

## Thoughts from your President, Maxine

There have been some wonderful chances to catch up with members locally and nationally last month. It was great to have so many at the Members' Meeting at the beginning of June and a few more joining in on Zoom to hear Emily Brailsford (from MSH) tell us how we can achieve our bronze, silver and gold RISE UP awards and I always love talking about what's been going on around the diocese. Secretary Kathryn sent out a summary a few days after the meeting to Branch Leaders, so do ask for that to be shared with you. My challenge to every branch is to recruit at least one new member this year as we aim to recruit 150 new members in time to celebrate 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the foundation of Mothers' Union in 2026. The members present have challenged me to make a gift for each of those being made deacon or priest in September. A "cross-in-your-pocket" was suggested and I have been in touch with Margaret at Stanford-le-Hope with United Benefice of Corringham and Fobbing to fill me in on the pattern – thank you, Margaret.

Thurrock Deanery Service was another chance to spend some time in fellowship and worship with the members there, but the big event was the Canterbury Provincial Gathering in Oxford, hearing about what's going in other dioceses (and coming back with lots of ideas!!) You can read a bit more from VP Rose a bit further on in the newsletter.

I'm looking forward to joining even more of you at some of the Cream Teas that I've been invited to during the Summer, but I can manage more... Apologies though if I am already booked up and congratulations to Woodford Wells Branch who managed to raise funds for EfW whilst I was at the Provincial Gathering and good luck to Grays who I won't be able to join because of a church commitment. My branch in Barkingside will be holding our *Summer of Hope* Service and cream tea on 14<sup>th</sup> July. We always invite the other MU branches in the area and diocesan members on email, but also other local women's groups and churches. As a result, we enrolled two new members last year – now, there's an idea for the President's Challenge... Please keep us, the *Summer of Hope* campaign and future members in your prayers.

*With love Maxine x*



This year's Summer of Hope challenge is supporting the expansion of Literacy Circles in the Democratic Republic of Congo, enabling women to learn life-changing literacy, as well as numeracy, agriculture and business

skills. You can download all the resources you need to run an event or take on *MU on the Move* at [www.mothersunion.org/summer-hope-2024](http://www.mothersunion.org/summer-hope-2024). Please let us know what you are doing and if you have an event you would like us to promote.

*Lord God, We hold up to you the communities involved in the Mothers' Union Literacy and Agriculture project in the DRC.*

*We pray for your guidance and wisdom to be upon each person involved in this project. We ask for your protection over them and their families as they navigate through any challenges or obstacles.*

*We pray that, through this project, they may gain knowledge and skills that will bring about positive change in their lives. May they experience your abundant blessings in the form of improved literacy, better health, and increased self-sufficiency.*

*Through your guidance and wisdom, may this project it grow and flourish, bringing hope and transformation to the communities it serves. Amen.*

*With God nothing is impossible: Transformation – Now!*

## Elections of Trustees

The diocese is currently seeking nominations from members to serve as elected Trustees on our Trustees Board for the period 2025-2027. Nomination forms for elected trustee positions are being circulated to all branches and to diocesan members following our June Members meeting. Nominations should be returned to the diocesan secretary by 31<sup>st</sup> July 2024.

There are also a number of diocesan roles (outlined in Roundabout) that we urgently need to fill: safeguarding rep, English for Women rep and website administrator. Please contact Secretary Kathryn if you would like to know more about these roles.

## Canterbury Provincial Gathering report from Rose Gorton

Five Members from Chelmsford attended the Canterbury Provincial Gathering on Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> June at Oxford. We heard from all the Dioceses in the Canterbury Province, with Maxine starting proceedings talking about *English for Women*. During the day we were told about many and varied MU projects around the country, including Travelling bags and Greggs vouchers for women heading home from prison, and Grandparenting days helping grandparents recognise the positive difference they can make to their grandchildren's ideas about God. There were many, many more examples of MU supporting their communities in ways that are both imaginative and loving. Two main things shone out through the whole day. Firstly, the importance of prayer to show the way and then to underpin and expand MU work - it is the foundation and fuel of everything we do. Secondly, a phrase used more than once during the day was "little things mean a lot". We heard how one woman cried to realise that somewhere, other women cared about her, even though they didn't know her. We can never underestimate the power of the love shown to others through the lives we live and the things we do as MU.



## Mary Sumner Day

We will be celebrating Mary Sumner Day on 9<sup>th</sup> August in the Chapter House (10:30am for an 11am start). Members are encouraged to bring a friend. If you are planning to attend, please let Secretary Kathryn know so we know numbers for layout and refreshments purposes. Please bring your own lunch, but tea and coffee will be provided.

## RISE UP

We were fortunate to welcome Emily Brailsford, the central MU domestic abuse lead, to our Members Meeting on 5<sup>th</sup> June. It was wonderful to see so many branches inspired by Emily's talk to take away copies of the RISE UP poster and church pledge afterwards. Please let us know if your branch or church have submitted a RISE UP award application form. If you haven't done so yet and would like some support, then please contact Secretary Kathryn. Online application forms are available at: [www.mothersunion.org/riseup](http://www.mothersunion.org/riseup)

## Away From It All

We still have funds available in our AFIA account for this year. If your church or local Foodbank know of a family that might benefit from a holiday or day trip then please contact [afia@muchelmsford.org.uk](mailto:afia@muchelmsford.org.uk) for a copy of our application form.

## Metamorphosis

Members of our Trustees Board recently completed the *Metamorphosis Bitesize* course. We are now offering a *Metamorphosis* session as part of our Speakers Programme. Please contact Secretary Kathryn to book one for your branch.

## News from Mary Sumner House

For regular updates on central MU work, sign up to the central e-newsletter on this link: <https://mothersuniononline.org/p/1I8Y-G0K/sign-up-to-the-mothers-union-mailing-list>

## Dates for the diary

- 9<sup>th</sup> August – Mary Sumner Day - 10:30am for 11am in the Chapter House
- 18<sup>th</sup> November - Provisional AGM and Annual Thanksgiving Service, Cathedral

*With God nothing is impossible: Transformation – Now!*