

**Diocese of The Murray,
South Australia.**



ANGLICAN
MOTHERS UNION
AUSTRALIA

THE MURRAY CON-TRIBUTARY NEWSLETTER

December 2017

“Faith in Action”

Dear Friends,

As we come to the end of 2017, we begin Advent, and eagerly await the birth of baby Jesus. We light the Advent candles each week and our thoughts prepare for the coming of Christ to the world. Preparing ourselves for Christmas, let us take hold of the confidence we can have in Jesus, and remember the promise that Mary had “for with God nothing will be impossible.”

In my home Parish of Strathalbyn once again during Advent the knitted figures of Mary and Joseph will be travelling around houses in the area, spending a night in each home, to symbolise the journey made over 2,000 years ago when Mary and Joseph travelled to Bethlehem for the birth of Jesus. On Christmas Eve Mary and Joseph will be brought back into Christ Church and the Holy Family will be assembled in the stable by the children during the Crib service.

In a recent letter received from Lynne Tembey, our Worldwide President, Lynne reminded us of our founder Mary Sumner’s words in an 1893 Mothers’ Union journal:

“Our Society is a company of mothers, and good women possessed with motherly hearts, women of all classes, high and humble, rich and poor, learned and unlearned great ladies of the land and poor mothers in small homes. We have bound ourselves together to love and help one another.”

Sometimes we need to be reminded about our roots and about the vision that Mary Sumner had when she began this wonderful organisation.

It was good to hear that many of you joined in the Mothers’ Union Project working to address violence against women and children through the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence 2017. This year, Mothers’ Union focussed on the issue of stigma, where society responds negatively to, or by blaming those who are, victims of gender-based violence.

I know many of you in your branches have remembered our MU Diocesan Links at your November meetings, but do personally remember them again when our actual Wave of Prayer date comes up from 17th to 19th December so the cycle of prayer is not broken.

It was so good to hear at the Council meeting last month at Aldinga, the tremendous work Prue O’Donovan and Gail Hardy are doing through the Quickest Warmth Project. I would have loved to have seen many more people there to see and listen to the wonderful work this project is doing in the community, and the ways in which we, as Mothers’ Union members, can help them.

I would like to finish this letter with a prayer that a member of my branch in England gave me many years ago, which I like to read each year on the lead up to Christmas.

Lord, it is so easy to get in a panic. We rush about making lists, perhaps determined to get things done earlier this year, anxious that we cannot afford to give our family the

presents we know they would like. What is all the fuss about? Help us to see beyond the rush and the worry to the baby, the little Prince of Peace, who was born to an ordinary family and yet who changed the history of the world. The message the angels brought is still the same and in a world crying out for love, help us to remember that the best possible present we can give is our talents, our love, our time and understanding to our families, our friends and our neighbours. Then Lord, Christmas will be Christmas, the great festival of the Christ Child, who still today can touch our hearts and our lives with His love, His joy and His peace. Amen.

My best wishes to you and your family for a Blessed and Holy Christmas, with a prayer that the joy of Christmas day may bring peace and hope to all the world.

With my love

Eileen

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LIFE VICE PRESIDENT

During the Eucharist service, prior to the Council meeting at Aldinga, Mothers' Union Diocesan Chaplain, Rev. David Price, admitted Judith O'Leary as a Life Vice President of The Murray Diocese, and acknowledged her 50 years Long Membership. Judith was presented with a Certificate and Badge by Diocesan President Eileen Smith, giving thanks for Judith's faithful membership of Mothers' Union.



Jocelyn Williamson was Commissioned as Publications Co-ordinator and Trish Frith as Social Issues & Action Co-ordinator, filling two vacant positions on the Executive committee.

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Trish Frith – Social Issues
Co-ord



Good Day, I have four married children who are devoted. In the past 17 years after becoming a widow I have become involved in the parish life of Southern Vales, primarily St. Ann's at Aldinga where I am a Warden and Pastoral Assistant.

I am a bush care rose co-ordinator/pruner and my hobbies include golf and croquet.

My new Mothers' Union position in this Diocese means I will be asking for your help!

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JUDEVANGEL BRANCH

At our branch meeting recently we packed 3 boxes for 'Make a House a Home' project for refugees.

We also arranged a "Quiet Day" which was conducted by Deacon Margo Holt. Victor Harbor members were invited to attend and we joyfully welcomed 6 fellow MU members bringing our total of participants to 14.



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PROFILE: Jocelyn Williamson – Publications Co-ordinator.



I grew up in various country towns of South Australia and vividly remember my mother going to F.O.M in Mount Gambier and MU in Murray Bridge.

Over the years I have been involved with Sunday School teaching, Youth groups, in Murray Bridge and a GFS Leader and Children's Ministry Co-ordinator in Coromandel Parish for a few years.

When first asked to join MU 35 years ago my reply was 'but I am not even a mother yet' and within that first year I was pregnant much to the delight of all the members in the Coromandel Valley branch.

My MU journey has been consistent since then. And I have had short stints as secretary and Publications co-ordinator. When we lived in Darwin for 4 years I joined their branch and was also involved with leading the Caritas group there. As there was only one branch in Darwin I was able to represent the Northern Territory at a conference in Brisbane with another Darwin member and found this bigger picture of MU very interesting. When we returned to Adelaide I spent a few years helping with the publication stock in the MU Rooms in the city.

Now life has changed again and my husband and I live at Meadows which is in the parish of Strathalbyn and now in the new Hills District. I was made to feel most welcome in the Strathalbyn MU Branch approx. 5 years ago.

We have two adult children. I love doing craft especially embroidery and we have a large garden which keeps me busy. We share our 20 acre property with 16 goats. I am also parish co-ordinator for the Kids Hope Aus mentoring program with the local Strathalbyn school and enjoy spending time with a little girl each week. Luckily she also likes craft.

I look forward to hearing from many of you as we buy, sell and promote literature through M U. I hope to be able to organise ways in which we can share this literature and books with the wider community not just those who attend meetings.

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FAMILIES EQUIP 2017

For the Families Equip team, 2017 has been a very exciting year, beginning in March with our facilitator training workshop with Kate and Ian Pearse, the authors of the FE program. It catapulted us all into a faith journey which we never expected!!

An amazing equation

a wonderful FE program + prayerful people with special skills +
enthusiasm for and belief in the abiding principles of family and MU +
God's intervention

equals

2 very different and exciting programs at the end of the year!

In September/October, we ran a course at St Margaret's, Woodville with 12 participants from the Marthoma Church Community, originally from Kerala, Southern India. Fr Thomas made the connection for us and Jolly, a facilitator and member of the Marthoma Church, did all the work to get the group together. The cross cultural learning was of great benefit to us all and the final Christian celebration with presentations and formal speeches thrilled us.

Some comments about the course were:-

" a very informative and valuable course."

" I liked the way everyone shared their opinions and experiences."

" Overall an excellent program. Great impact on us."

We had 7 participants in our second program at Lobethal Kindergarten in November. Nell, a teacher at the kindy and our connection there, is a member of the original Parent Education Program which Mt Barker MU ran in 2007 in conjunction with the Mt Barker Uniting Church.

The skill of the facilitators and the structure of the FE program encourage the participants to share their concerns and experiences, and once again, we have been privileged to be part of this in Lobethal.

God has truly blessed us all this year

My thanks to Him, to Eileen Smith and Marg Holt for their prayerful support, to Fr Thomas Karamakuzhiyil for making connections and having faith in us, and to our marvellous and committed facilitators, Natalie Jones, Cath Evans, Jeannie Minnis, Jocelyn and Richard Williamson and Jolly Abraham.

And next year? 2018?

We are waiting to hear what God has in mind for us!!! As you can see from our two programs this year, connections with people lead to success, rather than letterbox drops, etc. So, wherever you are , in or out of the diocese, please let us know of any connections you can make. Perhaps even a course for new facilitators!!!!

Liz Hampel, Families Equip Coordinator (PH 0439869702]



Some of the meal provided by participants for the celebration evening.



Jocelyn & Richard presenting Session 2, Growth, Development & Resilience, at Lobethal Kindy.



Discussion about the challenges facing parents with children 0 to 3 and 3 to 6 years of age.

FUTURE DATES

2017

17th – 19th December - Diocesan Wave of Prayer.

2018 Monday 12th February – Executive meeting at Strathalbyn at 10.30am.

Monday 9th April – Lady Day celebration at St. Luke's, Tailem Bend.

Thursday 9th August – Mary Sumner Day at Strathalbyn.