Parish of Great Aycliffe members helped St. Clare's Foodbank to pack and distribute 155 Christmas Hampers.to primary schools across the town to vulnerable families. This was made possible with a generous

Low Newton Christmas Service :9 Lessons and Carols.
Kathleen Wilson DP. Video recording .Isaiah Chapter 11. The Branch of Jesse. for the service.

Members of Parish of Great Aycliffe celebrated Mary Sumner Day at Siesta Coffee Shop. A short service was led by our branch leader Pam, after which members enjoyed coffee and cake.

2021 Theme: Rebuilding hope and confidence

Durham Diocese Newsround Spring 2021

72 branches within Durham Diocese
1,700 members within Durham Diocese
78,000 members countrywide

President
Miss Kathleen Wilson
0191 5480334

Finance
Mrs Janice Hardman
0191 386 5497

My Dear Members and Friends,

I trust that you are safe and well.

Christmas festivities and past months like no other! Illness, hospitalisation, family bereavements, unemployment. Prayers and petitions ongoing and include all front-line workers.

Prayer being our Light and Hope, confidence in a vaccine for everyone.

A busy start of the year for Durham Diocese Mothers' Union. An industrious time within our Communities. We maybe in lock down but not locked out of our duties.! Thank you to your Diocesan Board as we discussed the needs in all areas of our local communities.

In local schools, as Mothers' Union we have financed hot lunches for pupils, and outdoor wear for play and education.

Financial assistance to all Council Education departments in the Diocese, towards Lap Top Support for scholars at home and in school.

One community where flooding occurred Mothers' Union branch offered their help. Thankyou.

God is working his purpose out, through all that we do and offer in HIS name. Thankyou God.

Thank you to everyone. A positive beginning to 2021.

Moving Ahead. Triennial Elections due. Province, Diocese, Deanery and Branch level. Prayers and Thoughts important. (article inside).

Membership and Subscriptions. Careful movement ahead. From Mary Sumner House forward planning. Subscriptions can be paid by Direct Debit. This has been discussed in its entirety by your Diocesan Board. (article inside). An individual decision.

As President I have represented the Diocese at Zoom Meetings. Provincial Meeting in December, Diocesan Board Trustees invited. Speaker, Worldwide President Sheran Harper. Listeners enthused by her passion for Mothers' Union and work.

Further Zoom, Provincial, Building Hope and Confidence re Leadership Conference,

We give thanks for the life and witness of those who have died

Maureen Barker	83yrs	Lanchester
Sheila Coppeck	81yrs	Lanchester
Freda Flannigan	96yrs	St. George's, Fatfield
Joyce Goodfellow	79yrs	All Saints Monkwearmouth
Margaret Wilson	79yrs	All Saints Monkwearmouth
Jennie Storey	92yrs	All Saints Monkwearmouth
Margaret Storey	85yrs	St. Paul's, Spennymoor
Nancy Sweeting	98yrs	Christ Church, Great Lumley
Edith Barker	97yrs	Christ Church, Great Lumley
Anne Young	79yrs	St Michael and All Angels Norton
Nell Lawrence	89yrs	St Michael and All Angels Norton
Olive Basey	99yrs	Brandon
Joan Forster	83yrs	St Mary the Virgin Sherburn
Sheila Horniman		St. Mary & St Cuthbert, Chester Le Street
Margaret Shepherd		Great Aycliffe
Margaret Peterson		Great Aycliffe
Olwyn Wilkinson.		Holy Trinity Southwick.
Lydia Mason.		Holy Trinity Southwick.
Betty Barratt	85yrs	St. Paul's ,Winlaton
Hazel Peart	82yrs	St. Paul's ,Winlaton
Jean Wilson	97yrs	St Michael's ,Houghton-le-Spring
Audrey Lumley	93yrs	St Michael's ,Houghton-le-Spring
Blossom Waterstone	91yrs	St Michael's ,Houghton-le-Spring

Members receiving long service awards

Jennifer Alps	25yrs	St. Mary & St Cuthbert, Chester Le Street
Joyce Armstrong	25yrs	St. Mary & St Cuthbert, Chester Le Street
Joan Davison	40yrs	St. Mary & St Cuthbert, Chester Le Street
Olive Murray	40yrs	St. Mary & St Cuthbert, Chester Le Street
Joan Thompson	40yrs	St. Mary & St Cuthbert, Chester Le Street

Members who have celebrated special birthdays

Freda Hunter	80yrs	Lanchester
Eileen Matthews	70yrs	Lanchester
Joan Armstrong	95yrs	St. Philip & St John, Tow Law
Alice Langley	80yrs	St. Philip & St John, Tow Law
Anne Slater	90yrs	All Saints, Monkwearmouth
Mary Shearer	90yrs	St Andrew's, Chilton Moor
Joyce Taylor	90yrs	Christ Church, Great Lumley
Marjory Johnson	80yrs	Christ Church, Great Lumley
Jenny Bishop	90yrs	Christ Church, Great Lumley
Christine Stobie	75yrs	Christ Church ,Concett
Margaret (Peggy) Robson	95yrs	Christ Church ,Concett
Joyce Siddle.	90yrs	Christ Church ,Concett
Ella Green.	85yrs	Christ Church ,Concett
Elsie Dow	90yrs	St Michael and All Angel's ,Norton
Alison Blackburn	65yrs	St Aidan's & St Cuthbert's, Durham
Edith Jackson	80yrs	St Aidan's & St Cuthbert's, Durham
Marsha Belfield	80yrs	St Aidan's & St Cuthbert's, Durham
Josie Gregory	85yrs	St Aidan's & St Cuthbert's, Durham
Joan Cummins	70yrs	St Aidan's & St Cuthbert's, Durham
Nancy Tait	90yrs	St Aidan's & St Cuthbert's, Durham
Dorothy Hodgson	75yrs	St Aidan's & St Cuthbert's, Durham
Doris Jorden	100yrs	St Mary the Virgin Sherburn
Olga Nicholson	90yrs	St Mary the Virgin Sherburn
Shirley Oldham	80yrs	St. Mary & St Cuthbert, Chester Le Street
Mary Robinson	90yrs	St. Mary & St Cuthbert, Chester Le Street
Audrey Telford	90yrs	St. Mary & St Cuthbert, Chester Le Street
Ann Willis	90yrs	St. Mary & St Cuthbert, Chester Le Street
Lynne Waterston	70yrs	St. Mary & St Cuthbert, Chester Le Street
Betty Lamonby	80yrs	St. Paul's ,Winlaton
Carol Brown	70yrs	St. Paul's ,Winlaton
Doreen Taylor	90yrs	St. Paul's ,Winlaton
Jean Hodgson	90yrs	St. Paul's ,Winlaton
Marie Henderson	80yrs	St Michael's ,Houghton-le-Spring

2022. Prison Week, Membership and Direct Debit Payment, Diocesan Synod.

Zoom Attendance by your Trustee Board, Prayer Webinars, Finance, AFIA, Membership Payments, Training Sessions. (article inside).

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE BILL. Supported by Mothers' Union, Bishop Paul, and local MP's. Has had a second reading in the House of Lords and has moved to Committee stage. Significant progress.

DIOCESAN DATA BASE. Is now complete and included at Mary Sumner House. Thank you to all for your co-operation. Any changes, eg: address, bereavement etc. contact Susan Carter, Diocesan Secretary.

Acknowledgement to All Members. Bishop Paul sends his good wishes, as does Barbara Taylor (former Provincial President) and Julie Elliott. MP. Thankyou.
We continue to meet in Prayer. Maybe not too long before we are together in our Branches.

Soon LENTEN Preparation: Prayer, Trust and Reconciliation, as we approach the CROSS and a HOLY EASTER.

Thank you for all that you do for Mothers' Union. To our Families and Friends who support us in All that we do. Take Care and Look after each other.

May you be surrounded with the unconditional love, of the Lord Jesus.

My Love and Prayers.
Kathleen. Diocesan President.

Reverend Norma Clee

A few months ago a letter arrived, from Bishop Paul, asking if I would like to be the next Mothers Union Chaplain for three years from 1 August 2020. As a member of the MU for almost 30 years, I was delighted to accept this role.

Although I hope to be able to meet members in their Deaneries, this has to be postponed due to the restrictions of the ongoing pandemic.
However I thought members may like to know something about their Chaplain and so write this by way of introduction.

I am married to Brian and we have two grown up children and two grandchildren aged 13 and 9 years. I have lived in Ouston, near Chester-le-Street, most of my life. The house we live in now is opposite the house where I was born.
Our daughter and her children live nearby so we are able to help with childcare and schoolwork during the current lockdown.

One of my Mam's friends was Branch Leader (or perhaps Enrolling Member in those days) of Holy Trinity, Pelton Mother's Union. So when she invited me to a meeting I didn't feel as if I could possibly refuse to go! I very little about the MU, I'd seen the banner in church and knew members served refreshments at the Christmas Fair but that was all. So I went along to the meeting to find out more and soon afterwards was enrolled as a member.

For the first few years I simply went along to meetings, then gradually became more involved and learned more about the MU. However, it was a bit of a shock when the Branch Leader moved away and I was asked to take over. I quickly realised how little I knew.
One of the best things about the MU is the fellowship that comes from being part of such a large organisation. The Deanery Leader gave me so much help in the first few months, finding speakers and keeping me informed of Deanery and Diocesan events, which while working full time I often missed. Other Branch Leaders were also very supportive and this is the joy of being part of the MU.
When I began attending services at Christ Church, Great Lumley, I was delighted to find there was a branch of MU which I joined and am still a member there.
While at Christ Church I was licensed as a Reader, just after the priest moved to another church. The Churchwardens helped me to work out my role as Reader during the vacancy, which lasted five years. As well as helping with services during the vacancy I started a Bible Study group and became a Parish Visitor, visiting the sick and housebound with another MU member. I have also enjoyed speaking at local branches and Deanery Services. Like me, you are no doubt missing MU

Thank you , once again for all your articles. It was lovely to see that so much had been happening considering the year we have had. You can trust members of MU to keep things going!

Please can I ask that (by whatever means you contact me), that you include your branch and a contact number in case I have any queries. Occasionally, when I am putting the Newsround together I have a question which can easily be solved if I could contact you. Sometimes, to be fair it is because I haven't realised that the branch was in the subject of the email which I haven't saved! Oops!!

Without your contributions this magazine doesn't work so keep them coming!
Joan x

Deadline for next magazine June 18th 2021

Please send entries to:
Joan Parr 01325 487981
joan.parr24@virginmedia.com
4, Walworth Crescent, Darlington DL3 0TX

We extend a very warm welcome to our newly enrolled members

Susan Drape-Comyn, Brandon

Congratulations to all who have celebrated special wedding anniversaries

Pam & David Baggott	50yrs	Lanchester
Alan & Elizabeth Wharton	60yrs	Lanchester
Gillian & John Peacock	25yrs	Christ Church ,Concett
Audrey & Ray Philp	65yrs	Christ Church ,Concett
Edna & Gordon Sanderson	60yrs	St. Mary & St Cuthbert, Chester Le Street
Joan & Spencer Johnson	50yrs	St. Paul's ,Winlaton
Carol & Geoff Brown	50yrs	St. Paul's ,Winlaton
Hazel & Derek Peart	60yrs	St. Paul's ,Winlaton
Paddy & George Elliott	60yrs	St. Paul's ,Winlaton
Anne & Laughlin Todd	60yrs	St Michael's ,Houghton-le-Spring

St. Paul's Church Winlaton M.U.

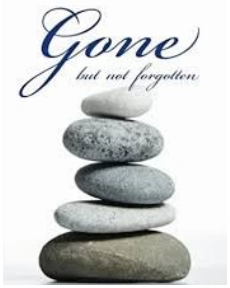
In October we lost two of our long serving members.

Betty Barratt died 4th October 2020 aged 85. Betty was a member of the branch for 54 years and branch leader for 5 years from 1991 to 1996.

Hazel Peart died 24th October 2020, a member for 45 years and Branch leader for 8 years from 2010 to 2018.

Both Betty and Hazel were prominent and active members of both the M.U. and the church. Until the coronavirus restrictions put a temporary halt to our gatherings, they rarely missed a meeting. They led fundraising activities. Christmas and Summer Fairs were not complete without Hazel's Tombola and Betty's lucky dip stall. They organised coffee mornings which were enjoyed by the local community. They both enjoyed M.U. coach trips to various parts of the country where much fun was had. Betty was a member of our church choir for over 50 years. She loved to sing and was also a member of the Gibside Singers. Hazel was licensed to distribute Holy Communion and delivered it to many of our housebound congregation. Both were involved in all aspects of Church life, latterly being part of the Messy Church team, Hazel as one of our kitchen angels preparing lunches and Betty working with the families, always on the play dough activity table where the children loved to be with their "Aunty Betty".
Both Betty and Hazel had been in poor health for some time. Although we could not give them the send off we would have wanted, we were able to form our M.U Guard of Honour outside the church. When we can gather again, we will have a fitting celebration of the lives of these special ladies.

R.I.P. Betty and Hazel



meetings and services and are praying that we can gather together again once it is safe to do so.

I loved my ministry as a Reader but in my prayer time I began to feel God was calling me to ordination. As is often the case, other people also recognised this call. Members of the congregation, friends and family talked to me about ordained ministry. After a long discernment process, I was recommended for training and was ordained Deacon in July 2015 and Priest in 2016.

Since ordination I have been Curate at St Thomas Church, Eighton Banks.

While training we had to do some Chaplaincy work. We were encouraged to choose something that would challenge us, so being a bit squeamish, I chose to work with a Hospital Chaplain and was surprised how much I enjoyed this. So for the last four years I have been an On Call Chaplain at the Queen Elizabeth hospital in Gateshead and two years ago started working there a half day each week. Chaplains are there for patients, their families and staff. This ministry is always about listening, sometimes praying with people and sometimes just being there and holding a hand. It is a privilege to be able to spend time with patients and their families, often at difficult times of illness and bereavement. These visits are appreciated by patients more than ever during the current restrictions when family and friends are not allowed to visit.
From 1st February I am going to be working another half day a week as Chaplain at Chester-le-Street Community Hospital.

All most every year since I joined the MU I have attended the September Retreat at Shepherds Dene. As a Reader I was delighted to lead the retreat in September 2011 and again as a Priest in 2017. I was invited to lead the 2020 Retreat, which had to be cancelled but will hopefully take place this year.
These retreats are a highlight of my year. A time to spend with God, and also with MU members, in beautiful surroundings. It would be lovely to see you there.

In these difficult days please be assured of my prayers for you and your families.

Every blessing,

Norma

All Saints Church, Newton Hall

In November we called on our members to collect various things including clothes, to donate to Low Newton Women's Prison 'Departure Lounge'. The women leaving the prison often have nothing so they need toiletries, tea/coffee, handbags etc and, at the moment, warm clothing.

As is usual our wonderful group of ladies came up trumps and we had a great amount to hand over to Kate Hurchinson who works with these ladies to rehabilitate them.

Kate works for NEPACS, North Eastern Prison After Care Society, who support the women and their families and she was absolutely delighted with our collection.

Thank you to all our members who donated to this very worthwhile cause.

Photos
Three of our members waiting to hand over some of the goodies !!
Some of the donations.

MU Enterprises

Many of you will have come across this title especially those who take on the responsibility in your branch for ordering goods from the MU catalogue. What is the explanation behind the name.

MU enterprises is the official title for the Mothers' Union "shop". All profits made from the sale of goods fund the charitable work of Mothers' Union (an added bonus…our Diocese receives 10% of the money raised in the sale of goods)

Five Deaneries have MU Enterprises Representatives. They distribute the twice yearly catalogue and take orders from branches.

Another opportunity to buy goods is from the Diocesan "shop". There is a full range of the goods from the catalogue on display at Diocesan events or Deanery events. Purchases of individual cards can be made rather than buying in packs of 5 alongside other items from the catalogue. This is a good opportunity to buy a variety of cards either for personal use or to sell within a branch.

Some branches deal directly with Headquarters, Mary Sumner House. A member of the branch orders goods either from the catalogue or the MU enterprises website. Payment is made directly to Mary Sumner House. Members in the branches are grateful for those members who take on this responsibility.

Over the past few years sales in the Diocese have been outstanding. In 2018 sales reached almost £18,000. This is all due to those members who have purchased goods, especially at Christmas when sales are at their best. The work of the Deanery Representatives cannot be underestimated for boosting these sales figures.

Treasurers in each branch will see that any spending on goods can be recorded on the Annual Account form under the relevant category…….MU Enterprises Representative / Durham Diocese MUe Account / MU Enterprises (London HQ).

There will be a new catalogue in February with Mothering Sunday and Easter goods on sale as well as the regular range of other cards with many new designs. Please consider MU cards as your first option when buying cards for all occasions.

Janice Hardman

A Prayer used during Mid Day Prayers by previous World Wide President

Lynne Tembey.

A NEW YEAR'S PRAYER.

MAY GOD MAKE YOUR YEAR A HAPPY ONE!
NOT BY SHIELDING YOU FROM ALL SORROWS AND PAIN,
BUT BY STRENGTHENING YOU TO BEAR IT, AS IT COMES;
NOT BY MAKING YOUR PATH EASY,
BUT BY MAKING YOU STURDY TO TRAVEL ANY PATH;
NOT BY TAKING HARDSHIPS FROM YOU,
BUT BY TAKING FEAR FROM YOUR HEART;
NOT BY GRANTING YOU UNBROKEN SUNSHINE,
BUT BY KEEPING YOUR FACE BRIGHT,
EVEN IN THE SHADOWS;
NOT BY MAKING YOUR LIFE ALWAYS PLEASANT,
BUT BY SHOWING YOU
WHEN PEOPLE AND THEIR CAUSES NEED YOU MOST,
AND BY MAKING YOU ANXIOUS TO BE THERE TO HELP.
GOD'S LOVE, PEACE, HOPE AND JOY TO YOU
FOR THE YEAR AHEAD.

For many years Jane Oxenham, a long standing member of St.Paul's Spennymoor Mothers' Union has been taking donations of toiletries, sweets and fancy goods etc. to a women's refuge in the Bishop Auckland area.

If any member reading this has suitable unwanted Christmas gifts or other items and can somehow pass them onto June Wilson, branch leader, Jane will make every effort to safely get the goods to the refuge in the present pandemic.

Anyone able to help can contact Kathleen, Diocesan President who could make contact with the branch as we do not want to publish addresses or telephone numbers.

Many thanks.
Pauline Storey

Joan Nicholson from All Saints Monkwearmouth writes about two members who have sadly passed away. All the recently departed will be remembered in their prayers.

Joyce Goodfellow Died 56th November 2020 aged 79yrs

Joyce was a member of MU for a number of years, always willing to help a hand when called upon to give the message to our meetings. Not needing any prompting to lead the prayers , her commitment to Jesus was evident. Called to be a Lay Reader which was hard work to get through she was able to preach in all our three churches, also to take funeral services . She was also a Youth Leader and Sunday School teacher. Joyce had served a number of years as a Church Warden while supporting her charities . Also she gave communion to the housebound members. Not wanting to give up her duties, ill health was beginning to show and she gave her last address at All Saints in March 2020, just before the COVID virus entered the world.
David (her husband) found it hard to care for her now that she was housebound. Eventually Dementia took over and the Lord took her home.
She is greatly missed but happy memories do not fade.

Margaret Wilson Died December 2020 aged 79yrs

Margaret became a member of MU when she was a neighbour of Judith King our Treasurer. Her Church was in the catholic parish of Boldon. She shared her time between both churches . Her son and daughter both loved away so she found it difficult to visit them

****

Carol from Brandon Branch writes...

Sadly we lost our very long-serving member Olive Basey just a few months before her 100th birthday which would have been the 7th November, she was well-loved in our branch and she will be sadly missed. Olive was a dedicated member and worked very hard for us, she held the position of Treasurer for many years, our branch meetings will not be the same (when we resume). Olive was also a loved member of St. John's congregation and she also worked very hard for the church, cleaning, flower arranging and much much more and I know they feel her loss as MU members do. Rest in Peace Olive, we all pray for you.

We also had some good news, we enrolled a new member, Susan Drape-Comyn, welcome to St. John's MU Susan.

Houghton-le-Spring St Michaels Mothers Union

Our church sent out a 'Star of Light and Hope" to the community to colour in however imaginatively they wished and placed it in their window, just as they placed rainbows in their windows in appreciation of the NHS in March.
Joan Beattie, Branch leader, thought it would be a nice idea to send out the star to our Mothers Union members to become involved in this activity.
Jesus came to a world full of darkness and brought light and hope to all. The star is symbolic of the Light and Hope Jesus brought into the world in his time, and the light and hope we need in our lives today.

Joan Beattie, branch leader, wrote to our local MP regarding support for the Domestic Abuse Bill. Joan informed Bridget that as a Mothers Union we support families affected by domestic abuse. This is the reply email: -

Dear Joan,

Thank you for your email regarding the Domestic Abuse Bill. It is encouraging to hear that you and the Mothers Union are playing your part in supporting families affected by domestic abuse; it is important that as a community we do all we can to end violence against women.

Please rest assured that the Bill has my full support, as a former campaigner against domestic abuse, Secretary of the APPG on domestic abuse and manager of a women's refuge, I know just how important getting this legislation through is. Moreover, as my colleague Shadow Minister for Domestic Violence and Safeguarding Jess Phillips stated, Jess Phillips MP, "for victims of domestic abuse, including children...lockdown means weeks of being trapped at home with an abuser." Victims of domestic violence need support more urgently than ever given the circumstances they face during the lockdown.

I will continue to press the Government on this issue to ensure that victims of domestic violence are protected and helped.

I will also raise your concerns with the Home Office, and share the response I receive with you.

Thank you again for writing to me.

Yours sincerely,

Bridget

Bridget Phillipson MP

Member of Parliament for Houghton and Sunderland South

Shadow Chief Secretary to the Treasury

Parish of Great Aycliffe Branch Leader Update.

Since my last updates to you from our branch, life as still been very busy. We are still keeping in touch with all our vulnerable members' of our church community .This is mostly by phone now, as the last lockdown has been very serious. Many are very grateful for our help in getting any medication or urgent shopping, which we try to do very Covid protective. Along with some MU member's and parish people well send letter's and cards to all our seven Care homes and one day centre in our town to let them know they are being thought about and prayed for. I have just put two items about this in out local free Newton News which comes out weekly, asking if any children would like to draw a picture or send aa letter and how to make sure they go through the correct Covid procedures, before they are posted or delivered by hand.

We also keep in touch with local hospitals sending home knitted baby bonnets and other items which are needed. The scrub bags seen not needed at present as they have had a massive influx from a lot of different charities which is great. It can be very difficult keeping all the "balls in the air" at present, there still seems a lot to do in helping many people of various needs .The church has a local food bank which I know can be called upon for needy families if needed. The local schools have been receiving lots of bags of food for needy families, which you can read about in another article in Newsround. I also know that we can call upon AFIA if need arises.

The church live streams many services at the moment with there being no churches open here. I along with others take turns doing evening prayer. We also have morning prayer by Zoom. Sundays we have a Eucharist at 10 am, then a Service of the Word this being named "New Beginnings" at 4pm. Every month we have a Meditation service on a Sunday afternoon, and also other different services during the week, all live streamed or by Zoom. If you had told me I would be taking a hand in all of these a year ago I would have laughed my head off. It just goes to show that one never knows what lies behind the next corner.

Hope you enjoyed reading this update of Life in a Busy Parish, take extra care everyone and keep safe. God bless

Pam Lovelass MU Branch Leader and APA of Great Aycliffe Parish.+++

Such a sad time for our branches.

Like my own branch of Great Aycliffe MU, I expect you yourselves have also had some bereavements. Since this pandemic first began there has been such a lot of illness, including mental health issues and the like all around us. As it has stretched out before us we have witnessed the sorrow of not seeing our nearest and dearest at all. Not having our trips away that cheer us up, Our meetings with special speakers, fund raising events, coffee mornings and lots more.

My own branch has lost two members who were very good attender's and supporters',

Mrs. **Margaret Shepherd** past away in March of last year. Margaret's husband Ray had passed away the year before. Margaret was instrumental in making our tea/ coffee and toast that we all enjoyed after our Cafe Church eucharist , before our meetings' began at 11 am. This change of time from an evening has been a great success as we prepare a buffet lunch to finish our meetings. I had thought up this idea a long time ago seeing how many members' lived alone and was aware that putting this lunch on would make sure they had a substantial meal before they got home. Margaret could always be relied upon to help out on our stalls during any MU fund raiser's. Many a laugh was had by us all on these afternoons as we set up the tables.
Margaret took her turn in being in the kitchen, preparing and washing up. She is very sadly missed, as was a member almost from the beginning of our branch starting up. RIP Margaret.

Mrs. Margaret Peterson
Margaret sadly passed away in June of last year. She was a very willing, helpful and generous supporter in her years in our branch. Margaret had not been in the branch as long as most, but that did not make her any less loved. She had been a widower, who came back to the North East after her husband died in Scotland, and one of her first things she did was join our branch. Margaret loved our yearly day trips ,and also visiting the many different churches on The Feast of the Annunciation. She was friendly, always cheerful and loved small children very much, even bringing them gifts from her many holidays abroad. She never asked for anything in return through her kindness and generosity, which endeared her to many. Margaret had no family, so she treated the church as if it were her family, helping out whenever she could, at Messy Church and going around our schools on the town with a team telling bible stories that children could understand, called "Open the Book". RIP Margaret, you are missed so much.

Holy Trinity Church Southwick. A favourite recipe.
A Recipe for a Happy Family.

1 husband
1 wife
Children
1 bible for each
1 home
Generous portion of prayer
3 cups of love
1 packet of work
1 packet of play
1 tbsp patience
1 tbsp understanding
1 tbsp forgiveness.

Mix thoroughly and sprinkle with awareness. Bake in a moderate oven of every-day life, using as fuel all the grudges and past unpleasantness. Cool. Turn onto a plate of cheerfulness. Garnish with tears and laughter, and, in large helpings serve God and community.

Kathleen Wilson.

NOT EVERYTHING IS CANCELLED

Sunshine is not cancelled
Love is not cancelled
Relationships are not cancelled
Reading ,sewing ,knitting and crochet are not cancelled
Naps are not cancelled
Devotion is not cancelled
Music , dancing and singing are not cancelled
Imagination is not cancelled
Kindness is not cancelled
Conversations are not cancelled
HOPE is not cancelled .

Ann Craig Sunderland Minster

Report on MU York Province Trustees Zoom meeting 3.12.20

As a technically challenged person, taking part in a zoom meeting was a new experience, and to keep it simple for myself, I participated on telephone only, which meant I could not see the other members, only hear them. At the end of the meeting, I came away with the impression of pros and cons of the experience. The cons were that zoom is only as good as the technology skills of participants allow – difficulties with connections were a problem – and also a virtual meeting cannot replace the normal interaction of a face to face conversation and discussion. However, zoom does mean that the meeting was able to take place and difficult times call for special arrangements. Also, from a financial point of view, there is no travelling expense involved, which must have been a great blessing for Mary Sumner House this year.

The meeting was led by Provincial President, June Houghton, and all dioceses were represented – Durham diocese had 5 representatives. The main topic was how had we all coped this year. Kathleen reported that in Durham we had kept our projects going as far as possible, and were in regular contact with each other by telephone or email. Newcastle diocese has a group of young members who all meet via zoom, and they are supporting local projects. Other dioceses had similar experience, with some branches meeting online. Everyone felt deeply the lack of services at local and diocesan levels. Prospects for 2021 seem very uncertain – hopefully the arrival of vaccines may mean a certain level of normality might return.

As next year is election year, details of the national electoral college were explained –Durham will have 2 trustees with the diocesan president to vote for the worldwide president, provincial president and zonal trustees.

An end of triennial service will take place at Liverpool cathedral on 6th November and the leadership conference due to take place in 2021 has been deferred for a year.

The highlight of the meeting was being joined by WWP Sheran Harper, who said she had seen more of God at work around the world this year. God helps us by giving us a team to work with, the right people with the right strengths to support each other – team work is essential. (Here in Durham, our trustee team illustrates that perfectly.)Sheran had spoken to the Anglican communion, especially about gender based violence, and has been invited to Wales and Scotland to speak on that topic. Archbishop Welby has invited her to join an interfaith body – a great compliment to

2020 has been a very difficult year for many. In April the first of our members died, Margaret Shepherd , then two months later the second Margaret (Margaret Peterson) died, both were very loyal Mothers' Union members of Great Aycliffe Parish, and are greatly missed .(See their obituaries in the following article)

Margaret Peterson's legacy.

This was a large bag of wool, the result of which has given me many hours spent during and in -between lock down's, knitting children's cardigans of all sizes, hats and scarves. Margaret had also made quite a few cot blankets also.
Along with member's donations of shower gel, toothpaste and tooth brushes, these were donated to the local Women's refuge, the smaller cardigans, hats and cot blankets were donated to the local Special Care Baby Unit, and I still have more to deliver once this lock down is over. Fingers crossed that will not be to long!

Branch News during Lock Down's

Members of Great Aycliffe MU Branch have tried to stay in touch either by texting or telephone calls, or a short door step home visit during our many lock downs. When the recent issues of Newsround and Families Worldwide were available I managed to visit members, face mask and social distancing compulsory of course. Members were delighted to have a short chat on their doorstep.
A number of members have also purchased items from the catalogue (£260) so this once again gave me the opportunity to visit.
The branch funds has allowed us to send £50 to support Mary Sumner Appeal and £50 was also sent to the overseas funds.
Hopefully when we are up and running again, in the not to distant future and the Covid vaccinations have been given I will be out and about once more delivering items to Women's Refuge, Long Newton Prison, and Special Baby Care Unit, and also to collect members 2021 subscriptions.

In the meantime everyone,
Take Care and Stay Safe.
Margaret Dobinson, Branch Treasurer.
January 2021

Union with their subscriptions. This year the Diocese are subsidising the amount paid to central funds (£18 from members with the other £2 paid by the Diocese). The Diocese is not collecting the Diocesan subscription from its members for 2021. The survival of Mothers' Union rests on the shoulders of its members. The Trustees want to pass on their thanks to our many members for their continued support and prayerful faithfulness to our wonderful organisation.

GIFT AID.

We have just received £763.00 from HMRC for our Gift Aid claim for 2020. As you know during this difficult year we have been unable to meet in branches or as a Diocese or to organise any of our usual fundraising events. I know you will appreciate, therefore, that this amount is very welcome. The needs to which we usually respond are still out there and new ones have arisen because of the coronavirus.
Many thanks to all those members who are taxpayers and have signed up for the scheme.
Beryl Wilson

HAPPY 100TH BIRTHDAY DORIS!

Many congratulations to Mrs Doris Jordan a much loved member of St Mary the Virgin's Mothers Union, Sherburn Village, who celebrated her 100th birthday on 24th November 2020.

MU as well as to Sheran herself. She said she has spent more time at home in 2020 than in the last 20 years – something we can all relate to.

Zonal trustee Catherine Hilton reported on worldwide activities – overseas dioceses are anxious to take control of their own projects, rather than being run from Mary Sumner House, and funding is being sought from outside bodies as well as MU. The Big give campaign raised £46,000 for overseas projects, which was an amazing achievement in such a short time. It was heartening to hear that MU is very active in Myanmar, especially in helping disadvantaged families.

In the UK, MU is supporting the domestic abuse bill going through parliament – it was suggested that not just 16 days, but 365 days are needed to keep this issue regularly in people's thoughts and actions. MU has links with the UN on this topic. The MU chaplain, bishop Emma Ineson, has been invited to chair the Lambeth conference – another mark of respect to the work done around the world by MU.

Carole Hopkinson

WHEN THE SONG OF THE ANGELS IS STILLED

When the Song of the Angels Is Stilled
When the star in the sky is gone,
When the kings and the princes are home,
When the shepherds are back with their flocks,
The work of Christmas begins:
To find the lost,
To heal the broken,
To feed the hungry,
To release the prisoner,
To rebuild the nations,
To bring peace among people,
To make music in the heart.

Howard Thurman.

"Love doesn't just sit there, like a stone; it has to be made, like bread, remade all the time, made new." Ursula le Guin

Think about the quotation, to me it is a reminder that we cannot expect those we love to feel loved without repeated actions of love and kindness.

Knowing how much M.U. meetings and contacts mean to members; this branch along with many others arranged members in small groups with the hope they would contact each other often. This was organised at the last meeting in March 2020. As the weeks went on various other things happened, all keeping to the rules and dependent on the weather.

Some took a seat and snacks into someone's garden to chat.

2 or 3 met at an outdoor space to enjoy a bought coffee.

When a member died, a written tribute for her, along with flowers, was delivered to each member in time for them to be able to share the funeral service.

One member has visited, when possible, two others on a weekly basis.

Branch leader rings everyone every 2-3 weeks and gave each member chocolates at Christmas.

Refuge support has continued - 12 Advent calendars for children, and so we didn't leave them out, chocolate oranges were given to mums. Money was willingly donated by members.

For Christmas members knitted 9 scarves; gloves were bought and members then added various toiletries and suitable items, all were beautifully wrapped.

A 99 year old has been telephoned nearly every day.

During the year masks have been sewn (some went a vets surgery which had given their PPE to NHS), cakes, dinners and jams made for people. Others have received a rice pudding almost every week. The grateful recipients have insisted on making donations, all donations have gone to M.U.

Letter from the Diocesan Treasurer

I have had some conversations with branch treasurers about the collection of this year's subscriptions, which has revealed how anxious they are about collection.

PLEASE DO NOT WORRY. We all know how exceptional are the circumstances in which we are all living and the first concern for our organisation is the safety of our members. We must protect each other and our communities by abiding by the government health rules. This means we cannot meet as branches, and we cannot ask treasurers to put themselves or others at risk by going to members' houses. We all hope that the crisis will be easing in the next few months and that we shall be able to meet again – only then can we collect subscriptions. The diocese will still be able to function without receiving the money at the beginning of the year. If anyone has any queries, please do not hesitate to get in touch with me.

Carole Hopkinson

Christian care
for families worldwide

MOTHERS' UNION LIFELINE—ITS MEMBERS

What a year we have endured. Hopefully when you read this article the light at the end of the tunnel will be very bright. We have all done our best in keeping in touch with our Mothers' Union family. We thank God for our church and our Mothers' Union both of which have raised our spirits in those dark moments.

We were all shocked in the middle of the first lockdown when we heard of the desperate financial collapse of Mothers' Union but our dedicated members stepped into the breach. The national appeal was inundated with donations from the generous heart of the membership and financial support rolled in. Thanks to the generosity of so many our organisation has been able to rise from the ashes.

Where do we go from here? The income sources for 2021 are fragile. Money raised from hiring out the many conference rooms in Mary Sumner House has dried up and donations from outside sources are similarly diminished. The administrative staff at Mary Sumner House has been reduced by one third to save on expenditure.

Mothers' Union is a member supported organisation and this is where the future income lies. Thank you to all those members who have managed to pay their subscriptions in these difficult times especially when branches and churches are closed. I hope that members will continue their financial support of Mothers'

MU subscriptions 2021/2022

The past year has been quite extraordinary for everyone around the world, and for Mothers' Union it has been felt particularly strongly from not being able to worship in our churches and meet together in our branches and deaneries. As the diocesan treasurer, I must take note of the financial consequences as we look to the future, and the staff at Mary Sumner House(MSH) have been doing likewise.

As you know, our annual subscriptions are divided between the diocese and MSH. For several years, the diocesan share has been £3.50, which trustees felt was adequate for our needs. In 2020, MSH asked for £14.50, bringing the total to £18. This year, MSH has asked for £20 and the diocesan trustees felt that this was too large an increase for many of our members to pay, so that it was decided that the diocese should ask members for £18, and the rest is to come from our reserves. Prudent financial management by the trustees over a number of years has meant that we are able to do this. MSH usually asks for a small increase each year, and we expect this to be the case in the future. The diocesan plan is to increase subscriptions gradually so as not to place too great a burden on members.

MSH is also proposing to start a direct debit system for subscriptions, such as many of us may do for household bills, etc. but this will be entirely voluntary. Their reasons for doing this are that they will know when they are going to receive the money, younger members may find it more convenient, and where branches close, individuals will still be able to ensure their membership. Anyone choosing to do this will need to have access to email. The diocese is quite happy to receive subs in the usual way.

As part of their scheme, MSH will be sending direct debit forms to every member in the new bi-annual magazine, due to come out in April, with explanatory details.

This is a new venture for MU and if anyone wishes to have further clarification and information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Carole Hopkinson

These small things are reflections of the love God has given to us all – they are signs that M.U. is alive and busy doing the things we can – we weren't able to develop the vaccine- so we did what we could. It's clear we have tried to "touch as many lives as possible for Thee…"
We are in need of a project to pull us all together, to help us feel we are involved in society, an ability to show we care….. I might just have one.

St Andrews Mu

MOTHERS UNION JOURNAL. 1914.
AN EXTRACT FOM THIS 1914 JOURNAL.
A NEW YEARS LETTER.

From MARY SUMNER .The Founder Of The Mothers' Union.
"The character of the Nation is formed in the Home".

MY DEAR FELLOW- MEMBERS,
With all my heart I wish you and your husbands a "Happy New Year", and we know that the best way to make it happy will be by drawing nearer to God.

Let us pray:
"Father , let me dedicate all this year to Thee;
In whatever worldly state Thou wilt have me be.
Not from sorrow, pain, or care, freedom dare I claim,
This alone shall be my prayer, Glorify Thy Name.

These words from our Founder Mary Sumner, offers us Strength, Peace and Love in all that we do.
Without Prayer, and without Christ, we can do Nothing.
Kathleen Wilson. Diocesan President.

St John's Mothers Union, Neville's Cross Rebuilding Hope and Confidence 2021

How can our members rebuild hope and confidence in these difficult times? There are regular news bulletins on television and social media as well as articles in the press about hospitals reaching capacity and the exhaustion NHS staff. However, St John's MU, Neville's Cross has found a number of ways to rebuild the hope and confidence of staff at the North Durham University Hospital and thought that we would share them with you. Your Branch may already undertake these activities, which we know are greatly appreciated.

Gift Packs

Many branches generously donate toiletry packs to their local hospitals on a regular basis.

However, you may be aware of the recent appeal by a local doctor working at the University Hospital of North Durham for toiletries for patients arriving in hospital as emergency cases. Many of these patients live on their own or may have relatives who are unable to travel or who are reluctant to visit the hospital to drop off personal items because of the worrying statistics about the virus. In her original message, the doctor stated that during the first wave of the pandemic, the hospital received donations of toiletries from a number of businesses and organisations. Unfortunately, there are now few such donations as many businesses have closed or are no longer in a position to help because of their current financial position. The doctor stated that often she and colleagues purchased items for the patients but because they are so busy now they do not always have time to go shopping for themselves let alone other people.

Once again the Branch was able to assist the NHS. We are very grateful to Fiona, one of our members, who as you can see from the picture, takes great care when preparing the packs Each pack contained: shower gel, toothbrush, toothpaste, wipes, tissues and a comb and also a gift tag with the MU logo and a message saying 'a gift From St. John's MU to say we are thinking about you'.
It certainly felt that we had helped to rebuild the confidence of one exhausted doctor and her colleagues by responding to the appeal. The provision of support through action and prayer should never be underestimated!

The Twin Heart Project – Appeal to Knitters and Seamstresses
Whilst collecting the packs, I asked if the Branch could help in other ways. The doctor asked if there were any knitters or sewers in the Branch and she explained

Diary Dates

DDMU Trustees	Monday 26/04/21	10.00	Bournmoor	Trustees
IMPC	Wednesday 05/05/2021	2.00 pm	Durham Cathedral	
Retreat	TBC			
Festival Service	Tuesday 15/06/21	2.00 start	Durham Cathedral	Everyone
Diocesan council/ All Committees AGM	Tuesday 08/06/21	10.30	Waddington St Chapel	Everyone
Deanery Leaders Lunch	Monday 05/07/21	10.30-2.30	Bournmoor	Trustees Deanery Leaders
Founders (Mary Sumner Day)	Monday 06/09/21	2.00 start	St Nicholas	Everyone
Retreat	07/08/09/21	11.00 start	Shepherds Dene	Bookable by anyone
All Committees	Tuesday 21/09/21	10.30	Waddington St Chapel	
General Meeting	TBC			
DDMU	Monday 04/10/21	10.00	Bournmoor	
Diocesan Council	Tuesday O2/11/21	10.30-2.30	Waddington St Chapel	Everyone
End of triennial service	06/11/21		Liverpool Cathedral21	

TRIENNIAL ELECTIONS 2021.

Yes , it is that time again!

Nominations needed for Diocesan President, Vice Presidents and Members of Trustee board.

Deanery and Branch level too.

Please, pray, think and reflect, is this for you?
Your interest, expertise, knowledge is an asset to all areas of representation.
We all have something to offer these roles , within Durham diocese Mothers' Union.

At this significant time within our organisation, again, please take time to pray, think and reflect.

Thankyou.

Supported by the Living Spirit, we will work together in Prayer, Faith, Love and Peace.

Kathleen Wilson. Diocesan President.

IMPC Report

I am sure we have all been thinking and praying for our indoor members both in care homes or living in their own homes. Hopefully now they will be able to see their families again. Sadly we have lost a small number of members in the last few months and we send our sympathy to their families.

It is important that branches keep me updated about their indoor members who have moved homes or have died. My telephone number is listed below . Thank you for donations to IMPC from the branches.
Take care, Stay safe and God Bless.

Carole Pattinson
carole.pattinson@hotmail.com
01915142659

about The Twin Heart project, which involves making a pair of hearts.
In some cases, one heart remains with the patient and the other is sent to the relative who is unable to visit the patient and in other cases, if a patient passes away, one heart is sent to the family and the other remains with their loved one.
A pattern follows on the middle pages for the knitters in the Branch and for the ladies who made their own patterns for hospital gowns and face coverings I am sure that a heart template will not be a challenge! The hearts can be any colour or type of material. Perhaps members in your Branch would like to participate in the Twin Heart Project.

Thank You Letters

How do you feel when you receive a thank you letter? Although we are familiar with the saying 'it is better to give than receive', most of us also derive pleasure when our efforts are acknowledged .I have been a Brownie leader for more years than I care to remember, but planning and running meetings takes time and a lot of effort, so receiving a thank you card or letter means a great deal.
In response to my question, 'how are you coping with the current wave of the pandemic?', the doctor reiterated that the situation was much worse than at the start of the pandemic and that staff were exhausted due to the increase in the number of patients and the fact that many staff were off sick or self-isolating themselves. The doctor also mentioned that at the start of the pandemic, the wards and clinics received lots of letters of encouragement and pictures thanking staff for hard their work, which really boosted morale. However, as the time has passed the originals have not been replaced. In the January newsletter, Branch members were asked to a letter of encouragement or simply send a card, to boost morale of the NHS staff. There are 17 wards, ICU and a number of theatres and 28 members in the Branch, so we are hoping to send a message of hope to everyone!

Annette Geragusian – Branch Leader (St John's MU, Neville's Cross)

HEARTS

HEART KNITTING PATTERN FOR COVID -19 PATIENTS.
ONE HEART IS GIVEN TO THE PATIENT,
THE OTHER A FAMILY MEMBER WHO IS UNABLE TO BE WITH THEM.

This heart is knitted flat and made in one piece to minimise any fiddly seaming, each set will be made up of two complete hearts.

THE PATIERN INCLUDES: Row numbers for each step so you don't lose your place, instructions for making the heart, a list of abbreviations and explanation of some techniques, and a materials list.

TECHNIQUES: All pieces are knitted flat (back and forth) on a pair of straight knitting needles. You will need to cast on and off, knit, purl, work decreases, work a make one increase, and a little seaming to finish.

YARN, NEEDLES & MATERIALS REQUIRED:

- A pair of straight 3.7Smm knitting needles
- Double knitting yarn in pink
- A small amount of toy filling or small pieces of clean soft fabric cuttings.
- A stitch holder

NOTES

- Finished size: The finished heart is approximately 6.5cm high x 6.5cm wide.
- Work flat: All pieces are knitted flat (back and forth) on a pair of straight knitting needles.
- Tension: The tension is approximately 22 sts x 28 rows for a 1 Ocm x 1 Ocm square in stockinette stitch on 3.75mm needles. Don't worry too much about tension for this pattern.
- Casting on; Unless otherwise specified, use the long tail cast on for all pieces.
- Sewing seams: Use mattress stitch to sew the seams.

ABBREVIATIONS

DK	Double knitting or light worsted weight yarn
k	Knit
k2tog	Decrease: knit two stitches together.
m1	Increase: Make one stitch by picking up the horizontal bar between the needles and placing it on tile loft-hand needle. Knit into the back of this loop.
p	Purl
Pull through to cast off	Cut the yarn leaving at least a 30cm tail. Thread the tail onto a darning needle and sew through the remaining sts on the knitting needle. Pull the sts off the knitting needle on to the yarn, gather together tightly and secure the yarn.
rep	Repeat
RS	Right side

ssk	Decrease: slip the next stitch on the left needle knitwise, then slip the next stitch on the left needle purlwise. Take the left needle and knit through the front of the two slipped stitches on the right needle
st(s)	Stitch(es)
WS	Wrong side
[•••]	Repeat the sequence between the square brackets by the number indicated.
(.. sts)	The number in round brackets at the end of the instruction Indicates the number of stitches after working the row.

KNITTING PATTERN

Make 1. Cast on 6 sts in pink on straight 3.75rnm needles. Start at the bottom tip of the heart.
Row 1: p (6 sts, W5)
Row 2: [k1, m1] x 2, k2, (ml, k1] x2(10sts)
Row 3: p (10 sts)
Row 4: k2, [ml, k1] x 2, k3, [m1, kl]x2, kl (145t5)
Row 5: p (14 sts)
Row 6: k3, [m1, k1] x 2, k5, [m 1, klJ x 2, k2 (18 sts)
Row 7: p (18 sts)
Row 8: k4, [m1, k1) x 2, k7, [m1, k1J x 2, k3 (22 sts)
Row 9: p (22 sts)
Row 10: k5, [m1, k1] x 2, k9, [m1, k1] x 2, k4 (26 5t5)
Row 11: p (26 sts)
Row 12: k6, [m1, k1] x 2, k11, [m1, k1] x 2, k5 (30 sts)
Row 13: p (30 sts)
Row 14: k7, [m1, k1] x 2, k13, [ml, k1] x 2, k6 (34 sts)
Row 15: p (34 sts)
Row 16: k (34 sts)
Row 17: p17, place the last 17 sts on a stitch holder to hold them to work later (17 sts)
For rows 18 to 22 work the 17 sts on your knitting needle for the first top piece.
Row 18: k (17 sts, RS)
Row 19: p (17 sts. WS)
Row 20: k1, k2tog, k3, ssk, k1, k2tog, k3, ssk, k1 {13 sts)
Row 21: p (13 sts)
Row 22: k1, k2tog, k1, ssk, k1 r k2tog, k1 r ssk, k1 (9 sts)
Pull through to cast off.
Now place the held 17 sts on your knitting needle with the WS facing you ready to purl.
Row 1: p (17 sts)
Rows 2 to 6: follow the heart pattern rows 18 to 22 (9 sts)
Pull through to cast off.
Making up: First sew the side edges of the heart top together (from the cast off sts down to row 17). Then sew the side edges together for the seam that runs down the centre back of the heart, adding stuffing as you sew. Finish by gathering the cast on sts together at the bottom of the heart.