

WINTER 2015 ISSUE

M.U.C.H.



For people in Rochester Diocese who care about family life; if you are ONE person you

are family to us.

WHAT IS M.U.C.H.?

MOTHERS' UNION COFFEE HOUSE is an e-club which is intended to attract and cater for people in our parishes who would believe in what Mothers' Union stands for but are unable to attend monthly or weekly meetings which have been the mainstay of Mothers' Union for so many years. GOOD NEWS. There are NOW many different ways to be a member.

Diocesan Membership – for busy people

Do you like the Mothers' Union mission and values, but feel unable to commit your time to it on a regular basis? You will be able to support the work of the Mothers' Union nationally and internationally through your subscription and will receive Mothers' Union publications including the free magazine Families Worldwide and the Rochester diocesan Newsletter.

[Click here](#) to sign up for Diocesan Membership

Branch Membership - based on your parish Mothers' Union groups, often based in churches, are an ideal way to meet like-minded people, to enjoy fellowship, and to work together to improve family life right at the grassroots level, within a local community.

Contact Liz –RD MU administrator – administrator@rochestermothersunion.co.uk to receive details of the branch nearest to you.

E - Membership or M.U.C.H – an informal access point for busy people with an email account

Providing all the benefits of Diocesan membership with the added advantage of access to wider links through the internet and informal gatherings 2-3 times a year to share news, friendship & fellowship Contact Heather for further information.



familiesfirst

YOU WILL SEE THAT THIS YEAR I CHANGED THE FORMAT OF OUR MUCH MAGAZINE, PERHAPS IN THE HOPE OF CATCHING YOUR EYE ! It is not meant to be printed out but those who like to put it on your Church notice board or want to print for some reason the new size is B5 and landscape orientation. I hope that won't put anyone out.

OK – YOU KNOW ABOUT MOTHERS’ UNION. But do you know about all the other things which MU is involved in on a daily basis ? READ On and find out.



MU Enterprises Ltd (MUe) is the trading company of Mothers’ Union. Its purpose is to make a tax-efficient profit for Mothers’ Union whilst working to promote and support our **objectives** and **programmes** around the world. MUe is governed by a board of directors who meet twice a year.

There are three main areas through **which MUe raises income for Mothers’ Union:**

Publications

Families First is a bi-monthly magazine from Mothers’ Union which highlights family life and at the same time acts as a tool to promote our **objectives**. It boasts subscribers worldwide. MUe has discount packages available to groups who may such as churches or parent and toddler groups. **From 2013, *Families First* purchased in WHSmiths, Sainsbury’s and various newsagents.**

Families Worldwide is a bi-annual members’ magazine which incorporates and profiles of the work we do through our dedicated, grassroots membership in distributed free to members through our dioceses



issues affecting around 30,000 wish to buy in bulk **can also be**

the prayer diary 83 countries. It is



Several floors of our head office at Mary Sumner House have been converted into first-class competitively priced **conference facilities** and these are available to local businesses for hire.

Sales & dispatch and gift shop

Through these two commercial outlets we sell ethically sourced goods to Mothers' Union members and the general public. Products are distributed to members via

a fantastic network of MUe representative volunteers who give their time to help raise funds for Mothers' Union. Products are also sold to the general public on the online [MUe shop](#) and at the Mary Sumner Gift Shop.

To get a detailed picture of what MUe has achieved in the past two years please read the most recent MU Enterprises Ltd **[Annual Accounts](#)**.

Latest News

CofE Warns UK Gov against Sunday Trading Extension

[Read more](#)

Mothers' Union welcomes the new Sustainable Development Goals

[Read more](#)

Updated: The Refugee Crisis in Europe and the Middle East

[Read more](#)



Junelle is a widow and was imprisoned for stealing food. Her child is with her and this will be their third Christmas in prison, still waiting for a trial. Conditions are particularly difficult, with overcrowding, no healthcare, and poor sanitation facilities. At times food is scarce and starvation is actually a real threat.

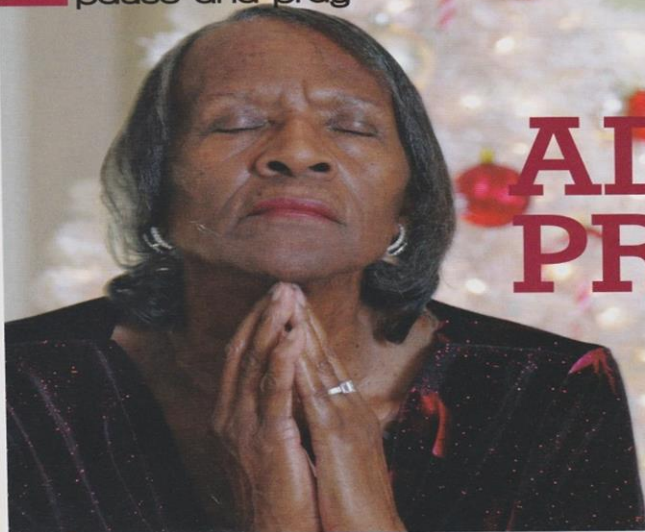
“It seems that prisoners in our country do not have a right to live.”

But Mothers’ Union started a project in the prison, helping prisoners learn to read and write, share and learn other skills, and most importantly overcome defeatist attitudes that say nothing can get better.

For Junelle these skills will enable her to make a life for her family on her release.

*“Through the help of Mothers’ Union I now have hope and see that God has provided opportunities for me to change my life for the better, even in this prison. I can now improve things for my family and don’t have to depend on others. Asante!
(Thank you)”*

pause and pray



ADVENT PRAYERS



MOTHERS' UNION'S
CATHERINE KYTE
SHARES SOME
PRAYER IDEAS FOR
CHRISTMAS

**Let's approach Christmas with an expectant hush
Rather than a last-minute rush.**

Source unknown

Whilst many of us would echo the sentiments of this plea, we know that in reality the season of Advent and Christmas can be taken up with busyness, occasional panics and a constant battle within us between the commercialisation and holiness of the moment. We may wholeheartedly agree that Advent is a time of waiting and expectation but, practically, this may be epitomised by waiting for deliveries from online retailers and low expectations as to how the festivities will pan out! So how do we avoid adding guilt at our spiritual shortcomings to the list of seasonal pressures? How do we take steps to embrace the significance of the celebrations, so that we do, indeed, approach Christmas with an expectant hush?

Well, rather than promising ourselves that we will spend hours in meaningful contemplation, and then failing to keep our commitment, the key may simply be to take steps in prayer throughout Advent - small, manageable ones - a few minutes each day. We could try to find some precious moments for ourselves to prayerfully review the year gone by; to reflect afresh on how the birth of the Messiah is key to our lives; and to look ahead, both to the coming year and to the coming again of Christ.

SUGGESTIONS FOR STEPS IN PRAYER

- Consider what has happened in your life this year - what is different for you at the beginning of this season? What is the same?
- Reflect on how the events of this year may affect your attitude to this Advent and Christmas
- Take time to acknowledge disappointment; to celebrate the good and the unexpected; to be thankful
- Choose a verse from the Bible about the Nativity and use it as an inspiration for prayer
- Reflect on what may lie ahead in the coming year. Be honest with God about your hopes and concerns
- Choose a verse from the Bible about the second coming of Christ and use it as an inspiration for prayer.

As we take our small steps in prayer, our waiting and expectation may become more meaningful and hope-filled. The stresses of the season may even recede into the distance as we focus on different priorities. And we may find that our steps have brought us closer to Christ and more ready to truly celebrate the wonder of his birth.

*As we begin our Advent journey
we pray for God's guidance
to lead us to the place of peace
As we carry the burdens of the
year gone by
we pray for a lifting of our spirits
On every step of our star-led way
we pray for new grace for the year
ahead*

*In seeking the place of the
Christ-child
we give thanks that the risen Lord
accompanies us every step of the
way
Amen*

On the Mothers' Union website you will find prayer resources for Advent and Christmas, including our midday prayers for December which will focus on our being 'united in wonder'. Whether you're full of hope as you look to celebrate the season, or you feel that your wonder at the Nativity has become jaded, why not join us in prayer as we reflect on the miracle of the birth of Christ. ■

*May the salvation of God
through the new-born Christ
fill our hearts with wonder
and praise
this Advent time and always.
Amen*

www.mothersunion.org

Thanks to the MU
"Families First"
helpful article.

magazine for this



CONTACT PAGE.

Any of the following people will be more than happy to help you find information or tell you what you need to know about any of the topics we cover in MUCH. Please do not hesitate to make contact with us.

M.U.C.H. Project Manager..... **Heather Sinclair** hlsinclair@btinternet.com

Vice-President supporter **Julia Jamieson** jjmothersunion@googlemail.com

Diocesan President ... **Susan Brooker** susan.brooker@btinternet.com

Action & Outreach Co-ordinator **.Wendy Swatridge** wswatridge@tiscali.co.uk

Catalogue for lovely gifts and cards.... www.mueshop.org

AND.....DON'T FORGET THE WEBSITES

Rochester Diocese.... <http://www.rochestermothersunion.co.uk>

_Worldwide MU.... <http://www.mothersunion.org>