



THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK FROM ANGLICAN MOTHERS UNION AUSTRALIA  
MONDAY 1 JANUARY 2018

### NEW YEAR

We have work ahead of us as we activate the process for identifying the future needs of Mothers' Union Worldwide. We thank God for the leadership of Lynne Tembey. The collective work is also the personal. May God guide each of us to LISTEN, OBSERVE and ACT as we faithfully open our hearts and minds to all things new.

*Trust in the Lord with all your heart and do not rely on your own insight. In all your way acknowledge him and he will make straight your paths. Proverbs 3:5-6*

Mothers' Union members in Lesotho are 'a listening ear' when visiting the housebound and those in hospital and prison. They try to ascertain what is needed so they can pray and take action. In Swaziland members support the Safe Water Ministry Team as drought threatens access to clean water. We give thanks for their commitment to community outreach.



THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK FROM ANGLICAN MOTHERS UNION AUSTRALIA  
SUNDAY 7 JANUARY 2018

### MOTHERS' UNION MISSION

Love is Jesus' way. Lynne Tembey reminds us that we are 'committed to love in service' and should 'strive for equality in every area'. Loving God,

To serve by love – O teach us how:  
Be this our great vocation,  
To comfort grief, to seek the lost  
With message of salvation;  
In loving may our full hearts beat,  
Our words be wise and winning;  
In helping others may our joy  
Have ever new beginning. AHB 534

*Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind and your neighbour as yourself. Luke 10: 27*

Let us thank God that in Mauritius, DP Shirley Gully has 'a priority to contribute to the wellbeing of all' and that the Seychelles members joined in a march with the Women in Action and Solidarity Organisation as part of the 16 Days of Activism against Gender Based Violence.



THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK FROM ANGLICAN MOTHERS UNION AUSTRALIA  
SUNDAY 14 JANUARY 2018

### HOPE AND JOY

We may say we hope for better weather, or for a drop in electricity prices, but Christian hope is born of a view of life that has heaven in its sights. Hope remembers God's love for his creation, is mindful of Jesus' Way; so following that Way lightens the soul and Joy fills the heart.

*May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. Romans 15:13*

Mothers' Union members in Gambia demonstrate hope in the power of prayer and community service as they resource education for the very young and revitalize their school. Members in Egypt are mostly refugees from war-torn Sudan and South Sudan. Despite political unrest members work with hope and joy 'to make a difference', meeting and praying in fellowship. Give thanks to God for their contribution to the 'vibrant faith life of the diocese'.



THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK FROM ANGLICAN MOTHERS UNION AUSTRALIA  
SUNDAY 21 JANUARY 2018

#### CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP

'We are the Body of Christ': this is our song. Let us strive to put aside the darkness of disagreement and competitiveness so that Christ's light brings a glow of love to our shared purpose.

*If we walk in the light as he himself is in the light, we have fellowship with one another and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin. 1John 1: 7*

We thank God for members in Nigeria who have reached out with compassion to effect changes in lives of women and girls. Mothers' Union in Christian fellowship intervened when a 13 year old girl was forced into marriage, so that 'the father was prevailed upon to allow the girl to go to school' and when a young widow was deprived of her possessions she was supported.



THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK FROM ANGLICAN MOTHERS UNION AUSTRALIA  
SUNDAY 28 JANUARY 2018

#### HOMELESSNESS

'Our hearts are restless until they rest in you'. St Augustine, CS Lewis, the lady next door, we, all of us, are homeless until our wandering ceases. Jesus identified with our human condition of spiritual homelessness and the very real condition of the world's lost. Let us pray God's mercy on those with no permanent home and forgive us in the complacency of our comfort.

*Jesus said, 'Foxes have holes and birds of the air have their nests but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head.' Matthew 8: 20*

We give thanks for members in Wales. Members in Monmouth are concentrating on work with the homeless and investigating partnership with Gwalia Housing Association and 'Amazing Grace Spaces' which looks at container living. Refugee families receive welcome packs in their new homes. Thanks be to God.



THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK FROM ANGLICAN MOTHERS UNION AUSTRALIA  
SUNDAY 4 FEBRUARY 2018

#### VALUING RELATIONSHIPS

Everywhere I look and listen I hear people being urged to think of their own wellbeing, their own happiness. A Christ-centred life is one which has a mind and heart for the wellbeing and care of others. Help us, dear God, to know you more clearly, that we may love you and all those who share our lives more dearly.

*Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit but in humility regard others as better than yourselves. Let each of you look not to your own interests, but to the interests of others. Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus. Philippians 2: 3-5*

In Botswana Church and Mothers' Union work together – valuing their relationship in Christ. As a result, vision and membership are growing and members are responding to community needs with practical action. Relationships are valued and strengthened when groups adopt orphans, build homes for the destitute and provide toiletries for prisoners. A mission goal, to respond to human need with love, is a reason for us to give thanks and praise to God.



THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK FROM ANGLICAN MOTHERS UNION AUSTRALIA  
SUNDAY 11 FEBRUARY 2018

### PRAYER MATTERS

Yes, it is true, prayer does matter. It matters so much that we need to stop and give the practice of prayer our attention. Time spent with God matters. The structure and content of the daily office, morning and evening prayer, settles us down, re-aligning our hearts and minds towards Jesus' teachings, praying God's blessing on those for whom we care. Sacred time matters. The dishes can wait.

*Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. Philippians 4:6*

Mothers' Union and the Anglican Church are now seen as major drivers of positive change in communities all over Burundi. Sesema was lonely and unhappy; she joined the Literacy and Financial Education Program. Now she can read and write and is able to send her children to school. We offer our prayers and thanksgiving for the givers and receivers of aid, that many need no longer beg but have learnt the skills to provide for their families.



THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK FROM ANGLICAN MOTHERS UNION AUSTRALIA  
SUNDAY 18 FEBRUARY 2018

### JOY OF LENT

'Love will be our Lenten calling': the first line of Elizabeth Smith's hymn sets a joyful tone. It is sung to 'Picardy' and I find it a meditation full of hope and honesty. What better road to walk in Lent.

Love will be our Lenten calling,  
love to shake and shatter sin,  
Waking every closed, cold spirit,  
stirring new life deep within,  
Till the quickened heart remembers  
what our Easter birth can mean.

*Have mercy on me O God, according to your unfailing love; according to your great compassion blot out my transgressions. Psalm 51:1*

Members in South Sudan are supporting feeding clinics for vulnerable children and families. War has devastated farming so Mothers' Union has provided people with seeds and tools to return to the land and start to feed themselves again. God's Love gives hope and purpose to shattered lives and heals the healers.



THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK FROM ANGLICAN MOTHERS UNION AUSTRALIA  
SUNDAY 25 FEBRUARY 2018

### WOMEN WORLDWIDE

Mothers' Union brings us in contact with women throughout the world. We hear their voices, their needs and triumphs. We are sisters in faith, we pray together and thank God for his faithfulness through the ages. We pray for women who still suffer injustice, whether in education, the workplace or in relationships.

*I thank my God through Jesus Christ for all of you, because your faith is proclaimed throughout the world. Romans 1:8*

In Australia members are committed to prayer and support to disadvantaged women and children. We give thanks for God's love and protection over 125 years. Let us pray for God's guidance and a renewed vision for the future.



THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK FROM ANGLICAN MOTHERS UNION AUSTRALIA  
SUNDAY 4 MARCH 2018

### FAIR TRADE ISSUES

It seems that every action of love and care takes TIME. Lord, let us be aware as we shop. Help us to seek out fair trade goods, to be prepared to pay a price that allows others a living wage and encourage retailers to stock more such products.

*Even when the land of the poor produces good crops, they get cheated out of what they grow. Proverbs 13:23*

Mothers' Union members in Cameroon has worked on financial empowerment. Women who learn to run their own affairs and managing money, learn the value of fair trade. One member said that 'the Lord has blessed (me) through the programme and now I have a bank account and contribute to my family's welfare.'



THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK FROM ANGLICAN MOTHERS UNION AUSTRALIA  
SUNDAY 11 MARCH 2018

### CARERS

Mothering is God's gift to the human race. Whether it is learnt from one's own primary carer or learnt by experience and observation, to have the art of mothering is to be a disciple of Christ. There are no boundaries or reservations to Mothering's care, it does not blame the victim, and it always loves the outcast and rejected. Lead us, loving God, from cynicism to uncritical love.

*Those who trust in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint. Isaiah 40:31*

We pray for Episcopal Church Women in the Philippines where human trafficking continues to be a big concern as it impacts on women and girls. Mothers' Union celebrated 90 years in Sierra Leone. Its vision of care is education and outreach to the poor and needy based on 'prayer and devotion'.



THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK FROM ANGLICAN MOTHERS UNION AUSTRALIA  
SUNDAY 18 MARCH 2018

UNITED NATIONS

Lord of the nations, we pray that the voice of Mothers' Union will be clearly heard this week at UNCSW as delegates focus on the theme of Challenges and Opportunities in achieving gender equality and the empowerment of rural women and girls.

*He will judge between many peoples, and shall arbitrate between strong nations for away; they shall beat their swords into ploughshares and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore. Micah 4:3*

Anglican Women in Peru are part of the Mothers' Union global family. They have adopted the theme 'firmness and fervor in prayer' and ask for our prayers for their future work. Bermuda faces political, racial and cultural tensions but on Pentecost invited the whole island to an ecumenical service – surely an expression of unity under God.



THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK FROM ANGLICAN MOTHERS UNION AUSTRALIA  
SUNDAY 25 MARCH 2018

HOLY WEEK

Be with us as we walk this Holy Week with you, Lord. May we greet you with palms, and with each passing day read and hear the scriptures concerning your humility in the face of betrayal and death. Eternal God, rock and refuge ... abide with us until we come alive in the sunrise of your glory.

*Jesus fell with his face to the ground and said, 'My Father, if it is possible may this cup be taken from me. Yet not as I will, but as you will.' Matthew 26: 39*

Floods and crop damage and pests have caused food shortages in Zambia, however, in the midst of suffering members reach out to others. Mothers' Union has continued to strengthen marriage and families through Christian education and support and encourage members to share the scriptures with their families and pray together.