**Mothers’ Union Reflection**

**Bishop Emma Ineson Reflection – 20th October 2020**

Hello there,

Here I am sitting on a bench in my garden that's on its last legs. It's a lovely bench, but it is really very wobbly as you can see, and I don't really trust that it will hold me up for very long. Life at the moment feels very much, I think, like we're sitting together on my wonky garden bench. We're not quite sure what's going to happen next and we don't know if we can trust the things that we've come to rely on.

Many of us have lost loved ones, our way of life has changed, our freedoms have been curtailed and our society and our economies are under threat. Many have lost livelihoods as a result of the Covid pandemic, and that's why I love the fact that the Mothers Union theme for 2021 is Rebuilding Hope and Confidence. How we need that.

We're a people of hope with our faith in Jesus, we can always have hope because he's risen victorious from the grave. But what do we have confidence in? the word confidence literally means with faith. Our confidence in the things we used to trust has been severely knocked, but we can still be people, with faith. With faith and trust in our loving living Lord Jesus, with him, with faith in him we can face anything that lies ahead of us in the future. Perhaps, at the end of the day, the one thing that we can only really have confidence in, is God. He's the same, yesterday, today and forever and he cares for us. He has our very best at heart and he will strengthen us.

2 Thessalonians 2, 16-17 May our Lord Jesus Christ himself and God our father who loved us and by his grace gave us eternal encouragement and good hope encourage your hearts and strengthen you in every good deed and word.

Again and again in his letters Saint Paul prays that we'll be strengthened, and that strength is nothing that comes from ourselves, or anything that we might be tempted to put our trust or our faith in, but God alone. And then we can have confidence in ourselves because Christ is in me and Christ is in you. So however wobbly life feels to you at the moment, may you know Christ’s hope and confidence today and always.

Let us pray together, we will walk in hope and confidence trusting each other, loving each other, and together we will rebuild the hope and confidence of families and communities everywhere. Always reaching out with the light of Christ, and reflecting a life filled with purpose and meaning, grace and love, peace and joy. Amen.