

Sunday Takeover Service Outline

During our [150th year](#), Mothers' Union members are encouraged to talk to their clergy about focusing a Sunday service on Mary Sumner and the work of Mothers' Union. Alternatively in a church where there is currently no MU presence clergy can still be engaged, as part of a diocese' wider engagement promoting MU generally and/or Church-Based Membership specifically). You may wish, for example, to takeover, Mary Sumner Day (9 August) which falls on a Sunday in 2026.

This National 'Sunday Takeover' is an ideal opportunity for members to talk during the service and inspire others to 'Join Us, Join In' and to become Mothers' Union members. An outline talk is provided to help and do have membership forms readily available.

This is an outline for a Service of the Word that you can use and amend to suit your settings. The words in **bold** are for everyone to say.

There are suggestions for creative worship, hymns, bible passages, and additional prayers further in this document. The Sunday Takeover Talk Outline is provided in a separate document available on our website.

Greeting

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.

Hymn

Call to worship

This is your day

and we shall praise you!

This is your day

and we shall declare your name!

This is your day,

and we shall worship

a risen Saviour and our King!

Welcome and Introduction

Welcome to our Service. We gather to celebrate the life and vision of the founder of Mothers' Union, Mary Sumner, during the 150th Mothers' Union anniversary year.

Mary Sumner was a woman of deep faith, with a heart for prayer and a determination to make a difference in the lives of others. She listened to God and acted upon his call. We too, in our day, want to follow her example as people of faith, by listening and acting upon the call of God.

Confession

Let us be still before the Lord
Rest quietly in his presence
Listen

(Pause)

Let us bring before the Lord
the words that may have hurt
and all those left unsaid;
the anger we have felt
and resentment we have fed.

Let us be still before the Lord
Rest quietly in his presence
Listen

(Pause)

The Lord is slow to anger
willing to forgive
full of Grace.

Draw near to him
rest quietly in his presence
Listen.

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.

Amen.

Hymn

Collect

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 for ever. **Amen**

Bible Readings

Hymn

Talk – see talk outline (separate document)

Hymn – during this hymn, you might like to take a collection to support the work and mission of Mothers' Union **

Creed

Let us declare our faith in God

**We believe in God the Father,
from whom every family
in heave and on earth is named.**

**We believe in God the Son,
who lives in our hearts through faith,
and fills us with his love.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit,
who strengthens us
with power from on high.**

**We believe in one God,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen**

Time of Prayer

After each petition use this or any appropriate response.

Lord in Your mercy
Hear our Prayer.

Lord of Heaven and Earth, we come today with hearts filled with joy and love for the work you have called us to in the worldwide Mothers' Union. Hear we beseech you the prayers of your people for the ongoing work we are engaged with.

Lord in Your mercy

Hear our Prayer

We pray for the members of the Mothers' Union in this Diocese of XXXX as they seek your guidance into the future, we pray for Bishop XXXX and our clergy, for the Diocesan President XXXX, all branch leaders, the trustees and all our members, that they may remain resilient and focused on the support of family life within the church and the communities in which we live.

Lord in Your mercy

Hear our Prayer.

Lord, we pray for our sister and brother members throughout the world remembering and praying for Mothers' Union Worldwide President Kathleen and the zonal trustees who bring the voice of this global movement into the church and into the world. [*You may also wish to pray for your Wave of Prayer link diocese here.](#)

Lord in Your mercy

Hear our Prayer.

Gracious God, we thank you for 150 years of faith in action and as we celebrate this important milestone, renew our vision and deepen our resolve to support the work of Mothers' Union projects. We pray for all the work done in your name: for people lifted from poverty through literacy and skills, for families strengthened and futures made possible; for survivors of domestic abuse who have found in us a place of safety and new hope; for people in prison, who we visit and do not forget, in whom we seek and find your face. [*You may also wish to pray for Mothers' Union projects specific to your branch/church here.](#)

Lord in Your mercy

Hear our Prayer.

Lord, we give you thanks today for the life and witness of Mary Sumner and of her vision in creating Mothers' Union. We give you thanks for having made her prayer and vision into the movement we are a part of today. Keep us ever mindful and inspired by the example she has set before us, and we ask you to bless the work of Mothers' Union today and into the future. We make our Prayer through Jesus Christ our Lord. **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**

The prayers may end with:

Merciful Father,

**Accept these prayers
for the sake of your Son,
our Saviour, Jesus Christ. Amen**

[If you are having a Service of Holy Communion, add the Peace and Eucharistic Prayer at this point. Suggested Eucharistic Prayer H can be found at the end of this document]

The Lord's Prayer

Let us pray with confidence as our Saviour has taught us

**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**

Hymn

Blessing and 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 for what lies ahead.

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

Lighting the way for generations to come since 1876

**** Donations for the work of Mothers' Union**

Why give?

Donating to Mothers' Union means standing alongside families and communities around the world as we transform lives through faith, community and action.

Your support helps us empower women, strengthen family life, and provide practical support through grassroots projects, education, and advocacy. Whether it is helping a parent gain confidence through parenting programmes, supporting survivors of gender-based violence, or creating safe spaces for connection and healing, every donation makes a real, lasting difference.

By giving to Mothers' Union, you are helping to build a more just and compassionate world.

Where does your money go?

When you donate to Mothers' Union, your money goes directly towards supporting our mission to strengthen families and transform communities both in the UK and around the world. Funds are used to support a wide range of programmes and projects including raising awareness on domestic abuse and modern slavery, working to support prisoners and their families, and providing respite to vulnerable families through our flagship AFIA (Away From It All) scheme that has been running for over sixty years in Britain and Ireland.



Globally, we fund literacy, parenting and gender-based violence programmes and savings and credit groups.

Every pound donated helps us reach more people in need and ensures that our work continues to grow and adapt to the challenges families and communities face today.

Donate here: www.mothersunion.org/give-overview/

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Suggestions for creative worship

Try using creative ways to enhance your worship and prayer during the service:

MAP: Find a map of the world or a globe. Place it at the front of your worship space to represent the global nature of Mothers' Union. You might want to mark each of your Wave of Prayer link diocese. Try also using two versions of a world map: one in black and white, and one in colour. Pray for God to bring colour and transformation through MU members within our link diocese.

FLAGS: Hang flags of the countries from your Wave of Prayer link diocese (or make small versions) or as many as you can from the 84 countries around the world that have Mothers' Union members.

CANDLES: Use a candle in a lamp, placed at the front of your worship space, to represent God lighting the way for generations of Mothers' Union members to come. Use smaller candles or tea lights to light during the time of prayer, and reflect on Jesus, the light of the world.

STONES: Give everyone a clean stone to hold. Feel the unique contours of the stone when praying – the hard and sharp edges representing the challenges and difficulties faced by those in your community that Mothers' Union members support as well as the smoothness representing their thanks.

RIBBONS: Give everyone a piece of ribbon and tie a knot in it representing the Mothers' Union national and global programmes, or your Wave of Prayer link diocese, or the Mothers' Union projects closest to members in your church/branch. Keep the ribbon in your pocket and feel the knots to remember and pray, knowing that we are stronger together.

PRAYER TREES: Use prayer trees to hang paper leaves or flowers, representing your prayers, or perhaps representing all of the Mothers' Union projects and initiatives that your church/branch/members have been involved in the past, present, and planned for the future.

BANNER: If you have a Mothers' Union banner you may like to use this prayer at some point in the service, as part of your rededication of your branch and yourselves to God for the future. If the church has a banner, but no longer has a Mothers' Union branch, amend the prayer to give thanks to past members and the ongoing work of Mothers' Union.

We rededicate this banner to the glory of God
in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.
May it be a symbol, visible to all who come to this church,
of our commitment to provide Christian care for families and communities.
Father, we also rededicate ourselves, as individuals and as a branch/group,
to serve you in following Jesus.
Help us in our commitment to nurture our faith
and to share your love with those we serve.
We ask in the name of the same Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen

Suggested hymns/songs

Be thou my vision
Brother, sister let me serve you
God is working his purpose out
Great is thy faithfulness
Hope of our calling
How good is the God we adore
In Christ Alone
I, the Lord of sea and sky (Here I am, Lord)
Jesus is king and I will extol Him
Jesus is Lord
Jesus put this song into our hearts
Jesus stand among us at the meeting of our lives
Just as I am
Longing for light (Christ be our light!)
Lord Jesus Christ, you have come to us
Lord, for the years your love has kept and guided
Oh Jesus I have promised
One more step along the world I go
Now thank we all our God
Shine Jesus shine
Such love
Tell out my soul
There's a wideness in God's mercy
This, this is the God we adore
Will you come and follow me
Ye servants of God your Master proclaim
You are the King of glory

There are also some music resources on the Mothers' Union website that might be helpful, including Mothers' Union specific hymn words and music settings to Mary Sumner's personal prayer: [Resources - Mothers' Union](#)

Suggested bible passages

Use the lectionary readings for the day or choose from the following suggestions:

1 Samuel 3:1-20

Proverbs 24. 3-4, 12-14

Isaiah 6:1-8

Matthew 4:18-22

Matthew 5: 13 – 16

Matthew 14:22-33

Matthew 15:21-28

Luke 11. 9-13

John 17:20-26

1 Corinthians 15:1-11

Ephesians 3: 14-21

Hebrews 13. 1-5

Additional prayers

Post Communion Prayer for Mary Sumner Day

Father,
from whom every family in heaven and on earth takes its name,
your servant Mary Sumner revealed your goodness in a life of tranquillity and service:
grant that we who have gathered in faith around this table
may like her know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge
and be filled with all your fullness;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**



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**



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 in every season.

Lord, we thank you for families strengthened,
for the vulnerable protected, for hope restored, and for communities renewed.
Where there was need, you sent willing hearts.
Where there was darkness, you brought light.

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.

Lord of justice and compassion,
stir our hearts to continue the work
You have set before us.
Give us courage to stand with those who suffer gender-based violence,
to speak out against modern slavery,
and to seek justice wherever there is oppression.
Open our eyes to the pain caused by racism and division.
Help us to challenge injustice, raise awareness,
and be a people who welcome, respect, and value all,
regardless of background or circumstance.

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

Written by Kay Clarke, All Ireland Provincial President



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

We give thanks for our development and project work.
We pray for all initiatives, large and small,
to transform families and communities.

We give thanks for our influence with governments.
We pray that our campaigns for social justice
will bring lasting change throughout the world.

We give thanks for our members across the globe.
We pray that our membership will flourish and grow
as stories of our work and achievements are heard.

**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**



We thank you, Lord,
for those who came before us,
and spurred us on to acts of love.
For those who have encouraged us
to strive to make vision reality.

We pray that in our turn
we too will play our part
in envisioning those who are following on,
to continue to share the love of Christ
and to build God's Kingdom on earth. **Amen**

Suggested Eucharistic Prayer – H

For use if you are having a Sunday Takeover Service of Holy Communion

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER

The Lord is here

All: His Spirit is with us

Lift up your hearts

All: We lift them to the Lord

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God

All: It is right to give thanks and praise.

It is right to praise you, Father, Lord of all creation;
in your love you made us for yourself.

When we turned away you did not reject us,
but came to meet us in your Son.

**All: You embraced us as your children
and welcomed us to sit and eat with you.**

In Christ you shared our life
that we might live in him and he in us.

**All: He opened wide his arms of love upon the cross
and made for all the perfect sacrifice for sin.**

On the night he was betrayed, at supper with friends,
he took bread and gave you thanks.

He broke it and gave it to them, saying,
take, eat; this is my body which is given for you.

Do this in remembrance of me.

**All: Father, we do this in remembrance of him;
his body is the bread of life.**

At the end of supper, taking the cup of wine,
he gave you thanks and said; drink this all of you;
this is my blood of the new covenant,
which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins.

Do this in remembrance of me.

**All: Father; we do this in remembrance of him;
his blood is shed for all.**

As we proclaim his death and celebrate his rising
in glory, send your Holy Spirit that this bread

and this wine may be to us the body and blood of your dear Son.

**All: As we eat and drink these holy gifts
make us one in Christ our risen Lord.**

With the whole Church throughout the world

We offer you this sacrifice of praise

And lift our voice to join the eternal song of heaven:

**All: Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,
Heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.**