



COMMUNICATE

Mini



GETTING STARTED – MOVING FORWARD

As I write this we celebrate Pentecost, that great birthday of the church. For a society that has experienced various lockdowns, there is, I think, a powerful message for us all. At Pentecost that small group of locked down, fearful disciples were transformed by the Holy Spirit and boldly proclaimed the gospel of the cross and resurrection. The last 18 months has been really difficult. I hope that as you read this, improvements will be continuing, and you will be able to experience more contacts with friends and family. However, if we have learned anything, it is that it is difficult to predict, or be certain about things, we previously took for granted.

The only thing we can be certain of is the faithful love of God. Not a distant God, but one who knows all about suffering. Our incarnate God walks with us through all the ups and downs of life, whether we are aware of it or not. This was the inspiration of our founder Mary Sumner. In the past 145 years we have seen her passion grow from an idea in a small Hampshire village, into our worldwide Christian charity, working for the good of families in prayer and action.

Despite the challenges of the last year we have kept everything going as a Diocese. Of course it has been hard not to meet together. However we have:

- Kept in touch with each other via, phone, distanced visits on walks, cards etc.
- Regular bulletins, our own “Communicate” newsletter and the new MSH publication “Connected”.
- E-mails, Zoom and materials on the Internet are not for everyone, but have proved very successful in keeping things going.
- Some members have met for midday prayers on Zoom or watched those available via the MU website. These go out worldwide.
- All have access to services on the radio or television or on the freephone Daily Hope 0800 804 8044. Our churches have been very inventive.
- Members have used their crafting skills to make gifts of love.
- Some of us have been baking for the NHS and care homes.
- AFIA holidays may be possible again this summer, but in the meantime our coordinators have offered flexible help to families.
- This has also been the case with the Frances lunch club where supermarkets have been generous in supporting food provision for families.
- We again plan to send cards and chocolates to prisoners in Peterborough
- Members have continued to support the Daylight Centre in Wellingborough in a number of ways, when possible.
- Faith remains at the centre of all we do. We would love to add members onto our prayer chain. Phone Julia Freeman on 01780 720869 if interested
- Our Quiet evening with Bishop Andrew Proud was thought provoking and well attended and the Retreat at Launde in October is fully booked.
- I have completed 4 virtual lengths and breadths of the Diocese which is 215kms x4=860kms! Funds will support Worldwide MU, AFIA and our clergy packs. If you wish, please send contributions to Sylvia Rowley our treasurer.

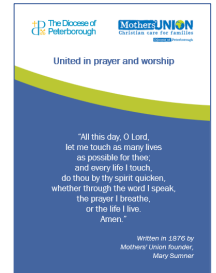
So as you can see we have never really stopped! However, we all look forward to being able to meet again. I pray that like those early disciples at Pentecost, inspired by the Holy Spirit, we can move forward and build on our solid roots.

Many of you are planning future events. This may include:

- MU services in church – I attended 3 in one week!
- Special services for Mary Sumner Day as we celebrate 100 years since her death. There are excellent resources on the MU website.
- We will be updating the Wave of Prayer service for use in September.
- Perhaps we can plan some events at the end of the year in support of our policy initiatives to combat Domestic violence, Modern Day Slavery and all forms of relationship oppression worldwide.
- All branches are receiving Summer of Hope materials to help plan outside events and fundraising.

CLERGY PACKS TO WORK TOGETHER TO BUILD GOD'S KINGDOM

This is an exciting new initiative for this year. We are developing MU packs for all 210 clergy in the diocese. We will be hand delivering these during the summer. Attractive A5 folders will include some of the best MU materials. We are offering contact details for more information and prayer in support of their ministry. We will pray for, and where possible actively support their ministry. In Mary Sumner's words we will "touch lives for Christ"



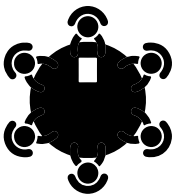
JUST A REMINDER ABOUT OUR...

Photo Competition

CLOSING DATE: 30th September 2021

IT COULD BE YOU!

At our March Forum, Helen Lynett was elected as our next Diocesan President, taking over from Jill in January 2022.



At our November Forum, elections will take place for a Vice President as well as for three Trustees..... Could it be you? Could it be someone from your Branch? If you have any questions about the role, please speak to any of the Trustee board who will enlighten you – you will find their contact details on the 'Who's Who' page on the inside cover of Communicate.

JOINING IN WITH GOD'S PLANS

I end with those wonderful words from Jeremiah 29:11 "For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans to prosper and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future"

Please pray for all we are doing

with love to you and your families

Jill Cannings

Please send in your articles for the next edition of ComMUNicate by 1st October 2021 to
Helen Lynett – helenlynett@btinternet.com
14 Thornbridge Close, Rushden. Northants. NN10 9NJ

Thank you