



Mothers' UNION
Christian care for families

NEWSLETTER FEBRUARY 2025



Presentations were made to Hazel, Di and Jo as they relinquished their posts at the end of the triennium. They will all still be supporting the Mothers' Union, together with Jean (in yellow), but in different ways. On the next page is a list of new positions and when the new Branch Directory is published next month there will be contact details of trustees and branches.

All members, family and friends are invited to our

COMMISSIONING SERVICE

St. Mary's Church, Ely

Saturday March 22nd at 2pm

Celebrant and Preacher

Rt Revd Dr Dagmar Winter, Bishop of Huntingdon

Banners will be paraded. Tea and Cake. MUE cards on sale.

Having seen so many banners on display in the Cathedral last year it would be wonderful to see them again at our Commissioning Service for trustees and leaders.

MU Trustees and Activity Leaders in Ely Diocese

Vice-Presidents	Jean Webb, Debbie Tye, Hazel Williams
Branch Liaison Officers	Helen Banyard, Maureen Haigh
Praying Our Faith	
Prayer, Quiet Days, Thursday Prayer	Christine Holt
Worldwide	Irene Porter
Indoor Members	Joanna Sanders
Clergy Liaison	Della Fletcher
Chaplain	Revd. Paula Spalding
Communications	
Events and publicity	Debbie Tye
Diocesan Members	Debbie Tye
Communications (social media and website)	Holli Bielby
MU Enterprises	Hazel Williams
Newsletter	Hazel Williams
Cathedral Display	Penny Hall, Mary Finney
Finance and Administration	
Finance and Administration	Jean Webb
Treasurer	Derek Tye
Safeguarding	Hazel Williams
Faith In Action	
Local Projects (collection & distribution of items)	Maureen Haigh
Prison Support	Catherina Griffiths
AFIA	Hazel Williams
AFIA officer	Ros Wright
Trustees	Jean Webb, Debbie Tye, Hazel Williams, Chris Mitchell Helen Banyard, Maureen Haigh, Christine Holt,
Minutes Secretary	Catherina Griffiths
Diocesan Secretary	Ros Wright



St. Neots Branch

St Neots Branch have had a busy start to Advent. We took part in a local Christmas Tree Festival with a beautifully decorated tree by Andrea Eckloff, daughter of one of our members.

The tree was on display a few days later at the Deanery Advent Carol Service and lunch hosted by us. At that service, Serena Gilbert, one of our church members was admitted to MU membership by Canon Robert Sibson who led the service.

The following week we held our Wave of Prayer in the Lady Chapel at St Neots Church. Liz Elson, Branch leader led this with personal artefacts from most of our link countries. Once again, the MU tree was on display.



Mothers' Union Membership Subscription is £24.50 for this year. This will all go to Mary Sumner House and there will be no MU Diocesan subscription.

If you are a taxpayer and therefore able to claim Gift Aid, Ely Diocesan MU would receive £6.12 for each individual.

Derek Tye, our treasurer, sent a form last year by e-mail to each branch that they can copy for you to fill in, if you do not already use Gift Aid. A copy is included in this mailing too. Copies can be sent to branches by post if necessary. This money will go to the taxman otherwise and I would much rather it came to Mothers' Union Projects. If you have already paid your subscription for this year, it is not too late to send a completed form to Derek (derektye@hotmail.com)

Diocesan Membership

If you live in an area that does not have a Mothers' Union branch, but would like to support the MU in their worldwide work, please consider joining as a Diocesan Member. Subscription is the same as branch membership, this year £24.50, but newsletters and other information comes direct to your in-box or is posted to you instead of coming via the branch. If you would like to know more get in touch with Debbie Tye at dmtypespost@hotmail.com or ring Hazel or Ros (details in newsletter) and they will pass on your request for information.



The **March Deanery Branch** twice a year do the monthly Christian Aid lunch. These are organised by March Churches Together. We supply the meal and serve etc

This year the Branch also donated toys to the March Food bank where they were very welcome as the only things for children. Sue



From the **March Deanery Branch** for the women at Fenland Refuge.

Along with toiletries socks were also sent. The Refuge wants to thank all those who donated vouchers which were most appreciated. Sue

Daphne Linsey 1935-2025 Milton Branch

With sadness we inform you of the death of Daphne Linsey, treasurer of the Milton branch for over 30 years.

Daphne was a passionate MU member. She volunteered regularly at Little Hey prison, in the visitor centre and organised the rota of helpers. Sunday mornings Daphne enjoyed joining in with the prisoners in their Sunday services. Later she helped Beryl with the very popular relationship courses.

All this time Daphne was knitting seemingly faster than a knitting machine. She was known as the Knitting Queen. Her Nativity sets have gone all over the country.

The Mothers' Union and all of us will sorely miss her.

The funeral will be on 12th February in All Saints Church Milton at 12 noon.

ADVANCE NOTICE - Spring Diocesan meeting and AGM will take place at St. Peter's Church, March on Friday 25th April at 9.30am for 10am.

Lady Day Service

This year St George's Littleport are hosting the Lady Day service on March 25th at 2.30. It will be a communion service led by our vicar, Natalie Andrews followed by light refreshments in the church hall. Please can branch secretaries send rough numbers of those attending to Julieanne Long julianne@textileartist.co.uk

A REFLECTION

Philip Baker (15th January 2025)

This is the season when we look to the year ahead and start planning for all those changes that, this year without fail, we will finally get to do. Decorating a room (or more), a garden makeover, the holiday we have been thinking about for years; most, if not all, pipedreams which, if we were honest with ourselves, we know we will still be thinking about in a year's time. And yet it is human nature to want, well, almost anything! We are never content with what we have and are always planning for something different. It is a human condition.

How often do we think about what we have just celebrated – Christmas? The arrival on earth of our Saviour Jesus Christ. There can be no bigger change than this, nothing could ever be the same once God's Son was with us as a fellow human being. We need to think about what this really means for us, certainly more than His contemporaries did – they found Jesus inconvenient, what we would today call a “disrupter”. And of course He was meant to be but no-one really likes having their routines disturbed do they, so they crucified Him. But that did not get rid of Him. We will soon be starting to think about what happened then – Jesus defeating death and rising again in glory, which was not the outcome the Pharisees had in mind!

Given the parlous state the world is in, largely as an outcome of all the unintended consequences of a world full of people all individually planning changes based upon their own priorities without regard for everyone else, perhaps what we should all be wanting achieve this year is recognise the place of God in our lives. There are no end of biblical sources supporting the general contention that if we have God in our lives we have all we need, such as Psalm 16:5 or Philippians 4:19 and the most beautiful Psalm 23. Letting God be a part of our lives and plans has a calming influence, and recognising that all we have to do is live in the footsteps of Jesus Christ (or at least try to) might give us a little peace amid all the striving of our combative world.



The Mary Sumner choir, made up with two members from each parish in the diocese of Lusaka, Zambia, sang at the 33rd commemoration of Zambia as a Christian Nation. If you are able, you can hear them on the Proudly Anglican face book page.

Thursday Prayer in Ely Cathedral and on Zoom

10.30am on 20th February

Debbie Tye

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/85209298628?pwd=VDTrciGq12BVz8luyEa34M6BRLZDIK.1>

Meeting ID: 852 0929 8628

Ely Diocesan M U Charity no. 251394

<https://www.facebook.com/MUElyDiocese/>

Ros 01223 861846 roswright1@gmail.com

Hazel 01638 743897 hwill66@icloud.com

MiniMUm MU members in Somersham have been very active in collecting stuff for Mary's Child – and other charities supported by Ely MU. On that note one of our members wrote the attached reflection - and asked me to send it to you.

Every blessing

Val Kilner

OF MOLES & MINIMUM

Several years' ago, in another country, I was sitting on a low wall in the sunshine, working out in my head how I could renovate a little stone house of two or three hundred years past. It would have to be done tastefully without losing its charm. I would have to scrape down the oak rafters, for a start. And the "patio" in front of the wooden door was partly stones and partly concrete. Wallflowers bloomed through the cracks. My neighbours thought I should knock it down and built another then where would the ghost go?

Suddenly, without a sound, a mole popped its head through the rubble, right in front of me! It arrived on a puff of dry earth, stared wide-eyed at me for a few seconds and then disappeared exactly how it had arrived. Didn't turn around, just disappeared with a quiet "plop". I am not sure which one of us was the most surprised. First time I had seen a mole up close. I was amazed at the speed of him.

It occurs to me that Mothers' Union ladies often operate in a similar way to the moles. They use their own methods and channels of operation like the moles' galleries, they do their work quietly and without advertising, they travel great distances to meet other ladies abroad who are dedicated to improving their own and others' lives. They perform small miracles every day, they knit, sew, teach and carry huge weights of items in their collections for the homeless and other charities. Their faith in God is paramount. And they are so rarely seen in action!

The other day I rang my friend M. to ask her to call by for a shoebox full of little baby sweaters I had knitted. I mentioned that there was nothing much going on at my end regarding collection of unwanted small furniture, or clothing. Put down the phone, switched on my computer – and there was a request from J. She had met a lady at the village's get-together who was anxious to find someone who would want the contents of her caravan she had just sold. It was essential she find somebody efficient quickly. Would the MU want these items? Yes, we would!. So I took the telephone number of the donor from J., checked that the items were in good state, rang M. again to be sure she and her dear husband could pick up the items and make arrangements to collect direct between them, the lady being in our village. I used to do the lifting but age has crept up on me.

M. had hoped to clear pre-Christmas donations from her garage during the week but everything happened so fast. The donor was desperate to get the caravan items out of her kitchen – they were all over the floor, she said. So by the time M. called by at my home for the baby sweaters on the Sunday the caravan items had all been wrapped up by the lady donor, all pristine and ready to go, M. and G. had shifted the lot!

J. had been down to my house for the second time, with two large kitchen knives to donate. All this activity happened over three days! Telephones ran hot.

So three dedicated Minimum MU Mole-Members toiled at speed to get another job done. Phew!

PS: I did renovate the Little House beautifully.

This whimsy is written by Gillian.

01/2025



COMMUNICATIONS

NEW YouTube VIDEO.

We have a new YouTube video link to share with you for **JANUARY THURSDAY PRAYER**:

“Joining God Where He is Working”. Led by Hazel Williams.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2LfeUXQEu_I

The photograph shows MU members enjoying refreshments at The Almonry after our regular Thursday Prayer at The Cathedral.

Debbie Tye

Win Norton sadly died recently, at the age of 93, and her funeral was held on 5th February in Swaffham Bulbeck church. She was a member of the MU for many years and a number of you will remember her because for several years she sold cards and other MU items to members, often with the help of her husband David.

She was also very involved in supporting the Women’s Shelter (now Cambridge Refuge) acting as liaison (and delivering) items between MU members and the Shelter.

Our thoughts are with her family at this time. May Win rest in peace and rise in glory.

We need your help!

Sherly, pictured above with Jean, a dementia nurse at Hinchingbrooke Hospital has contacted Mothers’ Union.

One of the wards is taking part in a quality improvement project, introducing brightly coloured and patterned knitted blankets for patients with dementia, to reduce falls.

The blankets need to be 3 feet by 3 feet approximately.

Would this be a good 2025 Branch project for you?

Please contact Maureen Haigh for any queries (01353 749760; email gmhaigh@talk21.com)

Patterns are also available for Twiddle muffs, Canula sleeves, Adult Lady Fingerless mitts, Levi Lovey, baby hats, baby coats, and blankets