



NEWSLETTER NOVEMBER 2024



A photograph of the twenty people who attended the MU week-end retreat at High Gate in Northamptonshire recently. There will be more about our time there in the December newsletter



Yaxley branch members had fun together making CHRISTMAS TREES, using ribbons, as gifts for the women's refuges. Each tree came with a Christian Christmas message and a Mothers' Union sticker.

16 Days of Activism against Gender Violence

Saturday 30th November at Ely Cathedral

12.15pm - Prayer Vigil in St. Dunstan's Chapel (near main door)
lasting 30 minutes

Gathering outside for 1.03pm for 1 minute banner witness.

NO MORE 1 IN 3 Campaign

Members around the world raise awareness of the fact that 1 in 3 women will suffer from some form of violence during their lifetime.

Mothers' Union Membership Subscription for 2025 is £24.50. This amount will all go to the central charity and equates to just over £2 per month, per member. Ely Diocesan MU will not levy any extra charge.

**PLEASE BRING
LIGHT INTO THE
LIVES OF
MOTHERS LIKE
FRANCINE THIS
CHRISTMAS**



Give online at
www.mothersunion.org/christmas24
between 3rd December and 10th
December, to have your gift amount
matched in the Big Give.

If you can Gift Aid every £1 of your
gift will be worth 25p more.

My name is Francine Nsabimana and I live with my husband Jerome and our six children in a village called Bibuye in the country of Burundi.

I am saddened to say that I used to have no peace in my heart or in my family.

I was really miserable, with no money for food or clothes and I didn't live in perfect harmony with my husband, because we didn't have the words to speak to each other. **We lived in a straw house with a roof that let the rainwater in. I was always afraid that it would fall onto my children one day.**

I didn't have clean clothes or soap to wash myself so I didn't want to go to church and I was afraid to approach others to find out how I could improve my life, as I knew no better.

One day I heard about this programme from my neighbours who told me that there is a literacy and numeracy circle opened by Mothers' Union in my parish. So I joined even though I felt ashamed of how I looked. I hoped that this programme would improve my living situation.

Francine's story is one of transformation. Thanks to the One More Step programme, she not only lifted her family out of poverty but strengthened her faith and her community. "I learned to manage our household and save for our family's future. I also learned how to strengthen my relationship with God. I pray deeply and also I am able to pray for me, my children and others. I now have confidence and hope"

With your help, we can expand this successful pilot to 6 more dioceses in Burundi, reaching 4,000 people in the first year alone. By supporting literacy circles and savings groups, we'll empower women to overcome gender inequality, improve agricultural practices, build business knowledge and reduce gender-based violence in their communities.

**HOW YOUR KIND
GIFT WILL HELP**

It could buy the seeds and fertilizer to help people start a farming business in communities like Bibuye.

It could help cover the running costs of a literacy programme for mothers like Francine.

It could help cover the costs of setting up a small farmers' co-operative so subsistence farmers can grow a future.

Stapleford Mothers' Union is saddened to announce the passing of Denise Craney, erstwhile leader of the Branch and a very long-standing member of the Mothers' Union. Her kindness and generosity of spirit will be sorely missed. Hilary Street.

Our congratulations and best wishes go to Ken Fletcher, a diocesan member and past treasurer for Mothers' Union Ely Diocese. He celebrated his 90th birthday on 1st November.

Out of curiosity I recently checked on-line for which “Awareness Days” were coming up in November and I was genuinely astonished at the range of contenders: everything from a World Kindness Day to a World Vegan Day; there is an Apple Day, a Brush Day (!), there is even a Social Media Awareness month, a National Spa week and a National Sandwich Day (honestly, these are all listed on-line, I am not making it up). Unsurprisingly perhaps, among the vast range of special days, weeks or months there is no mention of any need of “being prepared for God to come”.

Whilst it is no doubt good to bring many of these causes to mind, Luke reminds us in 12:40 that “you must also be ready, because the Son of Man will come at an hour when you do not expect him.” The one thing foremost in our minds should be “are we ready?”. How many times have we parted from someone and almost immediately thought of something we had intended to say or do – but it is now too late. We do not want to be in a similar position should we find ourselves face to face with our Lord, because what we have not done will no longer be possible.

So, what are we supposed to have done? A recent Sunday sermon in my parish church gave the answer to that in a consideration of Mark 10:35-45. If you read that section, you will see that we are expected to be humble, be a servant and serve all. This is where the passage “For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve” appears. Matthew 6:19 refers to the need for us not to seek our reward on earth but in heaven “where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal” – in other words, a reward which is durable and lasting. It is a guide we would do well to follow, be humble, act like Jesus, serving others without expecting any reward, other than God’s. Perhaps the World Kindness Day is not so far off the mark after all!



Congratulations to St. Neots oldest MU member, Pauline Keatley, who turned 97 on 29th September. Also in the photo is Canon Robert Sibson a retired priest (whose wife Elizabeth is our branch treasurer). Pauline was a member of Somersham branch for many years before moving to St Neots.
Liz Elson



Thursday Prayer in Ely Cathedral and on Zoom
10.30am 28th November
Presented by Debbie Tye.
<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/85209298628?pwd=VDTrciGq12BVz8luyEa34M6BRLZDIK.1>
Meeting ID: 852 0929 8628 Passcode: 080127

Ely Diocesan M U Charity no. 251394
<https://www.facebook.com/MUElyDiocese/>
Ros 01223 861846 roswright1@gmail.com
Hazel 01638 743897 hwill66@icloud.com

Ely Cathedral Branch

Our MU Stall at Ely Cathedral Open Afternoon on Saturday October 12th. *Gail Swanson*



COMMUNICATION NEWS – NEW YouTube VIDEO. Debbie Tye - Co-ordinator

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

“Peace: Week of Prayer for World Peace”. Led by Sue Claydon.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6dRqcmH3dg4>

“Life During Lockdown” Photo Competition and YouTube Channel.

Many of you will remember the Photo Competition we ran during the time of Covid lockdown. Members submitted up to 3 photos of something that meant anything to them throughout this time. There were so many lovely photos from people representing different aspects during the lockdown and memorable moments. I am repeating the link now because our **YouTube Channel will enable you again to see a video of the photos that were submitted.** It has been posted as an “unlisted” video which means it is “semi-private” and can only be seen if you have the link. You are welcome to share this with family and friends.

Here is the link:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fMuzeJuxz_c
(Ctrl + Click to follow link)

I enjoyed seeing again these lovely photos with their musical background and thanks go to Debbie Tye who put it together.
Hazel

Resources that will be useful if you are using the RISE UP campaign as part of your 16 Days of Activism from Emily Brailsford – National programme Manager MU

I am writing to ask if there is anything I can do to help you with the RISE UP! campaign. I am more than happy to speak to you and your diocese, on Zoom or in person, about the campaign and how easy it is to achieve the Bronze level. There are lots of resources on the MU Resource Hub which can be accessed using this link: -

<https://mothersunionresourcehub.com/shared/5ctddm6p>

and there is also a ready-made branch pack which can be accessed here: -

<https://mothersunionresourcehub.com/shared/bpvzlrwg>

There are still all the resources which can be found on the Mothers' Union website here: -

<https://www.mothersunion.org/riseup>

The MU Theme for 2025 is

Join Us and Join In

MU is changing lives

Dates of Future Meetings

Sat. 22nd March at 2pm

Service and Commissioning of New Trustees

St. Mary's, Ely,
Banners to be paraded

Canterbury Provincial Gathering

Sat. 27th September 2025

Oxford, The King's Centre

Global gathering in St. Paul's Cathedral on 10th June 2026 to celebrate 150 years of MU

This is a report by the Church of Nigeria Communication officer of an address given by Mrs Angela Ndukuba, President of the Mothers' Union in Nigeria. If you look closely at the photo you can see her Mothers' Union badge.

Have the Mind of Christ in You. *Mrs Angela Ndukuba*



Mrs Angela Ndukuba, the President, Mothers Union/Women's Guild and Girls Organisation of the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) has called on all leaders, Christian and especially women to embrace the mind of Christ in all they are doing to reduce challenges, misunderstanding, fighting, struggles and competition to overtake one another which is facing many facets of life today. She made this call while delivering her recent presidential address at the 25th edition of the annual women conference of the Diocese of Abuja,

She opined that servant-leadership style has remained the hallmark of the body of Christ.

"Jesus gives us practical examples as believers and leaders in our different capacities. Apostle Paul in his letter to the Philippians presented Jesus and His exceptional humility as the perfect example for Christians. The servant's heart of a leader is illustrated with the humility that Christ displayed in coming to earth. She added that allowing and letting this mind of Christ be in everyone will promote our appreciation and tolerance for one another and will represent Christ in better image before men and women in this generation and generations to come.

"I humbly invite us to prayerfully accept, adopt and follow Jesus Christ as our role model as we journey in our Christian pilgrim progress to eternal life. You can make it in Jesus' name. It starts by surrendering your life to Jesus, and desiring to be like him in thought, word and deed."

On the state of the nation, Mrs Angela urged the Federal Government of Nigeria to issue licenses to modular refinery operators to boost the production of petrol and to reduce the pump price of the product at the filling stations. She stated that the removal of fuel subsidy in May 2023 has continued to increase hardship among citizens. We are calling on the Federal Government to restore the fuel subsidy or make our refineries work.

"The high cost of transportation has affected every aspect of the lives of Nigerians and contributed to high inflation figures. Some people had to resign from their employment because of high transportation costs.

Capable interested Individuals should be given licenses to own standard modular refineries that will reduce the number of illegal refineries being dictated regularly. Reputable existing private refineries in Nigeria should be allowed to function and serve the people directly and Nigeria should stop the importation of refined petroleum products and encourage local production".

Mrs Ndukuba urged organisers of protests in the country to sheathe their swords and embrace dialogue, saying that protests are often hijacked by suspected hoodlums to unleash more hardship on Nigerians. She called on the Federal Government to listen to the issues raised by the protesters and find a lasting solution to alleviate the conditions and sufferings of the people.

“The Mothers’ Union are the heart and love of the Church” Archbishop Justin Welby

As I write this, the day after returning from the diocesan retreat at Highgate House, I am very conscious of the love that was shared there; and as it’s the Monday of Half Term week, of one family travelling to Hunstanton today for one of our Afia Holidays, enabled by us, members who have shared our love with them, through fundraising.

I received this feedback from a new referrer –

“Z really enjoyed being away with mum, grandma and her sister L. The family had time to relax. Z and mum loved swimming in the sea. Z had the chance to spend a lot of time with mum on her own as at home mum is busy with looking after L. The trip had positive impact on Z’s wellbeing.

Mum managed to go for a long walk on her own, which never happens at home. The trip provided her with opportunity to relax, reflect and recharge”.

We now look forward to the Christmas season, and Our Wish is to help those whose lives are not as fortunate as ours. The Refuges and Hostels we support really appreciate supermarket vouchers to give to their clients, as this enables the recipients to have the gift of CHOICE, so often denied to them by circumstances.

I have noted below the preferred vouchers for each place. If branches could arrange to send/ deliver vouchers (£10 value ideal) to our local contacts to pass on, that would be a great help. Some vouchers are easily ordered online (I’ve used Aldi and Asda).

Mary’s Child charity in Farcet, Fletton and Stanground is continuing, despite the recent sad death of founder Revd. Carol Avery. They would appreciate Selection Boxes and Toiletry Sets for teenagers and adults, male and female. THANK YOU! Our contacts and the preferred store vouchers for each are;

<p>Mid-Cambs Refuge Liz Elson 11. Mobile Home Park, Eynesbury, St Neots PE19 2JR Iceland, Tesco, Lidl</p>	<p>Whitworth House (young women) Jo Wibberley 13 Missleton Court Cherry Hinton Road, Cambridge CB1 8BL Primark</p>
<p>Fenland Refuge Sue Claydon 112 Whittlesey Road March PE15 0AH Asda, Aldi</p>	<p>Wheatsheaf Close, (young people) Jean Webb 35 Norfolk Road Ely, CB6 3EJ Aldi, Tesco, Argos</p>
<p>Cambridge Women’s Aid CWA, PO Box 302 Cambridge CB1 1EA Any store vouchers</p>	<p>Mary’s Child Collections can be delivered to Maureen Haigh 69 High Street, Haddenham Ely CB6 3XB or Jean Webb (as above) by the end of November please.</p>