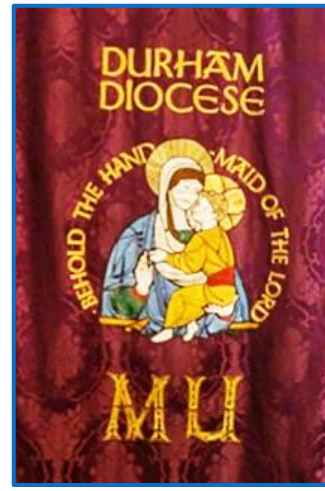
Mothers' UNION
Diocese of Durham



Newsround
Autumn 26/Winter 27

150 YEARS OF Mothers' UNION
Join us, Join in
Lighting the way for generations to come

Presidents Letter.

My Dear Members and Friends.
I begin with a Thank you to you All, for your tremendous commitment in this 150th Anniversary year of Mothers Union. United in fund raising, tea parties, afternoon teas, garden parties, cakes galore! knitting scarves and hats for Seafarers. Provincial time capsule, right across the diocese. Special services . Prayers - All Together in Love and Friendship.
St Paul's Cathedral celebration service, Gathering at Emanuel Centre, diocese was well represented.
Cathedral Festival Service / 400 plus in attendance and 39 banners- Wonderful!!
Mary Sumner Day. Participation in Cathedral Evensong and a Mary Sumner Day service lead by our Chaplain Rev Norma Clee.
(articles in this edition on the activities and services.) Worldwide President Kathleen Snow, Archbishop of Canterbury , staff from Mary Sumner House and members will attend 150th celebrations in Durban. I have sent warm wishes from Durham.
Fundraising has been phenomenal- outstanding! Thankyou. Support to projects and Mary Sumner House requests continue.
New and Development : Frankland prison are now receiving toiletries. We are awaiting outcome from a meeting at the Cathedral re new Mothers Union branch/ support.
A small increase in membership , please encourage congregations and friends to join us.
We are forward planning and anticipate progression within the diocese.
Time for Thought.: Trustees have served their time - and more. Is this for you ?
Next year we will be looking ahead to a new triennial- Is this for you? Please reflect and pray about it . There is always someone available to talk about the duties. We Need You!
Mary Sumner , prior to her visit to Durham and Sunderland said: No day of my life passes without earnest prayer for every member of the Mothers Union.
These inspirational words are thought provoking . Prayer is Powerful!
It will soon be Advent. A time for prayer, discipline and reconciliation—to welcome The King of Kings. (I've included a short reflection based on the popular Carol, I Saw Three Ships).
Thankyou. My love and prayers to you and your families.
May you always be surrounded with the love of The Lord Jesus.
Blessings. Kathleen. X kathleen.wilson345@btinternet.com

Remembering our friends who have died

Holy Trinity Washington

It is with great sadness our dear friend Ann Harrison passed away in August 2026.Ann joined MU in 1995, she was Branch Leader for 6 years the maximum you can serve without a break. She was then Branch Leader for a second time making a total of over ten years.
Ann also served as Action and Outreach Representative for both Deanery and Diocese. She was also a Trustee and a member of The Low Newton team (women's prison branch).
Ann attended every AGM until she was unable to, due to ill health. She was a Vice President in 2013 and 2018.She presented the new Diocese Overseas Banner in memory of her husband and was also responsible for our current Branch Banner.MU was very close to Ann's heart next to her family. She will be greatly missed by everyone who's life she touched.

St Mary's, Sherburn

Jean was "mother" of the Deanery. A valued member.
Jean Wilkinson died in hospital on 29th September. Jean was one of the longest serving members in Durham Deanery. A valued member. Her commitment to Mothers' Union was deep and prayerful, leading her Branch for many years and holding marketing and trustees' roles in the Diocese. Jean established a monthly Prayer time in the Cathedral over 30 years ago and despite her limited mobility in the past few months, she was always there to support. Prayer time was a constant Mothers' Union witness in the Cathedral. Our heartfelt thanks for Jean's wisdom and encouragement over so many years. May she rest in peace.

St Aidan's & St Cuthbert's, Framwellgate Moor

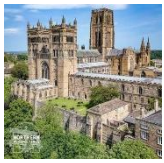
Sad News…one of our longest serving members, Betty Hutchinson, aged 97 died in October. Betty was a very committed member of Mothers' Union holding several roles. She was Branch leader at St John's. Nevilles Cross. Then went on to be Durham Deanery leader with 13 branches and twice the number of members that are now in Durham Deanery. A mammoth role. Betty didn't hesitate in supporting all that went on at Diocesan level. Thank you Betty for your dedication to the values upheld by Mothers' Union.

All Saints Monkwearmouth

Greta Redman died aged 85yrs on 9th March 2026. Sadly, her husband, Arthur, died on 8th April 2026, the day before Greta's funeral which was his 88th Birthday. They are both sadly missed by family and friends

The 150 years Celebrations continue across the Deanery

150th Anniversary Festival Service 2026



There was an air of anticipation in the Cathedral on 16th June. Chairs were being arranged for the visiting choir: tables were being laden with samples of Mothers' Union projects, memorabilia from earlier years and current resources; banners were rising on the north and south aisles of the Cathedral; VIP visitors, Susan Wear, the Deputy Lord Lieutenant of Tyne and Wear, Amanda Hopgood, Mayor of Durham, Provincial President Christine Sharp and Past Provincial President Barbara Taylor were being escorted to their seats. At long last the 150th Anniversary Celebration had arrived.

At 2pm after Jennifer Flynn, MBE, HM, the Deputy Lieutenant of County Durham had been escorted to her seat, the members and visitors stood as the organ led the assembly with the hymn Guide me O thou Great Redeemer and a procession of clergy and Trustees, with the Diocesan Banner and Overseas banner held aloft, made their entrance. The volume of sound in the Cathedral was something to be heard. Mothers' Union members from every corner of the Diocese sang with gusto to celebrate this great occasion.

The Reverend Canon Michael Hampel, Vice Dean welcomed and praised our members for celebrating this unique occasion in such grand numbers…the nave was full. During the Prayer of Preparation, the members responded with affirmation…We give thanks for every life touched, every home strengthened, every family blessed. The Inspire Choir gave a perfect rendition of the hymn Tell out my Soul, the greatness of the Lord. There followed readings from Ephesians 3: 14-21 followed by the hymn When we walk with the Lord. The Gospel reading from Matthew 5:13-16 spoke of the need to be the salt and light of the world to glorify God.

Lynne Tembey OBE, Past Worldwide President took her place in the pulpit. Lynne thanked the Diocese for the invitation to speak on this memorable occasion. Her address encompassed the vision of Mary Sumner and from that small start the growth of an organisation into a worldwide membership of over 4 million members. Something Mary Sumner could not have envisaged when she held that first "branch meeting" in her parlour. Lynne gave an overview of how we got to our 150th celebration and encouraged all members present to take up the baton to grow their branches and build on the vision that inspired Mary Sumner.

The intercessions that followed were a thanksgiving and celebration of our shared life written by Low Newton branch. Families in all its forms; those we love; our communities likened to a garden with all varieties of flowers; the joy and peace we experience when we gather together and serve one another. The 150th Provincial Prayer was led by our Diocesan Chaplain, Rev'd Norma Clee followed by the Lord's Prayer. The theme of light was expressed in the stirring hymn Christ be our Light.

Our President, Kathleen Wilson took her place on the dais as three children from a Primary school in Stanley brought forward samples of the numerous knitted scarves that have been made for the sailors who take respite in the Seamans' mission in South Shields. Kathleen gave a short precis on Diocesan work and thanked members for their commitment during this special anniversary year. In conclusion Kathleen reminded members of the promises they made at their admission to Mothers' Union and the members in one body reaffirmed those promises to uphold and support the Five Objects of Mothers' Union in word and action. The Mothers' Union Prayer summed up all the prayers that had been offered.

The Inspire choir gave a musical rendition of the song Durham Town which many would remember being performed by Roger Whittaker who composed both words and music. The hymn Lord, for the years your love has kept and guided, as the banner bearers prepared to leave the Cathedral.
Bishop Frank White led the Final Prayer and Blessing, and the organ introduction announced the final hymn, O Lord my God! When I in awesome wonder. Everyone stood as the procession of 39 banners were borne out of the Cathedral. A moving sight as memories of the 150 years of Mothers' Union in Durham Diocese and over the years the many members who have proudly carried their Deanery banners aloft to a resounding fanfare of joy and thanksgiving. Mary Sumner, thank you.

St. Cuthbert's Church, Blaydon on Tyne.

Our M.U. held its 'Festival Service' in July and was well attended by other M.U. in the deanery. This year was special as it was 35 years since it started (missed a year due to Covid). The service also recognised 150 years of M.U. and our theme was 'the 3 Mary's', of the bible but of course a 4th Mary was included, Mary Sumner and how M.U. had become to get started. Revd. Norma Clee was our speaker and the '4 Mary's' were linked into her talk exceptionally well. The hymns all linked to one of the Mary's, and we even sang the M.U. hymn (kindly written by Joan Atkin from York Diocese), thanks Joan this went down very well with our members. Of course, tea / coffee and buffet were then enjoyed.

Christ Church Lumley produced a display to celebrate 150 years of the MU

150th celebration news from St Andrews Chilton Moor

A service to celebrate Mary Sumner day and 150 years Mothers Union which was held and led by Rev'd Norma Clee

Photo shows Norma and members of St Andrews.

Mothers Union and members of St Andrew Church held garden party to raise funds for 150 years Mother Union .

Members attended the Celebration for 150 years Mothers Union at Durham Cathedral .The service was very well attended .The speakers told of the work carried out by Mothers Union around the world and that Durham has the only prison Mothers Union branch.

Leader Barbara Hall and Kathleen Curry cut the cake at to celebrate 150 years Mothers Union.

Chester Le Street & Houghton Deanery 150th Celebration Service.

We were welcomed to St. Michael and All Angels Houghton -le-Spring on Tuesday 13th July 2026 by Revd. John Barron and after notices we had a rousing "Lord for the Years" and our readings were from Ephesians3 14-21 and Matthew 5 13-16. Before the Gospel we sang Mothers' Union Hymn which was written by a member.

Sue Elsey, curate and MU member preached on "Lighting the Way for Generations to Come". Sue started by saying how fitting the words of the Gospel were celebrating 150years of founding of Mothers' Union and she wondered if Mary Sumner would have had any idea the reach her vision for the support of families would have

M.U. provides a strong network through which we can serve Christ in our communities, we aim to show our Christian Faith supporting the transformation of communities around the corner and around the world, many think we are a group of old girls drinking tea and eating cake- reader beware.

Here in the Deanery and Diocese there is much to be proud of, we support Refuges, provide toiletries to schools and hospitals, support local churches in various forms of volunteering where needed, AFIA programmes providing families with holidays they have not had in a long time. Sue told us of a lady and her daughter who attended Sue's Ordination, this family had been provided with a holiday through the Diocese, and the members of Houghton branch provided food and spending money as her benefit had not been paid.

During her training Sue had to spend 3 days at Low Newton Women's Prison, she really didn't want to go. One of her highlights was Sunday Morning service at the Chapel, this was run by Students from Kings Church Durham. They interviewed her

with 3 preplanned questions and when she thought she was finished they asked" where have you seen God in this place". In a flash it came to her she said you may have seen a group of women who come in with toiletries and assist in services, this is the only prison with a Mothers' Union branch, in every sense this is Gods working in this place, Give it up for the M.U. we would have been so proud of a room full of the most troubled members of society hooting and hollering for the Mothers' Union, so never let it be said we are just a group of Grannies drinking tea, yes we do that but we evidence "Let your Light shine before others so that they may see your good works and give Glory to you Father in Heaven.

We then honoured those who have gone before us and lit candles from each branch, Sue advised us to tell all our families and friends, so that this wonderful light will continue to shine for our children's children and Generations to come.

After Prayers we shared Peace and moved on to Communion and finished with "Tell Out My Soul" when the banners were processed out.

We then had time of Fellowship, tea and special cake and time to look at Displays before heading home.

Many thanks to all the people who did such a lot of work to make this special Service a one to remember.

St. Paul's MU members who attended the Festival service at Durham Cathedral on Tues 16th June

FRIDAY, JUNE 12, 2026 www.teesdalemercury.co.uk

Happy birthday, Mothers' Union

BY ANDY POTTS

MEMBERS of Barnard Castle Mothers' Union joined celebrations across the country to mark the organisation's 150th anniversary.

In the build-up to Wednesday's thanksgiving service at St Paul's Cathedral, members of the town's branch added their prayers to a time capsule which travelled to the north of England on its way to London.

Each of the 13 deaneries in Durham contributed a seven-word line to an anniversary prayer from the diocese. The text was placed in the time capsule, which was then handed over to the diocese of Leeds at a service in Middleton Tyas.

Sandra Sumner, no relation to Mothers' Union founder Mary Sumner, is the branch leader for Barnard Castle.

"We had a short service with Kathleen Wilson, our diocese president, to celebrate 150 years," she said. "It's amazing to think how the Mothers' Union started with one vicar's wife and today it has millions of members worldwide."

MARKING TIME: Front from left, Carole Hopkinson (deanery leader), Sandra Sumner (Barnard Castle branch leader) and Kathleen Wilson (Diocese of Durham president) with the time capsule plus members of the Barnard Castle branch

It turns out Barnard Castle has an indirect connection to Mary Sumner, the founder of the Mothers' Union in 1876.

George Dugard, the famed curate of Barnard Castle during the 1849 cholera outbreak, retired to Herefordshire in 1862 and was buried in the church at Colwall where Mary Sumner got married.

Her husband was vicar of a nearby parish and, as local clergy families, the Sumners and Dugards would have known each other, current vicar of St Mary's Rev Canon Alec Harding pointed out.

Meanwhile, 150 years on, the Mothers' Union remains as relevant as ever. And the Durham Diocese is the only Mothers' Union in the world that has a branch in a prison, providing support for women at Low Newton on the edge of Durham.

"We have a branch for them, just the same as the branch we have here in Barnard Castle," said Kathleen Wilson, diocese president.

"We try to help them while they are in there, and when they come out we can pass them on to another Mothers' Union branch for more support."

The union actively helps refuges for women and children fleeing domestic violence, works with schools to help ensure all children can have a proper uniform and supports the Away From It All scheme to help families under pressure afford days out or overnight stays.

"We do a lot more than just make tea," added Mrs Wilson. "Even though we've been going 150 years, we've still got the same problems that they had in the Victorian era. There are more options available, like social services and the welfare state. We've got a good NHS. But even though there are things available, people do come back to the Mothers' Union."

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Wearmouth Deanery held an Afternoon Tea Fundraiser. Prayers were led by Kathleen Wilson.

Celebrating 150 years of Faith and Family London 10-11 June 2026.

Wednesday 10th June.

The big day had arrived, so off we go, some trepidation, mostly excitement, to this milestone in the Mothers' Union Calendar at St. Paul's Cathedral. Arrived at Newcastle in good time, had coffee and then chatting to some MU members from Newcastle when the announcement came that our train was delayed pending further information. A little while later when on the train in our designated seats a further announcement that this train was cancelled and we were ushered to a train on the opposite platform, of course no designated seats get what you can. Eventually we set off for London in a very crowded train, we were not able to sit together however we had a seat each. Time was moving on! Would we get there in time? Nothing we could do about that, Aileen was convinced we would get to St. Paul's for 5pm service, I wasn't!!

Arrived at Kings Cross hours later than planned, Taxis where were they? So, we set off to walk to our hotel, fortunately Janice knew where it was, to be met with a long queue of people to book in. Finally, we got our room, only time to leave our luggage, use facilities but no time to change. While this was happening a young gentleman from the hotel got us a taxi, again we wondered if we would make the service in time, we did. We joined a long snaking queue, speaking to other Durham Diocese members, as service time was fast approaching the organisers opened another door and we became first in that queue. We were ushered through the cathedral to seating in the Dome, five rows from the Altar, we could see all the special guests including World-Wide President, Archbishop of Canterbury who led the service.

Soon the service began, the worry and hassle disappeared, we were in a beautiful building with members from all around the world, the singing was amazing resounding around the Dome. After celebrating the Eucharist, we made our way out, shaking hands with the Archbishop and Kathleen Snow our World- Wide President.

Tired but happy we made our way back to our hotel, after our first day. what would tomorrow bring.

Thursday 11th June.

After breakfast we set off for the Emmanuel Centre for the Annual Gathering, however nothing is straight forward, we were confident we had the correct

bus number but realised we were going in the wrong direction, off the bus cross the road and now we were heading in the right direction. We arrived just in time to register, no time for a welcome coffee.

A very packed programme started with celebrating our past and impact starting with presentations by former World-Wide Presidents, then Showcasing our Present with contributions from Dioceses around the country.

After lunch and a very hectic visit to Mary Sumner House next door to the centre where Aileen was able to see the Chapel. We started again with our afternoon session Shining a light on our future, we were left feeling confident with the future after listening to young people from Girls Brigade
As our Gathering was coming to an end our World- Wide President encouraged us to sing and do actions to "Rise and Shine and Give God the Glory"

We enjoyed our two days in London and our journey home was a doddle!!

Aileen Armstrong and Janice Clasper Chester-le-Street Branch.

Photos of the occasion

Waiting in the rain!

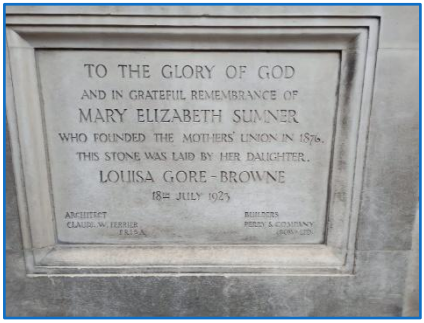
MU Scotland Banner and MU banner . Part of the procession at St Pauls

Inside St Pauls →→→

Photos of London continued

Inside St Pauls Province of York banner is in the centre of the photo. (Durhan diocese is part of York province)

Outside St Pauls our lovely sisters from abroad wearing dresses with MU logo



Plaque outside Mary Sumner House

Stained glass window depicting St Julien of Norwich in chapel of Mary Sumner House

Altar in Mary Sumner House

WWP Testimony Address
St. Paul's Cathedral 150th Celebration Service - June 10, 2026

May the words of mouth and the meditations of my heart, be pleasing to you O Lord, my Rock and my Redeemer.

It is good to be with you today. I am honoured and blessed to be sharing a few words on behalf of our Board and indeed the global Mothers' Union. Our hearts are full of joy as we celebrate and worship together on this special occasion of our 150th anniversary of Mothers' Union.

I quote from **Psalm 107:1, *His love endures forever.*** Many of you are aware that it is my custom to light a candle on my desk each morning to remind me of the light of Christ. I pray for His wisdom, His guidance and His words in all that I do.

I also pull out a card of scripture which guides me for the day. As I drafted this testimony, these words were on my heart, ***His love endures forever.*** I think of the 150 years of Mothers' Union, and how His love has carried us over the years. It carried Mary Sumner when the Holy Spirit nudged her, tapped her on the shoulder and called her to start a movement of mothers to support and empower one another to build heathy families, healthy marriages and health communities. Healthy relationships.

She was intimidated initially and did not think that she could do it. But His love gave her that strength and courage to 'step out of the boat' and bring those women together in her parlour 150 years ago. So many of us never expect to be where we are, in leadership positions or doing His work as His hands and His feet. But ***His love endures*** and carries us on.

The Holy Spirit equips us to do this. He plants people around us to encourage us. He speaks through others with whom we are in relationship. It is all about relationship. Mary Sumner knew this when she gathered those few women together in her parlour.

She knew that relationships with each other would strengthen these women and empower them to do good in their communities, to do good in their families and to reach out to their neighbours. This relationship strengthened

them in their faith as they prayed together. Is that not what He has done for us today, and what He has been doing for the last 150 years?

When I was a young mother, and working as a nurse, there were many Wednesday evenings when I would say to my husband Tim that I was too tired to go to our Mothers' Union Branch meeting. But he would literally push me out the door, as he knew that I would return home refreshed and inspired, with a deeper faith, and more energy and enthusiasm to be a wife, mother, nurse and friend to many.

The words of Mary Sumner's personal prayer demonstrate this: each day, touching as many lives as possible for Christ, whether through our words, our actions or how we live our lives. That is the essence of who we are.

We have been called to build His Kingdom here on earth. We do it wherever we live around the world. It is a way of life for us, and we are passionate about it. Founded on our faith and on prayer. ***His love endures forever.***

Wherever I travel, whenever I meet Mothers' Union members, we are living out this reality in our communities. It doesn't matter what language we speak, what culture we live in, what area of the world in which we reside. We all believe in the same purpose, aim, objectives, mission, vision…however we wish to describe or explain ourselves. We are united in faith and in service. ***His love endures forever.***

I would like to close with a story of who we are. I have so many stories that I could share, but this one has stayed with me from my recent visit to the Province of Wales. It is about **love in action and faith in action.**

I met a Mothers' Union couple in a diocese in Wales, who shared with me their work in prison ministry. Fifteen years ago, they were away on vacation, and someone burgled their home. Upon their return, they notified the police; it took three weeks before the police arrested the individual and he was imprisoned.

After a bit, they decided that they wished to meet this man through the Restorative Justice Programme and forgive him for the damage he had done to their home, and to their lives. It took three years, but they eventually met this man and they forgave him.

They developed a relationship with him and began to pray with him. They then met with other prisoners and began to pray with them, support them and run programmes with them within the prison. They have been visiting prisoners two days a week since then for 15 years. The husband went into the ministry because of this life-changing experience and has been a Vicar for a number of years.

This is faith in action. This is love in action. This is what we do as Mothers' Union members and what we have been doing for 150 years, affecting change, affecting policy, affecting people's lives for the better. **His love endures forever.**

May we continue to light the way for generations to come.

150 YEARS OF Mothers' UNION
Join us, Join in
Lighting the way for generations to come

More memories of the Celebration

Wendy. Jean Linda and Kathleen after the service.

Patchwork squares made by MU members for the exhibition . All Provinces and Diocese. Durham is 4th on the right

Other news from the deanery

Mary Sumner Day Service

Hello to All Members

Thank you to Rev Norma for leading and celebrating the Eucharist on such a special occasion and Sue for the Chalice administration.

Margaret, Doreen and Brenda for lighting the blue candles for each deanery.
To Linda and Janice for the Readings.
Appropriate music played by Edna.
A grand celebration for 150 years!
Thank you to Linda Ferries for ordering the cake and her Grandson for helping with the wording, no problem using AI.!x Very nice refreshments from Sue.
A time of togetherness , prayer and friendship.
Kathleen thanked everyone for attending members old and new, and for their support throughout this very special year.
Commitment will always be there as we continue to honour our Founder Mary Sumner.
Love and Prayers.

Kathleen. DP

The cake→

Members who ←attended

←Kathleen Wison and Jean Carleton cut the cake

Kathleen Wilson and Rev'd Norma Clee

St. Cuthbert's Church, Blaydon on Tyne.

In August, a special service for Mary Sumner day was held in church, where special prayers were said and candles lit. This was taken by our vicar, Revd. Diane Ryan who is also a M.U. member.

Bessie our oldest member (97) who has recently been very poorly but has since returned to her beloved M.U. meetings, go Bessie!

Photograph of Kathleen Wilson. Rev Norma Clee and some members after Evensong in the Cathedral. Service lead by the Dean , Rev Philip Plyming. Music sung by Allen Singers. We were welcomed , the Dean spoke about Mary Sumner, and prayers mentioned 150 years and Mothers Union work. Kathleen read the second lesson. Acts14 : 8-20. A celebration well attended and a joy to be there .Kathleen Wilson.DP.

All Saints Lanchester

At our AGM four of our members were presented with their Long Service Awards - Margaret Brown 70 years, Margaret King 30 years Judith Jobling 40 years and Angela Lee 40 years

Mothers Union and Suffragettes

Wearmouth branch members enjoying a day at Beamish Museum. History, fun , and delicious fish and chips!
Thank you to Mark Austin for the arrangements.

Kathleen Wilson.

Christ Church Consett

Table picture is our annual summer meal out . Then on August 8th in recognition of Mary Sumner day, we packed a cake box with treats and distributed to the 32 residents in the sheltered accommodation adjacent to the church . We placed a note inside of each box saying
“A random act of kindness , with best wishes from Christ church Consett Mothers“ Union .

Kathleen Wilson DP receiving Branch and deanery donations from longtime member Margaret Kidd Deanery Leader of Darlington. Alongside Past Presidents Jean Carleton and Carole Hopkinson.

Deanery Leaders lunch. Members enjoying time together and presenting their fund-raising monies towards £1, 500 for Mary Sumner House projects.
Kathleen Wilson. DP.

St Mary's Easington Village.
Two new members admitted by President Kathleen Wilson.
L. to R. Joanna Balfour. Kathleen Wilson . Elaine Marriott and Branch Leader Loraine Dodds.
Followed by friendship and hospitality.
Kathleen Wilson.

To celebrate her 80th Birthday ,Janis Brown from St Mary's Cockerton decided to have the MU logo tattooed onto the inside of her arm, She asked for sponsors and the money received was divided between Mothers Union and St. Mary's Church.
Well done Janis, you are much braver than most of us !

Low Newton

The monthly meeting in July was our Strawberry Tea. It was well attended, and ,as always our meeting began with a service of prayers and readings, their own Branch prayer is always said. Carole and Linda read the prayer the women had written that they read at the Festival service. The women always appreciate being remembered by our other members. Kathleen spoke about Mary Sumner and the work of the Mothers Union for the women who had not been before. The scones, strawberries and cream were a very welcome addition to our usual biscuits. We will be speaking to the chaplain The Rev Rebecca about how we can support them at Christmas.

STOP PRESS A text from Deb Lee, Zonal Trustee who is at the Worldwide Gathering gave the good news that the work at Low Newton had been clapped at.! Well Done everyone. Blessings. Kathleen.x

Holy Trinity Southwick
From the oldest.....

Doris Winlow celebrating her 103rd Birthday.Doris , a long time Mothers Union member of Holy Trinity Church Southwick. Wearmouth.

.....to the youngest

Photograph at Holy Trinity church Southwick of Susan Carter receiving long service award of 43 years. and Chloe Main Enrolled as a New member with her badge and card from Kathleen Wilson.

Chloe was Speaker at the Branch Meeting on her adventure working with families and children in Mexico. The branch supported Chloe in this interesting but emotional work. Well Done Chloe.

Celebration time! At Holy Trinity Branch Meeting. Kathleen Youern receiving flowers on her 80th birthday and Afternoon Tea with Kathleen Wilson. Rev Jen Rev Jen Bradshaw

Stockton Deanery pictured at their joint branch meeting held at Norton St Michael and All Angels Church. We were delighted to welcome our guest speaker, Miss Kathleen Wilson, who following worship spoke on Low Newton Mothers' Union Branch. We were also delighted that two ladies from Hartlepool St Luke's joined us. We ended the morning with delicious homemade cheese scones, coconut tarts and the inevitable cup of tea, alongside a raffle raising funds for our Deanery and Diocese.

St Aidan's and St Cuthbert's Durham,

Members and friends who enjoyed a day out in York. Members who received long service awards ranging from10years to 45 years

St Gabriel's Wearmouth after Kathleen's update on MU project work. Secretary Janet Fielding, Branch Leader Margaret Humble , Treasurer Wendy Faith. Kathleen receiving ."Large"! Wool donation.

MESSAGE FROM "MUDD" TREASURER TO ALL BRANCHES

On behalf of the Trustees, I should like to say a big thank you to all branches for your donations during this "Special Year" which have surpassed our expectations.

I have a few points I should like to mention:

•Please inform me the nature of any transactions carried out by bank transfer to our Diocesan Account either by letter, email or telephone call.

- Cheques must be made payable to **MOTHERS UNION DURHAM DIOCESE** (MUDD is an easy way to remember the correct way).
- I will issue receipts for all monies received by your stamped self addressed envelopes or email if provided.

And last but not least

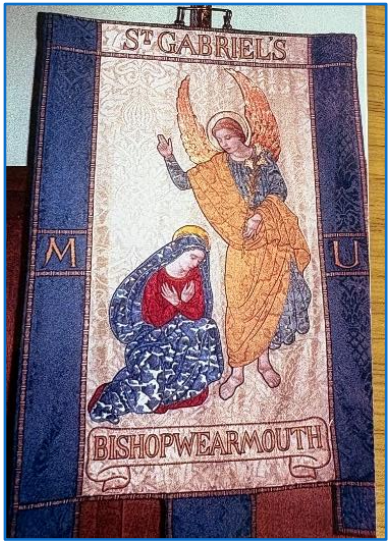
- Please ensure your Branch subs are paid no later than **25TH MARCH 2027.**
  This is important not only for myself , but our own Finance here in Durham and at Mary Sumner House.

Kind regards to you all
Edna Thompson

Badges, pendants, scarves

I often go to meetings of Mothers' Union members, meetings full of friendly faces, animated chatter and the clink of cups. It is always good to be with them. As I look around, I'm surprised to see there are only a few members wearing a badge or a scarf. When I meet them away from meetings there are less badge wearers. I think it is such a good way to advertise / share Mothers' Union- sometimes strangers recognise the logo (especially the old one of which I am very fond) and there starts a conversation perhaps their mother, grandmother or aunt was a member. Very often they are happy to hear of what it is doing now....they ask questions, make comments. I'm convinced that we need to take every opportunity to tell our story and one way is to be proud enough to wear a badge, a pendant or a scarf and not just to meetings but every day.

A request from St Gabriel's Wearmouth, re a previous banner they are trying to locate. Any information to Kathleen Wilson to forward onto the branch. Thank you



St Mary's Cockerton MU has had a very busy year celebrating. MU worldwide is celebrating its 150 years , our branch celebrated 100 years in April and the church celebrates 125 years with a special service in November to coincide with the anniversary of the laying of the foundation stone As part of the celebrations a Flower Festival was held over the weekend of 5 & 6th September to coincide with the Patronal Festival . The church was open over the weekend, and the flower ladies co-ordinated organisations attached to the church who provided flower displays. MU provided a display using MU crockery on the windowsill next to the MU banner. A display of memorabilia was on show underneath. Members were also active manning the refreshment tent and acting as stewards.

A Mothers' Union supporter

For over 30 years Rev'd Martin Jackson, vicar of St Cuthbert's Church, Benfieldside led the monthly branch meeting of Mothers' Union. He always brought interesting information of the saint /holy person whose relevant day fell at the time or he shared artwork from churches /galleries he had visited on his holiday. He chatted with members, sometimes keeping them up to date with the health of church members no longer able to get around, he was keen to hear parish information to help him in his visiting. Martin was very pleased to conduct Mothers' Union Deanery services; he took care to adapt them to current campaigns / projects.

Of course, Martin was well 'trained', some of you may remember his mother Amelia Jackson who was a vice president. He has recently retired from stipendiary priesthood after 42 years- we wish him a long and happy retirement, he will be greatly missed. Members have appreciated all the time and support he has given to the branch.

Thank you Martin and God bless ,

Members of Benfieldside Mothers' Union

News from Mary Sumner House

16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence

This year, our 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence (GBV) will take place from 25 November to 10 December, under the theme: "Together for Dignity and Safety – Ensure Justice, Protect Survivors, End Impunity." New resources will be available from mid-October on the MU website and Resource Hub to support members and dioceses in engaging with the campaign. We will also be contacting Faith Community of Interest (COI) representatives, chaplains, Domestic Abuse COI representatives, and Diocesan and Provincial Presidents to let them know when the resources are available. We encourage members to make use of these resources and join us in raising awareness, supporting survivors, and working towards communities where everyone can live with dignity and safety. We want to flag that there will be new resources available for 16 days of activism against GBV (25 Nov-10 Dec), which will be

added to the website and resource hub in mid Oct – we will send an email to the Faith COI reps, chaplains, Domestic Abuse COI reps and DPs/PPs to let them know that the resources are there. Our theme this year, aligned to the UN Women them, is: 'Together for Dignity and Safety - Ensure Justice, Protect Survivors, End Impunity.'

Mothers' Union, August 26, 2026

Mothers' Union has appointed Alison Marshall as its new Chief Executive, bringing more than 30 years' experience in international development, advocacy, campaigning and charity leadership to the worldwide Christian movement.

Alison is currently Chief Executive of Age International, where she leads work advocating for the rights and needs of older people in low- and middle-income countries, alongside fundraising, humanitarian response and international partnerships. She has previously held senior leadership roles with Sense International, UNICEF UK, Bond and CAFOD.

Throughout her career, Alison has championed the rights and dignity of women, children, people with disabilities and older people. She has represented organisations at the United Nations and with governments internationally, built partnerships across global networks and led campaigns on issues including poverty, gender justice and access to healthcare.

She brings substantial experience of charity governance, strategy, fundraising and organisational leadership, having served as a trustee of organisations including the Disasters Emergency Committee and the Fairtrade Foundation.

Alison joins Mothers' Union as it looks beyond its 150th anniversary and enters an important new chapter. With a strong focus on advocacy, Mothers' Union will build on its long tradition of standing alongside women, children and families through faith and action, while exploring new ways to respond to the challenges facing communities around the world today. Alison said:

'I am delighted to be joining Mothers' Union at such an important moment in its history. Mothers' Union has an illustrious history and the 150th anniversary is a wonderful milestone and an important springboard for the next chapter.

‘I am particularly excited by the opportunity to build on Mothers’ Union’s long history of advocacy, listening to the experiences of the women, families and communities we work alongside and working with members across the worldwide movement to use our collective voice to challenge injustice.’

Mothers’ Union Worldwide President Kathleen Snow welcomed Alison’s appointment:

‘We are delighted to welcome Alison to Mothers’ Union. She brings exceptional experience in advocacy, international development and charity leadership, alongside a deep understanding of how powerful networks can bring about change.

‘After 150 years as a Christian women-led movement, we have an opportunity to be brave about our future. We want to build on all that is strong about Mothers’ Union while asking fresh questions about what it means to be a member today, how we reach new people and how we can use our collective voice more powerfully to champion the communities we serve. Alison will be an important part of that journey.’

Alison will commence her role in December 2026.

A look forward to Christmas!

Vicar’s Angels

No, not the M.U. members, although many are angelic!
The vicar is planning a Christmas service for schools; he wants to create a child friend ly service about Angels. To make it memorable he would like to fill the church with angels, string them across the building, decorate the windows… put them everywhere. He is a talented crafter and is making several varieties of angel. The children will each make one but this won’t be enough so it’s Mothers’ Union to the rescue. Members are cutting out different card shapes, decorating them with glitter, lace, any bits and pieces; d’oyleys, too, make pretty angels and who knows what else we can use.

We are supporting the vicar as part of our aims and objects , the Christian upbringing of children. I, for one , am looking forward to seeing the church filled with angels, of children looking for their own little figure, experiencing

the joy of children and the excitement of pending Christmas. I am sure there will be a mention of the angel Gabri el visiting Mary, of those hosts bringing the message to the shepherds and the angel who told Joseph to go home another route. Lets hope our hosts help create some magic.

Would you believe it

Article from 'The Sun' dated June 6th 2026
TIP. IS FOUND IN 1960s CAPSULE. By ODHRAN GALLAGHER.

A Builder unearthed a "time capsule" from the 1960s—- and discovered a tip for today's Derby.
Craciun Doran found four old coins plus a spooky letter in a park renovation.
It said they were winnings from the 1964 Derby, which saw Santa Claus romp home. The note urged its finder to use the money, worth around £10 today, to back a horse "associated with Santa Claus".
The construction team at Crystal Palace Park, South London, were then stunned to learn that Christmas Day is to run in the annual showpiece race in Surrey.
In another eerie twist, Craciun's name means "Christmas" in his native Romanian. Site Manager Josh Smalls said if the note, found under a statue: "For it to link up so well with the horse this year was kind of spooky".
Christine Harris, Mayor of Bromley where the park is situated, bet £15 on at odds if 20/1, pledging that any winnings will go to charity. Josh staked £20 so " hopefully he'll make everyone a bit of money,

On 7th July at Branch meeting Brenda Davies one of the members at Holy Trinity Branch Southwick. Wearmouth, told her story
Last week Brenda read the above article in her paper. Thought it would be an idea to back the horse Christmas Day .
Went to the betting shop explained she wanted the money on each way, the person who helped her backed it as well.!
It came in first!! Went for her winnings. £47 which she brought to branch meeting as a donation to Mothers Union.
A coincidence?? You couldn't make it up!!
A new way to Fund raise.?

Kathleen

CHRISTMAS THOUGHTS.

Christmas , a time for Carol singing and Rhyme. We all have favourites.
A delightful one is:
I saw three ships come sailing in
On Christmas Day in the morning.
Striking imagination at this seasonal time, a special story.
ONE is WOR-SHIP. A definite at this Christmas time. St. Matthew wrote , on seeing the child with Mary, his mother, they fell down and worshipped Him.
SECOND SHIP is FRIEND -SHIP. At Christmas meeting and greetings to friends who live away.
THIRD SHIP is STEWARD- SHIP. Serving others- As Jesus came at Christmas time- to serve us.
Mother's Union is aboard ALL three ships as we offer Prayer, Friendship and Stewardship to All people.

I hope these THREE ships sail into your hearts and homes this Christmas time. Gifts of love for your families. Joy as we celebrate the King of Kings . Peace throughout the world.

My love and prayers to you and your families.
This Christmas time. Blessings.x Kathleen Wilson. Diocesan President.

Special Wedding Anniversaries

Paulene & Jackie Mordue	60yrs	St. Thomas's, Harelaw
Val & Les Page	60yrs	Consett
Enid & Bobbie Hall	60yrs	St Thomas the Apostle, Stanhope
Kate &John Anstee	60yrs	St Thomas the Apostle, Stanhope
Joan Mary & Bill Harland	60yrs	St Aidan's and St Cuthbert's
Joan & Bob Davison	60yrs	St. Mary & St. Cuthbert CLS

Special birthdays

Gillian Hanratty.	85yrs	Consett
Wendy Oxley.	80yrs	Consett
Norma English	80yrs	Wolviston St Peter's
Jen Smith	80yrs	All Saints, Lanchester
Alison Foster	75yrs	St Mary's, Sherburn Village.
Joan Mills	90yrs	St Luke's Hartlepool
Brenda Kloed	70yrs	St Luke's Hartlepool
Elizabeth(Betty)Mallaugh	89 yrs	Sunderland Minster
June Robson	80yrs	St Aidan's & St Cuthbert's, Fr/gate Moor
June Kirby	80yrs	St Aidan's & St Cuthbert's, Fr/gate Moor
Nora Ramshaw	80yrs	St Aidan's & St Cuthbert's, Fr/gate Moor
Joan Wilson	90yrs	St. Mary & St. Cuthbert CLS
Lesley Owen	80yrs	St. Mary & St. Cuthbert CLS
Jen smith	80yrs	All Saints, Lanchester
Norma English	80yrs	Wolviston St Peter's
Kathleen Youern	80yrs	Holy Trinity ,Southwick
Doris Winlow	103yrs	Holy Trinity ,Southwick

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

Greta Redman	85yrs	All Saints Monkwearmouth
Jean Williams	85yrs	St. Thomas' Harelaw
Mary Goldsborough	89yrs	Consett
Carole Pattison	87yrs	Sunderland Minster
Betty Hutchinson	97yrs	St Aidan's & St Cuthbert's, Fr/gate Moor
Ann Leggatt	90 yrs	St. Mary & St. Cuthbert CLS
Leanne Hunt	84 yrs	St. Mary & St. Cuthbert CLS
Elva Hockaday	90yrs	St John's, Burnhope
Anne Goodman	89yrs	St Michael & All Angels, Houghton-le-Sp
Ruby Lambert	92yrs	St Michael & All Angels, Houghton-le-Sp
Ann Harrison	81yrs	Holy Trinity Washington

New members

Tina Edgar	Wolviston St Peter's
Judy Allison	Wolviston St Peter's
Kathleen Snowden	St Cuthbert's Satley
Carol Cain	St Philip & James Tow Law
Joanna Balfour	St Mary's Easington Village.
Elaine Marriott	St Mary's Easington Village
Two New Members.	Low Newton Branch.

Long Service Awards

Margaret Brown	70yrs	All Saints, Lanchester
Angela Lee	40yrs	All Saints, Lanchester
Judith Jobling	40yrs	All Saints, Lanchester
Margaret King	30yrs	All Saints, Lanchester
Pamela Harding	35yrs	St Luke's Hartlepool
Alison Blackburn	10yrs	St Aidan's & St Cuthbert's, Fr/gate Moor
Dorothy Hodgson	10yrs	St Aidan's & St Cuthbert's, Fr/gate Moor
Nora Ramshaw	10yrs	St Aidan's & St Cuthbert's, Fr/gate Moor
Helen Gordon	10yrs	St Aidan's & St Cuthbert's, Fr/gate Moor
Anne Wright	10yrs	St Aidan's & St Cuthbert's, Fr/gate Moor
Sylvia Bowron	15yrs	St Aidan's & St Cuthbert's, Fr/gate Moor
Maureen Abernethy	30yrs	St Aidan's & St Cuthbert's, Fr/gate Moor
Delia Dixon	30yrs	St Aidan's & St Cuthbert's, Fr/gate Moor
Joan Cummins	35yrs	St Aidan's & St Cuthbert's, Fr/gate Moor
Joy Eve	35yrs	St Aidan's & St Cuthbert's, Fr/gate Moor
Joan Mary Harland	35yrs	St Aidan's & St Cuthbert's, Fr/gate Moor
Margaret Stainthorpe	35yrs	St Aidan's & St Cuthbert's, Fr/gate Moor
June Kirby	35yrs	St Aidan's & St Cuthbert's, Fr/gate Moor
Janice Hardman	45yrs	St Aidan's & St Cuthbert's, Fr/gate Moor
Norma Hedley	20yrs	St. Mary & St. Cuthbert CLS
Joan Finlayson	10yrs	St Michael & All Angels, Houghton-le-Sp
Angie Morris	50yrs	St Michael & All Angels, Houghton-le-Sp

Dates for your Diary

February 9	Quiet Day	TBC	
March 9	Council and AGM	10.30	Waddington St URC
May 12	IMPC Cathedral	2pm	Durham Cathedral
June 15	Festival Service	2pm	Durham Cathedral
July 13	D.L. Lunch	TBC	
Aug 10	MS Day	TBC	
October 19	Council	TBC	

Deadlines for Newsround 2027 are

Friday 19th February
Friday June 18th
Friday 1st October

Please send entries to:

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