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in Southwark Cathedral - (See p.8 for article)

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Back Cover: Diocesan Details

Festival Service photographs on the cover & pages 8,9,14
are from Southwark Diocesan Communications, with thanks.

Forthcoming Events

29 - 30 Sept General Meeting, Edinburgh

Thurs 5 Oct Meeting for Speakers,
   Trinity House 10.45 - 12.30

10 - 12 Oct Annual Retreat, Wychcroft

Sat 14 Oct Diocesan Council Meeting
   at Christ Church, Purley
   Coffee 10.30am, Meeting 11.00am
Letter from Our President

Dear Friends

Here in the middle of summer as I write this letter, we are just coming to terms with recent dreadful, and disturbing events. The horrific events at Westminster, Manchester and Southwark have shattered lives and brought untold pain to families and communities. We felt that pain so keenly when our Diocese was attacked and our beloved Cathedral, which so wanted to offer solace and refuge, had to be closed for a whole week. We do give thanks for the amazing care, bravery and the outpouring of unconditional love in and after every horrific event. Our country has also been in the midst of a General Election and we now have a minority Government which means more uncertainty and greater concern as we withdraw from the European Union. May we continue to pray for all who have been affected by these recent events, remembering our Cathedral Staff as they minister to all who enter the Cathedral. May we also pray for a fairer Britain, for our Prime Minister and for every MP as they serve the United Kingdom. Which nicely leads me on to ‘Thy Kingdom Come’ which is everlasting! What a wonderful initiative, which is now in its second year and has gone global. The Archbishop of Canterbury encouraged us all to get involved. We were given the time between Ascension Day and Pentecost and with the ‘wind of the Holy Spirit in our sails’ we will continue to pray Thy Kingdom Come for the world, our country, our community and for five people we want to see come into the Kingdom. May the light of the Holy Spirit illuminate the world and overcome the darkness.

It was a real joy to see so many children at our Family Festival Service this year. For me, Mothers’ Union is ‘family’ and I have just been on an MU Conference where they talked about ‘Family membership’. Where members involve their families in all their events and activities we see interest and growth which will go on. At church on the Sunday after the attack at Southwark I wept and later I picked by a copy of ‘The Bridge’ and smiled! I hope you have all read the Festival Service write up. Life is like a roller coaster and we have to hold on tightly to the hand of Jesus, He will not let us go, through all the ups and downs of life. All the children
of the choir have been given a copy of ‘The Bridge’ for their scrap books. Soon after our Festival Service, I did visit the choir and thanked them very much. I gave them a large planter full of different colourful flowers saying they were like them – beautiful together and such a blessing. The choir mistress thanked the MU for inviting them and then told the children that she had been praying for them to be used in Worship! We have all been blessed. Thank God.

As I made clear from the beginning of my Presidency, my focus would be on young families and I make no apology, as from where I am I can see clearly how much more difficult it is for these families today. Those young people and families who do not have high paid jobs, cannot afford to buy houses and struggle to pay rents. Many live in unacceptable accommodation which is so insecure. If we say we care about families we should be asking ourselves how are we serving these families and is there anything more we can do? If we say we are too old to be active we are reminded that we can all be active in prayer. When we wait on God and listen to Him, He will show us what is needed. New initiatives will be born and younger members and friends will bring them into being. We were told at a recent MU Conference to watch out for a new initiative called MULOA - Mothers’ Union Listen, Observe and Act. Listening to God through Scripture and Observing through conversations and Acting on the findings. You will hear more about this in due course. I am delighted because we are getting back to the heart of Mary Sumner and Mothers’ Union which is our Faith.

Thank you for all the wonderful work, campaigning and fund raising that you are doing in a variety of ways throughout the Diocese. Thank you also for the special fellowship and care which we share with one another

I close my letter with a prayer which came from Southwark Cathedral at the time of the horrific event.
Please pray with us and for us:-

God of life, may we grow in faith and love with confidence in you; vibrant, prayerful, passionate, alive in Jesus Christ. Amen
With love and prayers as we serve families in this turbulent time.  
*Cynthia Smith*

PS. *We remember before God all those who were caught up and have been severely affected by the horrific fire at Grenfell Tower. May they come to know God’s healing Peace and be given hope for the future. We again give you thanks for the amazing outpouring of practical and spiritual love. Amen*

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**Cathedral Prayers**

Cathedral Prayers takes place in the Harvard Chapel at Southwark Cathedral on the 4th Wednesday of every month except December. It is a privilege to be able to hold this short service of praise and thanksgiving for the work – and volunteers – of Southwark Mothers’ Union, and for our worldwide fellowship. Though not unique, not every diocese has this privilege and it is something which we in Southwark treasure. It is an opportunity to give thanks to God for his goodness to us and to intercede for our projects. It is also an opportunity to us to give thanks for the witness and service of those who have gone before, and in doing so, offer support to their families.

More people have attended the service, held from 11.45 to 12.15, since the introduction of the Book of Remembrance. There is a tribute to a past member every other month, but every month, the names of those who have died in that month in previous years are written into the Service Sheet. This is an opportunity for family and friends of past members to come to give thanks for their service within the MU.

Cathedral Prayers are led by members from each of the four Areas in turn; the leaders coming from a single branch or from different branches. Each service includes the Wave of Prayer for that day,
Southwark’s Links and Intercessions Calendar, prayers, thanksgiving and intercession for the work of MU, particularly topical ones for local and diocesan MU projects, prayers for MU members who are ill or who have recently died and the Year’s Mind for that month from the Book of Remembrance.

If someone in your branch sadly dies, please let Anne or Liz know, so that their name can be written in the Book of Remembrance, and send Liz any tributes you would like to be read at Cathedral Prayers. When you know when the tribute is to be read, please do encourage family and branch members to be present.

Do come to Cathedral Prayers if you can and encourage members of your branch to do so. It can be combined with lunch in the Refectory and a tour of the Cathedral to make a very pleasant day out. It is sad to know that many Southwark MU members have never visited the Cathedral, and there is so much to see within the Cathedral and outside. If you know that wheelchair access will be needed, please let Anne know at least a week in advance so that she can arrange for Cathedral Prayers to be held in the Retrochoir.

If you are asked as a branch to lead Cathedral Prayers, do try to say ‘yes.’ Remember that you are not on your own and can ask any number of people to help: e.g. your clergy or ministry team, VP or members of the F&P Unit. There are countless written resources as well. Most of all, God will enable you: he always provides.

_Liz Pullen  Faith & Policy Co-ordinator_

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**MU Cathedral Prayers**

Prayers are held on the 4th Wednesday of each month  
11.45am-12.15pm in the Harvard Chapel, Southwark Cathedral. All are welcome.

**Led by**  
26 July  - Reigate  
23 Aug  - Croydon  
27 Sept  - Woolwich  
25 Oct  - Kingston
A Big Thank You

A message to Members received from Jean Hatton, our recently retired Southwark Diocese Mothers’ Union Treasurer.

Dear Members,
Words cannot describe my feelings when I received Cynthia’s card with your generous gift inside. I thank you all very much. I have always enjoyed being with you and most of all helping you all. Many of you also sent cards, emails and notes. We have been friends for many years and I am so glad that Jean Cartwright has now taken over the reins and with your help will be able to keep in order the finances of the Diocese.

I need to say a big thank you to Ann Wright for all her support especially recently. I thank all of you for your prayers and help. Keep up the good work.

Take care all my friends
Jean

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Lady Day Service

Kingston Deanery held a Lady Day service at St Paul's Hook. Several MU members helped lead the service and the vicar, the Revd Luke Wickings preached. Margaret Palmer of St Andrew's, Surbiton, Win Jefferies and Diane Tink of St Paul's, Hook were presented with long service certificates. After the service everyone enjoyed a delicious lunch together.

Ann Fernihough
Festival Eucharist

I was accompanied by my husband to the Festival Eucharist in Southwark Cathedral on Saturday 6th May. On arrival we found the Cathedral buzzing with happiness as children and adults greeted friends old and new. All settled down 10 minutes before the service started when the choir of Christ Church Primary School, Purley sang for us. On our seats were the service booklet, the vitally important Gift Aid envelope and bookmarks welcoming us in various languages and with the Mary Sumner Collect on the back.

The President and preacher was Bishop Karowei of Woolwich. The service was an uplifting affair, full of joyous moments, lovely music from the young choir who had learnt their many songs by heart.

Cynthia, our president, introduced the MU and told us a little about some local projects, reminding us that volunteer forms were available after the service!

After the children had led the ‘Peruvian Gloria’, Bishop Karowei started to tell us about Matilda - a widow in Nigeria who helped out everyone in her village by teaching cookery, household management, numeracy and literacy, through Bible study, in the name of the Mothers’ Union. Eventually, he announced that Matilda was his mother who was celebrating her 95th birthday ‘today’!

He told us how ‘it takes a village to raise a child’ and itemised many of the ways in which the MU can make a difference - showing us through the use of water and dyes how the love of Jesus is vital to our work.
Our prayers were led by Kayode and Comfort, our Action and Outreach Trustee. (See picture on page 14)

Our Chaplain, Esther, was deaconing for the Bishop, but took centre stage when she was admitted as a member of the MU, and then installed as Chaplain.

Comfort, Althea and Grace were all commissioned as trustees.

After sharing communion, the service ended with a change to previous years by processing the branch banners during the final hymn. This was felt to be a good move and safer than in the past.

Cynthia said later, “I have had many wonderful remarks and comments about the service and one was that it was a ‘breath of fresh air’ and I know it was the breath of the Holy Spirit. So many young families (not MU) told me afterwards how much they had enjoyed it. Our colouring-in table was occupied all the time and was a real success.”

Margaret Simmons

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**Fresh Approach Day**

On Saturday 20th May, a group of new and younger members of the Mothers’ Union joined together for a time of sharing and fun to inspire each other about the work of the MU. We looked at how we can move forward in our branches fulfilling the aim and objectives we are committed to as members. Although we had hoped for a bigger turnout, the attendees did represent the four areas of Reigate, Woolwich, Croydon and Kingston. We enjoyed home-made cake and refreshments whilst looking at maps of the Diocese and sharing ideas that have worked well in our branches. Sheila
from Woolwich area said ‘I enjoyed being able to share ideas with others and getting ideas back. eg. Having a monthly or fortnightly Saturday market type stall outside the front of the church advertising the MU and also knitting ‘activity sleeves’ for dementia patients. Thanks once again for the day, it was very worthwhile.’

The second session was a two-way question time during which our Diocesan President Cynthia, asked and encouraged the attendees to think about how they are supporting young families in their branches. Gigi lead us in midday prayers and worship, we were enlivened by joining together to sing and dance to ‘The Lord of the Dance’. This was not going to be a sitting down day! After lunch we gathered again for a short face painting demonstration! It was actually about how we can use our gifts and skills and link them with the MU to make an event or talk for your church or branch completely relevant and fun. For example we could talk about getting the foundation colour on the face right … and then explain how Jesus and our faith is the foundation of the MU; it has to come first in everything we do. Gigi continued with the last session sharing some good ideas from other dioceses which we had picked up at the Conference last year. She told how she was inspired to work with her Messy Church service linking it to the Sunday family service supporting more families to ‘bring up their children in the life of the church’.

Rachel from Kingston area said ‘It was great meeting people from other MU Branches and hearing some ideas for developing our branch. I also appreciated the welcoming atmosphere that you, created for the group, so that we were all able to talk to each other, which isn’t always easy when meeting new people. Carole and I have already mentioned the idea of a Fathers gathering on a Saturday morning to our Vicar, who is also a new member of our MU branch. We look forward to helping Jackie, our MU leader, with expanding the branch for Mitcham Parish Church.

Anne from Tandridge Deanery said ‘As a full time working mum of two I didn’t have a moment to find out what the meeting was really about before hand. My life at the moment involves being where I say I’m going to be, making sure the kids are clean and where they
are meant to be and doing enough to ensure the house doesn’t turn into a compost heap whilst my back is turned. So a Saturday morning out with my 1 year old, who I don’t get a lot of one on one time with, sounded like a good idea.

I’m so glad we went because it was an inspiring day. I left having met women like me from across Southwark who wanted to be part of this organisation and make a difference to our communities and, through our network of members and friends across the globe, we can make a difference to the world. On a practical level, hearing about other branches’ ideas and projects, gave me some guidance on what we could be doing in our Caterham branch, to reach out to more people in our community.

We were very inspired from this Fresh Approach Day, we made new friends with the same mind and serving heart. A new network of different members sharing creative ideas...What fun and joy as all of us from age 18 months to 72 years praised and danced together!! We would encourage you to facilitate a gathering in your area or deanery, and we would be very happy to help. It was fun to get people talking and was such a blessing.  

Kate Buckley

“Labelled for Life” Booklet

The second edition of the Mothers’ Union "Labelled for Life" booklet was launched in November 2016 at the Jubilee Room, Westminster Hall. Oluremi Akitoye, Margaret Fitch and Micheline Ravololonarisoa were there to represent Mothers’ Union, Southwark Diocese. Bev Jullien, MU Chief Executive, and Fiona Bruce, MP for Congleton in Cheshire, herself a MU member, presided over the launch. Delegates had come from all corners of the UK.
Four presentations were made during the launch:

One by Ed Mayo, Secretary General at Cooperatives UK and author of a new book on “Values: how to bring values to life in your business”.

Lucinda Hasell, the MU Head of Faith and Policy, made the presentation on "New technologies and online safety"

Rose Wright, Campaign and Social Policy Officer at MU, presented on the question: How does the commercial world reinforce gender norms? Is this harming our children and young people?

Finally, Rachel Aston (with acknowledgment to Catherine Kyte) gave the “Response of the Church to the commercialisation of Childhood”

The novelty in this new edition is the updated information on how to manage technology. How brands make themselves attractive to children and young people through the various marketing platforms such as TV and radio, on street advertising, product placement, peer to peer marketing, online digital marketing, online adverts, behavioural advertising, special networking, user generated content, and blogs (written blogs) and vlogs (video blogs). The booklet gives a number of suggestions to parents, family members, carers and grandparents on how they can manage the influence and impact of the commercial world on children and help identify the potential risks that their children may face and consider alternatives.

A number of interesting and practical approaches are made to enable parents to equip their children, as well as a number of technological safeguards to put in place to protect children. The booklet stresses the importance for parents to stay informed and stay up to date on new technology, marketing tactics and strategies so that they can identify the potential risks that their children may face and concludes:
Technological precautions are not fully guaranteed to prevent children deliberately or unintentionally accessing unsuitable material. Educating and talking to your child is equally important in helping them to be a safe and responsible digital citizen.

Following this conclusion, participants were advised to get their views heard through the various systems set up in the UK that regulate advertisers and retailers. The three representatives from Southwark pledged during a television interview to talk to their respective vicars and MPs about actions that can be taken in this regard. It was a truly well co-ordinated and inspiring day and we are grateful for the opportunity to attend this meeting.

Oluremi, Margaret, & Micheline

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Our Annual Special Day

At St Alban, South Norwood, we held our annual MU Sunday on 21st May. We were very privileged to have one of our joint Area Vice Presidents Norma McKnight, with us. As our vicar, the Revd Russell Lawson, was on holiday, the Revd Jim Jelley led the service and our members took part in various aspects of it. We renewed our vows and Mary, a new member was enrolled. We had a retiring collection in aid of the MU South Sudan Emergency Appeal. With this money added to money collected from our Coffee Morning held earlier in May, the total amount was £110. Thank you to everyone who participated.

The service this year had a tinge of sadness as one of our members, Valerie Collins, had recently died. She joined our MU twenty eight years ago, left for five years and rejoined again last year. She will be greatly missed.

Val Green
Great News!

Following her recent Bishop’s Advisory Panel, Judith Brooks, a member of St Mildred’s, Addiscombe, MU Branch and the Diocesan MU Twitter Feed editor, has been sponsored by Bishop Christopher to begin her training for the full-time stipendiary priesthood this Autumn. Well done Judith! Our congratulations and prayers go with you as you prepare to start training.  

Margaret Simmons

A Welcoming Festival Eucharist

The Mothers’ Union service at the Cathedral was very well structured and was clearly laid out for young people such as myself, who were present to the extent that I even had a reserved seat. This gave me more confidence as I was reading prayers to the congregation.

This was also shown when Bishop Karowei used an experiment to explain clarity in which red water turned into clear water. This allowed me to remember his sermon and the message of the service even better. In addition, the atmosphere constantly felt bright and jubilant which therefore kept me interested throughout the full duration of the Mothers’ Union tribute service.

I also felt happy about how young people were included in the service. I felt welcome to the cathedral because of friendly members of the congregation which made my time there even better. As well as that, I also felt that everything within the service had no age restriction which allowed good lessons to be learnt which allows both adults and children to learn from each other.  

Kayode Ogunyemi

Thy Kingdom Come

While I am writing, this is still the Church’s Easter season when we celebrate the glorious Resurrection of our Lord. When you read it, however, so much will have happened. Ascension and Pentecost will have come and gone and we will be in the season of Trinity.
The election will be over and for some there will be new members of Parliament. For many but not all, the holidays are coming nearer.

Throughout, not just during the 10 days between Ascension and Pentecost, we will have been praying “thy kingdom come, O Lord.” Prayer is something Mothers’ Union members do well: it is part of what we as members are, since on our admission, we promised to include prayer in our everyday life. It is how we proclaim our faith in action: by Praying, Enabling and Campaigning. We have prayed that by the work of the Holy Spirit, the 5 people on our hearts will have come to know the Lord Jesus. We will have prayed that in the General Election, all have been protected from indifference and engaged with wisdom: that debates have been honest and disagreements, gracious. As the debates over Brexit continue, we pray that all communities are enabled to come together in solidarity, working towards a society of peace and tolerance.

Archbishop Justin says that prayer happens when we have a challenge we can’t meet by our own resources. “Our cupboards are bare,” he says, “so we have to go to the one who has everything we need and ask for it.” Yes, we ask God to provide our needs, but we also thank our great Creator God for all he has done for us and for life itself. Don’t forget though, that prayer is two-way and as well as praying to God, we need to take time to listen to him. In all our busyness and speech, it could well be that he is speaking to us in a still, small voice. Let us be quiet and wait on him.

Father, pour out your Spirit upon your people, and grant to us: a new vision on your glory; a new faithfulness to your Word; a new consecration to your service; that your life may grow among us, and your kingdom come.

*(The Church in Australia)*

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*Liz Pullen - Faith & Policy Co-ordinator*
# THE MOTHERS’ UNION
## SOUTHWARK DIOCESE

Linked with the Dioceses of Ekiti and Ogori-Magongo in Nigeria, Machakos in Kenya, Harare in Zimbabwe, Phulbani in India and Oxford in UK

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