Welcome to the

Mothers' UNION

Worldwide Gathering 2026

30th September 2026

Durban

Schedule

30 September

Session	Time
Registration and Arrival	
Delegate Registration and Exhibition Opening	11am – 1pm
Pre-Service Music & Gathering	1:30pm – 1:50pm
Opening Worship Service	
Welcome Remarks	2pm – 2:05pm
Come, Let Us Gather — The Lighting of the Way	2:05pm – 3pm
Opening Remarks	3pm – 3:30pm
Keynote: Arise, Shine — 150 Years of Lighting the Way	3:30pm – 4:30pm
Close of Day	
Notices and Safety Briefing	4:30pm – 5pm

www.mothersunion.org/mu150durban

Being Present Together

To help us make the most of our time together, we kindly ask that you keep your phones away during the event and put them on silent. Wherever possible, please refrain from taking or making phone calls during the event. Please take the opportunity during the breaks to catch up on messages and correspondence.

Live streaming, FaceTime and personal recording are not permitted throughout the event. We have a professional photography and recording team with us who will be capturing the occasion, and recordings and photographs will be shared with members afterwards.

Prayer Room

A quiet space is available throughout the Gathering for prayer, reflection and quiet time by the toilets on the right-hand side of the stage.

Whether you want to spend a few moments in stillness, pray for our Mothers' Union family around the world, or simply take some time for yourself, you are warmly invited to use the prayer room.

You are welcome to come and pray at any time.



Health and Safety

Please familiarise yourself with the exit routes and assembly points indicated by the signage throughout the venue.

A dedicated first aid station is located at the main medical desk. For health and safety reasons, staff members are not permitted to distribute personal medications or painkillers.

Certified Intermediate Life Support (ILS) and Basic Life Support (BLS) are present throughout the event. If you feel unwell or require medical attention, please notify any staff member immediately.

Safety and Security

If you notice any safety hazards or experience an incident, please report it immediately to a member of the safety team from Cumme Safe or venue staff.

Be aware of your surroundings, take care when moving through high-traffic corridors, and report any potential hazards to staff immediately.

Please take all badges, lanyards and name tags off before leaving the ICC Exhibition Centre.

Please note

All table and venue decorations are to be left where they are and not moved or taken away.

There are additional worship songs across the Gathering that are not printed in the worship booklet. Please refer to the screens for the lyrics.

Please always mind your belongings. For lost and found items please report to safety desk.






150 YEARS OF
Mothers' UNION
Join us, Join in
Lighting the way for
generations to come






Christian care for famil
Province of All Irel
RISE UP
against domestic abuse
Respond
Inform
Support
Empower
Unite
Pray
'Domestic abuse is not an accident; it is a deliberate act of cruelty. A compassionate society should do everything in its power to root out domestic abuse.'
The Most Revds. J. McDowell and Dr. M. Jackson
Mothers' Union
are equipping


MOTHER'S UNION
150 YEARS
JOIN US
JOIN IN






Mothers' Union
150 years of
Supporting families
www.musuffolk.org.uk






MOTHERS' UNION
Christian care for families




150 YEARS OF
Mothers' UNION
Join us, Join in
Lighting the way for generations to come


Mothers' UNION
Christian care for families
supporting families
seeing relationships flourish
transforming lives


JOIN US JOIN IN






150 YEARS OF
Mothers' Union
Join us, Join in
Lighting the way for generations to come






MOTHERS' UNION




150
YEARS
Join us, Join in


150
YEARS
FOUNDER
1876


EXIT




150
YEARS
1876
2026
2000


ACK
OF MACHAKOS
CELEBRATING
YEARS
50
YRS
Union



Pre-Service Music & Gathering

Please take your seat by 2pm

Mothers' UNION

The Rt Revd Nkosinathi Ndwandwe

Bishop of Natal,
Anglican Church Southern Africa

Welcome on behalf of the diocese and Anglican Church of Southern Africa





Come, Let Us Gather – The Lighting of the Way

Opening worship service

Mothers' UNION

We come from scattered lives to meet with God. Let us recognise his presence with us.

Silence is kept.

As God's people we have gathered:

Let us worship Him together.

This is your day

and we shall praise you!

This is your day

and we shall declare your name!

This is your day,

All: and we shall worship a risen Saviour and our King!

Opening Hymn

Bless the Lord O my soul O my soul
Worship His holy name
Sing like never before O my soul
I'll worship Your holy name

The sun comes up it's a new day dawning
It's time to sing Your song again
Whatever may pass and whatever lies before me
Let me be singing when the evening comes

Bless the Lord O my soul O my soul
Worship His holy name
Sing like never before O my soul
I'll worship Your holy name

You're rich in love and You're slow to anger
Your name is great and Your heart is kind
For all Your goodness I will keep on singing
Ten thousand reasons for my heart to find

Bless the Lord O my soul O my soul
Worship His holy name
Sing like never before O my soul
I'll worship Your holy name

And on that day when my strength is failing
The end draws near and my time has come
Still my soul will sing Your praise unending
Ten thousand years and then forevermore

Bless the Lord O my soul O my soul
Worship His holy name
Sing like never before O my soul
I'll worship Your holy name

CCLI Song # 6016351
Jonas Myrin | Matt Redman

Lighting of the Anniversary Candle

We give thanks for the light we have received. We give thanks for the generations who have carried it before us. And we pray that God will enable us to carry that light faithfully into the future.

Lord Jesus Christ, Light of the world, shine upon us, shine through us, and guide our way. Amen.

Confession

As we come into the light of Christ, we also come honestly before God. Let us be still before the Lord. Rest quietly in his presence. Listen.

Silence is kept.

Let us bring before the Lord the words that may have hurt and all those left unsaid; the anger we have felt and the resentment we have fed. Let us be still before the Lord. Rest quietly in his presence. Listen.

Silence is kept.

The Lord is slow to anger, willing to forgive, full of grace.
Draw near to him. Rest quietly in his presence. Listen.
Silence is kept.

Absolution

May the God of love bring us back to himself, forgive us our sins, and assure us of his eternal love in Jesus Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

Collect

Let us pray.

Faithful and loving God, who called Mary Sumner to strive for the renewal of family life: give us the gift of your Holy Spirit, that through word, prayer and deed your family may be strengthened and your people served;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

All: Amen.

The liturgy of the word

First reading: Isaiah 60:1–14

“Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord rises upon you. See, darkness covers the earth and thick darkness is over the peoples, but the Lord rises upon you and his glory appears over you. Nations will come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your dawn. Lift up your eyes and look about you: All assemble and come to you; your sons come from afar, and your daughters are carried on the hip.

Then you will look and be radiant, your heart will throb and swell with joy; the wealth on the seas will be brought to you, to you the riches of the nations will come.

Herds of camels will cover your land, young camels of Midian and Ephah. And all from Sheba will come, bearing gold and incense and proclaiming the praise of the Lord.

All Kedar's flocks will be gathered to you, the rams of Nebaioth will serve you; they will be accepted as offerings on my altar, and I will adorn my glorious temple.

Who are these that fly along like clouds, like doves to their nests? Surely the islands look to me; in the lead are the ships of Tarshish, bringing your children from afar, with their silver and gold, to the honour of the Lord your God, the Holy One of Israel, for he has endowed you with splendour.

Foreigners will rebuild your walls, and their kings will serve you. Though in anger I struck you, in favour I will show you compassion.

Your gates will always stand open, they will never be shut, day or night, so that people may bring you the wealth of the nations— their kings led in triumphal procession. For the nation or kingdom that will not serve you will perish; it will be utterly ruined.

The glory of Lebanon will come to you, the juniper, the fir and the cypress together, to adorn my sanctuary; and I will glorify the place for my feet.

The children of your oppressors will come bowing before you; all who despise you will bow down at your feet and will call you the City of the Lord, Zion of the Holy One of Israel.

This is the word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Hymn

In Christ alone my hope is found,
He is my light, my strength, my song;
This Cornerstone, this solid Ground,
Firm through the fiercest drought and storm.
What heights of love, what depths of peace,
When fears are stilled, when strivings cease!
My Comforter, my All in All,
Here in the love of Christ I stand.

In Christ alone! – who took on flesh,
Fullness of God in helpless babe.
This gift of love and righteousness,
Scorned by the ones He came to save:
Till on that cross as Jesus died,
The wrath of God was satisfied –
For every sin on Him was laid;
Here in the death of Christ I live.

There in the ground His body lay,
Light of the world by darkness slain:
Then bursting forth in glorious day
Up from the grave He rose again!
And as He stands in victory
Sin’s curse has lost its grip on me,
For I am His and He is mine –
Bought with the precious blood of Christ.

No guilt in life, no fear in death,
This is the power of Christ in me;
From life's first cry to final breath,
Jesus commands my destiny.
No power of hell, no scheme of man,
Can ever pluck me from His hand:
Till He returns or calls me home,
Here in the power of Christ I'll stand.

Stuart Townend & Keith Getty Copyright © 2001 Thankyou Music

Second Reading:

Matthew 5:13–20

You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled underfoot.

You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl.

Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.

Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. For truly I tell you, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished.

Therefore anyone who sets aside one of the least of these commands and teaches others accordingly will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever practices and teaches these commands will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. For I tell you that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the Pharisees and the teachers of the law, you will certainly not enter the kingdom of heaven.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

Mothers' UNION

Hymn

Thuma mina
Thuma mina,
thuma mina,
thuma mina,
Somandla.

Lead me, Lord.
Lead me, Jesus,
lead me, Jesus,
lead me, Jesus,
lead me, Lord.

Send me, Lord.
Send me, Jesus,
send me, Jesus,
send me, Jesus,
send me, Lord

Fill me, Lord.
Fill me, Jesus,
fill me, Jesus,
fill me, Jesus,
fill me, Lord.

Affirmation of Faith

Let us declare our faith in God.

All: We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father.
Through Him all things were made.

For us and for our salvation
He came down from heaven:
by the power of the Holy Spirit
He became incarnate from the Virgin Mary,
and was made man.
For our sake He was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
He suffered death and was buried.
On the third day He rose again in accordance with
the Scriptures;

He ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory to judge the living and
the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.
We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord,
the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son.
With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and
glorified.

He has spoken through the Prophets.
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come.
Amen.

Prayers of Intercession

In the light of Christ, let us pray for the Church,
for the world, for families and communities, and for the work to which God calls us.

Loving God, we give you thanks for the worldwide family of Mothers' Union. For every country represented here today and for all who are not; for every member, branch, diocese and province; for every person who prays, serves, encourages and gives; and for every family whose life has been touched by this movement. Strengthen the bonds that unite us across the world. Help us to listen to one another, learn from one another and stand together in love.

Lord, in your mercy

All: Hear our prayer.

God of compassion, we pray for families and communities throughout the world. Where there is poverty, bring provision. Where there is violence, bring safety. Where there is loneliness, bring companionship. Where relationships are broken, bring healing. Where there is fear, bring courage. Where there is despair, bring hope. Make us attentive to the needs around us and ready to respond with love.

Lord, in your mercy

All: Hear our prayer.

God of justice, we pray for all who experience gender-based violence, domestic abuse, modern slavery, discrimination, racism, poverty and oppression.
We pray for people who feel unseen or unheard. Give courage to all who speak for justice. Give wisdom to people who work for change.
And make us people who welcome, respect and value every person, regardless of background or circumstance.

Lord, in your mercy
All: Hear our prayer.

Gracious God, we give you thanks for the work of Mothers' Union throughout the world.

For literacy and skills programmes; for parenting and family support; for work with survivors of domestic abuse; for support for prisoners and their families; for communities strengthened and lives transformed; and for every project, large or small, through which your love is made visible.

Bless all who serve. Give wisdom to our leaders and trustees. Give courage to everyone who advocates for justice. And help us to remain faithful to our calling.

Lord, in your mercy

All: Hear our prayer.

Lord God, we pray for the leaders of Mothers' Union worldwide, for our Worldwide President Kathleen, for the trustees and leaders in every zone, province, diocese and branch, and for all who carry responsibility for the life and mission of Mothers' Union.

We pray also for bishops, clergy and all who serve the Church. We pray for our patron, The Archbishop of Canterbury, Archbishop Sarah and for Archbishop Thabo, Archbishop of Southern Africa.

Give them wisdom, humility and strength.
May they lead with faith, listen with compassion and serve with courage.

Lord, in your mercy
All: Hear our prayer.

Faithful God, as we celebrate 150 years, we place the future of Mothers' Union into your hands.
Renew our vision. Refresh our calling. Give us courage to respond to the needs of our time. Help us to be willing to change where change is needed, faithful to the Gospel, and united in our desire to serve. May the generations who follow us find that we have faithfully carried the light we received.

Lord, in your mercy
All: Hear our prayer.

Lord, we give you thanks today for the life and witness of Mary Sumner and for her vision in creating Mothers' Union.

We give you thanks for all those who have followed her example; for every prayer offered, every act of kindness, every family strengthened, every vulnerable person protected, every community renewed, and every life touched through the work of Mothers' Union.

Keep us mindful and inspired by those who have gone before us.
May we play our part faithfully for those who will follow.

Through Jesus Christ our Lord.
All: Amen.

We say together 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.

For 150 years, God has been faithful.
We give thanks for the vision of Mary Sumner.
We give thanks for every generation that has carried the work forward.
We give thanks for the members gathered across the world today.
We give thanks for the prayers that have been prayed, the hands that have served, the voices that have spoken for justice, and the lives that have been changed.

And we give thanks that the story is not finished.
Loving and faithful God,
we thank you for 150 years of Mothers' Union;
for every life touched, every prayer offered, every act of kindness given in your name.
We praise you for the vision of Mary Sumner,
and for the countless members who have served you with love, courage and quiet faithfulness throughout the years.

You have been our refuge, our strength and our guide.
As we stand at this milestone, we place our past into your hands with gratitude, and our future into your trust.
Renew our calling, O God.
Refresh our vision.
Strengthen us for the days ahead.
Help us to walk humbly, love deeply, and serve faithfully, wherever you lead.

May we continue to be instruments of your peace, bearers of your compassion, and witnesses to your love in the world.
We commit Mothers' Union, today and for generations to come, into your loving care.
Through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

As our Saviour taught us, so we pray with confidence,
each in the language of our hearts:

Our Father, who art in heaven,
Hallowed be thy name;
thy kingdom come;
thy will be done;
on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation;
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
the power and the glory,
For ever and ever.
Amen.

Going forward – lighting the way ahead

We have gathered here today
We have listened.
We have remembered.
We have prayed.
And we have received the light.
Now we are called to carry it.
The anniversary we celebrate is not simply a celebration of the past.

It is an invitation to the future.
For the next generation.
For the families we have yet to meet.
For the communities where God will call us to serve.
For people who need hope, justice, dignity and love.
Jesus says: “You are the light of the world.”
So let us go as people who have received the light.
Let us reflect the light of Christ in our homes.
Let us reflect it in our churches.
Let us reflect it in our communities.

Let us reflect it in our advocacy and our action.
And let us carry it together, across borders, across cultures and across generations.
Amen

One light can be carried by many. One prayer can reach across the world. One act of love can change a life.
And one faithful response to God's call can become a movement. Today we begin the next chapter. Together, in Christ.
Amen

Closing Hymn

Come Holy Spirit
Move among us
Come Holy Spirit
Flow Living Water
Flow within us
Flow Living Water

Your Love is alive
Breaking the darkness
It's bringing the Light
To soften the heart of stone
Your Love is alive
Breaking the darkness
And winning the fight
And bringing the orphan home

isiZulu / English

Uthando uthando
Lwakho lwakho
Luyaphila luyaphila
Your love is alive
Umbuso umbuso
Wakho wakho
Uyaphila, uyaphila
Your Kingdom is alive

CCLI Song #7087027

Blessing & Dismissal

All praise be to God, by whose power one woman's vision became reality through the founding of Mothers' Union.
All praise be to God who has led us thus far and whose Spirit inspires us for what lies ahead.
May the God who has called us, the Christ whose light shines among us, and the Holy Spirit who strengthens us, equip us to serve faithfully in the years to come.

And the blessing of God almighty,
the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit,
be among you and remain with you always.
Amen.

United in love across the world, go in peace to serve the Lord.
Thanks be to God.
Amen.



Kathleen Snow

Worldwide President



The Revd Maria Van Staden

Zonal Trustee Zone E

Welcome to the Annual Gathering in Durban

Kathleen Snow

Worldwide President
Mothers' Union

Arise, Shine — 150 Years of Lighting the Way





Notices

Notices and delegate safety briefing

Mothers' UNION

See you tomorrow from 8:15am for a 9am start!

Please remember to take your lanyards off before leaving ICC Exhibition Centre.

150 YEARS OF Mothers' UNION
Join us, Join in

#MU150Durban

www.mothersunion.org/mu150durban