



**In 2021 we look back with gratitude and forward with faith. In prayer, we give thanks and pray for ongoing vision for the future of Mothers' Union worldwide.**

**I know the plans I have for you,' declares the Lord, 'plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. *Jeremiah 29:11***

Take a moment to reflect on this verse and use it to focus your prayer for the future of Mothers' Union worldwide. If at home, you may like to write your prayer or depict it through drawing or craft

### **Prayer plait**

Take three lengths of different coloured ribbon, one representing the vision of Mary Sumner, one 145 years of Mothers' Union, one our hope for the future. Tie them together in a knot at the top and then plait them together, securing them at the end with another knot. As you weave your plait, use this verse and prayer, or pray your own for each strand, affirming that our hope for the future is held and strengthened by the vision and service that has brought us thus far.

*As I weave this symbol of strength;  
a threefold plait, not easily broken,  
so I also weave my prayers of hope  
for a future made firm by  
being entwined  
with past vision and present service.  
Amen*

### **Yesterday today forever Jesus is the same**

*Hebrews 13:8*

Use your plait as a bookmark reminder to pray for Mothers' Union.

If able to gather in person you may like to decorate a prayer tree with prayer plaits - each person tying theirs to the tree as a symbolic offering of gratitude to God and faith for the future. On a virtual gathering the plaits may be held up as all share in prayer.

*As we look forward with faith for all  
that is to come  
help us to build a future together  
which will enable our work to  
flourish;  
through far-reaching vision  
and commitment to your will.  
Amen*

### **Suggested hymn for prayerful reflection: Be thou my vision**

If possible, listen to the hymn or find the words and quietly sing as you reflect

*O King of glory, my victory won;  
Rule and reign in me 'til Thy will be done;  
Heart of my own heart, whatever befall;  
Still be my vision, O Ruler of all.*

*Traditional Irish hymn*



summer of  
**hope**

Creative Prayer





## 2021 marks 100 years since the death of Mary Sumner. In prayer, we give thanks for her life, her vision and her legacy.

**The Lord is good. His unfailing love continues forever, and his faithfulness continues to each generation.** *Psalms 100:5*

Take a moment to reflect on this verse and use it to focus your prayer of thanks for Mary Sumner. If at home, you may like to write your prayer or depict it through drawing or craft

Light a candle in gratitude as you read Mary Sumner's personal prayer:

*All this day, O Lord,  
let me touch as many lives as  
possible for thee;  
and every life I touch, do thou by thy  
spirit quicken,  
whether through the word I speak,  
the prayer I breathe,  
or the life I live.*

*Amen*

If at home, take some time to prayerfully reflect on the changes that Mary Sumner made through her life and vision, which were seeds for the growth to come over the years. Use the image of a seed, the flourishing plant and the forest to stir your thoughts.

If you have a garden or a nearby park, you may like to take a prayer walk around them, using the evidence of growth around to inspire your praying.

If together, virtually or actually, use the images to bring one word or sentence prayers to God, of thanks for seeds of vision planted by Mary Sumner and share examples of the growth we've seen over the years.

*Loving Lord,  
We give you thanks for the far-  
reaching vision  
of our founder, Mary Sumner.  
We look back with gratitude and  
praise for her witness, and for all that  
has been achieved thus far in the  
name of Mothers' Union worldwide.  
Amen*

### **Suggested hymn for prayerful reflection: God is working his purpose out**

If possible, listen to the hymn or find the words and quietly sing as you reflect

*All we can do is nothing worth  
unless God blessed the deed;  
vainly we hope for the harvest-tide  
till God gives life to the seed;  
yet nearer and nearer draws the time,  
the time that shall surely be,  
when the earth shall be filled  
with the glory of God  
as the waters cover the sea.  
Arthur C Ainger: 1841 – 1919*



# 2021 marks 145 years of Mothers' Union. In prayer, we give thanks for the service and inspiration of members across the years and across the world.

Since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses...  
let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us.

*Hebrews 12:1*

Take a moment to reflect on this verse and use it to focus your prayer of thanks for what has been achieved thus far by Mothers' Union across the world. If at home, you may like to write your prayer or depict it through drawing or craft

From a candle lit in gratitude for the life and vision of Mary Sumner, use a taper to light a multi-wick candle or a cluster of tea lights, a symbol of the growth of Mothers' Union over 145 years. Focus on the flames as you read the Mothers' Union prayer:

*Loving Lord*

*We thank you for your love so  
freely given to us all.*

*We pray for families around the  
world.*

*Bless the work of the Mothers'  
Union as we seek to share your  
love through the encouragement,  
strengthening and support of  
marriage and family life.*

*Empowered by your Spirit, may  
we be united in prayer and  
worship, and in love and service  
reach out as your hands across  
the world.*

*In Jesus' name.*

*Amen*

Then from the cluster of lights, light a candle lamp, a symbol of our prayers for God's leading for the future of Mothers' Union

**Your word is a lamp to guide  
me and a light for my path.**

*Psalms 119:105*

*Loving Lord, we praise your name  
as we look back down the years and  
see the imprint of your faithfulness  
on all that has come to pass.  
We place our trust in the light of  
your love to guide us forward in  
your ways.*

*Amen*

The symbolic prayer offering using candles can be a personal reflection or shared in a virtual or actual gathering

**Suggested hymn for prayerful  
reflection: Hope of our calling**

If possible, listen to the hymn or find the words and quietly sing as you reflect

*Hope of our calling; hope with strength  
empowered,  
Inspired by all that we have seen and  
heard;*

*This call is ours, for we are chosen too,  
To live for God in all we say and do.*

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