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Durham Diocese Newsround Spring/Summer 2024/25

Trustee Letter.

Dear Members and Friends.
Happy and Healthy 2025 to All.
I am Kathleen Wilson, past President , now ex -officio Diocesan Trustee.
It is a privilege for me to write this letter to you.
First, Thank you to Carole Hopkinson who has completed her term of office as President. Carole our prayers and best wishes to you.
As we 'Spring' forward into a new triennial without a President , Mothers Union Durham Diocese will be lead, and guided by the Diocesan Trustee Board. (There will be a short introduction by each Trustee in this Newsround.) All diary dates are noted, and listed for you.(In this Newsround) To include, Cathedral, MU Special Services, Meetings and Events.
Our Projects, Hospitals, Refuges, Schools, Prisons etc. continue. As will support to AFIA, Overseas , etc and Mary Sumner House. Also an opportunity to introduce further areas of interest for growth and development. Your thoughts and ideas would be appreciated too.
New Membership will be encouraged to include , Clergy and congregations , where there is a wealth of interest in Mothers Union .
An acknowledgement and Thank you for all that You do, to include our Indoor Members for their devotional and prayer mission.
We are a healthy, active Diocese. Recognised for our community and global commitment to All people- through our wonderful Mothers Union organisation.
We will now continue to progress and move forward in all areas of duties.
We all work better together, We pray together, We will stay together.
Words once said by our Founder, Mary Sumner. ' It is a call to everyone of us to live in Prayer, that His help, His blessing ,and His inspiration May rest upon our earnest efforts'.
Thank you. May you always be surrounded with the love of the Lord Jesus.
Kathleen Wilson.x

Prayer:
Loving Lord
You are the Vine. We are the branches.
As we branch out in Mothers Union Projects;
Let us show we Care, Listen, be Tolerant and Patient, To offer Kindness and Generosity.
Be there for All people, who ever they are, Wherever they may be, and, in whatever circumstances
We offer All these branches in you Name—— The True Vine.
Amen.
Kathleen Wilson.

Members who have celebrated special birthdays

Jenny Dixon	101yrs	Holy Trinity Southwick
Ivy Gilby	90yrs	St Michael & All Angels Norton
Barbara Haggerston	80yrs	St Michael & All Angels Norton
Helen Raine	80yrs	St. Paul's Spennymoor
Win Palin	80yrs	All Saints , Newton Hall
Diane Elsom	70yrs	All Saints , Newton Hall
Debbie Duncan	60yrs	All Saints , Newton Hall
Kathleen Gilson	90yrs.	St Mary's, Sherburn.
Sandra Cruddace	80yrs	Houghton
Sue Elsey	70yrs	Houghton
Marian Sherman	95yrs	Houghton
Jean Stothard	80yrs	St. Mary & St. Cuthbert Chester le Street
Rose Yeowart	80yrs	St. Mary & St. Cuthbert Chester le Street
Norma Sanderson	90yrs	St. Mary & St. Cuthbert Chester le Street

Congratulations to all who have celebrated special wedding anniversaries

Pam & John Newbould	50 yrs	St Michael & All Angels Norton.
Jean & Philip Wolstenholme	60yrs	All Saints , Newton Hall
Val & Dave Dorward	60yrs	St. Paul's Winlaton
Sandra & John Cruddace	60yrs	Houghton

Members receiving long service awards

Sybil Walton	45yrs	Christ Church , Consett
Christine Thompson	10 yrs	Christ Church Great Lumley
Carole Ellis	15 yrs	Christ Church Great Lumley
Eileen Turnbull	8yrs	Holy Trinity Southwick.
Audrey Newton	20yrs	All Saints, Lanchester
Sandy Jackson	20yrs	All Saints, Lanchester
Linda Hughes	48yrs	All Saints, Monkwearmouth
Ann Jeffrey	46yrs	All Saints, Monkwearmouth
Greta Redman	48yrs	All Saints, Monkwearmouth
Doris Wilton	11yrs	All Saints, Monkwearmouth
Lily Scullion	30yrs	All Saints, Monkwearmouth
Alma Campbell	24yrs	All Saints, Monkwearmouth
Catherine Jamieson	7yrs	All Saints, Monkwearmouth
Freda Guy	26yrs	All Saints , Newton Hall
Sue Kinghorn	26yrs	All Saints , Newton Hall
Linda Murdie	26yrs	All Saints , Newton Hall
Mamie Simmons	26yrs	All Saints , Newton Hall
Jean Wolstenholme	19yrs	All Saints , Newton Hall
Helen Moss	17yrs	All Saints , Newton Hall
Pam Newton	14yrs	All Saints , Newton Hall
Jean Wilkinson	67yrs	St Mary's, Sherburn.
Doris Carr	10yrs	St Mary's, Sherburn.
Eunice Coughtrey	12yrs	St Mary's, Sherburn.
Delia Coulthard	20yrs	St Mary's, Sherburn.
Brenda Crone	25yrs	St Mary's, Sherburn.
Alison Foster	22yrs	St Mary's, Sherburn.
Audrey Hickman	12yrs	St Mary's, Sherburn.
Joan Mayhew	12yrs	St Mary's, Sherburn.
Helen Murray	12yrs	St Mary's, Sherburn.
Pat Napier	12yrs	St Mary's, Sherburn.
Pat Strachan	12yrs	St Mary's, Sherburn.
Rita Tait	12yrs	St Mary's, Sherburn.
Brenda Tall	12yrs	St Mary's, Sherburn.
Margaret Porter	37yrs	St Mary's Norton
Marjorie Forster	34yrs	St Mary's Norton

The following trustees have provided some information….

Janice Clasper Mothers' Union enterprise Rep. dealing with orders all over Diocese where there are no Reps. I also cover Marketing for the Diocese.

Beryl Wilson. Since my retirement from full time work served on the Trustee Board as Action & Outreach co- ordinator then as Diocesan Treasurer & Finance Co-ordinator. I now assist Janice in Finance returns and Gift Aid claims.

Kathleen Wilson. Past President. I am an ex -officio Trustee Board Member. I am contact for the Province and Mary Sumner House. The Cathedral and Prison work. Support to : Stockton, Hartlepool, Darlington and Wearmouth Deaneries. God's work will continue as a team effort- we can all project Mothers Union wherever, and whenever an opportunity arises. God Bless.

Jean Carleton, I've recently been invited to join the Trustee Board for the next triennium. I am currently a Deanery Leader and a branch leader; the branch meets weekly in term time – this keeps me connected with members and busy. I believe strongly that Mothers' Union has a great deal to offer, we have fingers in many pies and can do more, we all need to look for opportunities to carry on the work of prayer and love in service as instituted by Jesus. I hope I can have some useful ideas with which to promote Mothers' Union especially in Durham Diocese, please be ready to support where you can and talk about M.U. at every opportunity.

Linda Murdie, Diocesan Secretary – As well as minuting all Diocesan meetings, I am responsible for the Mothers Union Database information for the Durham Diocese. A new database is being introduced by Mary Sumner House, and it goes live at the end of February. It is hoped that the transition from one to the other will be straightforward but please bear with us if you do not receive normal mailings - hopefully this will get sorted in time. I try very hard to keep this up to date with members who have deceased, new members who have joined and also change of addresses. Thank you for your help.

Janice Hardman Responsibility for consolidating end of year branch accounts for the Charity Commission. I have taken on the Gift Aid responsibility from Beryl Wilson. I am also Durham Deanery leader.

Sue Begg I am a trustee and also Deanery leader of Houghton and Chester le Street Deanery . I am part of Chester Le Street branch of MU and have been a member of Mothers' union for 25 yrs . I am part of the Low Newton branch of MU and I am also a member of The Community of Interest for Domestic Abuse and Modern Day Slavery and would be available to speak at your branch or Deanery meeting .I am also a Grandma who loves walking and reading and am a fair-weather gardener

Linda Ferries, Trustee and Diocesan Vice President for the Jarrow, Gateshead, Gateshead West and Wearmouth Deaneries. My Branch is All Saints Cleadon Village, in the Jarrow Deanery.

UPDATE FOR TREASURERS

The Branch Annual Account forms for 2024 have been arriving steadily over the past few weeks. Thank you.

Unfortunately I am unable to prepare the Charity Commission Annual Return for 2024 until all accounts for the Diocese are in. This is a gentle reminder to those branches whose accounts are still outstanding.

Janice Hardman (Finance)

Holy Trinity Christmas Lunch

Members enjoyed a festive lunch at Bede's Bakehouse ,St Peters Church Wearmouth. A lovely afternoon of music ,quiz and generous hospitality.
Kathleen Wilson

Eileen Turnbull receiving her long service certificate from Kathleen Wilson at their Christmas lunch.
Kathleen Wilson.

St Cuthberts, Darlington Branch of Mothers Union welcomed a new member in October. Mrs Anita Wilson was enrolled by the Rev Steph Price at our meeting and Rev Steph herself was welcomed to the branch by our Deanery Leader Mrs Margaret Kidd. All members were pleased to welcome both Anita and Steph to the branch.

To all new members

Marie Watson	St Peter's Wolviston
Ann Jenkins	St Peter's Wolviston
Ann Lipscomb	All Saints, Lanchester
Sue Smith	All Saints, Lanchester
Janet Jackson	All Saints, Lanchester
Fiona Holmes	Houghton
Lynne Woodhouse	Houghton
Julie Adair	Houghton
Rita Wilson	St Cuthberts Darlington

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

Judith Ivison	81yrs	Holy Trinity South Hetton
Elsie Thirlaway	97yrs	Christ Church Great Lumley
Joyce Taylor	94yrs	Christ Church Great Lumley
Ivy Gilby	90yrs	St Michael & All Angels Norton
Rita Fletcher	95yrs	St. Pauls, Spennymoor
Frances Kelly		St. Mary's Cockerton
Shirley Dawson	88yrs	St. Mary's Cockerton
Shirley Thompson	89yrs	All Saints, Monkwearmouth
Patricia Anne Wilson	92yrs	St. Mary's Barnard Castle
Jill Brown	92yrs	All Saints , Newton Hall
Paddie Elliott	85yrs	St. Paul's Winlaton
Ann Harris	88yrs	St. Paul's Winlaton
June Hubert	92yrs	Houghton
Florence Robinson	86yrs	St Aidan's and St Cuthbert's
Mary Gardiner	86yrs	St. Mary & St. Cuthbert Chester le Street

Members of All Saints Church Cleadon Prayer Group with Kathleen Wilson after her talk and question time on Mothers Union Prison work

Dates for your diary 2025

March 11th	Diocesan council at URC 10.30am
April 9th	Retreat with Lilian Clark at All Saints' church, Newton Hall, Durham 10 – 2.15
May 14th	IMPC service at the cathedral 2pm
June 17th	Festival service at the cathedral 2pm
July 15th	Deanery leaders' lunch at URC 11 – 1
August 5th	Mary Sumner Day service at URC 2pm
October 21st	Diocesan Council at URC 10.30 – 12

Deadlines for Newsround 2025 are

Friday 6th June
Friday 3Rd October

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

Away from it all

In the last Newsround, I gave details of the holidays we arranged and the support we gave to organisations organising holiday activities for children and young people. Please be aware of people in your area who need a break and bring this project to the attention of your local clergy and schools. We may not always know of cases ourselves, but people like clergy, teachers, social workers, doctors etc. are regularly coming into contact with families and individuals going through difficult times and who would benefit from a break. I can be contacted at any time for further information.

In addition, our funds are not as high as I would like – the balance in the AFIA account is just over £6,600. While this may seem a substantial sum, in practice it would only pay for 3 caravan holidays, so may I ask that if you are having any fund raising activity this year, or if your bank balance is more than you need, please can you contribute to our fund, by sending any donations, no matter how small, to our treasurer, Edna Thompson, to be added to the AFIA fund.

Carole Hopkinson

All Saint's MU Lanchester

At our Wave of Prayer Service in January our Branch Leader Margaret Brown enrolled three new Members Janet Jackson, Sue Smith and Ann Lipscomb. This was a joyful occasion. We wish them all the happiness, fellowship and love being a MU member brings.

A photo of The Inspire Choir and MU Members, who lead our music with their inspirational singing at Holy Trinity Southwick Mothers Union Carol Service. An afternoon of fellowship and Christmas preparation.
Kathleen Wilson.

A new board for a new triennium!

With the commencement of a new triennium comes a new Mothers' Union Board of Trustees – including Kathleen Snow as Worldwide President.

Representing 11 zones, alongside Policy and Safeguarding expertise, the trustees reflect our global movement

Kathleen Snow – Worldwide President

Kathleen was elected as Worldwide President of Mothers' Union for the triennium 2025-2027, following two terms as a worldwide Zonal Trustee (2019-2024). She heads up and chairs meetings of the Board of Trustees and fulfils an ambassadorial role on behalf of the organisation.

A retired registered nurse, Kathleen previously managed the Parish Nurse/Health Ministry in her home cathedral in Canada, where she was also involved in Safe Church Regulation. She has been a Patient Advocate in a major health region and, most recently, Chief Privacy Officer and Right to Information Coordinator for the Provincial Health Authority.

A member since 1988, Kathleen is passionate about Mothers' Union. She has served Mothers' Union at parish, diocesan, provincial and worldwide levels, including on the Fundraising and Communications Committee, which produced the *Dear Lord Prayer Book*, and also as a Regional Trainer for Parenting. She has had a particular role in facilitating parenting programmes with the Indigenous Peoples in Canada and has been member of the Steering Committee for the Central Parenting Programme. She was a facilitator in her Zone and in Britain and Ireland for the MULOA (Mothers' Union Listens, Observes, Acts) process. She chaired the Development Committee for six years in her capacity as Zonal Trustee and has been a committee member of the IT & Data Committee.

Deb Lee – Zonal Trustee for Zone H, York Province (North of England)

A retired consultant paediatrician, Deb is a relative newcomer to Mothers' Union. She is passionate about our aims and loves a challenge. She feels privileged to have the opportunity to serve in this way. She recognises the importance of increasing membership in Britain and Ireland to ensure the sustainability of the organisation, while at the same time ensuring that all voices on the board are heard equally. Deb's skills lie in networking and seeing connections. She has demonstrated these as Diocesan President in Carlisle, as the diocese increased its visibility and influence within the diocesan structures and, by working with a like minded charity, was able

Prayers written at the HMP Low Newton Mothers' Union branch meeting, 27/11/2024 ….continued

A Christmas Prayer

Dear God,
We thank you for being in our lives. We love you with all our hearts.
Bless everyone at Low Newton at Christmas,
and bless the Mothers' Union.
Be with our families; the people we love;
all those who feel lonely; the homeless;
and people who grieve for lost loved ones or find Christmas hard.
Give us the gift of hope
as we remember the birth of Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Baptism Bags

As you can see in the photograph – Mothers' Union provide bags to be given out by the priest to Baptism families. We make little bags approximately 10/11 inches square, 27/28 cms square with handles. I use any pretty material and tape, ribbon or material leftover from bag for handles. Inside we put either a blanket size 20ins x 25 ins 50x64 cms sizes are approx.. (or a child's hat check age and gender if it is older than a baby), a Bible Stories or First Prayers,(£2.99) M.U. leaflet, What Dad's add (these are available from M.U. publications) and small soft toy do check it is for under 3years old if the recipient is very young. Other little gifts can be given for older children. Any information from the church i.e newsletter, magazine, service times, events and contacts are useful inclusions.

The bags are often given out at the end of the Baptism service, sometimes the contents are shown to everyone present, it is lovely to be able to give little gifts and it's a great way to share information.

My advice is to have a year's supply before you give any away and then keep adding to the store. It can be a good idea to have a couple of bags in church so there is always one available.

LOW NEWTON BRANCH

Hello from Low Newton Members.
We continue as a branch , we meet monthly in the prison Chapel.
The women come in their own time, from daily prison duties.
Rev. Rebecca and Julie (Staff Member) have been admitted as members. Some of the women have shown an interest too.
In the branch service the women volunteer for the Bible Reading or read out the Branch prayer.
Prayers written at the meeting are in this edition. Please read them and use them at your branch meeting.
Kathleen, Beryl and Sue attended the prison Carol Service, we participated in the Readings, music by the Salvation Army Band. An emotional time for many of the women. Followed by delicious festive refreshments , served by the women.
Members and Friends, Thank you for the Angel Tree contribution towards Christmas gifts for prisoners children, Christmas cards and toiletries. All very much appreciated by the women.
Thank you for your prayers of encouragement and support to us as we lead the branch. Where we listen , talk ,and encourage love and respect in Jesus name.
Thankyou.
"So Many Hearts Everywhere Have Need Of Prayer"
Kathleen Wilson.x

Prayers written at the HMP Low Newton Mothers' Union branch meeting, 27/11/2024

The People's Prayer

Loving God,
You know the hearts of all the people you have made.
We pray for understanding of others.
We pray that we may show love better.
We pray for the disabled, and those in pain, for the homeless and the needy, and for people affected by war; please bring them peace.
We pray for the unemployed, and those in poverty.
We give thanks for the people who care for us and love us unconditionally.
We ask for your justice, mercy and grace,
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

to provide a caravan in one of their local sites for AFIA holidays.
Deb loves being part of a diverse team and sharing her skills. She is keen to learn from more experienced members of the board. She is excited to be a member of the team shaping the vision and focus of Mothers' - as we seek to reach out as God's hands across the world, in love and service, to fight for justice so that God's love will reign.

Members attend the Triennial service in Blackburn Cathedral.
The Diocesan banner carried by members in the procession.
Sermon by Bishop of Blackburn. Rev Philip North.
Spoke on how important women are in the Church!!
An afternoon of praise and thanksgiving.
It was good to meet friends old and new. Lynne Tembey interested as always in Durham. We hope she will visit us soon.
Thanks be to God for our Community work.
Kathleen Wilson.

Photo of Members of the Province . Janice Clasper and I attended the meeting of Diocesan Presidents and Representatives at Cliffe College Sheffield.
Interesting meeting and discussion of all areas of MU work.
A great deal of interest in our prison branch area.
Kathleen Wilson.

St Mary's Norton contributed by Val Swansbury

Before Christmas members took part in the Norton Advent Window Trail and their allocated window theme was "I'm dreaming of a White Christmas". The Advent Windows were displayed in various businesses in Norton and there was a competition to gather together all the alphabet letters that were on the top right hand side of the Advent Windows and re-arrange the letters to form three Christmas themed films.

A member of St Mary's Norton Branch, Barbara Brown, for the past 15yrs has made 3,600 hygiene packs for the local University of North Tees Hospital to be given to patients who are unexpectedly admitted to hospital. The packs consisted of a comb, soap, flannel, toothbrush, toothpaste and a small travel pack of tissues. The items were donated by members of the branch and her family. A hospital spokesperson has said that Barbara's packs were the best they had received over the past 15 years. Our sincere thanks go to Barbara for her hard work in making up the packs and delivering them to the hospital. At the branch's recent party at the home of branch member, Ruth Lyddiard, Barbara was presented with floral tributes to thank her for her work. On the photo Barbara is 6th on the right

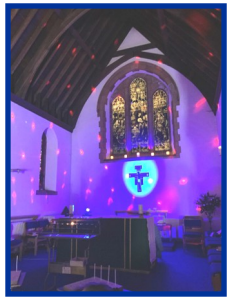
Members of St Mary's Norton took part in the church's Christmas Tree Festival. Their tree showed the work of the Mothers' Union throughout the world and celebrated their branch's 130 years Celebrations in September 2024. Photographs of members over the years, past and present were also displayed.

St Mary's, Cockerton Light Festival

Last year, our curate, Mthr Jess, herself a Mothers Union member, announced an ambitious project ,we would be holding a Light Festival! Don't put away your Christmas decorations, she said, bring them to church instead and we will illuminate the church inside and out! Her vision: She wanted to create a different space to invite the community into church, to experience the awe and wonder of God, and create a sense of ownership in the wider area of 'this is our church!'. The event was a huge success and brought many members of the community to church who had never been before.

It was such a success that Mthr Jess organised it all again this year and it took place on Sunday 16th February. The tickets were free and 'sold' out in no time. The weather promised to be poor but in the end was cold but fine. The outside of the church was lit up in lights and the inside of the church was totally transformed. There were plenty of crafts to do in the church, storytelling and a silent disco! After all that activity plenty of food was on offer from burgers to toasted marshmallows to tea, coffee and cake! Mothers Union members were involved; on the refreshment stall (of course!), marshalling people the right way, helping with the crafts as well as many other members of the congregation from the youngest to the oldest.

Again, it was a huge success and the following photos show a glimpse of what it was like, photos don't come out as well as expected when it is dark!



TRIBUTE TO IVY GILBY 1934 – 2025

With a very strong faith, second to none, following an illness bravely faced Ivy peacefully died on 6th February.

She worked tirelessly for Mouthers' Union as a staunch member alongside being Branch Leader with Norton St Michael and All Angels Church, Stockton Deanery Contact and also served as Diocesan Unit Coordinator for Finance and Central Services.

She was a “peoples person” and having worked closely with her we can never forget and will be grateful for her spiritual inspiration, friendship, support, encouragement and advice she not only gave to us but to all who knew her including Lay and Clergy alike.

Her work was always supported by her family, husband David, son Jonathan and daughter Sallianne for which we give thanks and send our condolences to them and her grandsons Daniel and Michael.

We pray for Ivy, a special lady, may she rest in peace and rise in glory.

Edna, Dawn, Trish and all at St Michael and All Angels Norton Mothers Union.

Members and Rector Rev Jen Bradshaw Holy Trinity Church Southwick. Kathleen had spoken on Domestic Violence and 16 Days of Activism within the sermon time at morning Eucharist.

All Saints Mothers Union. Kathleen Wilson receiving from Margaret , an enthusiastic knitter, and Branch Leader Linda Hughes, with knitted hearts for 4Louis project . We all enjoyed a delicious festive tea.
Kathleen Wilson.

St Mary's Norton (Continued)

While the Christmas Tree Festival took place and until January, Nativity figures of the Shepherds and Wise Men together with an Angel were put over the bollards at the entrance to the Church's drive. The figures of the shepherds were made by St Mary's Norton member, Joan Lambert and she also helped with the making of the Wise Men and the Angel with members of other groups in Norton. Over the Christmas period lots of passersby took photos of the figures with their children and their dogs. They were featured in local Facebook Groups.

Photo of Marjorie Forster receiving her 34yrs long service award from Lynn Ferries, MU Durham Diocese Trustee.

Margaret Porter receiving her 37yrs long service certificate from Pam Duck, Branch Leader, on the right and on the left Val Swansbury, Treasurer.

Souls of our Shoes
Chester-le-Street MU

As you will be aware 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence is a campaign which Mothers' Union has been involved with for many years.

As part of this year's campaign Chester Le Street MU held an exhibition entitled 'Souls of our Shoes' in the Parish Centre.

This was a very potent and telling exhibition of pictures of Shoes and comments by women and children who have been affected by gender based violence.

The Scottish Interfaith Group of Domestic Abuse www.ifgoda.org.uk - who originally organised this exhibition has also produced a short film which can be found on YouTube. The film can be found by searching for 'Walking Through Domestic Abuse'.

While the 16 Days of Activism campaign is specifically aimed at abuse of women we do recognise that many men also suffer this form of abuse.

If you have been affected by this please see get in touch with one either a member of your clergy or your Safeguarding Officer.

Some of the pictures used in the exhibition are shown opposite.

News from Haughton Branch from Sheila Wynne

We supported our church toddler group by providing selection boxes for all the children.

We enrolled three new members, Fiona Holmes, Lynne Woodhouse and Julie Adair with Rev John Barren and Branch leader Joan Beattie.

Mothers' Union got there first!

I wonder if any of you has heard or read about multi banks? I heard that Gordon Brown had recently opened a series of these, the latest of these in Middlesbrough. The large warehouses store lots of household items which are given to people who need them. One example was that a father couldn't eat with his children because they didn't have enough plates. That is sad.
For over 15 years a similar thing has been happening through M.U. small items – usually kitchen, bed linen, towels are collected and then given to those in need. So again we got there first.

Ask around in your area to see if there is a need before you start, it will take over your garage, spare room and car boot. Refuges, schools and even Foodbanks may be interested.
Recently, I was asked for a cot for a family having a new baby and having got rid of baby equipment. I asked one the local branches…. And not only a cot but also a Moses basket and clothes have been promised, I'll collect them next week. Wonderful.

Thank you to those who support this.