

Mothers' Union Lincoln Diocese Registered Charity Number 259980

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The Diocese of Lincoln.  
Spring Newsletter 2024

From our Diocesan President

My dear Friends

I send you my best wishes and love at Eastertime. May you feel the joy of Christ's resurrection giving you hope for life eternal.

*MU Lincoln Diocesan President, The Revd Sylvia Rice-Oxley  
invites you to fellowship, fun, friends and MU news  
at Lincoln Mothers' Union Summer Council and AGM  
22nd June, 2024 10am coffee and finish by 3pm  
The Methodist Church, Queen Street, Horncastle, LN9 6BD  
Special visitor The Rt Revd Hall Speers former Bishop of Mahajanga, Madagascar  
bringing news of MU  
All members and friends are welcome  
Please bring own packed lunch*

With love  
Sylvia  
Lincoln MU Diocesan President



An Easter message from our Worldwide President Sheran Harper

My Dear Friends,

You may be wondering what's up with this photograph and why am I dressed in this fashion! Well, the answer is simple as I too was pleasantly surprised when this happened. After I delivered the Address at St. Aidan's Nongoma, Diocese of Zululand, two Zulu Queens transformed me into a Zulu Queen in front of the entire congregation. It was their way of showing gratitude for my visit, respect for my role as WWP, and acceptance by the whole community. As you can imagine this was an honour for MU and very humbling for me.

Approximately 250 MU leaders, members, and Clergy from 4 cluster Dioceses gathered at St Aidan's and we worshipped, shared stories of MU joys and challenges, and encouraged each other to find much needed solutions. Members of all ages were engaged and

passionate about their call to serve in MU, with strong commitment to taking care of the vulnerable and marginalized in their communities. I was heartened by the enthusiasm of the young women and their willingness to work hand in hand with the more experienced women.

I was also impressed by the way in which all organisations in the Church consult with MU on a regular basis and act together to achieve their goals of transforming the lives of individuals and families in the Archdeaconries.

Their goals based on the MU priorities of ending violence, injustice, and poverty. I felt very excited to see MU leading the way in many areas including -

- Support for the Clergy and the Anglican Nuns and vice versa, with Convents providing safe spaces for MU to use.
- Care for lone members, the elderly, and widows, by involving them in income-generating projects e.g. making various pieces of craft items, household furnishings, and clothing for sale. Many of them said, “We feel good because we can help MU and make our contribution.”
- The funding and building of the Kwanzimela MU Hall and Pastoral Centre, a well-equipped modern facility that accommodates in excess of 4,000 people for Diocesan Events. It is a wonderful project that brings communities together in fellowship, and it is widely used by the Church.
- Sustaining the “Right to Life” Albinism MU project which started in 2017 provides safe spaces for children and teenagers to reach their full potential and make meaningful contributions to society.  
Having a strong drive to stand together in huge numbers and move forward with the necessary programmes to increase awareness and end all forms of violence and injustice.
- Assisting with boreholes which provides a consistent and reliable source of water for families and communities.  
Making and producing soap and fabric softener to generate funds for members and families.
- Rearing poultry for income and providing a ready source of protein for the communities.
- And so much more ...

I believe that in addition to their faith, the exceptional support and appreciation for MU in the Diocese of Zululand by the Clergy and wider community is the incentive for a passionate, engaged and purpose driven membership. A membership with no hidden agendas just pure hearts for making the love of Jesus Christ visible and known to the four corners of God’s land.

This story reminds me so much of the reason for Easter with its profound message of renewal and hope. It also speaks of the confidence we have right across the globe in the transformational work of MU, the work we have been given by God to do, a holy ministry to which we have all been called and chosen.

Today as we celebrate the Risen Christ with our unique expressions of faith and love; let us renew our commitment as we journey forward on the path that God has ordained for us as members and Christians. Jehovah Nissi our Banner goes before us, and we have hope in the Risen Christ.

May the miracle of Easter fill you and your families with joy and happiness to last a lifetime, even to eternity. May the divine love of the risen Christ descend into you hearts, homes and communities making it a heavenly and peaceful dwelling! May the Spirit of Hope that Easter brings help you find contentment in little things of life and restore your faith in the Lorde above, who first loved us!

Our Easter Thank you Prayer ...

*For your humble birth in Bethlehem  
For revealing the presence of God in your humanity  
For your obedience to the divine will of your Father  
For the simplicity of your teaching  
For your loving compassion  
For the forgiveness of our sins  
For your suffering on the cross  
For the triumph of the resurrection,  
And the promise of new life in the Spirit  
Thank you, Lord Jesus. Amen.*

(Written by Rev Dr John Davey, Nottingham City Branch Mothers 'Union, UK)

The Worldwide Board of Trustees and Staff at Mary Sumner House join me in thanking you for your generous love and prayers that mean so much to us. We wish you, your family, and friends a very Happy and Blessed Easter ... *For He is risen, He is risen indeed! Alleluia!*

With my love and prayers as always,

Sheran Harper, A.A.

Mothers 'Union Worldwide President

Mothers' Union at UNCSW, March 2024

The 68th annual Commission on the Status of Women (CSW68), the UN's largest annual gathering on gender equality and women's empowerment, took place from 11 - 22 March under the priority theme, "Accelerating the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls by addressing poverty and strengthening institutions and financing with a gender perspective".

A joint delegation of Mothers' Union and the Anglican Communion attended the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women, and advocated for:

- Funding of adult female literacy programmes, to enable women to lift themselves and their families out of poverty increase their self-esteem; improve the wellbeing of their communities and reduce Gender Based violence.
- Engagement with faith-based organisations to implement grassroots, transformational programmes which are sustainable, because they are anchored in their communities and act as volunteers, often in the hardest to reach, most marginalized communities.
- Reform of global financial injustice.



During the week, Mathilde Nkwirikiye, former Provincial president of Burundi, talked at side events organized by the UKCSWA, Christians for the elimination of violence against women and girls and NAWO on the role of literacy, as evidenced by the MU experience over 20 years, in helping women to build their self-esteem and become able to support their families and strengthen their communities, also leading to a reduction in domestic violence



The Anglican Communion and Mothers' Union organized an event, Chaired by Bishop Rachel Treweek of Gloucester, at which Mathilde spoke, looking at the practical ways in which the Church and related organisations address the issues of poverty.

Rev Sarah Pidgeon, provincial president for New Zealand and Aorteoroa, spoke at a NAWO event on Social Protection, where she called for protection of the most vulnerable women and girls, especially those in care, and for support for survivors.

The delegation also held meetings with government delegations:

Mathilde Nkwirikiye and CEO Bev Jullien, together with Genny Kresic from MU Canada, met with the Ambassador to the UN and Minister for Human Rights for Burundi and the wider delegation met with Maria Wynard, UK Head of Women and Girls international engagement.



Throughout the week, the delegation also started each day in worship with Ecumenical Women, and led worship on Thursday, with the theme of Thursdays in black, calling for an end to gender based violence. [www.mothersunion.org/news/mothers-union-uncsw-68-0](http://www.mothersunion.org/news/mothers-union-uncsw-68-0)

Thy Kingdom Come – resources and “5 + 1.”

‘Come Holy Spirit.’ This simple, profound prayer is at the heart of Thy Kingdom Come. This worldwide wave of prayer which has spread to over 172 countries around the world is rooted in the practice and experience of the earliest church as they obeyed Jesus’ command to wait for the outpouring of the gift of the Holy Spirit. Acts 1:14 tells us their mission planning was founded in constant, groundbreaking prayer: They all joined together constantly in prayer, along with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brothers.

Thy kingdom come is an invitation to bring five people before God - family, friends, neighbours, or colleagues to come to know the love of God for themselves. This ecumenical initiative takes place between Ascension, 9<sup>th</sup> May and Pentecost 19<sup>th</sup> May. We encourage everyone to choose 5 people and pray for them throughout the 11 days and to invite 1 of those people to an MU event.

For more information and resources: [www.mothersunion.org/ThyKingdomCome](http://www.mothersunion.org/ThyKingdomCome)

#### From the Branches:-

##### Lutton – St. Nicholas

A Member of Lutton St Nicholas Branch, Mrs Maureen Stacey, has this year been a member of the Mothers’ Union for 60 years. When moving house one of the things that she looked for in the location of her new home was that there was a Mothers’ Union Branch close enough for her to attend. She has often led our branch in various crafts and recently gave us a talk about gemstones, which she has used in jewellery making and about which she is very knowledgeable. She has also supported Lutton Church in many ways.

Cathie Whenman

### Caistor

It is with great sadness that the decision was made to close the Caistor branch following the retirement of The Revd Ian Robinson and his and Christine's move to Brigg.

Coupled to that, one of our members, Doreen Shenstone, passed away which left just two members in Caistor.

The branch had closed some years ago but enjoyed a re-birth in the 1990's so we pray the MU will resurface again in Caistor in the not too-distant future.

### Brigg Obituary

Muriel Chapman had been a member of Brigg Mothers' Union for over 50 years, becoming an indoor member when she was no longer able to attend meetings, She died on November 18th, 2023 aged 104.



### Washingborough with Heighington.

Washingborough with Heighington Mothers' Union held celebration for Ash Wednesday. Membered shard in a service of Holy Communion with Ashing led by our president Rev Sylvia Rice Oxley and the service was followed by a soup lunch in St John's Church, which was a good start to Lent 2024

### Gainsborough

Just over two years ago, on a Wednesday morning, St. George's Church Hall opened to a new venture, Mini-Messy Church. A warm welcome awaited -pre-schoolers and their parents / carers as they were greeted by our "welcomers" and gift packs were handed to the adults. Breakfast was served, fruit, juice and toast for the little ones and toast, tea / coffee for the adults followed by half an hour playing with toys until craft time – the craft relating to the worship which follows. Because of their young age, the children need help from parents and our mini-messy helpers – parents seem to enjoy the crafts as much as do the children.

Worship time involves a hymn and two puppets, Mini and Messy, and each child is mentioned by name, birthdays are celebrated when a card is given and a simplified Bible story is read and prayers are said. The children seem to particularly enjoy action songs – Christian words to well-known childrens tunes.

The parents- with the help of children – can choose items from our free food table – bread, veg, fruit, tinned good and flowers – provided by the Feeding Gainsborough Organisation. There is also a popular clothes rail where parents can bring clothes which their children have outgrown and do a swap for something that fits.



We have nine dedicated helpers – five of which are MU members. The number of children has increased from 16 to 33 and over the past two years we have connected with over a hundred families.

We hold special Easter and Christmas celebration days on Saturdays which are well attended by the Mini-messy families and now each month on a Sunday we hold “Church at 4 p.m.” which involves craft, worship and cake.

In January we were fortunate to be awarded £250 from a bequest left by a Lincoln Diocesan Mothers’ Union member – Thank You! This will help our work at St. Georges in reaching out to the community. A small amount has already been used to supply our mini-messy children with suitable books telling the Easter story and for craft material for our Easter Celebration Day. We can see God at work and how blessed we are!



This photo was taken outside Lincoln Cathedral November 2023 at the start of our walk to highlight abuses in society. Many pedestrians thanked us, and we gave out sweets and good wishes to those we met.

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