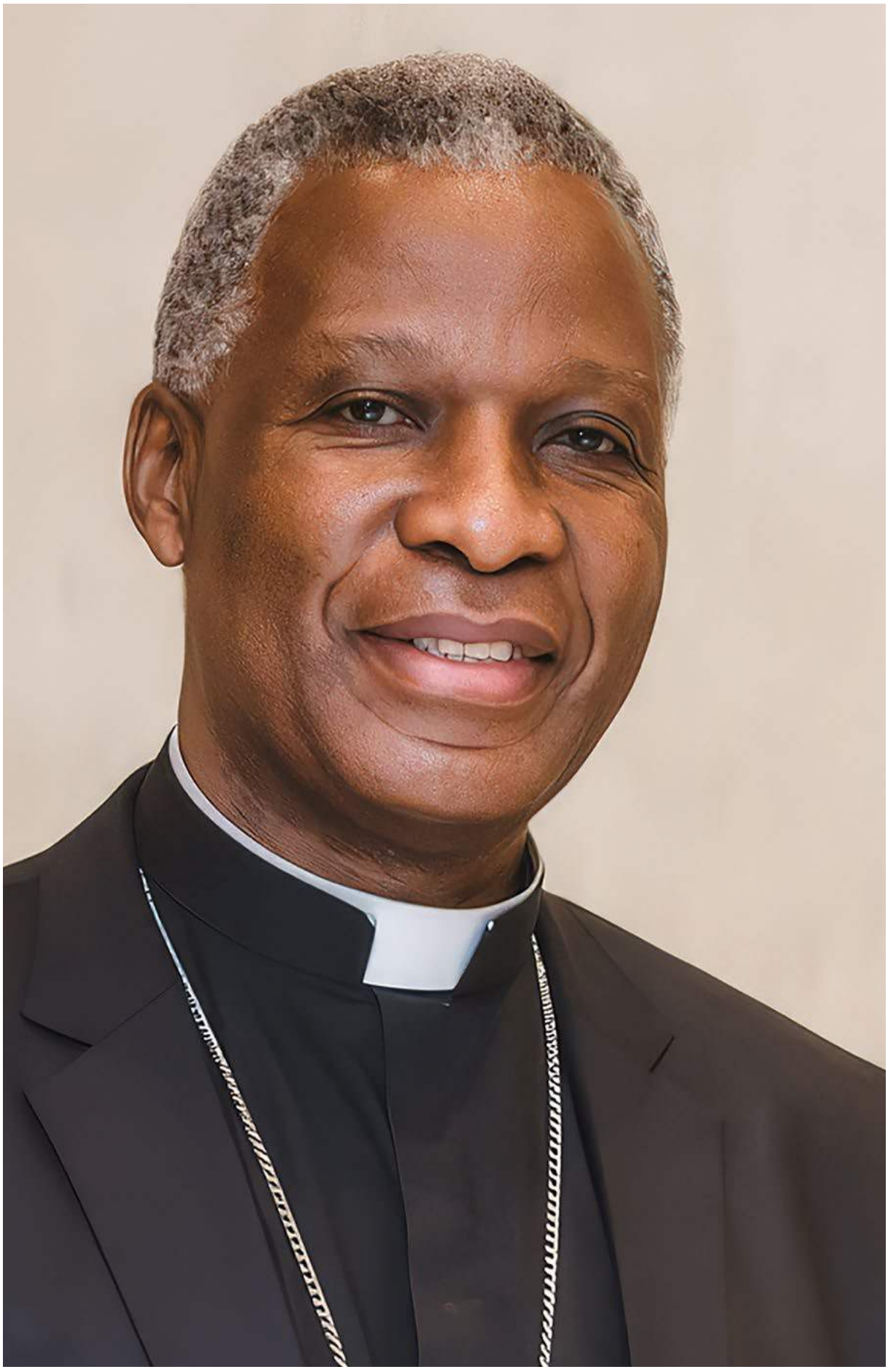
150 YEARS OF Mothers' UNION
Join us, Join in

150TH ANNIVERSARY WORLDWIDE GATHERING

DURBAN, SOUTH AFRICA

30 September – 3 October 2026

Mothers' UNION



FROM THE ANGLICAN ARCHBISHOP OF CAPE TOWN
The Most Reverend Dr Thabo Cecil Makgoba DD (hc) PhD (UCT)

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22 September 2026

MESSAGE FROM THE ARCHBISHOP OF SOUTHERN AFRICA

It is a great joy, and a deep honour on behalf of the Anglican Church of Southern Africa, to welcome the worldwide Mothers' Union family to South Africa for this momentous celebration of 150 years of ministry.

We are delighted that you have chosen to gather here in Durban. South Africa has a long and rich Mothers' Union story, and the ministry of its members has been woven into the life of our churches, families and communities for generations. It is therefore especially fitting that the worldwide family should come together here at this significant point in its history.

We are also thrilled that you have brought to our Province Her Grace the Archbishop of Canterbury. We welcome Archbishop Sarah, and are excited that such an important celebration by women, and of the role of women in our church, is distinguished by the presence of the first woman to lead the Anglican Communion.

As a Church, we give thanks for the vision of Mary Sumner and for all those who, over 150 years, have carried that vision forward through prayer, faith and practical service. Across our Communion, Mothers' Union has been a powerful expression of the Church's calling to strengthen families, uphold dignity and bring hope where there is need.

This gathering is both a celebration and a moment of discernment. As we look honestly at the challenges facing families today, from violence and poverty to displacement and social change, we are also called to look ahead with courage and hope.

It is a privilege to join with you towards the end of your time, to worship together, to hear your stories and to celebrate the extraordinary diversity of your worldwide family.

May your time in South Africa deepen your fellowship, renew your commitment to faith in action and give you courage to embrace the next 150 years of Mothers' Union.

+ Thabo Cape Town

The Most Revd Dr Thabo Makgoba

Archbishop of Cape Town and Primate of Southern Africa



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Message from the Archbishop of Canterbury, our Patron

I am delighted to be joining you in Durban as we mark a truly significant moment in the history of Mothers' Union - 150 years of a movement that has become a vital and enduring part of the life of the Anglican Communion.'

In 1876, Mary Sumner believed that women from all backgrounds could support one another and strengthen their families and communities. From that small beginning, Mothers' Union has grown into a remarkable worldwide movement, with millions of members serving families and communities across the globe.

For 150 years, that vision has continued to bear fruit. From tackling violence and poverty, to supporting families in times of crisis, Mothers' Union has shown repeatedly how faith, compassion and practical action can transform lives.

This anniversary is not only about celebrating the journey so far. It is also about the road that lies ahead. As you gather from across the world, I encourage you to listen to one another, hear the voices of the next generation, and consider how Mothers' Union can respond faithfully to the changing needs of families and communities.

I look forward to joining with you at the close of your time together to share in worship, fellowship and celebration.

May our 150th anniversary give us both gratitude for the past and courage for the future, as together we continue the work of ending poverty, violence and social injustice and seek to bring hope to families everywhere.

May God bless this Worldwide Gathering and guide Mothers' Union into the next 150 years.

+ Sarah Cantuar:

The Most Revd and Rt Hon. Dame Sarah Mullally
Archbishop of Canterbury



Message from the Worldwide President

It is an absolute joy and privilege to be with our sisters and brothers in Christ here in Durban as we celebrate 150 years of Mothers' Union.

Thank you for being here. I know that for many of you, coming to Durban has involved considerable personal sacrifice and long journeys, and I am deeply grateful that you have made the journey to be part of this very special gathering. My prayer is that our time together will refresh and renew you in faith, and that you will return home encouraged and strengthened for all that lies ahead.

For me, this gathering is deeply personal. As a member of Mothers' Union for more than 38 years, I have experienced the extraordinary strength of this movement, in our service, in our fellowship, and above all in the prayer and faith that underpin everything we do.

Prayer has always been at the heart of Mothers' Union. As we gather from all corners of the world, I hope we will make space to be still, to listen to God and to seek His guidance for the journey ahead. Our worship and prayer are not simply part of our programme; they are what give purpose and direction to all that follows.

We have come together to celebrate an incredible history, but also to ask an important question: what is God calling Mothers' Union to become in the next 150 years?

Our world is changing, and families face new challenges. This gathering gives us an opportunity to listen, learn and discern together, especially by making space for the voices of the next generation.

I look forward to worshipping and praying with you, hearing your stories, sharing our hopes and celebrating all that makes Mothers' Union such a remarkable worldwide family.

May these days deepen our faith, strengthen our fellowship and renew our sense of calling.

The first 150 years have brought us to this moment.

Now, grounded in prayer and trusting in God's faithfulness, let us step courageously into the future - ready to serve, ready to lead and ready to light the way.

Kathleen

Kathleen Snow
Mothers' Union Worldwide President

Message from The Revd Maria Van Staaden



It is my great joy and privilege to welcome you and to share this very special gathering with you here in Durban. On behalf of Mothers' Union in South Africa, welcome to our country, our city and our worldwide family.

It has been a privilege to prepare to welcome you here. Over many months, a dedicated team of Mothers' Union members, volunteers and the local organising committee have worked with great commitment, care and prayer to make this gathering possible. I want to thank each one of them for all they have given, often behind the scenes, to help bring us to this moment.

For 150 years, Mothers' Union members have gathered to pray, encourage one another and serve their communities. It is a wonderful privilege for South Africa to host our worldwide family as we celebrate that remarkable journey together.

We give thanks for all who have gone before us and for the countless lives touched by Mothers' Union. But we also gather with our eyes firmly on the future.

What will families need from us in the years ahead? How will we encourage and empower the next generation? How can we continue to bring faith, hope and practical support to communities facing new challenges?

I hope these days will give us time to worship, listen, learn, celebrate and simply enjoy being together. May you experience something of the warmth and hospitality of South Africa, and may Durban become a place of lasting memories and new friendships.

I hope we will leave here with renewed faith, a shared sense of purpose and excitement for all that lies ahead.

The past 150 years have brought us to this moment. Now, together, let us look forward to the next chapter and all that God has in store for Mothers' Union.

The Revd Maria Van Staaden
Zonal Trustee for Zone E
(Central Africa, Nigeria, South Sudan, Sudan, Southern Africa)

Welcome message from Rachael Anderson



When I organised the Mothers' Union 140th anniversary celebrations in Winchester ten years ago, I never imagined that I would one day be standing in Durban, preparing to welcome our worldwide Mothers' Union family for our 150th anniversary, and with just nine months to bring it all together!

God certainly has a sense of humour.

The journey to this moment has brought its fair share of challenges, long days and even longer nights. But what has kept me going is something I have known for many years: there is nothing quite as powerful as when Mothers' Union is in the room together.

There is something incredible about hearing hundreds of voices raised in worship, seeing friendships renewed and new ones formed, sharing stories, laughter and tears, and simply experiencing what it means to be part of this worldwide family. That is what has sustained me through the hard work, and it is what I hope you will experience here in Durban.

I am immensely grateful to my small but extraordinary team, to our faithful and encouraging Worldwide President and Board of Trustees, and to the many people in South Africa and around the world who have given their time, energy, expertise and prayer to make these four days possible. It has taken an extraordinary amount of dedication, and a great deal of faith, to get us here.

And now, finally, we are here.

So let us celebrate the 150 years that have brought us to this point. Let us worship, laugh, listen, learn and enjoy the gift of being together. And, perhaps most importantly, let us dare to imagine what God might do through Mothers' Union in the next 150 years.

Thank you for being here and for making this celebration what it is.

It is wonderful to have you in the room.

Rachael Anderson
Lead Organiser, 150th Anniversary Worldwide Gathering
Senior Leadership Team Lead, Mothers' Union

Mothers' Union Timeline

1876 — Mary Sumner founded Mothers' Union

1885 — Mary Sumner delivers her first public speech at Portsmouth Church Congress: *"Those that rock the cradle, rule the world."*

1886 — First overseas branch formed in Christchurch, New Zealand, followed by Canada (1888) and India (1889).

1926 — Royal Charter granted, giving Mothers' Union independent legal status.

1929 — Mothers' Union campaigns to raise the minimum legal age of marriage.

1930 — First Worldwide Council held in London with 200 attendees and 15 international representatives.

1942 — Working alongside organisations such as the National Council of Women (NCW) and the Women's Institutes (WI), contributed to the wartime *Design of Dwellings Committee*.

1945 — Following lobbying efforts with NCW, WI, and feminist groups, the *Family Allowances Act* passes, with payments made directly to mothers as opposed to men.

1952 — Queen Elizabeth II and The Queen Mother grant royal patronage to Mothers' Union.

1960 — Calls for increasing the widow's allowance earnings limit. In 1964, the limit is raised to £7, though full abolition is not achieved.

2010 — Launch of Bye Buy Childhood, calling on government and marketers to value and protect children from exploitative marketing.

Played a vital, hands-on role in the Sanctuary Pledge movement—a grassroots effort by churches and faith communities across the UK to offer support and a safe welcome to refugees.

2014 — Contributed to the broader policy environment informing the Children and Families Act 2014. Focused particularly on issues like the sexualisation of children and child welfare, Mothers' Union produced reports and actively lobbied via MPs and government consultations. The Act introduced key reforms such as the Child Arrangements Programme and mandates on early legal advice, areas MU champions through policy and advocacy work.

2017 — Global listening process MULOA (Mothers' Union Listens, Observes and Acts) launches, with over 200,000 members in 600 dioceses engaging worldwide.

2018 — Constitution revised to modernise governance and reflect the global nature of the movement. This includes a Worldwide Board.

2019 — Sheran Harper from Guyana elected as the first-ever overseas Worldwide President and Chair of Trustees, her term also includes our first male trustee on the board.

First Worldwide Council held outside the UK, in Kigali, Rwanda, concluding the MULOA process and shaping the movement's future.

2020 — Members rally to safeguard the future of MU by raising over £1million for an emergency appeal during Covid.

2024 — HRH The Duchess of Edinburgh becomes the royal patron of Mothers' Union.

1897

Queen Victoria grants royal patronage in Mary Sumner's silver jubilee year.

1909

Mothers' Union becomes Britain's largest voluntary organisation for women.

1912

The Overseas Committee is formed to advise the Central Council and support global communication and funding.

1913

An MU Watch Committee was formed to monitor bills introduced to parliament – the beginning of our formalised parliamentary and lobbying work.

1918

Mothers' Union publicly celebrates women gaining the vote: *"The vote is a duty we owe to womankind—a responsibility laid upon us by God... it is not a privilege conferred on us by men, for have not the women of this generation earned it?"*

1921

Mary Sumner dies. August 9 becomes *Mary Sumner Day* in the Anglican liturgical calendar.

1925

Headquarters, Mary Sumner House, opens in Westminster, London.

2000

Gains consultative status at the United Nations on poverty, gender equality, and HIV/AIDS.

2001

International representation added to the Board of Trustees, with three overseas trustees commissioned.

1996

At least 125 MU members ordained as priests in the Church of England after Synod approval of women's ordination.

1965

Launch of AFIA (Away From It All) programme, providing holidays for families in need.

2003

Involved in petitioning and lobbying regarding the Domestic Abuse Bill

Mothers' Union is invited to nominate a member-representative to the PEGI Advisory Committee, advising on the age-appropriateness of video games - a position it has held continuously since.

2005

Joins the Jubilee Debt Campaign advocating for debt relief in the world's poorest countries.

Joins Make Poverty History Campaign

2006

Led a long-standing campaign for the right to request flexible working arrangements for all parents.

Advocacy instrumental in the passage of the Work and Families Act 2006, which introduced this right — a major milestone in UK employment law

2026

Mothers' Union celebrates 150th anniversary

150 YEARS OF Mothers' UNION

Join us, Join in

DURBAN ICC

INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION CENTRE
INKOSI ALBERT LUTHULI ICC COMPLEX
SOUTH AFRICA

Mothers' Union Worldwide Gathering Celebrating 150 years of Mothers' Union faith in action

30 September – 3 October 2026

Keynote speakers

Kathleen Snow

Mothers' Union Worldwide President



Kathleen was elected as Worldwide President of Mothers' Union for the triennium 2025-2027 following two terms as a worldwide Zonal Trustee from 2019-2024. She heads up and chairs meetings of the Board of Trustees and fulfils an ambassadorial role on behalf of the organisation.

Kathleen is a retired Registered Nurse who in the past managed the Parish Nurse/Health Ministry in her home Cathedral in Canada. She was also a member of the team leading Safe Church Regulation. She has been a Patient Advocate in a major health region, and Chief Privacy Officer and Right to Information Coordinator for the Provincial Health Authority.

Kathleen is passionate about Mothers' Union and has been a member since 1988, devoting herself to serving Mothers' Union at Parish, Diocesan, Provincial and Worldwide levels. She has served on the Fundraising and Communications Committee which produced the Dear Lord Prayer Book, and also as a Regional Trainer for Parenting. She has had a particular role in facilitating Parenting programmes with the Indigenous Peoples in Canada and has been member of the Steering Committee for the Central Parenting Programme. She was a facilitator in her Zone and in Britain and Ireland for the MULOA (Mothers' Union Listens, Observes, Acts) process. She chaired the Development Committee for six years in her capacity as Zonal Trustee and has been a committee member of the IT & Data Committee.

The Rt Revd Dr Vicentia Kgabe

Bishop of Pretoria in the Anglican Church of Southern Africa



Bishop Vicentia Kgabe is a South African theologian, educator, and Anglican bishop, serving as the Bishop of Pretoria in the Anglican Church of Southern Africa. She served as Bishop of Lesotho from 2021 to 2025 and was installed as Bishop of Pretoria in December 2025.

She holds a PhD in Practical Theology from the University of Pretoria, an LLM in Canon Law from Cardiff University, and qualifications in leadership and enterprise management. She has also been awarded an honorary degree by Berkeley Divinity School at Yale.

Before becoming a bishop, she served as Rector and Principal of the College of the Transfiguration and held several pastoral and leadership roles within the Diocese of Johannesburg.

Bishop Kgabe has contributed to theological scholarship and to the revision of The Principles of Canon Law Common to the Churches of the Anglican Communion. She has served in university, church, and development governance, and currently chairs the Centre for Anglican Women's Research and Leadership in Africa. Her ministry is shaped by a commitment to leadership development, reconciliation, gender justice, theological education, and youth empowerment.

Liezel Mullah



Liezel lives in Atlantis, Western Cape. She is a Branch Leader at All Saints Atlantis Mothers' Union and also serves on the Saldanha Diocese Mothers' Union Executive in Marketing.

Her heart is deeply rooted in serving God, her church and her community. Liezel enjoys bringing people together, supporting women and families, and creating opportunities where people—especially younger generations—can feel welcomed, valued and able to contribute. She believes that through love, service and working together across generations, we can make a meaningful difference in the lives of others.

Lulama ‘Lulu’ Ntuta

Anglican Communion Youth Network



Lulama Ntuta is a Lay Leader from the Diocese of the Highveld in the Anglican Church of Southern Africa. Her full-time job is in Healthcare Management where she works for one of the leading healthcare providers in South Africa and has over 7 years’ experience in this field.

When not at work, Lulama serve as a lay minister in her local Parish, St. Philips Thokoza and within the Anglican Communion she serves as part of the Anglican Youth Network Executive and leading the Mark 3 - Humanitarian Service Committee as a co-chair.

In the ecumenical space, she had the privilege of being appointed as the 1st Vice President of the South African Council of Churches in Nov 2024, a position she currently holds.

Her past roles include the presidency in the Anglican Youth of Southern Africa Province; a Church Warden and a church council member in her local parish. She has served as a Lay Canon in the Diocese of the Highveld as well as being part of Board of Ministry committee in the same Diocese.

She is passionate about Youth Development, Gender Justice Advocacy and Climate Justice. She is a Green Anglican and part of the Climate YES global movement. She loves people, coffee and God, and feels truly privileged to be used as a vessel of God’s love.

Sarah Newnham

Director of Global Programme Mothers' Union



Sarah is an international development specialist passionate about empowering women, strengthening communities and supporting people and organisations to create lasting change. She brings extensive experience in women's empowerment, humanitarian response, and church- and community-led development across diverse contexts.

Since March 2025, Sarah has served as Director of Global Programmes at Mothers' Union, providing strategic leadership for programme development, implementation and evaluation, and supporting the long-term sustainability and impact of the movement worldwide. She also serves on the boards of The Anglican Alliance and the Overseas Bishoprics Fund.

Sarah has spent much of her career working alongside communities, local organisations and churches across Asia, Africa and the Middle East. She previously held senior leadership roles with international NGOs, including eight years with Tearfund, where she provided regional leadership across the Middle East and Central Asia and worked in some of the world's most challenging humanitarian contexts.

From 2021 to 2025, Sarah worked as an independent leadership coach and strategy consultant, supporting organisations with strategy, research and leadership development, while coaching leaders and emerging leaders across the international development sector.

Sarah holds a BSc in International Management from the University of Manchester and an MSc in International Development from the London School of Economics. She is also a Certified Coach with the International Coaching Federation.

Her faith and love of community are central to Sarah's life. She is actively involved in her church, serving on the Women's Committee and singing in the worship band, and she leads the Caring for the Environment group. Family is incredibly important to her, especially time with her son. Outside work, she loves discovering new places, reading, and any opportunity to be in or around water.

Octavia Lucy Leisa



Octavia Leisa is a dedicated Anglican, tax professional, entrepreneur, mentor, and community leader residing in Alberton, Gauteng.

She holds a Master's degree in International Tax and Offshore Finance and is a Master Tax Practitioner, Commissioner of Oaths, and Clearing Agent. With over 31 years of experience in the South African tax and customs industry, she has served in various roles, including Team Leader and Auditor at the South African Revenue Service. Her areas of expertise include Income Tax, VAT, Customs and Excise, International Taxation, Trust Taxation, Estate Planning, Mining Tax, Offshore Financial Structures, and customs compliance and clearing processes.

Octavia is the Director of Leesah Tax Consulting, where she is committed to assisting individuals and businesses with professional, ethical, and high-quality tax and customs advisory services.

She is a committed member of St Peter's Anglican Church in Auckland Park, Johannesburg, where she serves in the Mothers' Union and is actively involved in spiritual life and service within the church community. She is also passionate about empowering others through practical skills and teaches knitting and crocheting to both boys and girls, believing in the importance of creativity, dignity, and self-reliance.

Octavia is an active Alumni Member of Moletsane Secondary School, where she continues to support initiatives that promote development and good governance, contributing to the growth of future generations.

As a proud mother to her daughter, Boitumelo, she draws strength and inspiration from her family, including her mother, siblings, twin nephews, close friends, and her wider community.

Living with a disability as an amputee, Octavia embraces life with courage, resilience, and unwavering faith. She testifies that her journey has been made possible through God's grace, as well as the love and support of those around her.

Her life is a testimony to perseverance, hope, and purpose. She is currently completing her book, Living With An Amputation, which reflects on her life journey, challenges, and triumphs, and seeks to inspire others to overcome adversity and walk boldly in their God-given purpose.

Through her professional work, church ministry, community engagement, and personal testimony, Octavia continues to inspire others to rise above limitations and become instruments of positive change through faith, service, and resilience.

Panel speakers

Panel – Revd Fr. William Kadalamba Banda

Revd Fr. William Kadalamba Banda is from Malawi, in the Diocese of Lake Malawi and the Province of Central Africa. He is married with four children and holds a Bachelor of Divinity from Lake Malawi Anglican University.

William trained for priesthood at the College for Christian Ministries from 2005–2009 and was ordained deacon in 2010 and priest in 2011. He has served in a number of parish and church roles, including Archdeaconry Mothers' Union Chaplain from 2011–2014 and Diocesan Mothers' Union Chaplain since 2014. In 2026, he was appointed Archdeacon of Lilongwe South Archdeaconry, based at St Francis Parish.

William has also served in community roles, including as a board member of the Foundation for Community and Capacity Development and, since 2024, as a board member of the Tsabango Water Users Association.

Moderator - June Butler MBE



June Butler MBE served in various roles in the public and private sector in Northern Ireland for over 40 years. She was the Assistant Chief Electoral Officer for Northern Ireland from 2001-2009 with responsibility for the conduct of elections, electoral registration and matters of governance. Subsequently she was Diocesan Secretary of two Church of Ireland Dioceses.

From January 2019, for six years, June served as the All-Ireland President of Mothers' Union and in January 2025 commenced her second term as Zonal Trustee on the Worldwide Board. Her voluntary work has been primarily through the MU, focusing on work with the lonely, bereaved and victims of gender based violence. She has also served on boards for the police, Consumer Council, AgeNI and the National Churches Trust in N. Ireland and attended UNCSW on behalf of MU.

June holds a degree in English and in 2010 was awarded an MBE for her work with electoral services.

Moderator – Estelle Dibo



Estelle Dibo hails from Cameroon in the Province of West Africa. A teacher by profession and Lay Minister by calling, she has a deep passion for education, awareness creation, women's empowerment, marriage and family life, and community transformation.

A member of the Mothers' Union since 2002, Estelle has served extensively in women and girls' ministry for more than twenty years. As a Bishop's wife, she has served alongside her husband in episcopal ministry for eighteen years. She served for sixteen years as Diocesan President of the Women's Ministry and later as Provincial President of the Women and Girls' Desk in the Internal Province of West Africa.

In 2025, she was elected and commissioned as Mothers' Union Worldwide Trustee for Zone F, where she continues to encourage women to discover their God-given potential and strengthen their contribution to Church, family, and community life.

Estelle is actively involved in the Anglican Bishops' Wives' Network and Women on the Frontline. With training in Safe Church and Child Protection, she advocates strongly for safeguarding, gender-related issues, and the wellbeing of women, children, and vulnerable persons.

She is also gifted in leadership, administration and a strong advocate for transformational leadership. She is a counsellor, mentor, and promoter of Christian marriage and family-life.

Panel – Hanna Kim



Hanna Kim is a lay leader in the Anglican Church of Korea and a member and trustee of the Standing Committee of the Anglican Consultative Council. She serves as Education Officer at Seoul Anglican Cathedral, Lecturer at Sungkonghoe University, and a member of the National Executive Committee of Mothers' Union Korea. She is also the Provincial Link for Korea of the International Anglican Women's Network. Her ministry and academic work focus on Christian formation, women's leadership, Online mission, justice, peace, and reconciliation, including solidarity with Korean atomic-bomb survivors and Anglican women in Korea and Japan.

Panel and Moderator – Mandy Marshall



Mandy Marshall is the Senior Lead Consultant on Gender for the Mothers' Union and Anglican Alliance. Previously she worked for six years with the Anglican Communion as Director for Gender Justice and Link Director to the Safe Church Commission, Family Network and Women's Network. She Co-Founded and Co-Directed Restored, a UK-based charity working with churches in the UK and globally to end violence against women and girls. Mandy has spoken and facilitated workshops on gender and preventing GBV in many countries from Peru to the Philippines, Russia to South Africa over the last 30 years. Mandy has published numerous articles including God's Justice: Theology and GBV (with other theologians) and Domestic Abuse and COVID-19: How Churches Can respond.

Mandy is a trustee of two charities, Paz y Esperanza and Gender and Religious Freedom. She worships at St Stephen's Church, Twickenham where she is a member of the Prayer Team and Drop-In Team. In her spare time Mandy plays (field) hockey with her local club NPL.

Panel - Revd Dr Rachel Mash



Revd Dr Rachel Mash is Coordinator of the Anglican Communion Environmental Network. She is one of the founders of the Green Anglicans movement which is now present in 13 countries across Africa. Green Anglicans ACSA have been working with the Provincial Mothers' Union and launched the M.U. Eco-Champs program two years ago.

She is known for her international faith based work, having addressed the United Nations Environmental Assembly, the Parliament of World Religions and other major Conferences, as well as having many publications. She is part of the International Interfaith "Women , Faith and Climate Network". She is also a co-coordinator of the Ecumenical Season of Creation Steering Committee, convenor of the South African Council of Churches Climate Commission and member of steering committee, Anglican Communion Forest

In 2021 she was awarded the Cross of St Augustine by former Archbishop Justin Welby for Services to the Anglican Communion in the area of the Environment.

Panel – Ephena Matthew



Ephena Matthew was born on the small island of Antigua. She has been married to Arnold for 48 years and has two grown-up sons.

Upon completion of her secondary education, she migrated to the UK to join her parents. In England, Ephena pursued studies and graduated as a registered nurse/midwife. She resided and worked at the Leicester General Hospital and the Leicester Royal Infirmary before relocating to Antigua with her family. In Antigua, Ephena continued to work as a registered nurse.

Ephena became a member of the Mothers' Union in 1992 and has served the MU passionately in the capacity of Branch Leader, Island President, Diocesan President and is now Zone B Trustee.

Ephena was a recipient of the Governor General of Antigua and Barbuda's "Faithful & Meritorious Service Award" (Gold), for years of dedicated nursing and humanitarian/community work carried out for many years.

Panel - Revd Barbara Turyashemererwa Mugisha



Revd Barbara Turyashemererwa Mugisha is Uganda's Family Life practitioner. She holds the position of Provincial Mothers' Union and Family Life Coordinator (PCDC).
Her 21-year career spans pastoral ministry, community development, and Family strengthening. For 16 years, she served with Compassion International, working directly with families across Uganda. This experience shaped her understanding of how economic hardship, parenting, marital aspects and community systems intersect to influence family wellbeing.

Revd Barbara holds a Master's Degree in Pastoral Ministry from Lancaster Bible College, USA, alongside qualifications in Accounting, Financial Management, Business and specialized trainings in; Counseling, Children at Risk, Parenting, First Aid, and Asset-Based Community Development, among others.

She is passionate about restoring dignity, hope, and thriving families through sustainable community interventions. Her inter-disciplinary experience positions her to contribute meaningfully to conversations on family resilience, stability and community-led development in the African context. Outside work, Revd Barbara's interest is music and family walks.

Panel – Steph Nunn



Steph Nunn joined MU in 2022 as Director of Membership to lead the Reimagining Agenda across Britain and Ireland. She formed the Membership team in 2024 and oversees Membership Engagement, Faith, National Programmes and Partnerships, alongside her role as the charity's Safeguarding Lead. With 25 years' leadership experience in membership organisations, she has built teams, increased membership, delivered member forums, community outreach and national programmes, managed stakeholder relationships, and developed strategic partnerships that generate income.

Panel – Dr Kezia October



Dr Kezia October is an HPCSA-registered Research Psychologist and Lecturer at the University of the Western Cape's Centre for Interdisciplinary Studies of Children, Families and Society. She holds a PhD in Child and Family Studies from UWC. Her doctoral research focusing on family determinants of social cohesion and the development of a logic model of change. Her research interests include family resilience, family cohesion, child and family well-being, social cohesion, human capabilities, community psychology, and social inequalities.

Dr October has contributed to national and international research initiatives and has contributed to developing research-based teaching modules and curriculum resources addressing inequalities and social change. She has published on family functioning, social cohesion, affiliation, trust, and community relationships in South Africa and has experience in lecturing post-graduate supervision, research methodology, curriculum development, and research capacity building.

Panel – Robin Ray



Robin Ray is in her second term as Provincial President for MU Australia. Previously she led the Education, and Overseas and Northern Outreach departments for MU Australia.

She retired from a position as an Associate Professor at James Cook University five years ago but continues to supervise students researching the provision of healthcare. Robin is active in her local church and has held church related leadership positions in five different dioceses, ranging from Sunday School teacher, bible study and women's group facilitator to Chair of Ministry Education Commission and providing theological student support in her current diocese. She also served on the Board of Anglican Overseas Aid which partners with MU in dioceses across several countries.

Robin has been married for 48 years to her retired bishop husband, they have two married children and three teenage grandsons.

Panel – Sue Rivers



Sue Rivers has been a member of Mothers' Union for over 45 years and, since retiring early from teaching in 2012, has dedicated her time to supporting and developing Mothers' Union at diocesan and provincial level.

She has served as Branch Leader, Deanery Treasurer and Communication Unit Coordinator for the Diocese of Llandaff, developing its website, marketing materials and social media to strengthen communication with members. She was Llandaff Diocesan President for six years and is now Provincial President for Zone K (Wales).

Passionate about tackling domestic abuse, Sue serves on the Communities of Interest Strategy Group. As Provincial lead for the Domestic Abuse Campaign, she works with organisations including Welsh Women's Aid and the Church in Wales to raise awareness and encourage action. She co-developed the Behind Closed Doors exhibition and organised its launch conference, bringing together high-profile speakers to address the issue.

Her priorities are strengthening relationships with clergy, sharing experiences and supporting engagement and growth across Mothers' Union.

Panel – Sandra Rolland



Sandra Rolland is a Christian leader, educator and community advocate from the Solomon Islands. A registered nurse and midwife, she served the Solomon Islands Government for 32 years.

Sandra joined Mothers' Union in 1994 and has served at parish, diocesan and provincial levels, including as Provincial Mothers' Union President for the Anglican Church of Melanesia, which includes the Solomon Islands, Vanuatu and New Caledonia.

Her work focuses on strengthening families, empowering women, nurturing children and building resilient communities. She is a Positive Parenting and Literacy Trainer and continues to support Mothers' Union through mentoring, training and community ministry, encouraging others to lead with faith, courage and compassion.

Moderator – The Revd Maria Van Staden



The Revd Maria Van Staden is a Mothers' Union Zonal Trustee for Zone E (Central Africa, Nigeria, South Sudan, Sudan and Southern Africa).

Revd Maria is a researcher focused on policy and advocacy. Ordained as a deacon, she joined Mothers' Union in 1997 and has held leadership roles from branch to provincial level. She has served as Provincial President in South Africa for the past 6 years.

Panel – Susan Watson



Susan Watson is the Canadian Provincial President of Mothers' Union and has been a member of Mothers' Union for more than 36 years in the same branch as our current Worldwide President Kathleen Snow. She is currently Branch Leader of her branch and a member of her Diocesan Council.

Susan has a heart for food insecurity and she has served on the board of directors of her local food bank since retiring from her career as a Physics teacher, 9 years ago. Susan loves to travel and has done so for pleasure and for short-term missions work including prison ministry. She most recently attended training sessions in Sao Paulo, Brazil for the new Anglican Alliance initiative called "A Place at the Table".

Susan is very happily married to Mike and they have two adult children. They are grandparents to one biological granddaughter and two other step-grandchildren who keep them very busy.

Panel – Antonia Wilson



Antonia Watson has been involved with Mothers' Union since 2003, when she joined following some "encouragement" from her Branch Leader. She was immediately drawn to the opportunity to use her experience in theatre and event production to raise funds, particularly for the Literacy Scheme, where she saw the potential for direct funding to make a significant difference.

Antonia has held a number of roles within Guildford Diocese, including Trustee, Diocesan President and Emly Deanery Co-ordinator. She has also served on the Annual Gathering organising committee and the Canterbury Provincial Gathering organising committee.

Antonia was brought up in a mixed Jewish and Anglican family. Her mother was Jewish and her father Anglican, and her childhood faith was very much observed through high days and holidays in both the synagogue and church. Her own Christian faith grew over the years, encouraged by a local chaplain who baptised her when she was 20. She was confirmed following the birth of her second child, aged 31.

When Antonia joined Mothers' Union, it was a pivotal moment as she answered God's call and opened up a new chapter in her life within both Mothers' Union and the Church. She is grateful for the encouragement and support she has received from Guildford Diocese throughout her years of service. Antonia is married, has three children and is a grandmother to nine.

Choir

Diocese of Natal Worship Team

We are a contemporary worship band made up of passionate musicians and worshippers from Anglican churches across the Diocese of Natal. Coming from different churches but united in Christ, we bring together our gifts, experience and love for worship to serve the wider Church.

Our ministry focus is to encourage worship that is authentic, Spirit-led and Christ-centred; to build unity across the Diocese; and to create opportunities for people to encounter God through contemporary worship.

We are passionate about serving local churches, supporting diocesan events, encouraging and equipping worship teams, and raising a new generation of worshippers.

Mannenburg Worship Team

The Mannenburg Worship Team serves the Parish of Mannenburg in the Diocese of Cape Town, leading the congregation in worship through contemporary music.

Our focus is on leading worship that is accessible, engaging and rooted in Scripture — helping the congregation move beyond simply singing songs to actively responding to God.

We are committed to developing our musicians and vocalists, encouraging younger people to become involved in worship, and creating a team culture built on preparation, prayer, and serving one another.

An AnglicanSA Choir

AnglicanSA Choir is a Christian choral ministry rooted in the worship life and musical tradition of the Anglican Church in Southern Africa. The choir brings together voices committed to praising God, serving the Church, and sharing the beauty of sacred music with congregations and communities. Through hymns, anthems, psalms, gospel songs, and liturgical music, AnglicanSA Choir seeks to lead people into worship and proclaim the Gospel through song.

AnglicanSA Choir has shared music through online platforms and public worship events, including performances connected with Anglicans Ablaze and collaborations or appearances alongside recognised gospel artists.







Programme

DAY 1

Gathering the Worldwide Family

Wednesday, 30 September 2026

REGISTRATION & ARRIVAL	
11h00 – 13h00	**Delegate Registration and Exhibition Opening**
13h30 – 13h50	**Pre-Service Music & Gathering** *Worship Team leads devotional music.* *Delegates take their seats for Opening Worship.*
OPENING WORSHIP SERVICE	
14h00 – 14:05	**Welcome to Mothers' Union Worldwide Gathering on behalf of the diocese and Anglican Church of Southern Africa**
14h05 – 15h00	**Come, Let Us Gather — The Lighting of the Way** *Opening Worship Service*
OPENING SESSION	
Opening Remarks 15:00 – 15:30	**Welcome to the Annual Gathering in Durban**
Keynote 1 15:30 – 16:30	**Arise, Shine — 150 Years of Lighting the Way**
CLOSE OF DAY	
16h30 – 17h00	**Notices & Delegate Safety Briefing**

DAY 2

Next Generation MU: Flourishing in Faith for the Future

Thursday, 1 October 2026

MORNING EUCHARIST	
8h15 – 8h45	**Pre-Eucharistic Service Music & Preparation** *Worship Team leads devotional music.*
9h00 – 10h30	**Opening Eucharist — Bread for the Journey** *Holy Communion for the Global Gathering*
10h30 – 11h00	**Tea and Refreshments**
YOUNG VOICES & FAMILY	
11h00 – 12h00	**Voices of Young MU Leaders** *Young, Faithful & Unstoppable — The Next Generation Rises*
12h00 – 13h30	**Lunch**
13h30-14h30	**Family Panel 1 — What Does a Family Look Like Now?** *Redefining Family in a Changing World — Through the Lens of Academia and Faith Leaders*
14h30 – 15h00	**Afternoon Tea & Exhibition**
15h00 – 16h00	**Family Panel 2 — Raising Children of Faith** *How Do We Nurture the Next Generation Spiritually When Culture Pulls Every Other Way?*
16h00-16h45	**Delegate Reflection & Day Feedback** *Small groups of 8–10. Guided questions from both family panels. Commitment cards collected.*

DAY 3

Living Out Faith: Empowering Communities and Families

Friday, 2 October 2026

MORNING WORSHIP	
8h30 – 8h45	**Pre-Service Music & Preparation** *Worship Team leads devotional music.*
9h00 – 10h00	**Worship Service — Go into All the World** *Scripture, Song & Testimony*
10h00 – 10h30	**Tea and Refreshments**
KEYNOTES & PANELS	
10h30 – 11h30	**Keynote — The Church as Agent of Justice** *From Charity to Transformation*
11h30 – 12h30	**Family Panel — The Crisis in Our Homes** *Domestic Abuse, Poverty, Addiction and the Hidden Suffering Inside Family Life*
12h30 – 14h00	**Lunch**
14h00 – 15h00	**She Stood Up: Women Who Changed the World Through Faith**
15h00 – 15h30	**Afternoon Tea**
15h30 – 16h30	**Family Panel — Families Under Pressure** *Migration, Displacement, Climate Change & the Fragmentation of Family Life Across the Globe*
16h30 – 16h45	**Commitment Cards** *Each delegate writes one commitment from today's sessions.*
CULTURAL EVENING	
17h15 – 17h20	**Welcome to the Cultural Evening**
17h20 – 17h45	**Opening Performance — Africa Leads the Way** *South African welcome of traditional music, Zulu / Xhosa / Sotho dance, and song.*
17h45– 18h50	**Choirs**
18h50 - 19h00	**Closing Blessing of the Cultural Evening**

DAY 4

Celebrating Worldwide Fellowship: One Worldwide Family in Christ

Saturday, 3 October 2026

MORNING KEYNOTE	
8h30 – 8h45	**Pre-Keynote Music & Gathering** *Worship Team leads devotional music.* *Delegates take their seats for Opening Worship.*
9h00- 10h00	**The Saturday Vision Keynote** *The Future Belongs to the Faithful — Hope, Courage & the MU's Next 150 Years*
10h00 – 10h30	**Tea and Refreshments**
CLOSING EUCHARIST & COMMISSIONING	
10h30 – 12h15	**Closing Eucharist & Commissioning Service** *Go, Light the Way — Holy Communion & Sending Out of the Global Gathering*
12h15– 12h30	**Official Closing of the 150th Anniversary Worldwide Gathering** *The Worldwide President formally closes the gathering and announces the next Global Gathering.*

Mothers' Union – Serving Families Worldwide Since 1876

www.mothersunion.org



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INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION CENTRE
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SOUTH AFRICA

Important information

Venue on site safety emergency contact

Name	Position	Contact No.
Dudu Shangase	Safety Officer	078 242 4048
Thobile Mtshali	Safety Officer	072 348 4100
Ebrahim Yusuf	Venue Safety Officer	072 621 4841
Thandeka Zulu	Security Manager	065 850 3743
Thando Ngubane	Intermediate Life Support (ILS)	073 245 0001

In the event of an emergency outside the venue, the general emergency number in South Africa is 112 when calling from a mobile phone. This number connects you to an automated service that will direct your call to the appropriate emergency response team nearest to your location.

If you are calling from a landline, please use the following numbers:

- 10111 – **Police Emergencies**
- 10177 – **Medical and Fire Emergencies**

We recommend that all delegates save these numbers on their mobile phones for easy access during their stay in South Africa.

Safeguarding

For any safeguarding concerns at the Global Gathering, please find a member of staff or volunteer who will direct you to the event's Safeguarding Lead, MU's Director of Membership and Safeguarding Lead, Steph Nunn.

Media

Photography and filming will take place throughout the Worldwide Gathering and may be used across Mothers' Union communications, including our website, social media, publications and other promotional materials.

If you do not wish to be photographed or filmed, please make this known during registration or speak to a member of the Mothers' Union team at any point during the event. We will do our best to ensure your preference is respected.

If you're sharing your Worldwide Gathering experience on social media, we'd love to see it! Please tag the official Mothers' Union social media accounts and use **#MU150Durban** so we can follow along, share your posts and celebrate the gathering together.

Emergency Procedures & Evacuation:

Fire exits, evacuation routes, and assembly points are clearly marked throughout the venue. Please familiarise yourself with the exit nearest to your location.

First Aid & Medical Support: By Medi Care Life

A dedicated first aid station is located at the main medical desk.

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.

For health and safety reasons, staff members are not permitted to distribute personal medications or painkillers. Please ensure you have your own personal medical supplies if required.

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 who will be wearing uniform, or venue staff.

Be aware of your surroundings, take care when moving through high-traffic corridors, and report any potential hazards (such as loose cables or spills) to safety and event staff immediately.

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

Code of Conduct

Gathering together in Christ

We come together from different countries, cultures, languages, backgrounds and experiences, united by our faith and our shared purpose.

Our Gathering is a place to worship, pray, listen, learn, build relationships and discern together. We want everyone to feel welcomed, valued, safe and able to participate fully.

Respect for one another

We will:

- Treat everyone with dignity, kindness and respect.
- Welcome and value people from different cultures, traditions, languages and backgrounds.
- Listen to one another and respect different opinions and perspectives.
- Make space for those whose voices or experiences may be less familiar to us.
- Be mindful that English may not be everyone's first language and that cultural differences can affect how we communicate.
- We will not tolerate bullying, harassment, discrimination, intimidation, threatening or abusive behaviour, or any behaviour that causes another person to feel unsafe or unwelcome.

Worship and prayer

Our worship reflects the richness and diversity of our worldwide Anglican family.

We will:

- Participate respectfully in worship, prayer and Eucharist.
- Respect different traditions and expressions of faith.
- Be sensitive to the different ways in which people pray, worship and express their faith.
- Follow the guidance of those leading worship and Gathering activities.

Personal space and privacy

We will respect one another's personal boundaries and privacy.

- Ask permission before taking or sharing photographs or videos of individuals where appropriate.
- Respect people's right to decline invitations, conversations or activities.
- Not share personal or confidential information about another person without their consent.
- Be mindful of personal space and appropriate physical contact.

Respecting our leaders and guests

Our Gathering brings together bishops, senior leaders and guests from across the Anglican Communion. We understand the excitement of meeting people we admire, and ask everyone to be mindful of their time and personal space.

- Please ask politely before taking photographs or selfies, and respect it if someone is unable to do so.
- Please avoid repeatedly approaching, following or surrounding leaders for photographs or conversation.
- Please do not give gifts directly to senior leaders or guests unless this has been arranged through the Gathering organisers.
- Above all, please remember that our leaders and guests are here to worship, participate and share fellowship with us. Let us give them the same courtesy, kindness and space that we would wish to receive ourselves.

Social media

We encourage people to share the joy of the Gathering, while remembering that not everything is appropriate to share publicly.

Please:

- Use social media responsibly and respectfully.
- Ask permission before sharing photographs or videos where appropriate.
- Do not share confidential conversations or personal information.
- Remember that the same standards of kindness and respect apply online as they do in person.

Caring for one another

We are part of a worldwide Christian community and have a responsibility to care for one another.

- If you are concerned about something that has happened, or if you see someone who is distressed or feels unsafe, please speak to a member of the Gathering leadership or the designated safeguarding person.
- We recognise that misunderstandings can happen, particularly when people come from different cultural and linguistic contexts. Where we have caused hurt or offence, we will seek to listen, apologise and put things right.

Our shared commitment

By taking part in the Worldwide Gathering, we commit to creating a community where everyone can participate, contribute and feel that they belong.

- Listen generously.
- Speak graciously.
- Respect difference.
- Care for one another.
- Worship together.
- Walk together in Christ.

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.

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.

We also ask that, wherever possible, you refrain from taking or making phone calls during the event. Please take the opportunity during the breaks to catch up on messages and correspondence.

Thank you for helping us to create a space where we can be fully present, enjoy one another's company and share in this special occasion together.

Mary Sumner: Our founder

“The hand that rocks the cradle is the hand that rules the world.” - Mary Sumner, quoting ‘The Hand That Rocks the Cradle’ by William Ross Wallace written in 1865.

Today marks the 150th Anniversary of Mothers’ Union, our movement born of Mary Sumner’s vision. At its heart was her belief in the ‘awful sense of responsibility… that mothers had one of the greatest and most important professions in the world.’ After raising her own children and watching them begin their journeys into parenthood, Mary resolved in 1876 to create a network of women supporting each other, the beginnings of Mothers’ Union.

Mary Sumner was born on 31 December 1828 in Swinton, near Manchester, to Thomas and Mary Heywood. From a young age, she was bright, sociable, and deeply rooted in faith. She spoke three languages, sang beautifully, and carried a strong sense of purpose.

In 1848, she married George Henry Sumner, a young clergyman whose family connections, including the Bishop of Winchester and ties to William Wilberforce, helped Mary establish her vision. Living in Alresford, Hampshire, Mary and George raised three children. It was here, in their home, that the first Mothers’ Union group met and the first membership card was issued, a humble beginning for a global movement.

For ten years, Mothers’ Union remained local. But in 1885, Mary spoke at the Church Congress in Portsmouth, urging mothers to understand their responsibility to ‘train up a child in the way he should go’ (Proverbs 22:6). With growing support, branches multiplied across the UK and eventually worldwide, as women carried the movement wherever they went.

In 1896, as the Movement expanded, Mary became Central President, helping establish a Central Council, the first constitution, and the Aims and Objects that guide us today. She continued in leadership until her husband died in 1909 and remained Honorary President until her own passing in 1921.

Today, 150 years later, Mary Sumner’s vision lives on. From that first living-room gathering to a global network of millions, Mothers’ Union continues to empower women, strengthen families, and transform communities. Truly, the hand that rocks the cradle continues to shape the world.

Clare Howarth,
Mothers’ Union Archivist


St. GEORGE'S
BARCELONA
















150









Mothers' Union – what's next

As we celebrate 150 years of Mothers' Union, we do so with gratitude for all that has been achieved, and with a clear sense of the future we are shaping together.

We are currently refreshing our global strategy, building on the strong foundations laid in 2019 through MULOA and the voices of more than 200,000 members worldwide. Together, our Board and Worldwide Council have affirmed that our direction remains correct, while recognising where we can go further, especially in strengthening our work with women and families, and in setting clearer, measurable milestones to guide our progress. During 2026, our anniversary year, we are continuing to listen and learn through consultation across our global fellowship.

This year is a moment of celebration, connection and invitation. It is an opportunity for us to share more widely who we are, to deepen relationships with our members and supporters, and to grow our movement. Across dioceses and provinces, we are coming together in celebration, culminating in the Worldwide Gathering in Durban towards the end of this year.

At the same time, our work continues to grow. Through the Ignite initiative, we are expanding funding and extending our reach into new areas and countries, including Sierra Leone. We are also strengthening how we understand and demonstrate our impact, developing our monitoring, evaluation and learning, and exploring digital approaches to reporting, even in the most challenging contexts.

In Britain and Ireland, we are continuing to grow and strengthen membership through our Church-Based Membership model, while also developing new partnerships and diversifying our income to support our shared mission.

Our advocacy remains at the heart of who we are. We continue to stand against gender-based violence, while also beginning to address emerging challenges such as online safety and the impact of digital harms on family life.

We are also investing in the way we work, improving our systems, strengthening our processes, and building resilience so that we can serve more effectively in the years ahead.

All of this is underpinned by our commitment to long-term financial sustainability, ensuring that we are well-resourced to deliver our strategy and respond to the needs of the communities we serve. As we mark this milestone, we honour our past—but even more, we look forward with faith, determination and hope. Together, we continue to grow, to serve, and to make a difference.

Mothers' Union in South Africa

South Africa is a country of extraordinary beauty, complex history, rich cultural diversity and deep contrasts. With more than 60,000 members across the country, Mothers' Union in the Anglican Church of South Africa (ACSA) is deeply rooted in local communities, responding to the needs they see around them with compassion, faith and practical action.

While each diocese focuses on the issues most relevant to its local context, members are united in strengthening family life through advocacy, pastoral care, environmental stewardship, health initiatives and education.

Gender-based violence (GBV) remains one of South Africa's most urgent social challenges. Across ACSA, Mothers' Union members are responding with courage – supporting survivors, equipping communities and advocating for change.



In the Diocese of Johannesburg, leaders have been trained to deliver programmes focused on prevention, intervention and advocacy. Parish helpdesks now provide safe spaces where survivors can seek support and be connected with mental health care and social services.

Members also stand alongside survivors in powerful ways. When a 16-year-old girl was raped in the Free State, Mothers' Union members attended every court hearing with her family, offering solidarity and support. In Cape Town and Soweto, diocesan marches and awareness events have encouraged open conversations, challenged stigma and created safer spaces for survivors to share their stories.

Practical support remains central to this ministry. Members distribute dignity packs, provide 'Jars of Hope' filled with essential food items, and offer spiritual and emotional care to families affected by violence.



Their advocacy is also helping to influence wider systems. In Johannesburg, 100 Mothers' Union members presented a memorandum to government calling for stronger community-based responses to GBV. Mothers' Union continues to be recognised as an important partner in shaping provincial initiatives, while members work alongside clergy and communities to challenge harmful attitudes and cultural norms.

The vision is simple but powerful: a future where violence is no longer accepted as normal, survivors are supported with dignity, and faith communities are recognised as trusted advocates for justice and protection.

Reflecting on the dedication of members across the country, Meisie Lerutla, Provincial President of South Africa, said: 'We are truly thankful and inspired by the remarkable dedication of our South African Mothers' Union members – from establishing safe help desks against gender-based violence to championing local environmental care. This shows true faith in action. Their courageous community-led transformation deeply inspires our global Mothers' Union family and inspires us as we celebrate Mothers' Union's 150th anniversary.'



Environmental stewardship has become one of Mothers' Union ACSA's defining ministries. Since environmental care became a provincial priority in 2015, members have embraced the Anglican Communion's Fifth Mark of Mission: 'To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew the life of the earth.'

Today, every diocese has an eco-champion helping members respond to climate change through practical, community-led initiatives. Across the region, Mothers' Union members are planting indigenous and fruit trees to improve climate resilience and food security, creating vegetable gardens in homes and church grounds, transforming plastic waste into useful items for people experiencing homelessness, organising community clean-up campaigns and encouraging schools and families to care for creation.

Earlier this year, the Diocese of Pretoria distributed 150 spekboom plants, encouraging members to plant this remarkable indigenous species known for absorbing carbon and helping restore degraded land.

In Johannesburg, members marked World Environment Day by introducing 'Farming God's Way', encouraging mothers to grow chemical-free food at home and in parish gardens. Seedlings and seeds were distributed, helping families strengthen food security while caring for creation. Existing gardens in St Monica's and Elizabeth Paul parishes are already producing fresh vegetables for families and local soup kitchens.

Eco-champions from across South Africa regularly gather to share learning, strengthen partnerships and encourage one another. Their work has attracted interest from neighbouring countries including Botswana, Kenya, Uganda, Mozambique, Ethiopia and South Sudan, demonstrating how local action can inspire wider change.

As one eco-champion reflected: 'Caring for creation is not simply about protecting the environment; it is about protecting communities, livelihoods and future generations.'

Whether standing beside survivors of violence, caring for creation, supporting those living with HIV/AIDS or strengthening families, Mothers' Union members across ACSA continue to demonstrate what faith in action looks like. Their work reminds us that transformation begins with local people responding faithfully to local needs – one family, one parish and one community at a time. We give thanks for the dedication, faith and compassion of our sisters and brothers across ACSA, whose witness continues to inspire our worldwide Mothers' Union family.

Shop from wherever you are

Even though a physical pop-up shop won't be available at the Gathering, attendees can still order MU products and have them delivered overseas.











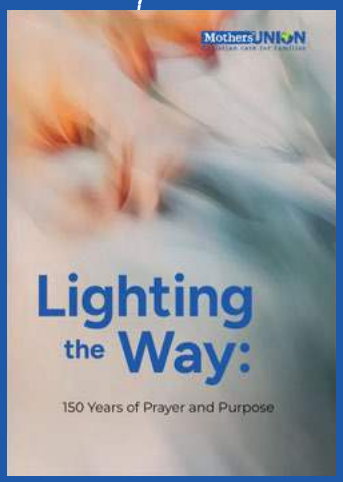





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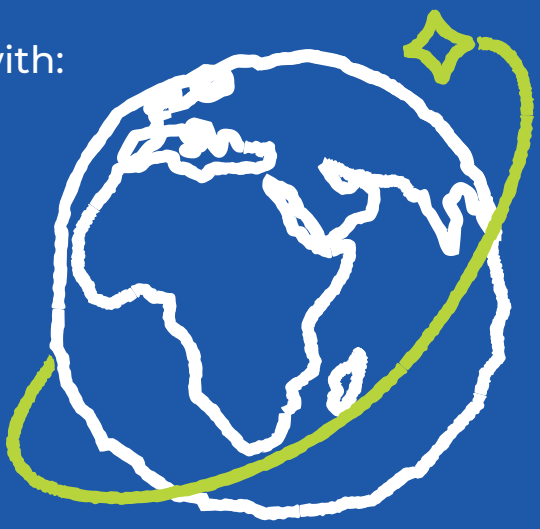

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Notes

Notes

Mothers' Union Wishes to thank:

South Africa National Convention Bureau

ICC Durban

Anglican Church South Africa

South African Steering Committee

Anglicans Ablaze, South Africa

And all the individuals and businesses that have helped make this event a success