



Inspired Folder
April 2015

Mothers' UNION
Christian care for families
Peterborough Diocese

Inspired Folder

This folder has been compiled as a result of the Inspired Afternoon held on Saturday 13th September 2014. The feedback from the day was positive and everyone went home truly 'inspired'.

All the project ideas brought to the afternoon have been placed into a variety of categories, which we hope are easily understood.

We hope you will adopt one or more of the ideas from the folder in your branch or deanery. Each page can be downloaded separately from the website.

Take a look at what is needed in your parish or community and see how Mothers' Union could reach out.

Discuss with your members before you start on a project. Answer some simple questions. Are you able to meet the need? (time, members, funds). How will people know it is a Mothers' Union project?

If the project is running in another branch, get in touch about the project.

Lastly, let the Action and Outreach Unit committee members know what you are doing, so that we can add it to the folder and share it with others through our website, not just in our own diocese, but with other dioceses and with Mary Sumner House.



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There is a monopoly style game available to large branches or deaneries for a fun way of learning about the projects in this folder.

1. Faith and Prayer



The prayer life that Mothers' Union branches have underpins the work of the diocese.

There are two prayer books that branch members could use at their meetings, the blue book 'United in Prayer and Worship' and the red book 'The Prayers We Breathe'. Besides these books there is also the 'Families Worldwide' booklet and the 'Grapevine', published by the diocese itself, has a pull out centre for prayers for the month.

'United in Prayer and Worship' also has a section at the back to help branch members focus more prayerfully.



In the diocese we have an emergency prayer chain which has an organiser who asks the chain members to pray for three consecutive weeks for such events as AFIA holidays as well as individual people on request.

Wave of Prayer



We hold deanery and branch Wave of Prayer services between the 21st and 23rd September when we pray for the work of Mothers' Union in our worldwide link dioceses of Soroti in Uganda, Rumbek in South Sudan, NE Caribbean and Aruba, and Oyo and Aba Ngwa North in Nigeria.



Travelling Crib or Posada

Knitted models of Mary, Joseph and the donkey travel around homes in the parish during Advent. Sometimes a knitted sheep is left with each family to be brought to a children's service on Christmas Eve. Hosting the crib is a way of finding a shared moment for the family when many of us are busy card writing, present wrapping and preparing festive fare.



Mothering Sunday



Some branches make small posies of daffodils for the children to give their mothers at the service and others buy the bookmarks on sale from MU Enterprises in their catalogue for Mothering Sunday. Other branches provide Simnel cake for after the service.



Bible Story Bags

In some branches the members have put a bible story book in a bag with the knitted figures of the characters in the story for the children to share with their parents.

Pre-school children's services

Some branches have organised pram or monthly services for pre-school children and their carers.





2. Marriage

The sacrament of marriage and its support by our members as an objective is something that branches could offer in support of the clergy in their parish. Mothers' Union members at St Peter's church in Brackley assist their priest by using a marriage preparation course. The contact person is Marian Thompson. Mothers' Union produces a 'Marriage For Better Not Worse' booklet. They also run a 'Loving for Life' course for facilitators to support couples preparing for marriage. Mary Sumner House sell a 'Loving for Life' prayer card for couples.



Wedding cards

There is a selection of wedding cards available in the MU catalogue for your branch to send to couples on the occasion of their wedding day.

3. Baptism



There are many branches which support the sacrament of baptism in their parish by assisting their priest with the preparation for baptism. Also, many branches give a gift at the child's baptism of a knitted 'baptismal' teddy, or a posy with a candle, or a presentation book. Some branches give a card on the day of the baptism or over the next five years on the anniversary of the child's baptism. Besides those advertised in the Mothers' Union Enterprises catalogue the diocese of Carlisle produce cards that can be delivered by Mothers' Union members as a way of having contact with the family. You could also include a 'What Dads Add' leaflet as well. These are obtainable from Mary Sumner House. Some branches organise an annual tea for the baptismal families to support their clergy. Banners for the baptism service have also been made in branches.

'Hand in Hand'

This is a booklet for families to help parents to pray with their children and is priced at £2 from Mary Sumner House.

4. Social Policy



There is a Social Policy co-ordinator in the diocese.

The campaigning nationally is the 'Bye Buy Childhood' campaign which is promoted in the booklet 'Labelled for Life'. Other campaigns are 'The 16 Days of Activism against Violence' which takes place during Advent each year. This includes gender based violence and female genital mutilation. The millennium goals were up dated and are on the national website. A Family Ministry is to be piloted later this year.

The leaflet 'What Dad Adds' has been updated and can be used throughout the year.

Making A Difference

A book entitled 'Making A Difference' is a social policy tool kit available from Mary Sumner House which outlines how we can make our members aware of the current campaigns on the Mothers' Union website.





Promoting Mothers' Union

Always wear your badge! This shows others you are a member of Mothers' Union. A variety of badges are available from Mary Sumner House. People may ask why they are different or what organisation they represent. Have a two short sentence reply ready to describe the work of Mothers' Union.

When you have read your copy of 'Families First' offer it to young mums in your church, or place it on the information table in your church alongside Mothers' Union leaflets.

Make A Mother's Day

Mothering Sunday may be used as a fundraising event by sending out catalogues to branches with a selection of ethical gifts that families can choose as an alternative present for their mother.





The Big Wheels Appeal

This year this fundraising appeal has slightly changed its name. Many branches hold summer lunches, coffee mornings or afternoon teas to raise money for this worthwhile appeal. Make sure you publicise this event in your church.



6. Action and Outreach Projects



‘Away From It All’ holidays

Families can be referred by members, the clergy or other agencies as being in need of a holiday. There are two chalets at Hemsby Holiday Centre which are available on a weekly basis. Usually the referee can supply transport for the family to travel to this site just outside Great Yarmouth. The two co-ordinators for these holidays organise together with the site supervisor a welcome pack of the basic essentials for the family which also contains a prayer card for them.



Prisons

Each year our diocese sends cards at Christmas, which members have signed 'With love from Mothers' Union' to all the prisoners at Peterborough Prison. The branch at Werrington serves refreshments in the Visitors' Centre at the prison on visiting days.



Hospitals

There are several hospitals in the diocese. The Brackley Deanery knit 'Angel Pockets' for the Horton hospital in Banbury, for still born babies. In the Kettering Deanery some members make 'Joy Boxes' for patients who go into hospital. The box is wrapped in brightly coloured paper and each gift is wrapped individually in coloured tissue, to be opened on a daily basis. Some are to taste, some to read or write in, others to smell. They brighten up what can be quite a frightening time for some patients.

Parent and Toddler Groups

Where a church has a parent and toddler group many Mothers' Union members assist the group by providing a snack of tea, coffee, juice and biscuits for the parents and the toddlers to enjoy.



Family Fun Days

To celebrate Mary Sumner Day some branches have organised a 'Fun Day' for families in their deaneries or a picnic with outdoor games.

Children's Activity Bags

Some branches provide Activity Bags for the younger children attending services in church. The bag contains crayons, a pencil, a colouring book, a bible story book and a soft toy.



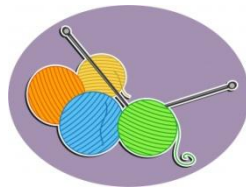
Knitting



In the diocese we knit blankets, children's tops, scarves, hats and mittens and knitted 'Teddies for Tragedy'. The blankets and the children's tops go to a hospital in Africa. The scarves, hats and mittens go to the Samaritan's Purse Christmas Shoe Box Appeal. The teddies go to Northamptonshire Police for distribution. Sewn on to the teddies is a 'With love from Mothers' Union' label.

Knit and Natter

It was suggested on the 'Inspired' afternoon that some branches could set up a 'Knit and Natter' group in their parish to promote the knitting of the above garments.



Women's Refuges

Some deaneries send teddies for the children in the Refuge to be given on their arrival. Others send toiletries for the children, and make up and toiletries for the mothers, which may include deodorant, shower gel or cream, shampoo, toothbrush and paste, soap and sponge or face cloth.

Care Homes



Many branches are now sewing the Activity Aprons and Quilts for the care homes in their parish. These are helpful for those residents with dementia who like to 'fiddle' with their clothing.

Certain branches provide entertainment and a special tea, on an annual basis, for the residents in their local care home.



Food Banks

Branches in the Wellingborough Deanery collect items required for the Daylight Centre, who provide Food Bank boxes for those families in need. The diocese is also designing a recipe card, with several easy recipes, that can be cooked using ingredients from the food boxes distributed by the local Food Bank.



Homeless people



The members of All Saints branch in Wellingborough provide the homeless of the town with a rucksack containing a sleeping bag, some clothing, a mug and a sachet of an instant hot drink, and non perishable food.



10 pence on Tuesday

This is a diocese project which raises over £1,000 each year for the Worldwide fund. Each member is asked to save 10 pence a week during the year and send the money via their branch to the November Forum where the collection is taken up during the Eucharist and blessed before being counted and sent to Mary Sumner House.



Parenting groups

Some members have attended a diocese course to enable them to run a parenting group. Please contact the Diocesan President for your nearest facilitator if your parish would like run to a group. There is a pamphlet 'Tackling Torment' which may be helpful to parents. Other useful publications are the 'Top Tips for Parents' available from Mary Sumner House.

Tea and Toast

At the 'Inspired' afternoon some members felt that this project would be worthwhile if you had the building space. The members would provide tea and toast for the parents of primary school children between 9 and 10 am once or twice a school week and chat with the parents, 'Families First' copies and 'Bye Buy Childhood' resources are left out for the parents to pick up.

Newly moved in families

A 'Welcome to Your New Home' card from your branch available from Mary Sumner House would advertise your Mothers' Union branch in the local parish.



Christmas cards



The diocese sends cards to the Daylight Centre, its Wave of Prayer link dioceses worldwide, to families who went on an 'Away From It All' holiday during that year and to its Indoor members each year.

