

Mothers' UNION

Christian care for families



Southwark News

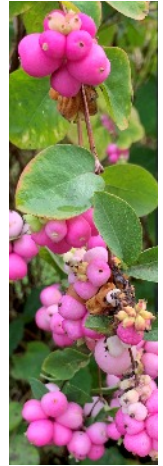
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Contents

Front Cover: *MU Members with their Branch,
Bronze Rise Up Certificates
- Article on page 10*

Pages

- 3 Letter from our President
- 4 Southwark Monthly MU Prayers
- 5 Mothers' Union Diocesan Secretary Advert
- 6 Oxford Gathering
- 7 Mary Sumner Day Garden Party
- 8 Threads Through Creation
- 10 Rise Up Campaign
- 11 A Special Birthday Tea
MU Diocesan Treasurer Advert
- 12 Bell Ringers
- 13 A Short Tour of Lambeth Palace
- 14 MU Trip to Buckingham Palace
- 15 Empower Her Literacy
- 16 Seasons



Forthcoming Events

Fri 29 Nov - 16 Days of Activism Service & AGM for Croydon Deanery
11.00am St Alban The Martyr, South Norwood, SE25 6RD

Mon 2 Dec - Advent Service 11.00am St John the Evangelist,
Caterham, Clareville Road, CR3 6LA

2025

Sat 21 June - 11.30am Festival Service with commissioning of the
new Trustees Board

Please send your material for the Spring Edition by 23 February

Editor: Val@utopia-creative.com

Letter from Our President

Dear Friends,

Welcome to our Autumn edition of our newsletter. I hope you have all been keeping well. How wonderful to know we are at the end of the year 2024. We must give thanks to God for enabling, empowering, and equipping us for the various tasks we have been able to conduct through the year.



Our elections for 2024 were successfully conducted. We thank God for the emergence of Kathleen Snow from Canada as the WWP, we congratulate her and her Trustees as well as Provincial Presidents, Diocesan Presidents, Branch Leaders, and all those coming into new roles for the new Triennium 2025-2027. We pray for an anointing of the Holy Spirit for them to be able to conduct the assignment you have been assigned to. (Zachariah 4:6) Here in Southwark too our election for DP went well. Penny Lothead takes over from me as from January. Penny needs no introduction; she comes with a lot of experience. She has worked at Trinity House and has collaborated closely with me throughout my journey. I am confident that you are in safe hands.

While giving thanks for elections, there are lots of vacancies and we are praying that there will be members ready to fill these roles. We are having to say goodbye to our Secretary and Treasurer as we have received notice of their departure. We pray and plead for a good response to these and other vacancies.

Subscriptions, this is a word that nobody wants to hear but we cannot avoid it. As the cost of living goes higher, the need to pay wages, the continuous wear and tear as well as the need to fundraise for projects in areas where we cannot go. Our impacts on AFIA holidays, Education, Literacy, Campaigning for Justice around the world to enable God's people to flourish in their own environment. So, as subscriptions go up again next year. It is not about why or what the subscription is being used for but thanking God for how many lives have been touched through what you give. And please, do not stop being a member of the MU, an organisation you have cherished for years.

The preparations for a Provincial Gathering in 2025 are on, which will be

September 27th at the Oxford Centre in Oxford, as well as the plans for our 150th Anniversary celebration of Mothers' Union in 2026. Please be on the look out for announcements as well as making plans to be a participant. There have been various activities through the year, and I thank you for being part of these, notably, the RISE UP campaign, which has lots of resources on the resource hub. Please avail yourself to these as we plan and prepare for the 16 days of Activism. We are continuing to explore diverse ways of membership, our retreat was led by The Ven. Carol Coslett. The Advent service is on the 2nd of December followed on the 3rd of December by a noticeably short Trustees' meeting which will be followed by a get together lunch with staff of Trinity House.

It will soon be time for the rush for Christmas preparation. May I wish you all a happy and amazing Christmas with your friends and family. May I also use this opportunity to thank you all for your support through six years of my journey as Diocesan President. A journey of discovery and learning. May God bless you all. As I take on the big task of becoming the Provincial President for Canterbury Province, please pray for me for another journey of learning and challenges.

May I end with this “May the God who gives endurance and encouragement give you the same attitude of mind toward each other that Christ Jesus had, so that with one mind and voice you may glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ” Romans 15:5-6

Your sister and Friend, *Comfort*

Southwark Monthly MU Prayers

MU midday Prayers are held on the 4th Wednesday of each month in the Harvard Chapel in Southwark Cathedral at 11.45am - 12.15pm - All are welcome. - However, the prayers continue to be distributed to branches beforehand for their own use.

Led by			
	27 Nov	-	Reigate
2025	22 Jan	-	Croydon
	26 Feb	-	Woolwich



Please Note - there is no access for wheelchair users in the Harvard Chapel. If members who use wheelchairs want to attend Cathedral Prayers, the Cathedral has to be notified in advance and the Retrochoir would be prepared for the service

Diocese of Southwark

Job Title: Mothers' Union Diocesan Secretary

Hours of work: 15 hours per week, flexible working, must be computer literate

Location: Trinity House, 4 Chapel Court, Borough High Street, SE1 1HW

We wish to appoint a Mothers' Union Diocesan Secretary who will be the Secretary to the Southwark Mothers' Union Board of Trustees (5 meetings per year), the Finance and Administration Unit (5 meetings per year), Diocesan Council (2 meetings per year) and the AGM.

Duties include:

- Provide secretarial support to the Board of Trustees and Finance & Administration Unit including booking meetings rooms and circulating Minutes.
- Keep up to date records of branches and officers on the diocesan database, and all branches and members on the Central database at Mary Sumner House (The Mothers' Union HQ).
- Distribute reporting papers to branch officers.
- Ensure that branches are kept informed about Mothers' Union matters.
- Be the first point of contact for branch officers and members in the diocese and respond to queries and requests for information.
- Help to organise the annual Diocesan Festival service on a Saturday in Southwark Cathedral and any other diocesan events.
- Arrange and administer triennial elections.

For more information,
please contact Anne Love - mu@southwark.anglican.org

Southwark and Central MU websites

<https://southwark.anglican.org/mission-ministry/faith-in-action/mothers-union/>

<https://www.mothersunion.org>

Closing date for applications will be Monday 11th November 2024

Oxford Gathering

On 22nd June, the Mothers' Union, Canterbury Province held a Gathering for all members in the Province of Canterbury at the King's Centre in Oxford. Four members of our branch attended and the hall was packed. At lunch time there was Holy Communion which included the enrolment of Pippa and Steve Cramer. (See below about them).

The meeting was very inspiring. Each of the Clusters (Geographical Groups of Dioceses in the Province of Canterbury - Southwark is in the South East Cluster), reported on their outreach and development to projects including the teaching of English to immigrants, giving £500 grants to projects like "Dignity through Dressmaking", Mum's and Babes Groups, a mission studio so young people, including Guides, can make professional films to explain about their work; the Red Chair Project against domestic violence; making cakes for the staff in a local hospital, toddler groups to show mothers how to play with their children; making up rucksacks of essentials to give to foster children who, at 16, are expected to start their own lives; a free Family Fun Day at Truro Cathedral and a Banner Display at Ely Cathedral; the Blonde Angels Street Team helping the homeless in Bristol; virtual babies (models of babies which pupils have to look after for a weekend) to show the work involved in parenting (each "baby" costs £1,000 each and a computerised chip inside records how it is looked after); a Refugee Contact Centre; sending Christmas and Easter cards to prisoners; running craft groups for older women prisoners and giving bags on prisoners' releases which include Costa Coffee vouchers so that they can get home without being conspicuous with their stuff in a black plastic bag.

We were shown a presentation by Pippa and Steve Cramer about "Hymns We Love", a talk and slide presentation aimed at older people which helps them find spirituality near the end of their lives by understanding the deeper meaning of familiar hymns. We saw one of the sessions on "The Lord is My Shepherd". The whole series can be obtained at the Good Book Company (<https://www.thegoodbook.co.uk/series/hymns-we-love/>) or you can email pippacramer@htclaygate.org for more information.

All this information was truly inspiring. However, to add a light interlude, we also played "Mothers' Union Bingo" and had a Christian stand-up comedian, Andy Kind, to amuse us. A truly memorable day.

Janice Clarke, St Barnabas Sutton

St Mildred's & Croydon Deanery Mary Sumner Day Garden Party

On Thursday 8th August we held a 'Strawberry Tea' Garden Party in our garden, which was attended by about 25 members and 3 small children! We couldn't hold it on the official day, 9th August, because several of our St Mildred's members were busy singing in a big wedding in our church.

We opened up the event to the Deanery and many members flocked into the garden, where we first held a short Mary Sumner Day service, whilst the sun was still shining. By the time everyone had settled down with their cuppas and plates of scones, cream, jam,



strawberries and cakes the light rain had started! Several brave folk stayed determinedly outside, until the heavier rain finally drove everyone indoors. Undeterred, a great time was had by all, and **£167** raised for AFIA from the raffle, sale of preserves and donations for

'doggy bags' of spare cakes taken home! Everyone seemed to have enjoyed themselves, especially the opportunity to chat to friends from other branches. Our next event to include the Deanery will be the 16 Days of Activism against Violence, which will be held at St Alban's, South Norwood, on Friday 29th Nov at 11.00am, to be led by Father Sean and members from the Deanery, thank you St Alban's.



Penny Locke, Deanery Leader

Threads Through Creation

On one of the MU Southwark emails, we were informed about "Threads Through Creation", a massive embroidery/appliqué and painted depiction of the Creation story, shown on 12 beautiful silk panels, using enough fabric to cover a playground with over 8 million stitches. The panels were very contemporary and the stitching was intricate, showing details such as frog spawn turning into tadpoles and then frogs, leaves and flowers, water in all its forms, constellations and even the hope of the Lamb of God.

Humphrey and I, along with other MU members, went to see it at Rochester Cathedral. While I was looking at it, the lady next to me started to explain everything. Only when I bought the book after the exhibition did I realize that I was being shown it by Jacqui Parkinson, the artist herself.

At our Branch MU meeting in April, the first chapter of Genesis was read out and we heard "All things Bright and Beautiful" presented by 'Uncle Mac' and saw a PowerPoint of all the 12 panels with an explanation.



As an MU branch leader in Hayes in the Rochester Diocese was ill, I also took the PowerPoint and talk to them for their branch meeting. When I played the "All of the Things Bright and Beautiful" cassette, one of the members stood up and said "I was singing on that recording by the Greenbank Children's Choir in 1929". What a coincidence!

One of the ladies listening at our branch meeting told me that Jacqui Parkinson had also done "Threads Through Revelation" which was displayed in Exeter Cathedral before lockdown so we looked up Google. Jacqui had not only sewn "Threads Through Revelation" but was also making "Threads Through the Cross" about the life of Christ. The three exhibitions will be combined into "Threads Through the Bible" to make

42 panels on display using 25,000,000 stitches and will be exhibited in January 2025 in Liverpool Cathedral, and then at a further nine venues, up till the end of 2026.

This year from 20th July to 26th August, "Threads Through Creation" was on display at Southwark Cathedral.

For Mary Sumner Day this year, 11 Mothers' Union members from our branch, St Barnabas, Sutton, went to Southwark Cathedral to see this wonderful, 'Threads through Creation', embroidery and textile exhibition by Jacqui Parkinson. Everyone was very impressed by the skill and the vision of the work. Other people in the Cathedral joined our group to hear Jacqui's explanation of the twelve panels.

You can see more of Jacqui Parkinson's work by searching the internet.

Janice Clarke



RISE UP Campaign



Congratulations to the five branches awarded Bronze Level Certificates for the RISE UP campaign.

Four of the members of the Bronze winning branches are pictured with Comfort, our Diocesan President, on the front cover of this magazine. They are:

Liz Pullen - St John the Baptist, Malden

Anne Scoones - Christ Church, Purley

Christine Waller - St Andrew & St Mark's, Surbiton

Margaret Simmons - St Mildred, Addiscombe

Penny Lohead collected her branch, Bronze Certificate for St Frances, Horley, at the Mary Sumner Day service in August, at Christ Church, Purley

It is hoped that all branches will adopt the successful RED CHAIR initiative which we hope to roll out further this year.

RISE UP Against Domestic Abuse is Mothers' Union's campaign to raise awareness about domestic abuse. Our aim is to make sure that activism against domestic abuse and gender-based violence happens 365 days a year and not just during the 16 Days of Activism campaign in November and December.

One of the aims of RISE UP is not to turn us all into domestic abuse professionals, but to teach us how to respond appropriately to a disclosure and ensure we know where to signpost a victim to. If someone discloses something to you, please:

Respond to a disclosure of abuse with compassion and calm

Inform the person where they can get help. If a person is in immediate danger call 999, otherwise direct them to their county domestic abuse helpline or the Refuge 24 hour helpline on 0808 2000 247

Support in a safe manner, listen and believe

Empower them to grow and heal

Unite the members of Mothers' Union and churches to help end domestic abuse

Pray for all affected by domestic abuse.



A Special Birthday Tea

On 21st August, St Barnabas, Sutton Branch held a 'Summer of Hope' Cream Tea to celebrate Southwark Diocesan Mothers' Union Trustee, Cathy Brown's 75th birthday. Members from the Branch and the Church, as well as some members from St John's Belmont and the Church of the Good Shepherd, Tadworth branches, attended. Before the tea, we heard about the DR Congo. Sue Davis, one of our members, made a teddy bear birthday cake for Cathy (Cathy has an enormous collection of teddies). With donations for the tea, a 'bring and buy' table and a raffle, £324.30 was raised for 'Summer of Hope'.



Janice Clarke

Are You Good At Figures?

If so your diocese needs you to volunteer to take on the position of Mothers' Union Diocesan Treasurer.

Accountancy or book-keeping skills and a level of computer literacy are essential, along with an enthusiasm for the work of Mothers' Union and an ability to see the wider implications of financial decisions.

Persistence, patience, tolerance
and a sense of humour would be helpful.

You would be working as part of the Finance and Administration Unit, a small friendly team, and reporting to the Trustee Board.

**For further information, if you are interested,
please contact Anne Love
(mu@southwark.anglican.org)**

Bell Ringers

On a Wednesday afternoon, the MU at St Mary's Addington had a visit from two ladies who came from Sanderstead Hand Bell Ringers. Sandra and Angela, known professionally as Duo Didimus. They brought 34 different bells of different sizes and sounds. The theme for the session was Music associated with Strictly Come Dancing. They even had a glitter ball. They played a variety of music, ranging from waltzes, mambas and even a Can-Can! We were given bells and maracas so that we could play along. They told us about different techniques and lots of amusing stories. The audience wasn't huge but



we thoroughly enjoyed ourselves and learnt a lot. Donations were made towards the work of the Mothers' Union.

Pat Heady.
Branch Leader



A Short Tour of Lambeth Palace

Beryl Barrow was a guide at Lambeth Palace for some years and recently gave an interesting talk to MU members at Holy Cross, Motspur Park.

In 1999 Archbishop George Carey opened Lambeth Palace for tours as part of the London millennium celebrations, originally just for the year 2000. About 50 guides were recruited and trained, not just from the London area but from as far away as Hereford, Reading and even Paris! It was a brave decision because the Palace is the home of the Archbishop and his family as well as being his very busy office. There were 4 tours an hour with 25 people in each group, from Tuesday to Saturday, always fully booked. One of the most common questions asked was “Why is he called the Archbishop of Canterbury?”

In AD 597 Pope Gregory sent a monk named Augustine to England in order to preach the Gospel and bring the Christians under the umbrella of Rome. Together with other monks he sailed to England and landed in Kent, where they stayed and founded the Cathedral so that is why Augustine became the first Archbishop of Canterbury. 600 years later however England had become a Christian country, including the monarchs, so Westminster was the seat of government. By then the Archbishops had an important place at court so needed to be there and in AD 1197 they acquired the manor of Lambeth and started building the Palace, right on the riverside.

The first to be built, on the riverfront, was the chapel and the basement or crypt is the oldest part of the Palace, dating from about 1199. Built several feet below river level, mud and water started to come in so the floor was raised by 4 feet making the crypt very dark and damp. It was little used until about 1900 after the Albert Embankment had been built in the 1860's and the area had dried out. The original floor level was revealed and it was used for storing wine, beer and old furniture. It was then used as a rest centre in WW2 and as a temporary chapel after the war because the main chapel overhead had been bombed. The crypt has now become a much loved place for private prayer and daily worship with a very spiritual atmosphere.

The Upper Chapel has seen a lot of history over the last 800 years, including the consecration of many bishops of the early Anglican Communion eg the first Bishops of Virginia and Jamaica. The only Archbishop buried in the Palace, Matthew Parker, was interred here in

1575, only to be removed in the the Civil War when Oliver Cromwell's soldiers occupied the Palace, using the Chapel as a drinking parlour and throwing his body on the rubbish heap. It was replaced after the restoration of the monarchy and is commemorated in a small tile. The ceiling was painted in 1988 by Leonard Rosoman, a war artist who had been a fireman during the war and had helped to put out fires at the Palace.

Two of the soldiers offered to buy the buildings and grounds from Oliver Cromwell but could not split the medieval Great Hall so pulled it down and sold off the materials. It was then replaced in 1663 and became part of Lambeth Palace Library in 1834, which moved to a new building in the gardens in 2021.

The talk did not include other areas except the entrance towers where the tour would have started and ended.

Pat Afflick, Holy Cross

Mothers' Union Trip to Buckingham Palace

On a Saturday in July, twenty five members and their families and friends from St Barnabas, Sutton and St Dunstan's, Cheam went on an outing to Buckingham Palace. Although London was particularly crowded, everyone enjoyed the magnificence of the State Apartments with the beautiful chandeliers, the amazing ceilings and splendid furniture, along with famous paintings including, the latest rather modern, portrait of King Charles III. We also saw the royal thrones with the new insignias. It was a lovely afternoon group outing.

Humphrey Clarke



Most of the group met at Victoria Station

Empower Her Literacy



On Sunday 8th September, International Literacy Day, Mothers' Union was proud to launch their new campaign: **Empower Her Literacy**. This campaign aims to raise awareness of women's illiteracy and promote the importance of educating women.

Did you know that over 480 million around the world are illiterate? That millions of women who can't register the birth of their child, read a medicine packet or apply for a job.

In a world where technology and instant communication are everywhere, it doesn't make sense that millions of women are illiterate. Being illiterate makes it harder to make sense of the world. Illiteracy doesn't make sense!

We all agree that access to education for children is a fundamental human right. Yet there are millions of women who missed out on an education, due to conflict, financial barriers or just because they are girls. As we champion children's access to education as a fundamental human right, Mothers' Union believes we must also prioritise education for women of all ages.

Join the Campaign at www.mothersunion.org/empowerher

The UK government's International Women and Girls' Strategy emphasises the importance of girls' education, but it doesn't address educating women in the same way. We want to work with the new government to ensure that they prioritise women's education, regardless of their age, so that no woman is left behind. We want the government to use their influence and leadership to prioritise women's education. Will you help us?

*Add your voice to put women's education on the global agenda.
Together we can **#EmpowerHerLiteracy!***

From the Mothers' Union Website



Seasons

Earlier in the year, in May, we all rejoiced that summer had arrived at last and the sun chose to show it's face. Its wonderful how the change in the weather makes a big difference to everyone's mood. Even the birds and the insects are happy when the sun shines and the weather is nice, they can get around freely. For those people who enjoyed a summer break we asked God to enable them to return to their daily lives refreshed. Now Autumn is here and the harvest has been gathered, preparing us once more for the cold winter nights ahead. Thanks be to God for all He provides in all situations in our lives.

Cathy Brown



Mothers' UNION
Christian care for families