

Mothers' Union Coventry Diocese Overseas Links: DRAFT policy

Introduction and context:

There have been links for several years between MU in Coventry Diocese and:

- Akot, South Sudan;
- South West Tanganyika, Tanzania;
- Aba and Irele-Ese Odo, Nigeria;
- Cuttack, India;

Limited direct links have been possible, due to changes in personnel, poor or no internet.

MU Prayer Diary: Wave of Prayer: Dec 3rd – 5th

Links between Kapsabet Diocese and Coventry Diocese

Background:

Members can find out more about Companionship Links in Coventry Diocese

<https://www.coventry.anglican.org/link-dioceses.php>

There has been a Companionship Link between Kapsabet Diocese and Coventry Diocese since 2017, its vision being: *“particularly prayerful, seeking Kingdom relationship and opportunities to learn from and be enriched by each other primarily.”* Thus, it was agreed that Kapsabet, Kenya would be added to our MU links. Find more information at: <https://www.coventry.anglican.org/about/more-about-us/link-dioceses/>

The intention in Coventry Diocese is that partnerships would develop between clergy, churches, schools, hospital chaplains, Mothers' Union etc. For friendship, prayer, greater awareness of the lives of one another – spiritual and practical. Hopefully visits and email communication.

Specifically for Mothers' Union members:

- Mutual learning about the lives of MU members in a different context, global, relationship with the church, community and families.
- Potential links through email and social media
- Focussed prayer

In order to fulfil this, the aim is to:

- provide regular reports to members updating on our overseas links, including points for prayer
- speak to members during Members' meetings, presentations to branches
- hold diocesan international events

Visiting Kapsabet:

Any visit will be hosted by the Bishop of Kapsabet and his/her staff. Decisions regarding the itinerary will be agreed between the Bishops of Kapsabet, Coventry and the Companionship Links group. MU members will be part of the Diocesan Team, under the leadership of a Bishop or designated leader. Any activity carried out by a MU member whilst in Kapsabet will be under the direction of, or agreed with, the designated leader. Discussion regarding particular aims of MU whilst in Kapsabet will be discussed as part of the preparations for the visit.

What is the purpose of a visit?

- To build stronger relationships between MU members in both dioceses
- To learn and understand more about the lives of MU members, family and community life in Kapsabet and share this learning with MU members and others in Coventry Diocese
- To encourage MU in Kapsabet, by our visit – worshipping, praying, friendships
- For MU in Coventry diocese to pray in a more focussed, meaningful way
- For MU to be part of a wider Diocesan Team, thereby being part of the “Companion Links” group and raising the profile of MU in our diocese
- To encourage MU groups across our diocese to forge additional links, where appropriate
- To grow in Christ and be transformed.

Regarding a potential visit to Kapsabet by MU members:

We believe that God calls us all to pray for our sisters and brothers in other parts of the world. He calls some to go as witnesses and as the representatives of our MU movement. Prayer is an essential part of the discernment process for all involved.

- Individuals are expected to provide funds for their costs: airfare, gifts, vaccinations, insurance, possibly accommodation and transport in country.
- Individuals may do their own fundraising or gain sponsors.
- Coventry Diocese MU may support some of these costs via members’ donations or underwriting reasonable costs associated with fundraising events. (** See additional notes below)
- Individuals are expected to engage their own church members, MU members in a local branch and other friends/family, in prayer and possible fundraising or donating gifts to give to MU members in Kapsabet
- Members who visit Kapsabet are expected to provide feedback/report to Diocesan President and Trustees. This to include comments on what was achieved and in what ways the visit was transformational. Also to feed back to MU members more widely, their own church members and any others who have been involved in fundraising, prayer and practical preparations. Where appropriate also to make a presentation to others.
- Whilst small gifts (e.g. MU badges, prayer books etc) will be given and received during the visit, MU members will understand that there must be no financial transactions or promises made directly to MU members or clergy in Kapsabet. Any further gifts, following a visit, must be agreed by Bishops in Kapsabet and Coventry and Mothers’ Union Trustee Board. In addition, the MU Overseas Rep and Diocesan President should be kept informed of any friendships/communication following the visit, to ensure that an all MU Diocesan approach is maintained with transparency.

It is anticipated that Coventry Diocese will arrange an annual visit to Kapsabet, and MU may be invited to send representatives from MU within the Diocesan team. A process of application and discernment will be followed for those wishing to be part of the MU group visiting Kapsabet. Please talk to the Overseas Rep or Diocesan President in the first instance if you are considering putting yourself forward.

Coventry MU Overseas Rep (currently Jane Hill) will be the lead liaison person between MU members and the Diocesan President/Trustee Board on all matters relating to our overseas links.

** Additional notes regarding financial support from Coventry Diocese MU for a visit of members to Kapsabet, as part of a Diocesan team.:

1. The MU Diocese of Coventry will *underwrite any Diocesan and possibly Deanery fundraising initiatives that are run so that all proceeds are used to help subsidise members' flights, vaccinations and possible overnight accommodation en route to be capped at *£1000 per trip.
2. The MU Diocese of Coventry will pay for *gifts e.g. badges, scarves etc. to be capped at *£250 per trip. This must be spent using the MU Coventry Diocese stock in the first instance.
3. Monies raised to subsidise flights will be forwarded to the Diocesan lead responsible for booking flights and not the individual member.
4. Should there be excess funds available to cover vaccination costs and malaria medication, members will be re-imbursed once the MU Treasurer receives a receipt.
5. Occasionally, the collection within a Mothers' Union service could be used to boost funds within the Kapsabet Project should it be needed.
6. Any money received from Kapsabet fundraising/donations will be ring fenced and any surplus will be used to support the trip the following year.
7. There would also be an expectation that members travelling to Kapsabet would work together to support fundraising initiatives linked to their trip and would also support the team going out the following year.
8. Members will receive guidance on what they will be doing whilst they are there and what the expectation will be, on their return, to ensure engagement continues and the wider membership benefits.

Safeguarding: The Diocesan Team should follow the rules of the safeguarding policy within the visiting diocese e.g. Kapsabet Diocese. The Mothers' Union lead within the Diocese of Coventry will also act as a safeguarding lead for those members representing Mothers' Union as part of the Diocesan led team.

Jane Hill Draft: January 2023

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