

**Welcome to the Branch Pack.** We hope it is helpful to you. The Diocesan President would welcome any comments you may wish to make, any further information you would like included or anything you consider could be excluded. If there is anything that is not clear, or you need further information, you should contact the appropriate person in the deanery or at the diocesan office, where updates can also be sent

**Our vision** is a world where everyone prospers. We actively pursue this vision through prayer and action, helping to build confident people and resilient communities. Our movement seeks to bring about justice, challenge prejudice and advocate change.

### **Mission, Aim, Objectives, and Beliefs**

We aim to show our Christian faith by helping the sustainable transformation of communities worldwide. We do this by helping to nurture strong relationships at all levels, promoting peace and reconciliation locally, nationally and globally.

**The Aim** of the Society is the advancement of the Christian religion in the sphere of marriage and family life.

In order to carry out its **Aim**, its **Objectives** are:

- encourage parents in their role to develop the faith of their children
- maintain a worldwide fellowship of Christians united in prayer, worship and service
- promote conditions in society favourable to stable family life and the protection of children
- help those whose family life has met with adversity
- promote and support married life.



### **Our beliefs**

- We believe in the value of each individual and their unique qualities.
- We believe in the value of relationships. Jesus said, "Love the Lord your God with all you heart and all your soul and all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it love your neighbour as yourself."
- We believe in the value of the family in its many forms as a source of love and support for individuals and the basis for a caring community.
- We are firmly rooted in voluntary ethos centred on mutual respect and collaboration.
- Our governance, leadership and programmes are driven by and undertaken through members within their own communities worldwide.
- We are inclusive and work with people of all faiths and none.

## Who We Are



sustainable ways.

We are a movement of over four million Christians in 84 countries worldwide. Mothers' Union members work as volunteers in local communities, putting their faith into action by acts great and small, giving those in need a helping hand and giving communities (of all faiths and none) the confidence and skills to transform their lives in

### Membership

Membership is open to all baptised Christians who subscribe to the Mission, Aim and Objects above. Our members are not all mothers: they are female or male, single, married, divorced, parents or not, and of all ages. Mothers' Union provides a network through which they can serve Christ in their community – through prayer, financial support and actively working at the grassroots level in programmes that meet local needs.

Members pay an annual subscription, which supports the work of the Charity both in the Diocese and centrally. Branch members join through a branch at their local church, and for those who are no longer able to participate actively, there is the option of Indoor Membership. If there is no branch at your church, or if the branch closes, Diocesan Membership is available, administered through the Diocesan Office. There is also Central Membership for those wishing to support the charity without direct links to a Diocese. All members have equal status, are eligible to hold office and take part in activities, and receive the same publications. See the website for more information and current subscription rates.



### Our history



The movement was started in 1876 by Mary Sumner, a vicar's wife. She wanted to create an organisation for women bringing together rich and poor to build a network that would support mothers of all kinds as they brought up their children in the Christian faith. By 1909 it was the largest women's voluntary organisation in Britain, and it soon spread overseas to all parts of the British Empire.

In 1918, the modern Diocese of Coventry was formed from Worcester Diocese, and in 1919, Mothers' Union members in the new Diocese were formally affiliated to the central MU.

Since then, members have been active in the Diocese in many ways, including supporting the work of rebuilding the cathedral after the Coventry Blitz. Coventry has hosted Songs of Praise, the General Meeting and the first Parenting Training Course. Many projects have been started, and some still continue.

In 2014, largely due to the work of past President Diana Sliwinski, we became a partner on the Community of the Cross of Nails (CCN), formed after the 2<sup>nd</sup> World War to promote peace and reconciliation. This led to the Central MU becoming a member on CCN.

*For a more detailed history of MU in the Diocese of Coventry, see the website [covmu.org](http://covmu.org)*

### **Structure of the Mothers' Union**

Mothers' Union is a worldwide federation of independent provincial and diocesan Mothers' Unions. These are all affiliated to our central charity, which is incorporated under Royal Charter.

The worldwide movement of MU, and the membership in Britain and Ireland, are supported by a small group of professional staff, based in London at Mary Sumner House, whose work is funded by our central charity. Staff work in specialist teams to provide appropriate support in line with the vision and strategy agreed by our members.

Some teams include coordinating the core programmes worldwide, fostering relationships across the worldwide movement, and giving direct support to the provinces, dioceses and members in Britain and Ireland. They are also responsible for the coordination of policy development and campaigning, governance for the movement and providing materials to nurture the community of faith.

There is an international Board of Trustees, headed by a Worldwide President, currently Sheran Harper (pictured) made up of members elected by members' representatives every three years. Mothers' Union is active throughout the Anglican Communion. It has members in the 5 Provinces of the British Isles: Canterbury, Wales, All Ireland, Scotland and York (Coventry being in the Province of Canterbury) and in most of the 42 Provinces around the world.



### **Mary Sumner House (MSH)**

Mary Sumner House has been the headquarters of Mothers' Union since 1925. Located in Westminster it was built for this purpose with money donated by members throughout the world. The staff team is based there.

With most queries you should contact Coventry Mothers' Union Diocesan Administrator or the Diocesan President via email.

**Mothers' Union Enterprises (MUE)** is the trading arm of Mothers' Union. It produces a wide range of cards, gifts, books, diaries and calendars and twice yearly all branches receive a catalogue. Goods can be purchased via the website [www.mueshop.org](http://www.mueshop.org), at Diocesan Events or via our MUE Rep. When registering on the shop website, please remember to include the name of the Diocese of Coventry. Sales go towards funding the work of MU and a percentage of the sales is returned to the Diocese.

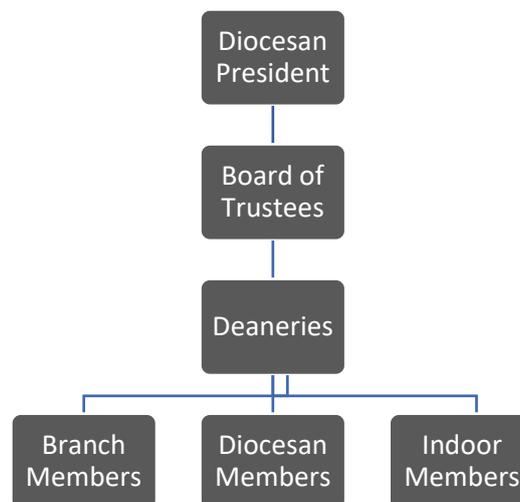
The Mothers' Union magazine, *Connected* and the central *Prayer Diary*, which are sent to all members who have paid their annual subscription, are also available from MUE.

## Diocese of Coventry

### Structure

#### Project Work in Coventry

Members in the diocese raise money to support the work of MU at home and overseas (see section on Guidelines Relating to the Law P16, for clarity on fundraising). They can also be involved in many different local, Diocesan and national projects.



Below are some examples of projects within the Diocese.

Parenting Groups

Away from It All Holidays (AFIA)

Knitting and sewing for premature babies and community groups

Prison Visiting and helping in Visitor Centres

Baptism & Wedding Preparation

Fund raising through knitting, craft and baking

Membership of the Community of the Cross of Nails (CCN)

Link with Kapsabet Diocese in Kenya

We also work alongside other groups, including:-

Coffee Tots

Tools With a Mission

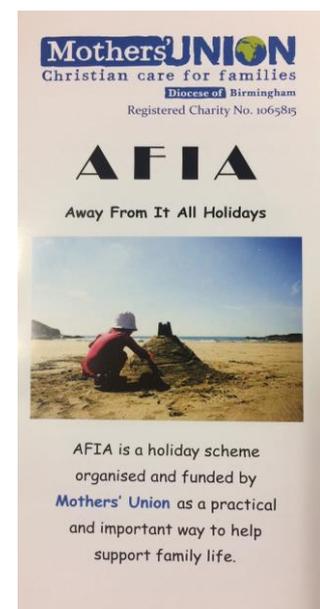
Women's and Men's Refuges

Operation Christmas Child Shoeboxes and Teams 4 U shoeboxes

Coventry Refugee and Migrant Centre (Carriers of Hope and Clothing Coventry)

Toddler Groups

Make Lunch Warwick



Members are also involved in many other Christian activities which whilst not organised by MU are in accordance with the MU Aim and Purpose.

## You and Your Branch

Some pointers to help with the running of a branch, in conjunction with the Diocesan Constitution at [covmu.org](http://covmu.org)

### Meetings

- Have regular meetings, ideally monthly at a time suitable for the majority of your members.
- Keep them flexible and varied - consider different formats.
- Meetings need careful preparation to be effective.
- Plan your programme in advance, preferably for the whole year, and include dates of Deanery and Diocesan events. Make sure all members receive a copy whether they attend meetings or not. You may also want to send copies to local branches and Diocesan Members. Keep your incumbent informed of what you are doing. Email a copy to the MU webmaster to put on the website.
- Have an AGM to approve accounts and hold elections.
- Make worship a part of every meeting and link it with the meeting's theme.
- Pass on news from the parish, deanery and diocese, and worldwide as appropriate.
- Advertise your meetings and any activities on your church or special MU notice board  or Facebook page, if you have one. Please remember to refresh and update regularly!



### Links

- A branch may choose to correspond with a Mothers' Union branch in another country. Please keep the Diocesan President informed.
- Through such a link, information and prayer is shared but not financial support. Any request for financial support should be channelled through the Diocesan President.

### Fundraising

We hope your branch will want to raise funds for Mothers' Union work. This may be for a central Mothers' Union campaign, a diocesan project, or a specific MU fund. **By law and according to the MU constitution you may not give money raised for Mothers' Union to other charitable organisations (see page 16).** Reasonable expenses may be paid to a speaker from another charity, but if members wish to support the work, a separate collection should

be taken once the meeting has officially closed and this money should **not** go through your branch accounts.

You may run events such as a coffee morning or sponsored event to raise funds for MU. These are opportunities to publicise our work and encourage new members. Make sure everyone knows what the money raised is going to. Publicise what you are going to do in good time - report what you have done afterwards.

The Diocese also receives money from MUE related to the volume of sales, so you might want to sell MU cards and gifts at your meetings or publicise the catalogue.

### **Communication within the Branch.**

Communication is vital for the smooth running of the branch. Not ALL members will be able to attend meetings but communication with all makes each member feel valued. It is therefore important that each member has a copy of the Branch programme, information about and invitations to deanery and diocesan events as well as their copies of *Link Up*, *Connected* and *Diocesan* and *Central Prayer Diary*. Find out your members' email addresses and mobile numbers. You might want to set up a WhatsApp group or a Facebook page for up-to-date news and prayer requests (subject to GDPR requirements). Do remember to include your Indoor Members and any diocesan members that may be in your area as well. Diocesan Members will receive *Link Up*, *Connected* and the *Prayer Diaries* by post and email.

### **Communication beyond the Branch**

A healthy branch needs to know what is happening with the organisation at local, national and international levels. Every member should know something of the current issues for the MU.

- Encourage members to attend provincial, diocesan or deanery meetings, training days and special events.
- Liaise with other church organisations and community organisations.
- Invite your MUE representative for a Mothers' Union goods and literature sale.
- You may want to get regular information from local bodies such as your local council.
- Try to maintain a presence on the PCC to promote the work of MU.

BUT, keeping in touch is about two-way communication. Let other groups and your diocese know what you are doing!

### **Prayer Circle**



There are people around the diocese who respond to urgent prayer requests for those who are sick or in specific need. Please contact the Emergency Prayer Circle contact, to pass on your prayer requests. New members of the Prayer Circle are always welcome, and this may be something that members who cannot get to meetings may wish to be involved with.

## Roles In The Branch

Each branch should have a committee to spread the workload. For a Branch to run smoothly everyone needs to understand not only what is required of her/him but what responsibilities others have. Encourage branch members to know who does what. There may be other roles than those given here, and these tasks are not definitive.

When new Branch Leaders are elected, you should let your incumbent know, and if possible, arrange a commissioning service, preferably during normal worship. (Guidelines for this are on the website).

### Branch Leader

A branch leader is ultimately responsible for what goes on in a branch. They are accountable to their members and the parish but if for any reason there is no branch leader, a branch may, in consultation with the Diocesan President, run by committee, nominating someone to be **the branch contact**. The tasks required are the same, but delegation is important.

Every branch has members with a range of skills; the branch leader must discern those skills and strengths and encourage members to use them.

### Tasks required to run a branch:-

This list may look daunting at first but remember that although the BL needs to ensure these jobs are done, **they do not have to do them all themselves!** See it as a chance to use the committee or find those new gifts/skills among the members.

- Leading meetings.
- Planning worship as part of each meeting.
- Implementing the programme.
- Ensuring all MU activities are underpinned by prayer.
- Being a point of contact for the incumbent, congregation and community.
- Encouraging members to be involved in meetings and activities and maintaining contact with all of them.
- Chairing regular committee meetings.
- Attending Diocesan meetings and reporting back to the branch.
- Preparing new members and arranging for them to be admitted – preferably at a regular church service, because it is a good way of promoting MU.
- Ensuring all members are cared for and fully aware of developments and plans within the branch whether or not they attend meetings. Contacting any who are sick or in need of any kind, making sure they are visited, and arrangements made, where possible, to meet those needs.
- Remembering that indoor members are still members and need regular contact and should receive any information.
- Making arrangements to take part in the Wave of Prayer each year



- Ensuring the care of the banner (if there is one) and its good display in church.
- Asking someone else to look after the visiting speaker – and any other visitors/newcomers (you may well be too busy to do this yourself)
- Asking someone to give the vote of thanks to the visiting speaker at the end of the talk.
- Passing on all communications from the Diocese or MSH to all members; do not pre-judge what the members may or may not be interested in... you might be surprised.

### **Branch Secretary**

Tasks include:-

- Being the branch Administrator or keeping the Administrator up to date with members, their addresses, telephone numbers, email addresses and other useful information such as year of admission, and date of birth.
- Notifying the Diocesan Administrator of any membership changes.
- Notifying the diocesan office of significant birthdays i.e., 90+, golden/diamond wedding anniversaries and significant years of membership i.e. 25,30,40,50 and 60. (The diocese will contact MSH of those who are entitled to cards from the Worldwide President). The office ideally should be notified 2 months prior to the event.
- Convening the Annual General Meeting and arranging committee elections as appropriate.
- Attending the Branch committee meetings.
- Creating the agenda for committee meetings with the branch leader and distributing it and taking the minutes.
- The committee may have appointed a programme secretary but if not, the secretary may also be responsible for booking speakers and confirming the details and making sure they have adequate directions for finding the meeting – especially if it is in a member's home.
- Making sure with the Branch Leader that members are aware of all correspondence from the diocese and MSH.
- If the branch is large or very diverse it might be useful to create a newsletter to distribute to all members so that everyone is aware of any activities/special events.

### **Treasurer**

Tasks include:-

- Keeping careful account of income, expenditure and savings of the branch so that the committee can budget effectively and ensure that savings do not mount up.
- There must be a bank account in the name of the branch.
- Normally three signatories are required for the account – these should include, the treasurer, the branch leader and one other committee member.
- Completing and returning the annual accounts form sent by the diocesan treasurer.
- Arranging for accounts to be audited or inspected.



- Presenting the accounts to the Annual General Meeting of the branch.
- Collecting annual subscriptions of those not paying by Direct Debit and orders for MU diaries (larger branches will normally have member(s) assisting with collection of these). MU is able to reclaim any tax paid on membership subscriptions and donations from UK taxpayers if a Gift Aid Declaration is completed. See the form on the website.



## BRANCH COMMITTEE

Each Branch should elect a committee. Its size will depend on the size of the branch but should include the branch leader/contact, treasurer, secretary and maybe a programme secretary.

- The committee and branch leader should share the practical arrangements.
- They should plan a balanced programme.
- Tasks and responsibilities should be delegated to other members of the branch.
- The committee should meet regularly, having an agenda in advance prepared by the branch leader and the secretary.
- Committee membership is subject to nomination and election at the branch AGM. Elections are on a triennial basis, each post elected for 3 years with option to stand for a further 3 years (see Constitution).
- Exception to this rule may be made for the post of treasurer and secretary although where possible it is good to make changes and use others with appropriate skills. *The branch leader* cannot be re-elected to the committee in any other post for a year.
- To ensure continuity it is preferable not to have all committee members eligible for election at the same time.

### REMEMBER!

*Delegation is always the name of the game.*

## Problems

If any problem arises, depending on what it is, call on the incumbent, the Deanery Contact, a Trustee, or the Diocesan President.

## GROWING MEMBERSHIP

### Encouraging new members

- There is no substitute for personal contact and showing friendship. If people feel valued, they are more likely to respond.
- Enthusiasm for Mothers' Union is catching.
- Invite individuals to attend meetings and/or be involved with activities to find out more about MU.
- Be sure there is someone to welcome newcomers at all meetings.



- Publicise what you are and what you do.
- Remember it is not essential to attend branch meetings to be a member: support for the Aims and Purpose and Mission Statement is what matters but if a member does not attend meetings, communication – and possibly visits – are essential to keep them informed. Make sure they have a current copy of *Link Up, Connected* and the *Diocesan and Central Prayer Diary*
- Discern and use skills of new members– membership forms from the diocesan office may help.
- Listen to the opinions and ideas of new members, are their expectations being met? Are they as involved as they would like to be?

### Preparing New Members

Before admitting a new member, the branch leader, or another designated member should discuss the Aim and Purpose, and use this as an opportunity for branch members to share what is special about Mothers' Union

- Explain projects with which the branch, deanery and diocese are involved and opportunities for taking part.
- Introduce the Mothers' Union prayer and the Wave of Prayer (see the central *Prayer Diary*)
- Offer copies of *Connected, Prayer Diaries* and *Link Up* to give insight into the work.
- Explain about subscriptions and how the money is used. Roughly half of the  subscription is set by MSH and goes to pay for running costs of the central charity. The other part is kept by Coventry Diocese and varies according to the category of member. Encourage Direct Debit payment via MSH, and the use of Gift Aid if a UK taxpayer. Gift Aid may not be used to pay for a non-tax paying spouse, even if from a joint bank account, but joint membership can be if only one person is a tax payer.

### Admitting New Members

- It is preferable for the incumbent to admit new members within a church service as this then acts as a witness to the whole congregation.
- The recommended form of service is available on the website or from the diocesan office.
- Admission cards for each candidate are available from the diocesan office. The branch should also give a badge and it is a nice gesture to give the new member a copy of the MU prayer – prayer cards are available from MUE.

All members are welcome at Diocesan and Deanery events such as Festival Services and Members meetings and at the Annual Gathering held around the country each year. Inviting new or potential members to attend can be a good way of showing them a wider view of MU to inspire them.



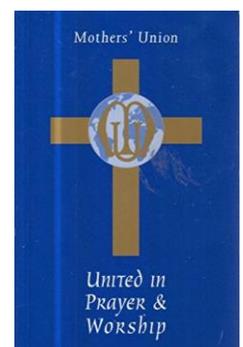
## WORSHIP

Worship should form part of every meeting and your branch may be called upon to organise a service of corporate communion. Share out responsibility for leadership, readings and prayers. If there is to be a speaker at the meeting, ask if they would like a specific reading. Include a variety of elements – readings, singing, silence, prayers, music, liturgy, meditation.

The exact form of worship can vary according to who is present, meeting themes and the plans of the person chosen to lead. It might range from a few prayers and a Bible reading to a full service.

There are many resources available to help you plan a service.

- The Mothers' Union Service book, *United in Prayer & Worship* and other worship books, though now out of print, are often held by the branch.
- The central website and the Diocese of Coventry website have many ideas for worship including ideas that fit with the year's theme.
- You could also include the Litany of Reconciliation. As partners of the Community of the Cross of Nails, we have undertaken to use this Litany as often as possible. It can be downloaded from their website [www.coventrycathedral.org.uk/ccn](http://www.coventrycathedral.org.uk/ccn)



## **A True reflection of the Mothers' Union**

It is important to recognise the beauty and diversity of the many communities that make up the worldwide organisation in our prayer and worship. Prayer is an expression of who we are and what we believe, our experiences and hopes, and sharing together the wisdom and life of all members - worldwide. Try to reflect our worldwide identity in our prayers and worship.

Be inventive and creative using music, readings, pictures etc. to help members identify with the range of cultures within the worldwide fellowship of the Mothers' Union.

The MU Prayer Diary and a wide range of resources is available on the MU website and Coventry Diocesan MU website.

## **Preparing a service**

If you are asked to plan or be involved in planning a deanery service, it will give you the opportunity to build on your experiences of leading worship in the branch. Further help and guidance is given on the central MU Website [www.mothersunion.org](http://www.mothersunion.org) under resources.

## **GUIDELINES FOR PROGRAMME PLANNING**

The programme for the branch should broadly reflect the Aim and Purpose of Mothers' Union. You may wish to follow the theme suggested by Mary Sumner House each year or follow one of your own to give a unified feel. Consult your members for their ideas and find out what kind of activities and speakers they would like. A copy of the programme should be made available to the incumbent and also sent to the Diocesan Office and the webmaster.

Planning the programme should be the job of the branch committee, although you may have a Programme Secretary to make contacts. There is a Diocesan Speakers' list in every branch which also includes speakers from other organisations. Most Trustees are also willing to come and talk about their work, experiences of MU or a recent event. It is not always necessary to have a speaker. Include opportunities to keep up to date with the work of the Mothers' Union.

A discussion can be stimulating, and remember your members have many interesting stories to tell as well. Try a "hands-on" craft session or a demonstration.

- Remember to arrange your programme so that it takes account of Deanery and Diocesan events. Balance is the key to a good programme. It should reflect the MU aims and objectives and the theme for the year, as well as any local issues.

- Vary the format. Once or twice a year it is a good idea to have a discussion e.g. about MU matters or something in the news that is relevant to families. You can find many ideas on central MU Website [www.mothersunion.org](http://www.mothersunion.org). A “hands on” craft session can build friendships and develop new skills.



- Invite non-members to meetings and outings that you think will be of particular interest to them.
- The diocese regularly arranges Members Days which are intended to support the running of your branches by sharing ideas and information and discussing problems.
- Branches may like to meet together for a special speaker or event.
- Above all – ENJOY YOURSELVES!



### **Arranging Speakers.**

- Try to approach a Speaker initially by telephone, but always follow up with a letter or email outlining the subject of the talk, the date and time to come, and how long you wish the talk to last.
- It can also be useful to indicate the likely number and age profile of people attending. If the speaker is not an MU member, it helps to include the Mission Statement, or Aim and Purpose.
- About two weeks before the meeting, the Speaker should be contacted again just to confirm the details and to make sure she/he knows where to come to. Ask if she /he would like a special reading or hymn and try to make the opening service relevant to the topic.
- Check requirements for equipment and room layout.
- Give one member the responsibility of looking out for and welcoming the Speaker. This leaves the Branch Leader free to be available to members. If you don't know anything about the Speaker, ask for a short biography so that the leader can introduce her/him before the talk.

- When the talk is over, somebody other than the leader should be briefed to give a short vote of thanks (not a lengthy anecdote of their own!)

Reasonable speakers' expenses can be claimed for both MU and non-MU speakers, via the Mothers' Union Diocesan Office to cover travelling expenses etc. Please avoid printing costs by asking speakers to email any handouts in advance or post meeting.

Please note, it is the responsibility of the branch leader/contact to sign off the expense form before sending it to the office for payment. Expense forms can be found on our website under publications.



## **PROMOTING MOTHERS' UNION**

### **Inform the parish**

- Get information about meetings and other events listed in information that is made available to the whole congregation – parish newsletters/magazines.
- Include information about branch meetings and special events on Notice Boards. If possible, have a branch Notice Board and keep it tidy and fresh.
- For a special event, you could consider borrowing the diocesan banner and display boards
- Make sure the events of the past year are included in the church's APCM report.
- Involve various members in writing articles/snippets – do not leave it all to the branch leader.

### **Inform the Diocese**

- Keep the Diocesan President and Trustees up to date with what you are doing.
- Make sure your Deanery Contact knows what is happening so that they can report at Officers' Meetings.
- The Webmaster always welcomes photos and news items, as well as branch programmes.
- Send articles and photos to the Link Up Editor.
- Consider sending articles to be included in Connected – talk to the Diocesan President.
- When taking photos for Link Up, Facebook etc. please ensure you seek permission from members and where children are involved, please complete the photo consent form which can be found on our website.

## **BRANCH PROJECTS**

Before considering setting up another project find out more about those already established in the Diocese. It may be possible to replicate a project within your branch, or it may be preferable to be involved in a project running in the deanery, diocese or centrally.

### **Questions to ask before you start**

- What are we trying to achieve?
- Is anyone else doing this?
- Whom will it benefit?
- Does it reflect the Aims and Purpose of Mothers' Union?
- Who needs to be involved or notified? The Trustees should be kept informed of all projects.
- Will it need funds? Where will you get these from – fundraising in the branch or your local church, donations? If considering applying for a grant, keep the Trustees informed.
- Where should it be located? Have we done a risk assessment?
- How will we get volunteers? Will they need to have a DBS check and safeguarding training?
- How will it be advertised?
- Does it have a finite life or is it on-going?
- Can the project generate good publicity for the Mothers' Union?
- Who might give advice or offer training?

### **Where to get ideas?**

- Talk to your incumbent, youth leader or other parish staff.
- Look at the local community – where is help needed? E.g. hospital, prison, health centre, school, children's centre. Discuss with the personnel what MU might be able to offer.
- Check out local Facebook pages and other social media, and the Diocesan and Central websites.
- See what others are doing – ideas from *Connected and Link Up*.
- The Diocesan President may know what has been successful in other dioceses.

### **When setting up a project**

- Read the section on Guidelines Relating to Laws and Regulations on page 16.
- If working with other organisations, everyone should be clear whether it is a Mothers' Union project or joint project.
- If working in partnership with another organisation, consider drawing up a written agreement in consultation with the Trustees, that sets out responsibilities and

liabilities. This is particularly important with regard to Safeguarding, Insurance and Risk Assessment. Make sure that the MU is acknowledged in any promotional material and clarify responsibilities in writing.

## **GUIDELINES RELATING TO THE LAW**

Mainly to do with money! Mothers' Union is a UK Registered Charity, and Mothers' Union Coventry Diocese is a registered charity affiliated to the central charity. Because of this there are rules which govern what we can do and how we can do them. This particularly applies in relation to finances.



- All funds within a branch must be accounted for.
- Money raised by the branch in the name of MU can only be used to further our Aim and Objectives
- Goods cannot be bought and traded at a profit. This does not apply to items made to raise money.
- Money from the branch cannot be given to another charity. If you have a speaker from another charity and wish to give them a donation, you must take a collection from members once the meeting has officially closed. This collection should **not** be put through your accounts.
- You should not use branch funds to pay for a member's subscription, though another member may gift a subscription.
- If you wish to buy something for your church, you should seek guidance from the Diocesan President or Trustees. Normally you should not use branch funds to pay for building or repair work, but you might want to buy something to promote the Christian faith, such as Bibles for Baptisms or Weddings.

### **Copyright**

- You must not reproduce written, pictorial or music material without the permission of the owner. Beware of copying photos from the internet, knitting patterns and prayers except for personal use. Usually, owners are happy for you to make copies or use prayers in a branch collection. This also applies to MU publications. If you cannot trace the owner, then you should acknowledge them if possible.
- You may use the MU logo, either the central one or the Coventry Diocese one, both of which are available from the Office. You can resize it, but do not change the shape or proportions of the logo by stretching it.

### **Other legal considerations**

- You should do a regular risk assessment of your normal meeting place, and before any events in other venues.

- If taking photos to use in Link Up, on websites or social media, you must get consent from all those featuring, and not include anyone who does not wish their photo taken. If children are present, you must complete the form on the Coventry Diocese website including signed permission from the child's parent or legal guardian.
- If you are considering any event outside your normal activities, you should check the insurance situation with the Treasurer or Diocesan President
- The GDPR Act requires you to only collect necessary information about your members, and to delete information when they are no longer members
- If you are doing anything with food, you should check regulations with the Local Authority. Be aware of any of your members who may have the relevant qualifications.

## **Publications and Resources**

### **Mothers' Union Enterprises Catalogue (MUe)**

The catalogue is full of wonderful gifts, cards and ideas. It is published twice yearly and sent to all subscribing members. Contact the Coventry Diocese Office for further copies. You can purchase directly from the online shop. If you purchase from the website, please indicate that you are from Coventry Diocese as we receive a turnover related grant which helps to fund our local projects.

### **Resources**

There are many leaflets and resources which you can download from the new Mothers' Union Website, [covmu.org](http://covmu.org) including ideas for services and meetings, prayers and posters for campaigns. Monthly Midday Prayers and the Wave of Prayer Diary are also available in the faith section, as well as printable copies of the MU and Mary Sumner prayer.

The new Coventry website, [covmu.org](http://covmu.org) also has a number of resources, such as prayers, letters from the Diocesan and Worldwide Presidents, sewing and knitting patterns and information about forthcoming events. There is also a Facebook page which has photos and news, as well as requests for help and ideas for meetings.

If you need help or advice with anything, contact the Diocesan President, the Diocesan Office by email, or the relevant Officer as listed in the Directory. The Directory is available to all Branch Leaders and Office Holders but because of GDPR regulations, should not be shared widely with members.

### **Safeguarding**

Currently the Diocesan President is the Designated Safeguarding Lead for Mothers' Union Diocese of Coventry. Should the Diocesan President not be available, please email the Mary Sumner House Designated Safeguarding Lead: [safeguarding@mothersunion.org](mailto:safeguarding@mothersunion.org)

If a child is in immediate danger, call 999.

If you have information of a safeguarding nature where an adult at risk is in immediate danger or requires immediate medical attention, call emergency services on 999.

The Diocese safeguarding policy and guidelines indicate that EVERYONE involved in Children's Young People (CYP) or Vulnerable Adult (VA) ministries should receive training soon after they start and at least every three years thereafter. There is a new requirement for more of those in leadership to receive training as well, in order that safeguarding might become part of the DNA of the body of Christ.

The courses now available and which may concern you are:

1. Basic Awareness (formerly C0) – only available on-line – all branch leaders/contacts should complete.
2. Foundation (formerly C1) – required for all who are involved in CYP or VA work, now also available on-line.

For more information, please see our safeguarding policy together with other useful documents such as Risk Assessment, Photo Consent Form, and General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) via our website **covmu.org**

