



Newsletter November 2025



ELY DIOCECAN DAY OCTOBER 2025 with JULIA JAMIESON, Zonal Trustee for Canterbury Province



MU displays of worldwide and local initiatives.





Talk by Julia Jamieson, MU Zonal Trustee, on new central initiatives:

Julia spoke about her background and said that she had been introduced to MU by her mother-in-law, and enjoyed attending her local afternoon group to listen to a speaker and have a cup of tea. She had been warmly welcomed by the group but wanted to explore more about MU by attending Deanery and Diocesan Meetings as well as the Annual Gatherings. She saw the positive impact that MU was making on the world around her and the wider world. She spent 3 years on the World-Wide Board and then

3 years on the new World-Wide Board as part of a leadership team of 14.

Global MU: What does it mean to us? There was a short discussion in small groups. It is not just a few old ladies in a church hall; It is central to Africa; AFIA; in parts of the world it is women's empowerment through literacy projects; savings groups; prevention of gender based violence; financial sustainability. The central MU role is governance, to ensure that we are working within charity laws and financial controls. It is a member led movement and so although the Board makes decisions it is guided by its membership. Trustees can be asked to serve on additional boards, but it is only trustees who have a vote. Julia asked "How can we celebrate the 150th anniversary and encourage others to join us?" it is our duty to keep the flame of MU alive around the world. Care and concern is important locally and helping those in adversity is the core objective. Although members in Britain and Ireland are contributing most financially there is an affiliation agreement for overseas members similar to subscription. Support is needed in order to set up projects until they are self-sufficient. The Literacy Project after 20 years is an example. Those who benefited are trained to serve and support each other. The programmes have restored dignity. We are a "handing up" not a "handing out" community. There are still many members unable to contribute due to war, displacement, or just struggling to survive. In Burundi, one of the poorest countries, 144,000 have learned to read and write; 7,500 have accessed parenting education and this has improved relationships. We have changed lives by giving a voice to the voiceless. Julia urged us to continue to support our fellow MU members with prayer and contributions.

Central Charity: Bev Jullien oversees a reduced staff team of 20 and all that they do is scrutinised by the elected trustees. There is targeted support for Britain and Ireland members and conversations from the Leadership Conference are available on the resource's hub of the MU website. The World-Wide Board is tasked with putting faith back into all we undertake, and there is a personal chaplain for the board. There will also be a new central chaplain.

150th Anniversary: We need to celebrate: where we have come from; what we have accomplished; and our faith and love for the Lord. In 1876 women did not enjoy the freedom we have today. The MU challenged social norms and fought against injustice and Mary Sumner prayed when she faltered. Julia asked "How are you using your gifts?" "How can we stay connected?" we need to look beyond the boundaries and energise and support one another. The MU website has details of information about central celebrations including the service at St Pauls Cathedral and the Annual Gathering. The Global Gathering is in South Africa from 30th September – 2nd October 2026. We need to consider what we can do to support MU either by being a Martha or a Mary.



Jean and Hazel attended a harvest lunch with members of the **Wisbech and North Nene Branch** and other invited guests. A traditional ploughman's lunch and fruit crumble was served and a food raffle raised funds for the MU.

For the MU 150th celebration, they are planning a diocesan wide, Hands Across the World Display, and are asking all members to draw around their hands on A4 paper and add when they joined MU and what made them join. These will be laminated and cut out. More details in the December Newsletter.

Sue Clayden announced, at the Diocesan Day, that on **10th December**, also Human Rights Day, there will be online prayers and reflections from India, Liberia and Papua New Guinea, thinking about how domestic violence impacts women throughout the **Anglican Communion**.

A reminder below that you need to register for these meetings. You have a choice of either the 8am meeting or the 6pm meeting (held twice to accommodate time zones across the world).

Please find the zoom registration links below for the 10th December online prayer meetings:

Zoom meeting: Dec 10, 2025 08:00 AM Universal Time UTC

Prayer for 16 days of Activism against Gender Based Violence

Register in advance for this meeting:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/hAfo8S0uSDisfpHBUR3DA>

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting.

Zoom meeting: Dec 10, 2025 6:00 PM Universal Time UTC

Prayer for 16 days of Activism against Gender Based Violence

Register in advance for this meeting:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/DUdDvAFsT96yTa3w2ZxlUg>

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting.

A REFLECTION

Philip Baker (26th September 2025)

We will soon arrive at All Hallows' Eve, or Halloween. This is, as we know, the evening before All Hallows' Day, or as we usually term it, All Saints Day and is widely celebrated by children dressing up as ghostly characters and being given sweets. The connection between celebrating the lives of saints and remembering our ancestors, and dressing up as ghosts is clear. But the modern celebration has distorted our understanding.

Based on pagan celebrations, All Saints Day arose from an edict issued by Pope Gregory in the eighth century that November the first be a day to honour saints, a term originating from the Latin "sanctus" meaning holy or sacred. I like the definition in Wikipedia that tells us that "The Feast of All Hallows, the Solemnity of All Saints, and Hallowmas, is a Christian solemnity celebrated in honour of all the saints of the church, whether they are known or unknown". To me that final phrase is vitally important, "whether known or unknown".

When we think of "Saints" our minds turn to the named saints who have achieved their sainthood through recognition of deeds in support of the Faith. And this is fine, but we might overlook all those who might fall into the definition of a saint ("a person recognised for their exceptional holiness, virtue, or service to God") but have not been formally elected or "canonised", and I would suggest that there are many people who might fall into that category but conduct their "saintliness" largely unseen.

Continuing the theme, All Saints Day (on first day November) is followed on the second of November by All Souls Day, when we commemorate all those who have passed within the Faith. This is an opportunity to remember all those who followed in the path shown us by Jesus and lived their lives as best they were able according to His rules. We will all know someone we have walked the way with who fits into that measure, and probably within the Mothers' Union somewhere in the world.

So, this Halloween, let us gather our thoughts around the Christian aspects of this festival, starting with the internationally recognised saints and then moving through the ranks to include all those we have known and loved who have done their best on this world for the love of God.

MU Photos and Prose Anthology for 150th Anniversary.

Debbie Tye

Some of you will remember the photo project we ran during 2020, which was turned into a photo video of pictures from members.

We would like to run something similar for 2026, but also widen the content.

I will be publishing full details next month of how to enter your contribution, but this is advance notice so you can start taking photos in December with a Christmas theme, and also be thinking about what might be relevant for next year.

For the Photos: They can be anything that represents Mothers' Union activities: e.g. meetings with speakers, afternoon teas, outings/events, services, knitting or sewing for MU projects. If taking pictures of people please ensure you have their permission. Ideally, they should be taken during 2026 (with the exception of Christmas photos this December).

For the Prose/Art: This could include written or art work either focussed on MU or with a special meaning relating to faith, family, friendship and fellowship, or God's world and creation: e.g. poems, prayers, a short piece about what MU means to you, a hymn/song that is special. If you are creative with art it could be a drawing/painting that you have done.

We will work out the finer details of how to collate all your ideas and produce an application form for your entries. But this is to get your creative ideas forming, so we can put together a commemoration of our 150th year, which can be published in a video or booklet.

Canterbury Provincial Gathering.

Debbie Tye

Jean, Debbie and Audrey attended the Canterbury Provincial Gathering in Oxford on Saturday 27 September.

We were welcomed by Comfort Fearon, Provincial President, who reminded us that we are “stronger together”. We heard talks from members around the Province, about projects they had been working on, as well as many displays from each diocese. Bishop Jo Bailey Wells led the Eucharist and gave a talk on: “Tales of the Unexpected”. She is the former Bishop of Dorking, and now Deputy Secretary General of the Anglican Communion. In her talk she shared her thoughts as a “Bishop passing by”, and conveyed glimpses of the MU through her eyes in her work around the Communion.

We were joined online in the afternoon by Kathleen Snow (Worldwide President) who gave a presentation, and spoke about how “God’s Love reaches to the heavens and to each other”. We also enjoyed a Puppet Show, given by “Parababble Puppets”. We heard more about plans and initiatives for 2026, our 150th Anniversary Year.

It was a very enjoyable day, and so encouraging to meet up with many other MU members from across the Province.



Kigali Diocese Mothers' Union, in Rwanda, held a conference in October. It's lovely to see the attendees in their Mothers' Union dresses. In one photo you will see Bishop Nathan, the Bishop of Kigali. I have had the pleasure and privilege of meeting Bishop Nathan on several occasions when he has visited Ely Diocese and in Rwanda.



Sadly, last year one of our members at **Yaxley** passed away. We were delighted when her son contacted us recently offering us Sheila's Cross to have at our meetings. Sheila is fondly remembered by us all and will now be with us at our meetings. *Irene Porter*



On Saturday 31st November, **St Peters Yaxley** held a "Light Festival ". The Mothers' Union entry was an arch with Angel fairy lights. One photo shows before the main lights and one after. *Irene*



Christmas cards, diaries and calendars are available now

Branches and individuals can either get in touch with me, order online for themselves or get together as a branch and put in a branch order. If your order is over £60 postage is free. Please remember to put Ely in as your diocese so that we can receive a branch related grant. *Hazel*

We have two new YouTube video links to share with you for Thursday Prayer.

SEPTEMBER THURSDAY PRAYER: "Good Stewardship" – Led by Revd Paula Spalding, Chaplain, Ely Diocesan MU.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vO69txPP1OU>

OCTOBER THURSDAY PRAYER: "Peace" – Led by Sue Claydon.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RsEZ9BININ8>

Christmas Wish List 2025

Refuges and Hostels

Fenland Refuge. Sue Claydon (sueclaydon112@gmail.com)

Washing up bowls filled with house hold cleaning products, festive foods, Vouchers. (Asda, Aldi)

Mid-Cambs Refuge. Liz Elsom (jimelson@talktalk.net)

Washing up bowls filled with household cleaning products. Vouchers (Iceland, Tesco, Lidl)

Whitworth House (young women) Jo Wibberley (jowibs.mu@gmail.com) Washing up bowls filled with house hold cleaning products, Vouchers (Primark)

Cambridge Women`s Aid Maureen Haigh (gmhaigh@talk21.com) Vouchers.

Wheatsheaf Close, Ely (young people) Jean Webb (jmw35n@gmail.com) Vouchers.

Mary`s Child. Stanground Maureen Haigh (gmhaigh@talk21.com) For food hampers and breakfast with Santa.

By the end of November if possible

Selection boxes.

Boxes of biscuits for families and individuals.

Boxes of chocolates for families and individuals.

Boxes of tea or coffee for individuals.

Christmas puddings –individual and family size.

Toiletry sets for men and women.

If your branch wishes to support any of the above for your Christmas giving, please get in touch with the named contact to arrange delivery or collection. Maureen Haigh is happy to help if there is a problem.



**Saturday 29th November at Ely Cathedral
12.15pm**

**16 Days of Activism against Gender
Violence and Rise Up**

**Prayer Vigil lasting 30 minutes
Gathering outside for 1.03pm for 1
minute banner witness.**



Friday 7th August 2026 150th Diocesan Anniversary Service at Ely Cathedral

10th June 2026, a celebratory service at St Paul's Cathedral at 5pm is the official 150th service for Mothers' Union

11th June 2026, 150th year Annual Gathering at the Emmanuel Centre, next to Mary Sumner House.

Please find attached the MU prayer adapted to be sung to the well-known hymn tune for "Dear Lord and Father of Mankind".

I felt the urge to produce this while spending a night in hospital a few weeks ago, When I attempted to sing it to branch members at our October meeting, they seemed to approve of it and encouraged me to share it.

Liz Elson

MOTHERS UNION PRAYER

Adapted to be sung to the tune of the hymn, Dear Lord and Father of mankind.

O loving Lord, we thank you for your love
so freely given to all.

We pray for families round the world,
and ask that you will bless the work
of Mother's Union x 2

Bless all our members everywhere
and make us shining lights,
as we seek to share your love
through strength'ning and encouragement
of marriage and family life x 2

Empowered by your spirit, and
in prayer and worship, one,
in love and service we reach out
as your hands across the world,
in Jesus' name, Amen x2

2026 Mothers' Union Membership Subscription is £25. This will all go to Mary Sumner House and there will be no extra MU Diocesan subscription.

Ely Diocesan M U contacts <https://www.facebook.com/MUElyDiocese/>

Ros 01223 861846 roswright1@gmail.com

Hazel 07747022431 hwill66@icloud.com

What a successful evening!

Mothers' UNION
Christian care for families

Invitation to our Pudding Evening

7.45 to 9.30 pm
Tuesday 14th October
Church Hall

You are invited to join us for our pudding evening. This is our fund-raising meeting for the Away From It All Holiday Scheme.

The pudding evening is very enjoyable. You have your main meal at home and then come to the church hall at 7.45 for your pudding. There will be a wonderful selection of puddings on offer with cream, custard or ice cream.

Donations welcome using cash or contactless.

Please come along anytime between 7.45 and 9.30 pm.
You will be very welcome.

Julie "mu@eastleightonstone.com"



Brampton held their annual "Pudding Evening" in October and this year, 56 people came and they raised £410 for the Away From It All Holiday Scheme. As every year, they advertised the evening in the local magazine, the church newsletter and handed out personal invitations. The evening was open to all, members, guests, people from the church, neighbours and friends in Brampton. The puddings are all made by members and they were delighted when non-members arrived with puddings as well. There was a huge selection of puddings including baked cheesecake, apple crumble, tiramisu, chocolate profiteroles and fruit salad, to name a few. The members provided cream, ice cream and custard to go with the puddings as well as offering tea and coffee. People were asked to list the ingredients of the puddings (to ensure anyone with allergies are informed), provide a named serving spoon or slice and take away any uneaten pudding at the end. They don't sell tickets, but instead, ask for a cash or contactless donation on the evening. A couple of years ago, the branch purchased a "SumUp" machine, and this has proved useful in taking contactless donations using a credit or debit card.. There were leaflets on the tables about the work of the Mothers' Union and the leader gave a brief introduction about the Away From It All Holiday Scheme. If people wanted to find out more about the Mothers' Union, the committee were there to answer questions, but people could also sign up for the monthly newsletter (email) that is sent by the branch. The Branch Leader for Brampton is Julie and her email address is mu@eastleightonstone.com. I am sure she would be willing to answer any questions about holding an evening like this if you are interested.

**Thursday Prayer in Ely Cathedral and on Zoom
10.30am on 27th November.**

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

Meeting ID: 852 0929 8628 Passcode 080127