

March 2017

Mothers' UNION
Christian care for families

Mothers' Union Scotland E News

Welcome

Welcome to our third edition of the Mothers' Union Scotland News, designed to inspire and inform people of the worldwide aspect of the Mothers' Union, to engage with current social policy issues in a prayerful and faith filled way, to learn about what we are doing through the Scottish Episcopal church in Scotland and where

we need your help and prayers.

This is the biannual **Mothers' Union Scotland E News** which you can receive from enews@muscotland.org.uk, ask to subscribe to the mailing list. You can also subscribe [here](#) or at www.muscotland.org.uk

Working in Partnership

These articles are examples of **working in partnership** with our local ministers, church members, other charities, friends, family, people of faith and no faith, who all want to make a difference to other peoples lives whatever their circumstances.

Many initiatives are started by Mothers' Union members. We couldn't do what we do without them

Angels for Premature babies at Christmas

Mothers' Union (MU) in Glasgow and Galloway is involved in many projects supporting people and families in need of help. We also campaign for awareness and practical progress in such issues as domestic violence, abuse and human trafficking.

We support maternity hospitals and neo-natal units. We knit and crochet angel pockets for 'babies born asleep' and hats for new born and premature babies. At Christmas we knit angels and small cardigans for Santa Claus to deliver to the tiny babies in neo-natal units. The angels are often hung on the incubator until the babies go home.



Angels for Christmas premature babies

Underwear for Africa and Plastic mats for homeless



One of our newest projects is bonding squares. We knit 7 x 7 inches squares, two identical for each baby. When a baby is too small or ill to go home, one square is put in his/her incubator and the other worn by the mum.

Bonding squares for mum and premature baby

When mum comes to visit the squares are swapped over. The baby is comforted by the smell of its mum and the mum's milk comes in much quicker encouraged by the smell of her baby.

We also make fiddle muffs for dementia/ Alzheimer's patients in care homes. Visits to care homes have increased. We take part in craft activities and celebrate all sorts of occasions with songs, poems and entertainment. We have even helped support a cookery class, in which the main problem was trying to stop the residents from eating the ingredients before they cooked them!

Working in Partnership with other organisations has helped us to expand our projects. 'Smalls for All' is one which has proved to be very successful. This charity sends bras and pants to various countries in Africa.



Packs of new underpants

By collecting bras (new or lightly used) and new pants, we are helping children, girls and women in several ways. Children, girls and women who wear underwear are treated with more respect in certain countries in Africa and

therefore less likely to be attacked. Girls who own pants can go to school on every day of the month, even when they are menstruating and therefore do not miss out on education. Women who have had genealogical repair surgery are able to leave hospital sooner if they have underwear to protect them from infection. Underwear deemed not satisfactory to send is recycled with the profits used to educate girls unlikely otherwise to have this opportunity. MU collects underwear and we deliver it to ['Smalls for All, Livingston'](#) for transport to Africa.

Our latest project is for the homeless. We are starting to make sleeping mats for the home-



less. These are made from carrier bags, cut into strips, joined and made into a ball ready to crochet into a mat. The mat is 2 x 6 ft. It is to replace the bits of card normally used by the homeless on the streets. Again we are using a partnership in this.

The Simon Community in Glasgow will

Plastic carrier bag mats for homeless

distribute them along with their sleeping bags to

those sleeping rough on the streets of Glasgow.

Starting new projects can be daunting, but by looking at the gifts our members can offer, visiting various other charities and being aware of our own community's needs it soon becomes clear what we can do.

Jill Cameron, Glasgow and Galloway.

Patterns for angels, bonding squares, knitted teddy bears and premature baby hats are available on our website.

www.muscotland.org.uk

Crochet or knitted [sleeping mat pattern](#). Also look at You Tube video's

If you can help contact E News by email

Posada during Advent / Messy church during holidays

Members of St Anne's Church, Coupar Angus have encouraged young families by offering a Parent & Toddler group. We were lucky to attract good leaders who organise it 2 or 3 times a week and the church offered the hall, electricity and insurance free of charge. Members from the church provided a monthly time of worship for these families and as the diocesan programme for mission was called "Casting the Net" we called it "Little Fishes". The picture shows "incense" bubble prayers.



'Little Fishes' - worship for parents and toddlers

From this contact we started a monthly Sunday school and now have a loyal core of 11 children who come with their mums or grandparents. Last Christmas we sent a [Posada](#) around and the small knitted nativity set and a prayer travelled around 10 homes during Advent and was brought back to church for our children's Christmas Eve service and at each household the children could keep a knitted sheep each .

Messy church is advertised in the local primary school and we have invested in a banner to hang outside the church. Parents must accompany children as this is not to be seen as a holiday club

and we are reaching out to parents as well as children. We hold Messy church in the holidays as having experimented with after school it became clear we were competing with school activities.



Messy church—during school holidays

A supper group for the mums helps keep them in touch in between Messy church events and we have a simple meal of perhaps pasta and yummy puds and a glass of wine, followed by a time of craft or pampering when mums can continue to chat and we end with a time of worship including a meditation and prayers. We have called the group - Pasta, Pamper and Prayer and it is a non threatening occasion when mums can leave the family behind and have a girls' night out. When possible these evenings follow on from a Taize service the night before so we can include some of prayer stations in our worship. These evenings are aimed at people who are not church goers and we find the time of prayers and worship is surprisingly very popular.



Café style church in the hall

One Sunday we tried a "Cafe Style" church service - we met in the hall rather than the church and had separate tables so we could munch sandwiches while we discussed the day's Gospel reading. It finished with an informal Eucharist standing in a circle and the children did craft work during the first part of the service. It helped the Sunday school mums meet the rest of the

congregation and it worked very well and even the sceptics asked when we could do it again.

All these different initiatives come together to make a happy sharing church where children are seen as part of our family and not just "add ons".

Charmian Paterson Mothers' Union member

Highlighting domestic abuse issues at Holyrood



Scottish Interfaith group on domestic abuse with MSP's

In January the [Scottish Interfaith Group on Domestic Abuse](#) (including Scottish Episcopal Church rep Naomi Browell and Mothers' Union rep Hilary Moran) hosted a lunch time event in the Robert Burns Room of the Scottish Parliament, to which all MSPs and Faith Leaders were invited. George Adam, MSP, sponsored this event and we are grateful to him for making it possible for us to raise the issue of abuse to a wider audience.

After beginning with a prayer, the history of our group and the work we have been involved in over the years was outlined as well as some exciting new developments in schools, the prison service and hopefully, production of an educational DVD, should funding become available.

To increase understanding of the complicated issues facing someone fleeing from abuse, an interactive exercise was used and to deal with some of the common misunderstandings of the process of abuse and how it develops, everyone took part in a quiz, which helped to dispel some of the myths relating to the effects on families and individuals.

After a question and answer session we finished with a prayer and a few words about our basis in faith. Networking time followed and this is when useful connections were made for future events and new fields of work.

Many thanks to the Scottish Parliament for allowing this event to take place.

[Christian care for families through praying, enabling and campaigning](#)

Launch of Study Guide to help tackle gender based violence

The Scottish Episcopal Church and Christian Aid Scotland and have released a new resource that addresses gender-based violence in collaboration with Episcopal church in Brazil



Fran has been in the safe house three times, it broke the cycle of being beaten and threatened. She works to raise awareness of domestic violence and dreams of

Every day, we hear stories reflecting the challenging and often dangerous experiences women face because of their gender - both in Scotland and throughout the world. One in three women will experience physical or sexual violence, most likely by an intimate partner.

The Most Rev David Chillingworth, Bishop of St Andrews, Dunkeld and Dunblane and Primus of the Scottish Episcopal Church said "This material is intended to raise awareness of the problem, it places gender based violence in the context of our faith: for to tackle such a serious denial of human rights, is indeed a godly task".

" for all of us in this society, this is 'our' problem"

Based on similar material developed by the Episcopal Church in Brazil, **Loving one another** seeks to look at gender inequality through a global lens and to learn how to apply it locally and personally.

You can download '[Loving one another](#)' here.

Hard copy from here. <http://>

www.scotland.anglican.org/contacts/

Training course offered

If groups in any church or branches of the Mothers' Union were interested in taking this Bible based study, and didn't feel confident and would like some one to facilitate, there is an offer of a training course and/or a facilitators. Please register an interest and to find out more contact enews@muscotland.org.uk

Facilitation skills

The facilitator will find it helpful to have some biblical knowledge, but does not have to be an expert since the study method draws out the wisdom of the group. It will also be helpful to have some experience in facilitation and an understanding of the sensitivities of GBV. Ideally, each group should be guided by two facilitators, allowing each to focus on their strengths and be mutually supportive.

Make a Mother's Day on Mothering Sunday 26th March

Make a Mothers' Day 2017

Gifts that put mothers at the heart of everything

We hope you like this year's range of truly inspiring and empowering [Make a Mother's Day gifts](#). Available here.

Each one helps mothers move from life on the margins right to the heart of their families and communities. Whether that's through enabling a mother to learn to read, become a better parent or find the strength in God to change things for the better. This Mothering Sunday, what better way to celebrate your mum than by helping mothers around the world to be at the heart of positive change!

Your donation will be distributed across all areas of Mothers' Union's work, wherever the need is greatest. A card for a mother or in memory of one. If a card is required please order by 15th March.

[Christian care for families through praying, enabling and campaigning](#)

MBE awarded for prison work



Ann Glenesk, former Mothers' Union Diocesan President and member of Bishopbriggs Branch, has been awarded a British Empire Medal for her work in Low Moss Prison.

In response to the news, Ann commented: "The British Empire Medal in my name represents the willingness of a host of folk to come together, to have fun and at the same time do a wee bit of good - often difficult to quantify, but reassurance comes in spades from the most unlikely sources. Victims of crime deserve justice, perpetrators of crime deserve punishment from

courts. Rehabilitation, support for families in prisons can be aided by a friendly smile, chat and a willingness of us all to notice and respect our neighbours in whatever context.

Thanks to Scottish Episcopal Church, Mother's Union and the amazing Low Moss Volunteer Group and staff of HMP Low Moss."

HMP Low Moss— We attend multi-demonational prayer groups and help at family days. The picture is of the Mother' Union banner that hangs in the multi-faith centre at Low Moss. Mothers' Union members initiated the provision of a Girl Guide and Scouts group for prisoners' visiting children.



Untitled poem

I came as a stranger, uncertain and unsure,
 you held out your hand in friendship,
 your house always had an open door,
 your faith and love were there for me to share.
 And as my faith grows daily stronger,
 my love for Jesus Christ deeper still.
 I come to give you my thanks.

By Sue Brough

UN— pressing for greater women's economic empowerment



The Mothers' Union will have a greater impact at the United Nations Commission Status of Women (UNCSW) this year following the process of open application for members to attend. A delegation of six [Mothers' Union representatives](#) from across the world, will travel to the UN's global forum on gender equality in New York this March to lobby on women's economic empowerment. They will call for governments to prohibit any form of discrimination against women and enshrine in law equal rights in the workplace, including the right to employment, equal pay and freedom from discrimination which prevents the appointment of women to senior positions.

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16 days of Activism around the dioceses 2016

Aberdeen– Women's Aid welcome trays and worship

Grampian Women's Aid, asked us to consider a new project to supply welcome trays in the rooms for the women and children coming in. We supplied twenty of these in November and the response has been very positive



On 29th November our Chaplain the Rev. Canon Paul Watson led us in prayers and worship, using material from the [Mothers' Union activism booklet](#). Then we had a very informative talk from Helen King and Nelly on the work of an organisation called [Choices](#). They work in deprived areas of Aberdeen. Nelly's work takes her into schools to work with teenagers and their relationship problems, encouraging them to take responsibility for their actions and give them the opportunity to reform their lifestyle so they realise domestic violence is not acceptable.

Chris Crossley

St Andrews, Dunkeld and Dunblane with Brechin

On 25 November, 18 Mothers' Union members and friends from our joint dioceses attended St Paul's Cathedral, Dundee to mark the start of 16 days of Activism against Gender Violence.

Revd Helen Bridger, associate Rector of St Mary's, Broughty Ferry, led us in a moving, prayer and Mothers' Union which we were individual tea lights Global Moment



meaningful service of reflection. At noon a candle was lit from invited to light and join in a of solidarity against

gender-based violence.

This was the first time our dioceses have actively taken part
Rosemary Stirling

Glasgow and Galloway



Holy Trinity, Ayr, branch members joined together with members from Kilmarnock in a service of prayerful reflection held on Friday 25th November

In Holy Name, Cumbernauld several MU branches came together on 24th November, along with other ecumenical groups to join in a service. After the service white ribbons and friendship bracelets were sold. The money raised will be used to buy pants to send to various parts of Africa



At the monthly meeting of Bishopbriggs branch on 14th November, they shared information on the issue of gender violence and the importance of helping people practically and through prayer. A prayer tree was created which was placed in church for the 16 day period, MU members and the wider congregation were asked to write prayers

Christian care for families through praying, enabling and campaigning

General Meeting in EICC Edinburgh

We are pleased to say we are hosting the Mothers' Union General Meeting in the award winning, world class venue, [Edinburgh International Conference Centre](#) on Saturday 30th September. We are expecting over 1,200 members to attend from around the UK and Ireland.



"I was a recent delegate to the FAB conference June 2016. The EICC is among the finest disability accessible facilities I have ever seen. In addition, excellent, professional, helpful staff and finally, fantastic food well done!!"

At 5.30pm the evening before, [St. Mary's Scottish Episcopal Cathedral](#) will be full to capacity, and also will [St. John's Scottish Episcopal Church](#), these are always very moving services. Anyone can attend the meeting and services, so once ticketing arrangements have been made, get your tickets and enjoy an interesting and entertaining day. We are in the planning stages for souvenirs, which we hope to sell across our churches prior to this event.

Global gathering of Mothers' Union leaders

Ireland is the venue for a major gathering of Mothers' Union leaders this March. The Mothers' Union is a movement with over four million members in over 80 countries. From Sunday March 12th the Worldwide trustees, Worldwide Provincial Presidents and Diocesan Presidents of Britain and Ireland will meet, initially to agree the new constitution. During the week the global Presidents will be exploring the unique role which Mothers' Union can play as a force for 'Peace and Reconciliation'. They will be staying in the [An Grianan conference centre](#), near Drogheda. Please pray for our overseas guests that their travel will go well and they will feel ready for the work ahead.

£50k Emergency Appeal for South Sudan relief

In total more than 1.5 million refugees have now fled from the country to the surrounding regions such as Uganda, Ethiopia and Sudan - the UN also estimate that a further 2 million have been internally displaced. 60% of the refugees are children who will often arrive at the camps suffering from acute malnutrition. Despite the scale of the crisis, it is receiving little international attention and is therefore chronically underfunded. For prayer points and donations [go here](#).

Provincial Dates

Tues 25th April—Thurs 27th April	Provincial Retreat at St Mary's Monastery, Kinnoull, Perth
Fri 29th Sept 5.30pm	General Meeting Service at St. Mary's Scottish Episcopal Cathedral and St. John's, Edinburgh
Sat 30th Sept	General Meeting at Edinburgh International Conference Centre