



## **PETERBOROUGH DIOCESE – REPORT FOR FORUM MARCH 2021**

### **President's introduction**

After a difficult 2020 there is cautious hope on the horizon. We will not be able to worship and meet together at Forum in March. However, as we promised last year all Diocesan events and activities will take place virtually or face to face. We will communicate by all means possible to keep in touch with members.

**Thankyou for holding the faith and praying and acting to touch lives for Christ.**

**This year we celebrate 145 years of Mothers' Union.**

**On Mary Sumner day in August it will be 100 years since the death of our inspirational founder.**

**Since then we have become the oldest and largest worldwide Christian movement, supporting family life.**

This report celebrates what we achieved last year and sets our plans for 2021.

### **Mary Sumner House and our Worldwide mission and ministry**

Thankyou to those of you who supported the appeal for funds last year. We enter this year with a smaller MSH staff group, most of whom continue to predominantly work from home. However, they are doing a great job in consulting and communicating. The use of Zoom meetings will continue to enable more sharing across Britain and Ireland and indeed worldwide. Our membership details are more accurate, so all members have received their prayer diary and will receive the twice yearly national publication "Connected". **But please, please keep us informed.**

### **Activities and plans**

**AFIA** - our co leaders Anne Touchin and Margareta Hallam did a great job last year. We received wonderful feedback. It was not possible to send families away on traditional holidays by the sea. While this may be possible later in the summer, they will continue to provide flexible responses supporting family life.

**Lunch club** - This now enters its 5<sup>th</sup> year. The impetus of the campaign by Marcus Rashford means that we are at the forefront of combatting food poverty. Supermarkets gave generously and deliveries were made to families. Lyn Ridley and her team of volunteers are hoping for face to face contacts later this year.

**Cards** - Last year we maintained our ministry to our link dioceses, Daylight and the prisoners by sending cards. We received grateful feedback and will do this again.

**Crafting** – Members continue to use their skills to create gifts of love. Please try to support a local need. Jennie Edis and Juliette Dunkley can advise.

**Faith and spirituality** – The quiet evening led by Bishop Andrew Proud on the evening of 12<sup>th</sup> May will be on Zoom. We will circulate the link or ask Revd Christine. She has written a Lady Day service that can be used and the Wave of prayer will be updated. 25 members are booked onto the retreat at Launde later in the year, and we may start a short waiting list in case anyone is unable to go. Please ask Lyn Ridley or Revd. Christine Ostler. Midday prayers and other special services are available on the MU website. There are also prayers resources on our own website <http://mothersunionpeterborough.org>

You will also find the filmed service by our chaplain Revd. Deborah Marsh. All members have received materials for Mothering Sunday. The daily free phone for hymns, reflections and prayers on 0800 804 8044 continues and includes MU midday prayers. This year we are planning to create helpful **packs for all our clergy**. We pray that this will help their ministry, while raising the profile of MU.

**Policy** – Nicky Vaughan is always happy to talk about our policy initiatives. We challenge all injustice, violence and oppression that impacts adversely on women, children and family life generally. There are excellent resources on the MU website regarding **16 days of activism**. Some branches mark this between 25<sup>th</sup> November and 10<sup>th</sup> December. Perhaps we could think of doing some larger events this year. We have raised awareness of **Modern Day slavery**. Ask Nicky for posters or more awareness cards. We have challenged the appalling rate of domestic violence worldwide through the **No more 1 in 3 campaign** and will continue with the work. She also has a resource to share with any in touch with their local refuge.

**Communications** - Helen Lynett uses her skills to coordinate the production of our Diocesan newsletter “Communicate” which is produced twice a year. This year we will be asking you to send in photos from the last year. Watch out for details of this fun photo competition. Our own website is a valuable source of all information that you may need; contacts details and useful documents plus interesting articles.

**Fundraising** – 2020 was a difficult year for fundraising, but we know that some branches are planning fun events for the warmer weather. Let us know your ideas. Jill has come up with the idea of virtually walking the length and breadth of the diocese. This will raise the profile of MU and funds that will go towards AFIA and creating clergy packs. Members can contribute using her Just giving page. The link is [Jill Cannings is fundraising for Mothers' Union \(justgiving.com\)](https://www.justgiving.com/Jill-Cannings). or send a contribution through your branch.

**Plans for the future** – As you can see we have been doing a great deal, and have additional plans for 2021. I know that many of you will be looking forward to worshipping and meeting together. But in the meantime we are part of a worldwide Christian charity praying and acting for families. In the light of the pandemic and its impact on children and families, there has never been a greater need for our shared faith and MU.

***BREAKING NEWS - HELEN LYNETT IS OUR DIOCESAN  
PRESIDENT ELECT AND WILL TAKE OVER NEXT JANUARY***

Written by Jill Cannings Diocesan President on behalf of the Trustees