

Diocese of St Andrews, Dunkeld and Dunblane with Diocese of Brechin

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THANK YOU FROM THE MOTHERS' UNION

It's surprising how far a word can travel. Last year I wrote in 'Across the Glens' to thank the people of Kirkmichael, Cally Crafters and St Ninian's church Alyth for all their donations to Cornton Vale Womens' Prison (near Stirling) as they supported the Mothers' Union programme to help prisoners.

Petrina submitted this to the Blairgowrie Advertiser not knowing that it would find its way onto the Facebook page of The Daily Record Paper. So now folks in the glens are known nationally for their kindness and care for others. What an accolade!

A surprise outcome from this was that Petrina received two phone calls from people in Perth who had read about us and had items they wished to



donate. So as soon as covid restriction allowed, she went to Perth to collect bags, towels and pants from two unknown ladies in Perth.

So it really is amazing how far "a little word" can travel. The Trustees of the MU in this Diocese (St Andrew's) are so appreciative of the continued support which is shown for this programme; additionally the prison staff are delighted and grateful as it means so much to them to be able to help the prisoners in ways which they cannot.

During the various lockdowns in addition to the prisoners and staff not being able to see their families, there has been building work. The old building was not fit for purpose any longer and was in need of repair so it was decided to build a replacement one.

The new one will be smaller and more appropriate for the long term prisoners some of whom have

mental health issues. So as the new one is going up the old one is being pulled down creating quite a logistical challenge.

Male and female prisoners who have committed minor offences now go to Polmont, Edinburgh. Long term male prisoners go to Glenochill where there is a very successful Family Hub which enables a wider range of family-prisoner meetings. It had been hoped that more of these could have been built but that now seems to be in abeyance.

In the meantime the MU keeps on "rolling up its sleeves and tackling whatever needs to be done wherever it can" That is why we are so appreciative of the continued support shown across the glens (and beyond!) as we try to rehabilitate and rebuild other people's lives.

Now that lockdown restrictions are easing I will be able to take the January /February collection to our liaison member in Dunblane who will pass them onto the prison staff at Cornton Vale. Getting 40 pairs of pants, 50 towels, 81 bags, 8 shoppers, 2 rucksacks, assorted purses and other related items into my car will be a pleasurable challenge! So once again, thank you to everyone who has contributed – all of these items will make someones' life better.

Jean McPherson Richardson

GREETINGS FROM THE SITWEE DIOCESE

I did not send any email and information by internet last two months ago because I was out of internet areas. By the grace of God, I arrived at internet access area without trouble

By the grace of God, we did clergy retreat, clergy meeting, ordinations and confirmations within two months. I met all the clergy and over 500 Church members in April and May. Last year, we did not do anything in Myanmar as well as my Diocese because of civil wars and Covid-19. But now there is still a hard situation here due to the Military coup.

Please remember and pray for us and our country.

I would like to inform you about the Children Education programme. We have four student boarding houses and about 200 students live at the boarding house. We have difficulty because we can not afford two boarding houses' renovation.



Therefore, we pray together
We are praying for you and your ministry.

Blessings,
+James

NEWS AROUND THE DIOCESE

Rosemary writes from Broughty Ferry

The most recent lockdown upset any plans we had for meeting up with family at Christmas as they all live too far away.

The time from New Year until being “released” into Level 2 was spent relatively quietly – just keeping in touch with family, friends and MU members by phone or letter. We also joined in St Mary’s morning prayer and virtual coffee mornings. Time, however, seemed to pass quickly. We felt very “locked in” as we were confined to Dundee’s boundaries – not even a foray into Monifieth which is almost part of Broughty Ferry! Even going for walks was not particularly enjoyable as “the whole world” seemed to descend on Broughty Ferry.

Moving into Level 2 was such good news that Graeme and I “dared” to go to Glendoick Garden Centre to purchase some plants for the garden – the feeling of freedom was wonderful. We have even managed a trip to Edinburgh for a couple of nights. Time there was mainly spent buying replacement items for the house – it was good to actually see and feel things – not having to rely on images on the Internet.

Easter Sunday was wonderful with church reopening in accordance with Covid restrictions – it was lovely to see members who live some distance away.

Our next venture is a visit to see our son and his family in Yorkshire next week. (Fingers crossed that Dundee doesn’t return to Level 3!)

Rosemary Stirling.

Emmanuel writes from St Ninian’s

I am always blessed by the help of my friends, family and neighbours, especially during this time of

pandemic. There are so many people to say Thank You to, those who phone regularly and those who send emails. We are all on this earth for various reasons, and I have found that my ministry of prayer has expanded enormously lately. I try and say Morning and Evening prayer every day, as well as other prayers during the day.

I read a lot, currently focusing on the subjects of Surveillance and Theology which are the next topics for my Mlit at St Andrews. I read the bible daily using the notes from the UCB booklet.

I manage to see my sister regularly online and zoom, and we meet up occasionally for lunch and a walk

I’ve enjoyed the times that I’ve been Cantor at St Ninian’s and thank God for our wonderful gifts but I couldn’t do without my friends and family. May God bless you all.

Emmanuel Patterson

REFLECTION

This is part of Jenny’s Reflection for June,

In the MU ‘United in Prayer and Worship’ book there is a prayer from an unknown source which I love to read, it reminds me how wonderful our heavenly Father is and how fantastic is His creation. The prayer is entitled - If the earth were only a few feet in diameter



If the earth were only a few feet in diameter, floating a few feet above a field somewhere, people would come from everywhere to marvel at it. People would walk around it, marvelling at its big pools. People would marvel at the bumps on it, and the holes in it, and they would marvel at the very thin layer of gas surrounding it and the water suspended in the gas. The people would marvel at all the creatures walking around the surface of the ball, and the creatures in the water. The people would declare it as because it was the only one, and they would protect it so that it would not be hurt. The ball would be the greatest wonder known, and people would come to behold it, and to be healed, to gain knowledge, to know beauty and to wonder how it could be. People would come to love it, and defend it with their lives, because they would somehow know that their lives, their own roundness, could be nothing without it. If the earth were only a few feet in diameter.



Elizabeth writes I'm bursting with pride as my grandson Matt has just completed an ultra marathon when he and his mate ran from Carlisle to Newcastle with some 650 others. It took him 18hrs to complete the course and raised over £2000 for Client Earth. Here he is at the finish!

What is MU On The Move?

Staying active at any age is essential to keeping a healthy mind and a healthy body. As part of our Summer of Hope, Mothers' Union is encouraging members to get moving in whatever way they can this summer. The target is 5km but this can be run, walked or leisurely strolled. It can be done on your own or with a group.

We have created a fundraising pack full of helpful tips and suggestions for you to make the most out of your experience. It can be found in the resources section of our main website, or downloaded by [clicking this link](#).

If you need support or advice you can contact the Fundraising team at fundraising@mothersunion.org or by calling 0207 222 5533. We also generally just love to hear about your amazing events!

A MESSAGE FROM SARAH

Dear Friends

Well, we had hoped to be freer by now, but it is certainly not the case with ever increasing numbers of covid cases of this new Delta mutation. I was lucky enough to go south a few weeks ago to visit our daughter and family and see their new house and garden. They are having such fun seeing what is in the garden and even have an app on their phone to identify each plant as it blooms. They have not been gardeners up until now, but that is changing and they are enjoying the time they spend mowing and such though weeding is not so great though!

Thank you to all those who responded to my question about Mary Sumner Day. As expected, the responses

were mixed. Some very keen, some less keen and some not able to come anyway. There is obviously still anxiety about travelling in cars with others or using public transport as well as the indisputable fact we are all a year or more older!

The Trustees met last Friday and discussed this and several other things which I will mention later. For Mary Sumner Day in view of the rising numbers of cases of the Delta variant of Covid and the uncertainty still of any relaxation of rules about masks and distancing we will regrettably not hold a service in Perth. However, we are encouraging groups to hold their own celebrations in their locality and combine this with maybe some fund-raising for the Summer of Hope Appeal. I think each branch has been sent details of this or they can be found on the Mothers Union website under Resources.

At our Trustees meeting during our time of prayer Nerys asked us all to think about and share what blessings we had been given during the last 18 months. They were different from us all, from time to garden, not having to rush to meetings or appointments, wonderful on-line lectures, or MU Midday prayers on line with members from all round the world joining in. I am sure many of us can think of many other blessings we have received from this time. But we must not forget the awful toll it has also taken on many people from deaths of loved ones, anxiety about catching Covid, being alone all the time and missing friends – I could go on but we all know the not so good side.

As I mentioned in the last e-news as part of the Summer of Hope appeal Mary Sumner House has once again produced a "Blessings" Calendar. I hope some of you will want to take part in this and if you do any donations can be sent to Liz Crichton and she will transfer the money to the appeal in September. I am attaching the calendar separately with this letter. I am sure we will all have other things to give thanks for as well as what is mentioned on the calendar.

I hope most groups will be making plans to start meeting again perhaps from September if allowed and social distancing rules are relaxed. Meeting together with people we know and feel safe with is a good gentle way to start feeling our way back into the world. Whether you meet again in groups or to I would ask you all to consider a couple of things. As I wrote last time we are coming to the end of this triennial. There is increasing urgency to consider who might be willing to become a Trustee; the Trustees also discussed last week the pros and cons of St Andrews, Dunkeld and Dunblane with Brechin MU remaining as charity in its own right. The Province of Scotland MU is a charity with its own charity number and Edinburgh, Aberdeen and Moray, Ross and Caithness all use this where needed. If we were no longer a charity there would be less official work for the treasurer – it would be more of a book-keeping

role so this might feel less daunting for someone to take on.

So, I would like you all to consider and maybe discuss with each other or in your groups how you would like to go forwards and ideally if one representative from each group came forwards to sit on the Trustee board it would be wonderful and make the board more representative. If we were no longer a charity, we would not have the same responsibilities as "official" trustees are deemed to have. Please continue to pray about this as it would be sad if the MU had to close in our diocese. Do not be afraid to tell me or someone else you would like to be part of the board. It is quite likely we will continue to have some meetings via zoom but others in person.

To allow time for discussion to take place we have decided to move our **Diocesan Annual Meeting** from September 18th to a date yet to be fixed later in October. I will let you know more in our next e-news. Nomination papers will be sent out mid-September for our elections. As I said last time, Irene Rose is willing to stand again as am I, if you as members wish me to.

The Mothers Union Annual Meeting is again to be held on line in September – I have not yet got the date fixed in my head and cannot find it on the MU website but hopefully more information will be forthcoming soon and I will let you know the date in the next e-news.

I pray you have all been keeping well and that we can enjoy meeting up again very soon with each other as well as our friends and family.

Sarah

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Cathedral Prayers happens on the second Tuesday of each month unless notified to the contrary. It is a quiet half hour of prayers, readings and intercessions led by various members, and even though we can no longer gather in St Ninian's, the service is sent out on line, so we can still gather together and pray and reflect as a corporate body. Join us and see!

OUR CHAPLAIN NERYS WRITES

I wonder if you can identify the Bible story on which this picture is based? It is a stunning mural in the Encounter Chapel in Duc in Altum, a place for prayer, teaching and worship for Christians of all backgrounds and denominations on the shores of the Sea of Galilee. It is often referred to by tourists and pilgrims as 'the picture with the feet', but it is to the hand that the eye is drawn, the delicate hand of a once-wealthy

woman – a woman whose fear led her to Jesus. She is known as the woman with a haemorrhage, rendered untouchable because of



the flow of blood which had blighted her life for twelve long years. Her fear was not only that she would never be well again but also that she would always be alone, isolated from those who could help make her life bearable. This fear had changed her from the easy-going, confident person she used to be. It had worn her down. She was now poor, cowed and tired. She didn't have the confidence even to ask Jesus for healing, but in her desperation reached out her hand to touch his clothes ...

There are many like this woman in our communities today, people whose mental and physical health has been affected by the pandemic, whose personalities have been transformed because of fear and loneliness. As part of Mothers' Union 'Summer of Hope', we are called to pray for these people and to respond to their need. Despite being surrounded by a jostling crowd, Jesus is aware of the woman's desperate touch and makes time to acknowledge her faith and give her a voice. We are not told what becomes of her but it is clear that these are the first steps to her recovery and restoration.

The theme of this summer's Midday Prayers is 'Rebuilding Hope and Confidence'. I invite you to join me in July and August to pray with a purpose, asking God to identify to us those who might be reaching out for friendship and love.



