**Thoughts from your President, Maxine Paul**

Here we are in May – Easter is behind us, the Coronation is just round the corner and we have a *Summer of Hope* to look forward to, not forgetting our May Council meeting on 24th May. In between now and then, I’m off on one of my cruises and the break will be very welcome!

Since Easter, Secretary Kathryn and I have been working on *Roundabout* which you will all receive before the end of the month, but with a deadline of 1st April, inevitably, recent things miss out and I feel I must congratulate the newly merged Stanford-le-Hope with United Benefice of Corringham and Fobbing Branch – undoubtedly the longest named branch in the diocese! Another good way of avoiding completely closing a branch is to merge with one nearby. I was delighted to be able to join them for a special service of dedication for a new branch with lots of long-standing members and my prayers are with them for the future.

A group of people in a room

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Do try to use the MU prayer for the Coronation of King Charles III below in your church services and branch meetings and be prepared for the prayer-based President’s Challenge which I will announce at Council. Do try to come along and you will also hear about the excellent *Thrive* Support Group for Domestic Abuse Survivors direct from the team at Epping, St John. May God bless your Coronation celebrations and I look forward to seeing you on 24th May.

**With love and blessings.**

**Maxine x**

****Coronation – 6th May**

Prayer ideas for the coronation are available to download here:

[Prayer ideas for the Coronation | Mothers' Union (mothersunion.org)](https://www.mothersunion.org/news/prayer-ideas-coronation)

*Almighty God, on this joyous occasion we, the members of Mothers’ Union in Chelmsford Diocese, offer our prayers for the reign of King Charles III. May the wisdom of God, the love of Christ and the power of the Spirit guide him to govern with righteousness, that all may live in peace and harmony. We pray your blessing on the King, the Queen and the Royal Family as they share in the privilege and responsibilities of service. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen*

**May Council – 24th May**

Council will take place in the Chapter House on 24th May when we will hear more from Phillis about the Epping *Thrive* Domestic Abuse Survivors Support group. Please let our diocesan secretary know if you or any of your members are planning to attend.

Badges rep Lynda Booth will have a supply of certificates and membership cards at Council. If you have extra or unwanted badges, please contact Lynda as they would be very much appreciated in Kenya when Revd Margaret Fowler next visits. [michael.lynda.booth@btinternet.com](mailto:michael.lynda.booth@btinternet.com)

A diocesan fundraising concert, featuring cello and piano electronics duo **“Two Lads and a Laptop”**, will take place on 7th October at Emmanuel Church Billericay. Tickets, (£15), will be available at Council.

**Thy Kingdom Come 18th – 28th May 2023**

A reminder that the “Thy Kingdom Come” resources are available to download at [*www.mothersunion.org/news/thy-kingdom-come-2023-0*](http://www.mothersunion.org/news/thy-kingdom-come-2023-0)

**Diocesan Retreat, Pleshey 26th/27th June 2023**

There are still spaces available on the Mothers’ Union Retreat, Pleshey. For further information or to book a place contact [marionketley157@gmail.com](mailto:marionketley157@gmail.com) or 01702 556318.

**Make a Mother’s Day**

Thank you to everyone who purchased a Gift of Perseverance as part of our Make a Mother’s Day campaign. You can catch up with the live interviews Bev Julien and other members did here [Louise Hulland - 19/03/2023 - BBC Sounds](https://www.bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/p0f5nrst). It starts at 2:45:50.

**South Sudan**

Since the violence erupted in Sudan, which borders South Sudan, we have not heard any news from Bishop Edward. Revd Mary Stephen, the diocesan president, had been having medical treatment in Khartoum, the capital of Sudan and we do not know if this has completed or been affected by the fighting. Please keel them in your prayers.

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**Summer of Hope campaign**

The Summer of Hope campaign is nearly with us, highlighting our programmes in Britain & All Ireland empowering women and men and giving them the skills, knowledge and support to transform their families and local communities. Fundraising and faith resources are available to download at [www.mothersunion.org/soh2023](http://www.mothersunion.org/soh2023) The campaign pack will arrive in May.

**Central Mailings**

If anyone in your branch did not receive their copy of “Connected” in April, please let the diocesan secretary know so she can check their address and contact preferences. We should have a small number of spare copies available at Council on 24th May.

**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

The programme for the annual gathering in York on Friday 22nd September has now been scoped and will include a keynote on global MU from our WW President Sheran Harper. Please go to <https://www.mothersunion.org/annual-gathering-2023> for more information and to book tickets.

*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.

**Dates for the dairy**

* *Thy Kingdom Come:* 18th – 28th May
* May Council: evening of 24th May in the Chapter House, 7pm for 7:30pm
* Diocesan Retreat, Pleshey – 26th/27th June 2023
* Annual Gathering in York – Friday 22nd September from 11am
* *Two Lads and a Laptop* concert: 7th October 7pm Emmanuel Church, Billericay.