

Mothers' UNION

Christian care for families



Southwark News

No 263 Summer 2022



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MU cake stall at the Charter Fair, Cheam village

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Forthcoming Events in 2022

Friday/Saturday, 23 / 24 September

- Annual Gathering, Belfast - tickets needed

Saturday, 15 October

- Diocesan Council at St. Mildred's, Addiscombe

Tuesday / Thursday, 18 / 20 October

- Retreat at Wychcroft - booking needed

Saturday 19 November

- Branch Leaders' day - details later

Friday 2 December

2.00pm Advent service, St Mark's, Surbiton

Please send your material for the Autumn Edition by 1st October

Editor: Val@utopia-creative.com



Letter from Our President

Dear Friends,

Just over a month ago, we had our Festival and Commissioning Service. I did talk about the Trustees and myself being conferred with a BA degree. Except in this case it was not a Batchelors degree but ours meant Begin Again. Yes, each time you complete a task, the end of a project, school or whatever, you put that behind you and begin again. This could be something new or you re-examine what you have been doing and start afresh. I compare this to climbing a ladder. You manage to climb to the top and there you have a beautiful view. As soon as you are at the top its time to step back down again and be at eye level with things around you. Very soon you will need the ladder to go back up again.

At commissioning services, we begin a new triennium which means beginning again with new and old trustees and committees as well as new and old Branch Leaders. It is time to look back and look forward. We check out what has gone well, what needs improvements, starting new things and hoping that when we are back at the top of the ladder, in this case three years, we will cheerfully look at our goals, aims and objectives as well as individual commitments to see how we are doing.

Many of you like me would have watched the Queen's Platinum Jubilee. What a weekend of celebration. I watched everything on television. All the planners deserve a commendation. The Queen at her coronation, made a pledge to serve her country and people and after seventy years of service, the people came out to say 'thank you Queen' So she starts another chapter in her life, she has also bagged a BA. Life, moving on will not be



the same again, changes will be made. So as we say thank you to the Queen, we wish her well in everything and pray for her health and all that she does.

I turn my mind now to summer, a time of change, there is beauty all around us, the dead plants begin coming to life in spring and blossom in summer. This beauty can be seen in all of us, smiles, friendliness, sunbathing. Gardeners with a beaming smile as they hope for fruit and vegetable in abundance. The last few weeks of good weather has made us all come alive in a new way.



So how does all I have said above, affect the Mothers' Union in Southwark Diocese (Samaria) Britain and Ireland (Judea) and the worldwide MU (rest of the world)? Wherever we are and whatever we are doing, we are witnesses of new beginnings and change and God is calling us to be part of what is going on and not sit back and look. My question is, how will we cope in the midst of all this? In Revelation 21:5. God says 'Behold, I make all things new' and also in Lamentations 3:22-23 "because of the Lord's love, we are not consumed, his compassions fail not, they are new every morning" This is our God giving us the assurance that he is the Lord of the universe and he holds everything in place.

So, if you find yourself annoyed or complaining about how banks are changing their mandate and the way we deal with our money, this along with the introduction of direct debit or subscriptions. energy bills, the rising cost of living, are all the changes happening at the moment. Rather than complain, maybe a little bit of Transformation or Metamorphosis tools, using our skills and spiritual gifts and better still, PRAY. Prayer is at the heart of what Mothers' Union does and we are about Families. So surely there is a lot to engage with. As I point you to what you can do and be part of the change, we have lots of vacancies on our Trustee board. The Mothers' Union gathering in September 23rd/24th in Belfast is another opportunity for you to go and see how you can be part of this movement of believers throughout the world.

The new Bishop of Croydon has just been consecrated. What joy that history is being made as Bishop Rosemarie Mallet moves from being Archdeacon to Bishop. A new beginning and change. We pray for you to be a voice in the wilderness going about your Father's business crying 'May your kingdom come Lord'

In conclusion please join me in singing the Hymn "Through all the changing scenes of Life" stanza 2 in particular:

*O magnify the Lord with me, exalt his name;
when in distress to him I called, he to my rescue came.
The hosts of God encamp around the dwellings of the just;
deliverance he affords to all who in his promise trust.*

Whatever your plans for summer, have a wonderful and God filled holiday.

Your sister and friend,

Comfort

CONGRATULATIONS

In March this year, Jenny Kempsell sent a message saying, Charlotte Hellyer, one of their members at Holy Trinity Redhill, was awarded the BEM in the recent honours list. Below is the article which appeared in their church headline news for that month.

For Services to Children

Our congratulations to Charlotte Hellyer on the award of the British Empire Medal for services to children in Redhill. Charlotte gave almost 30 years of service at St Matthew's Preschool, leading or assisting. At Holy Trinity, she has worked with the Climbers group since 1981 and has been on many teams over the years for Under Fives, Holiday Club and JAM. Her warmth and care have welcomed and influenced generations of children in the name of Jesus.



(Climbers is the children's Sunday School group for children aged 5-8 years old. JAM (Jesus and Me) is the after school club for Primary aged children).

MU News From Christ Church Purley Branch

Mothering Sunday

On the Thursday before Mothers' Day a small group met at Christ Church Purley to craft paper flowers with an eco 'flavour'. The leaves of the flowers were 'decorated' with a packet of seeds plus a Bible verse, and were distributed at the 27th March service.



Easter

This year's MU Easter Event was held on Tuesday, 12th April. Normally on a Tuesday Christ Church Purley's Baby and Toddler Group, called Carousel, meets in the church hall for two hours in the morning. Tea, squash and biscuits are served and there are many toys available to be enjoyed, together with a sing-along with guitar accompaniment, and it's a great time for parents and carers to meet and chat. Many MU members are involved with this church outreach activity.



The last session for the term this year was on the 5th April so it was decided to hold the MU Easter Event at the same time on the 12th, encouraging Carousel mums to come along at the usual time and enjoy the event and to meet other members of the church.

There were craft activities, games, a raffle, beverages and a fantastic cake stall. The event was hugely successful and raised a substantial sum to be donated to the Mothers' Union.



Fran King/Anne Scoones April 2022

Tea and Talk

What is this? – you may ask. About four years ago we started a new initiative called ‘Communicating English’ which was to help women whose first language was not English. We started a group in South Croydon near to a Hotel which temporarily houses asylum seekers and refugees. Because our group invited men, women and children to join us we had men and women helpers. Sadly we had to close for many months due to Covid but last summer we opened our doors again. The MU now have sole responsibility for this group in a Church that does not even have a branch. The Vicar allows us to use halls and kitchen free of charge as he is so pleased with what we are doing. As a matter of interest, one of our founder volunteers became an MU member and now is joint leader of our branch! When we reopened we decided to call our group Tea and Talk as we realised that friendship and support was as important as teaching English. Some of our guests speak English well, while others struggle, so we have to be flexible. The women helpers befriend the women and younger children. The men helpers talk with the men and also help with the children, especially the boys.

We have many refugees and asylum seekers in our Diocese and probably living in a Hotel near you. If your branch hasn’t got a project this may be one for you. We pray for families around the world and we can serve them on our doorstep. We have invited our small group to our church for a monthly midweek communion and lunch and a few have regularly attended. They so appreciate our care and hospitality. You may be reading this and say “I would like to do that but I am too old”. We have three helpers who are in their 80s and are wonderful communicators and our other helpers are not a lot younger. It is the unconditional love of the Lord Jesus and His youthful spirit which enables us to serve him this way. We have funds and materials to help you start a Group. Please contact me for more information.

Let us thank God for the many ways in which we serve in our Community. Thank God for all the blessings we receive when serving Him.

Cynthia Smith

Jubilee Tea Party

On Tuesday 31st May, St Barnabas, Sutton Mothers' Union, held a Jubilee Tea Party in the Church Hall, celebrating Her Majesty the Queen who has been Patron of the Mothers' Union for all 70 years of her reign.

The Hall was decorated with bunting and flags. The bunting included 51 knitted triangles, which were originally knitted to celebrate the 75th anniversary of VE Day in May 2020, which was cancelled because of Covid. Our Guest of Honour was Susan



Gibbin, our new Vice President, as Sutton Deanery is now in the Reigate Area. Over 30 people attended.

The afternoon started with a short service from the Mothers' Union Summer of Hope Jubilee booklet. The Summer of Hope is raising money for Mothers' Union leadership roles overseas. The Queen is obviously a shining example of leadership and duty. We began with the speech the Queen made on her 21st birthday in 1947 -

"I declare before you all that my whole life whether it be long or short shall be devoted to your service and the service of our great imperial family to which we all belong."

Prayers, a hymn and a poem followed. Susan Gibbin read the story of Caritas Kanyamuneza from Burundi, who began by learning to read on a Mothers' Union Literacy Programme and ended up running seven saving groups with 175 members, including 133 women and 42 men, teaching them how to read, write and how to deal with their money. We ended by singing "God Save the Queen" and waving Union Jacks, before saying the Grace. Whilst the service was taking place, the children were decorating crown shortbread biscuits and colouring royal pictures.

We then had the MU 50 question quiz about the Queen and her 70 year reign. There was fun and games later as the children then took part in a dressing-up race, having to dress in a cloak, pick up a corgi (Valerie Walsh had knitted six corgis for the occasion), a 'My Little Pony' and a crown. Each child was given a corgi and some a bubble stick.



After this, the Revd Dave Billin said grace before we all tucked into a beautiful spread of delicious food which everyone had donated. I then brought out the Jubilee Pudding, which had been the winner of the Platinum Pudding Competition on TV. I made it in memory of my mum, Daphne Doyle, an MU member who was famous for her trifles. Everyone had some, there was nothing left over!



Afterwards, Susan Gibbin cut the Platinum Jubilee Cake which had been baked by Pearl Essex. It had three layers of sponge and was covered with raspberries and Union Jacks. Again, all of it was eaten, not a crumb was left. We then charged our glasses and made a toast to the Queen's 70 years' reign.



When the children had finished eating, they played with red, white and blue balloons before the raffle was drawn which included Platinum Jubilee biscuits, chocolate corgis, Platinum Jubilee 'Roses' chocolates, a Jubilee mug, a knitted corgi as well as other prizes. The afternoon raised £134.45 net for Summer of Hope and everyone seemed to thoroughly enjoy themselves.

Janice Clarke

Jubilee Coffee Morning

On Saturday the 4th June around 40 members and friends attended a Coffee Morning at the Good Shepherd Church, Tadworth, to celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee. They enjoyed lively chats over a cuppa and delicious homemade cakes and tried their luck with the raffle, the prizes having been kindly donated.



It was a huge success raising nearly £200 to boost the Church Funds and the Mothers' Union Summer of Hope Campaign.



**Reigate Deanery Area Rep
& Branch Committee Member:**

Margaret Fitch

News From St Dunstan's, Cheam



After a two year hiatus the historic Charter Fair in Cheam Village resumed on Saturday 14th May 2022. St Dunstan's MU's cake stall, a regular event at the Fair, was as ever a sell out, raising funds for the Mothers' Union in our diocese.

Platinum Jubilee Tea & Lunch

On the 6th of June our MU branch held a Platinum Jubilee tea in the garden of one of our members. At least it should have been in the garden, but the uncertain weather drove everyone inside where a substantial afternoon tea was enjoyed by members and their guests.

Three days later on Thursday 9th the St Dunstan's Loaves and Fishes lunch group held a belated Jubilee celebration lunch in our church hall. The diners enjoyed a buffet lunch followed by strawberry pavlova and strawberry cake, neither surviving long enough to be photographed.

Julia Hey

Southwark Monthly MU Prayers

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



Refugees: Our Neighbours



We were delighted that many people attended an evening in June to learn more about refugees and asylum seekers in the UK. After the refreshments, Ivanka Lennon, who works so hard at the Croydon refugee day centre, was our first

speaker. She spoke of what happens there and how families and single people are helped with clothing, food and a place to be, as they only have one room to live in. One of the most striking problems were the impossibilities of the system. It can take up to two years of living in one room with very little money, privacy and little contact with others, to be given refugee status. After this a person or family is then dispersed to an unknown town somewhere. There are then ridiculous demands on them to get a national insurance number, open a bank account (need an address), get a job, sign on for universal credit, find accommodation, save enough for a first months' rent and save enough for the deposit which is usually one month's rent, all within 28 days!!



The Revd Canon Jay Colwill, Canon Missioner, Southwark Diocese also spoke to us and highlighted a few bible verses which encouraged us to 'welcome the foreigner' and seek the common good. Jay introduced some asylum seekers, who came because of their attendance at 'Tea and Talk' a Thursday afternoon gathering, where MU members and other volunteers chat with and support families from a hostel just up the road. They told us a little about their story. One family from El Salvador fleeing from threats of death from gangs, not helped by the corrupt police



there, who had difficult interviews, with accusations of trafficking and lying. Another family, from the Lebanon, fleeing death threats because of their political ideals and also desiring to protect their children (3 boys) from having to be trained how to fight with guns and the inevitable outcome. The third family from Pakistan, who were persecuted for their religious beliefs. There are many more reasons why people flee their country, its very hard to imagine the level of fear and terrible times that refugees and asylum seekers go through.

One of our MU objectives is to 'To help those whose family life has met with adversity'. All three families thanked the 'angels' for their kindness, care and support, who give up two or three hours a week to have drinks and biscuits and talk with them in the church hall, away from the one room in the hostel they are confined to. Informal chat can help people with their English and give confidence. A very simple project to arrange, which touches many families. Occasionally the volunteers are able to give them surplus toiletries or second hand clothes and other items.



Refugee centres always need clean clothes and other items to support families and they need volunteers to sort and distribute items. Is there one near you? The Croydon centre needs volunteers on Mondays - 9.30am till 1pm, Tuesdays - 9am till 1pm(ish) and on Saturdays - 10am till 1pm. It is near West Croydon bus station, train and tram stops so very easy to get to.

If you can spare some time please contact Ivanka - 07702 067758

Be careful about giving money/goods, only give to recognised organisations, avoid social media links as they are not all legitimate. For information about Ukraine refugees and how you can help:

<https://southwark.anglican.org/ukraine-what-can-i-do-to-help/>



*How can we love our neighbour?
Kate Buckley, Christ Church, Purley*

Jubilee Celebrations with the Local Community

Picnics, cream teas with homemade scones and cake – what better way to mark the Queen's Platinum Jubilee?

On Saturday 4th June, the MU branch members at Christ Church Purley joined forces with the organisers of a Jubilee Picnic at the local park, to host a memorable celebration. The church opened its doors, welcoming picnic-goers to use its facilities - fortunately the wet-weather option was not needed



despite some worrying drizzle earlier in the day!



During the afternoon, Christ Church branch members cheerfully served hot drinks and a range of delicious home-made cakes and scones with clotted cream and jam. Lots of people

came across from the park to relax and enjoy a treat. Many left knowing a little more about the local church and the work of Mothers' Union in improving life for families throughout the world. By 4.30 pm all the scones (and most of the cakes) were gone and nearly £300 of donations had been received! The funds raised will be given to support the ongoing work of Mothers' Union.

The Christ Church MU team was delighted to have this opportunity to both serve the local community and honour Her Majesty, our Patron, on such a special occasion.

Sue Keeler

Summer is Here Again!

Reflection - Renewal - Refreshment - Re-Creation

Many churches celebrate the Season of Creation during September, which often ends with Harvest Festival. Our church is no exception, but we recently had a 'Welcome to Summer' Sunday, a 'Celebration of Creation' inspired by the Lutheran churches in Sweden. It was a beautiful service held on a superb summer's day with the sun shining through the stained-glass windows. In



particular one such window was shedding shards of coloured light straight onto the Rood Cross. It was enough to make anyone cry with joy! I'm sure the light would

have been shining just as brightly and movingly through the jewels in the Diamond Jubilee Window in the Cathedral!

Windows are created by human skill, a gift of God, but the world around us is created directly by God. This is very similar to the photo on the front of the service sheet, and the delicately coloured petals of the flowers are the very epitome of a summer meadow, and a celebration of God's creation.

Our happiest memories often revolve around summer holidays: a time of sharing and celebration with family members: a time to share blessings too. One of God's blessings is that of *time*, and summer is often the season when time is said to stand still. The freedom of the summer holidays, away from school, and hopefully away from much of the daily routine, is the time to stop, pause, breathe deeply and celebrate God's creation all around us: in our

window boxes, gardens, parks, countryside and seaside ... and in all humanity. God constantly renews and sustains this creation and we should try to do the same. As people we need to renew and refresh ourselves constantly, and we need also to renew and refresh *all* God's creation: the people and the world around us. Perhaps we will have time during the summer to change our habits to consider those who are poorer than ourselves, the sustainability of our planet and climate change. While we are having recreation, we can consider the re-creation of all God's world: God's great gift to us for which we are eternally grateful, doing our small part to bring about a lasting renewal of our world. A real Celebration of Creation.

Glorious God, the whole of creation proclaims your marvellous work: increase in us a capacity to wonder and delight in it, that heaven's praise may echo in our hearts and our lives be spent as good stewards of the earth, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Collect taken from 'A Time for Creation' published by Church House Publishing

Liz Pullen

Annual Gathering 2022 ***Transformation - Now!***

Friday 23rd & Saturday 24th September
St Anne's Cathedral &
Waterfront Hall

International Convention Centre (ICC) Belfast



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24 Tufton Street, London SW1P 3RB
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