



MU Australia
Part of the World Wide Mothers' Union

**Diocese of The Murray
South Australia**

THE MURRAY CON-TRIBUTARY NEWSLETTER

February 2017

“Faith in Action”

Dear Friends,

Well here we are, a new year with a new theme, and in February already! What changeable weather we have had so far this year but it is so good to see the paddocks so green and the dams still with water in them.

We all think in different ways with a whole range of triggers and processes to guide us through the day and our lives. I think in images and pictures. Give me verbal directions to find my destination and the result might be uncertain. Present me with a map and I am confident of reaching my goal. When the words ‘MOTHERS’ UNION’ come to mind, either spoken or written, what image does it immediately conjure up in your mind? I would truly like to know the answer to this question so please do tell me the next time we meet, or write me an email/letter.

From the moment I became aware of the history of Mothers’ Union, I have nestled somewhere near the back of my mind a picture of Mary Sumner, at home at the vicarage, welcoming women from her church and local village, balancing hospitality with support for their concerns about family life, as well as underlying social issues of the day. If we were to get in touch with every branch around the world I would imagine we would be overwhelmed to discover that this same mix of hospitality, co-operation and active concern for social reform would be found worldwide.

Mary Sumner had a God-given idea. I am grateful to everyone since then who has remained focused on her original objective. Of course we have moved on, become modernised and technologically updated, thus expanding the local nature of our aim and purpose to include our neighbours both far and near, but the principle remains the same, and I praise God for that.

Our badge is our symbol, the way in which we tell everyone that we are Christians, working to promote Christian Family values around the world. Wear your badge with pride, show it to people, let them know what we do. Tell them about our wonderful organisation and the projects we are involved in at home and abroad. The more we shout out aloud ‘we are Mothers’ Union’ the more we will be recognised and supported, enabling us to enable others.

Mothers’ Union celebrated it’s 140 years birthday last year and we in Australia celebrate our 125 years this year, so why not celebrate in your church or local community. At one of your meetings make a display board showing what Mothers’ Union does and how we help others. Display it in your local community centre or library. A wonderful outreach and, you never know, you may attract new members!

With my love,

Eileen

FROM OUR CHAPLAIN - Fr. David Price.

Is Ash Wednesday Mentioned in the Bible?

Ash Wednesday is not specifically mentioned in the Bible, however, from Biblical times, sprinkling oneself with ashes has been a mark of sorrow for sin. Several times the Bible mentions people repenting in dust and ashes; for example: Mordecai (Esther 4:1), Job (Job 42:6), the inhabitants of Nineveh (Jonah 3:5-6), and Daniel (Daniel 9:3-4). Repentance in dust and ashes often was accompanied with fasting during Bible times.

The type of fast Jesus himself endorsed was the following, found in Matthew 6:16-18, "Moreover, when you fast, do not be like the hypocrites, with a sad countenance. For they disfigure their faces that they may appear to men to be fasting. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward. But you, when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, so that you do not appear to men to be fasting, but to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly."

Additionally, Isaiah 58:5-7 says, "Is it a fast that I have chosen, a day for a man to afflict his soul? Is it to bow down his head like a bulrush, and to spread out sackcloth and ashes? Would you call this a fast, and an acceptable day to the Lord? "Is this not the fast that I have chosen: to loose the bonds of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, to let the oppressed go free, and that you break every yoke? Is it not to share your bread with the hungry, and that you bring to your house the poor who are cast out; when you see the naked, that you cover him, and not hide yourself from your own flesh?"

Jesus is calling His followers to avoid making a show when fasting, but rather to help those in need. He is calling Christians to think externally in avenues of service, instead of only thinking internally toward themselves. The point of that matter is this; Jesus is interested in the condition of the heart and not merely external appearances or show. As you think about your life, repentance, and fasting where is your heart? Are you focused on others or self focused? Do you desire to have true repentance and fasting as mentioned in Psalms 51 (especially verses 10-13, 17), or are your actions merely based on outward tradition?

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Many of you will remember Hazel Treadgold. It is with great sadness that I let you know that Hazel, a former Central President of Mothers' Union from 1983 to 1988 has passed peacefully away. Her contribution to Mothers' Union worldwide was enormous and she will be greatly missed. Our thoughts and prayers are with her children at this sad time.

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Please pray for Liz Hampel and those attending the Parenting Facilitators Course, Families Equip, at Mount Barker on 17/18th March and for the safe journey for Kate and Ian Pearse, the writers of the course, who will be flying from Sydney to facilitate these days.

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If you are intending to go to the MU 125th Anniversary Conference at Launceston from 15th to 17th September, please contact Ronda Elson for information and your registration sheet.

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RECENT VISITS BY MARY SUMNER HOUSE STAFF AND TRUSTEES.

May

- Johanna travelled to **RWANDA** to meet with the Provincial Community Development Co-ordinator, Immaculee, to discuss their plans for the coming year.

July

- Rob and Bev visited **KENYA** to attend the enthronement of the new Archbishop of Kenya and met with the new Mothers' Union Provincial President, Mrs Esther Sapit.
- Rob and Johanna visited **MADAGASCAR** to take part in a Mothers' Union Indian Ocean provincial meeting where they completed work on their previous strategy.
- Lynne and Laura visited **RWANDA** to celebrate with them their 50th anniversary of Mothers' Union in Rwanda, 140 years of Mothers' Union in general and launch their savings and credit programme.

August

- In August Johanna and Nicola made a short trip to **BURUNDI** to attend the enthronement of their new Archbishop and meet their new Mothers' Union Provincial President, Mrs Emilienne Nyaboho.
- Staff visited Mothers' Union in **SUDAN** for a few days. Against an incredibly difficult backdrop, Mothers' Union Sudan are making an enormous difference in their communities. Through the Literacy and Financial Education Programme for example, women who previously had little hope or opportunities to work, are now starting businesses and sending their children to school. Together they save and encourage one another.

September

- In September Johanna had the privilege to visit **DR CONGO** for the enthronement of the new Archbishop and the Bishop of Kinshasa. Beyond the enthronement she met with the new Provincial President Mrs Naomi Katanda and the new Provincial Worker, Marthe Vira, to discuss Mothers' Union plans in the province.
- Johanna also joined the Anglican Alliance Middle East Consultation in the Diocese of **CYPRUS AND THE GULF**. This was a really key opportunity to meet with the Bishop of Cyprus and the Gulf and the Archdeacon of the Gulf, who are both very involved with the Mothers' Union in Iraq. Also, she had opportunity to meet with one of the key women's leaders in the Diocese of Jerusalem and start initial discussions about Mothers' Union.
- Rob visited **ZIMBABWE** in order to take part in a roundtable meeting with other partners about Church and Community Mobilisation work in the country and its future direction. It was an opportunity to meet with Mothers' Union in Harare to work with them on their hopes of introducing a savings and credit programme to the diocese. Rob's visit also included a visit to Matabeleland diocese where Mothers' Union are supporting vulnerable elderly female headed households during the current food crisis.

October

- Anne-Marie visited **VANUATU** and the **SOLOMAN ISLANDS** in the Province of Melanesia. This was an opportunity to visit local Mothers' Union projects and activities as well as learn more about Mothers' Union parenting work across the province. Anne-Marie's visit culminated with her participating in a roundtable meeting of organisations working with the Anglican Church of Melanesia to share learning, map areas of work and update each other on current and future plans.

November

- In November Hannah and Sheran gathered together with Mother' Union leaders and trainers from parts of the **WEST INDIES** to follow up on the Parenting Programme.
- Johanna visited **ETHIOPIA** to follow up on the literacy work being done by Mothers' Union there and their future plans.

December

- Lynne and Hannah visited **SRI LANKA** to see some of their projects and show solidarity with their ministry. During this trip there was also time for a brief visit to **INDIA** to meet with Women's Fellowship leaders and continue to build relationships.



Lynne Tembey and Archbishop Justin Welby at Winchester Cathedral



Zambian Choir praying over Mary Sumner's Grave

After previous consultation with clergy at General Synod and an all Australia census, Australian Council, in November, voted to change the 'MU Australia' name to 'Anglican Mothers Union Australia' All paperwork will have this Logo, and will come into effect by 2020.



The Staff of Mary Sumner House



FOR UPCOMING DATES

Wednesday 1st March - Ash Wednesday

Friday 3rd March - World Day of Prayer

Friday & Saturday 17th/18th March - Families Equip Facilitator Training Course.

Sunday 26th March - Mothering Sunday.

Monday 27th March - Lady Day, 11am Holy Communion at Strathalbyn.

Sunday 16th April - Easter Day