Clacton, St James AGM – something different at each one too. Quiet, contemplative crafting for *Transformation – Now!* in Rainham with a full turn out of branch members, a couple from other local branches and there was even a member from St Vincent in the West Indies over visiting her sister.



We had a very entertaining evening with Kelvedon Hatch and Bentley Common branches plus a smattering of members from further afield when we had a great deal of fun re-imagining MU as a spirited, fizzing cocktail – have a look at the photos on our Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/ChelmsfordDiocesanMothersUnion/>

The evening meeting at Waltham Abbey was an altogether “colder” affair in the rather grand surroundings of the Abbey which unfortunately had a broken heating system – the warmth of the welcome fully made up for the chilly temperature though.

Tricia (treasurer) and I enjoyed a lovely morning with our fellow branch officials in Redbridge Deanery talking about *Re-imagining MU* and paying our dues. Then we had a trip to the seaside to Clacton having a stroll on the pier before the branch AGM hearing about how they had filled their 2022 and their “Meals for Mothers” initiative. We started with Mass and a very “on-message” homily from Fr. Justin.

Sadly, the members event at Witham won't be able to go ahead, but we would still really like to have something in the Colchester area, so please have a think about whether your branch could host a gathering at fairly short notice during March.

You may already be signed up for a Lent study course of some sort, but it's also worth having a look at the lovely Lent activity calendar which accompanies this newsletter. I am trying to use it alongside the *#DustAndGlory* Lent reflections from the Church of England - <https://www.churchofengland.org/our-faith/what-we-believe/lent-holy-week-and-easter/dust-and-glory-lent-reflections>. Both relatively simple and easy to do from home. May the Lord help us to grow in faith and love over these next forty days, and may we be brought even closer to him in our lives.

Love and blessings

Maxine x

Mothering Sunday

This year's Make a Mothers' Day Appeal is focussing on Gifts of Perseverance to support women, families and communities in Burundi and other places we work. The website www.mothersunion.org/make-mothers-day-2023 is now live and appeal packs have been delivered to all members. If you wish to buy one of the ethical gifts available and receive a Mothering Sunday card in time for Sunday 19 March, please make your orders by Thursday 9 March either by returning the order form or purchasing them online. We would love to know anything your branch is planning for Mothering Sunday (email secretary@muchelmsford.org.uk).

With God nothing is impossible: Transformation – Now!

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Women's World Day of Prayer – 3rd March

This year the World Day of Prayer service has been prepared by Taiwan which is the focus of prayers. To find out more about this worldwide wave of prayer and services taking place in your local area visit www.wwdp.org.uk

International Women's Day – 8th March

Mothers' Union will be taking part in the 2023 International Women's Day campaign #EmbraceEquity. The campaign aims to highlight that equal opportunities are no longer enough and the world needs to start talking about, and embracing equity. MU members are being asked to send examples of how they are embracing equity to help transform lives in communities as well as pictures giving themselves a hug to Communications@mothersunion.org. These will be compiled into a video to be released on International Women's Day. To find out more about this campaign visit <https://www.internationalwomensday.com/>

Thy Kingdom Come 2023

This year, rather than producing an online service, MSH are encouraging members to hold events in their local areas and involve both their own church and other local churches. The expanded remit of TKC this year to "*go the extra mile, empowered by the Holy Spirit, to love and serve those we are praying for or others who are in need*" fits particularly well with our vision and mission, and gives good opportunity to share this with others, who may be less aware of MU. Resources are now available on the website www.mothersunion.org/news/thy-kingdom-come-2023-0 so please signpost these to your members and encourage them to take part.

Annual returns – Deadline 10th March

Thank you to those branches who have already submitted their annual returns documentation. The deadline for returns to be with our Diocesan Treasurer, Tricia McCarthy, is 10th March. Please contact Tricia (treasurer@muchelmsford.org.uk) or Kathryn (secretary@muchelmsford.org.uk) if you have any queries or require any support with your submission.

Metamorphosis bitesize

If your branch is interested in learning more about Metamorphosis bitesize, MSH are holding a Zoom session on the second Tuesday of every month at 2pm to provide an overview of the Metamorphosis session. The next sessions are scheduled for 14th March and 11th April. The Zoom meeting ID is: 839 0360 2897 and the passcode is 610193. Please contact development@mothersunion.org with any questions.

Roundabout

The deadline for articles for our May edition of Roundabout is 1st April. Please email roundabout@muchelmsford.org.uk

News from Mary Sumner House

The monthly Indoor Members Prayer Circle reflection is attached to this newsletter.

Dates for the dairy

- May Council – evening of 24th May in the Chapter House
- Tickets for the Annual Gathering in York on Friday 22nd September are now on sale - <https://www.mothersunion.org/annual-gathering-2023>

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