

MSH Member Update – October 2024 Edition

Dear Members,

Welcome to your October edition of your monthly MSH Member Update.

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Have You Added Your Voice to Our “Empower Her” Literacy Campaign?

As a women-led movement with a passion for transforming and improving family and community life, we are deeply concerned about the number of people globally who cannot read or write. We were alarmed to learn that one-third of that global figure is women. That realisation hit me hard, knowing that there are women like me around the world who lack the ability to read or write. That is why I have added my voice to the Empower Her Literacy campaign, and I am encouraging others to do the same.

Since launching this campaign, on International Literacy Day, nearly 1,000 people have signed up! Our goal is to put women’s education on the global agenda for the UK government, and we are well on our way. There is still time to add your voice. If even half of our membership signs up, the number of supporters would rise to tens of thousands.

If you have not yet signed up, please do so and encourage everyone around you to get involved; your friends, neighbours and even the person in front of you in the queue at the shop. Each signature brings us closer to a world where every woman has the tools to shape her future.

Together, we can give more women the chance to read, to lead, and to uplift their communities.

As the saying goes, "The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing." Let us not be silent. Let us speak up by signing up!

Literacy truly does change lives! Let us make a difference, one signature at a time!

Armistice Day: "United in Prayer for Peace"

On Armistice Day, 11th November, the Mothers' Union will release a series of heartfelt social media posts, filmed at the historic Mary Sumner House to unite us all in a powerful moment of prayer for peace. This day of remembrance is more than just honouring those who sacrificed their lives in conflict; it is a call to reflect on the importance of reconciliation, healing, and the pursuit of lasting peace in our troubled world.

As a global movement with a mission to transform communities and support families, we believe that peace begins in the heart of each individual and ripples outward, shaping our families, our neighbourhoods, our nation and the world. Through these special posts, we invite you to pause with us at midday on this day, wherever you are, to honour the courage of those who gave up everything to give us a better future. Let us also be reminded of the work that still needs to be done in bringing unity and peace to communities that are torn apart by conflict, war and injustice.

This Armistice Day may our prayers rise in unity, and may our actions speak louder than words as we work towards a future where peace reigns for all.

Embrace Peace This Advent and Christmas (Advent resources & Blue Christmas)

This Advent and Christmas season, Mothers' Union invites you to embrace the theme of "**Calm and Bright**" to encourage you to pause and breathe amid the hustle and bustle of life and the season. The Advent Calendar provides daily reflections, offering inspiration and a quiet space to centre yourself each day as you prepare for the joy of Christmas.

We also recognise that for many, this holiday season can be a difficult time. That is why we have created a comprehensive guide for hosting a "Blue Christmas" service, which offers comfort for those who may be struggling due to experiencing grief, loneliness, or hardship during the season. This resource helps churches and communities provide a space of solace and comfort while promoting community connection during this special time.

Visit our website, www.mothersunion.org/resources/general-faith-resources, for more details on how you can bring "Calm and Bright" into your Advent and Christmas. Let us walk together in faith and hope this season.

Help Build Brighter Futures – The Mothers' Union Christmas Appeal

We invite you to join us in spreading hope and joy through our Christmas Appeal, which will be launched on 3rd December. Your support will help us continue our vital work, empowering families and communities in need across the world.

This year's Christmas appeal is special – it is your chance to double your impact and change lives. Starting at noon on 3rd December 2024, your donation will be matched by the Big Give, meaning every pound you give will go twice as far in helping women like Francine build brighter futures.

Francine's story is one of transformation. Thanks to the One More Step programme, she not only lifted her family out of poverty but strengthened her faith and her community. "I learned to manage our household and save for our family's future. I also learned how to strengthen my relationship with God. I pray deeply and, I am able to pray for me, my children and others. I now have confidence and hope," she says.

With your help, we can expand this successful pilot to 6 more dioceses in Burundi, reaching 4,000 people in the first year alone. By supporting literacy circles and savings groups, we will empower women to overcome gender inequality, improve agricultural practices, build business knowledge and reduce gender-based violence in their communities.

Please set a reminder in your calendar! During this week, your gift will be DOUBLED, meaning your generosity will have twice the impact. Together, we can transform lives, like Francine's, and create lasting change in Burundi.

Please share this message with your friends and family so they too can take part in this incredible opportunity to make a difference!

Gifts of MU

Why not buy a Gift of MU for family and friends for Christmas? These annual gifts are a good way to promote MU in Britain & Ireland. Recipients will receive benefits and

updates on MU and will be encouraged to become members. Dioceses will receive a proportion of the gift payment (based on where the purchaser lives) and benefit from potential new diocesan memberships! **Share this wonderful movement and help it to grow and thrive.**

<https://www.mothersunion.org/get-involved/join-us-today> and select the Gifts of MU tab in the box.



Food & Drink Hampers

Our new food & drink hampers feature a delicious selection of sweet and savoury treats, wines and prosecco.

You can add a personalised message and choose your delivery date!



Spread the Joy of Christmas with the Mothers Union Christmas Shop!

The holiday season is just around the corner, and our shop is officially open, and our 2024 Christmas Food & Drink Hampers have already become a best seller with orders flowing in. These thoughtfully designed hampers are not just a treat for yourself; they make for perfect gifts for your loved ones too.

Speaking from experience, finding the perfect gift for that someone at Christmas can sometimes be a challenge, but these hampers are designed to bring joy to anyone on your list. Each hamper is filled with a delightful selection of festive treats, from gourmet snacks to delicious beverages, ensuring there is something to please every palate. Whether it is for family, friends, or colleagues, our hampers are a wonderful way to show you care.

By choosing a hamper from the Mothers' Union Christmas Shop, you are not just gifting an experience but also supporting a meaningful cause. Order yours today and let your purchase make a difference!

Women Together - A Path for Younger MU Members

We are thrilled to share some amazing stories from the Blackburn Diocese! The diocese has found a creative way to engage young people by moving away from the traditional branch model, and it is yielding fantastic results.

Lisa Peynado shared with the teams at MSH the inspiring success of a group called Women Together, made up of younger Mothers' Union members. They began meeting just over a year ago, and now gathers every two months on Friday afternoons from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m. for fun worship, crafts, and a shared meal. She said It is a wonderful space for mums and their children, and many of the participants have now enrolled for MU membership and are enjoying the privilege of attending regular MU events.

The group also has a Women Together WhatsApp group which is an invaluable source of support for the new mums amongst them, offering a space to ask for prayer, share baby items, and receive encouragement. In addition to their meetings, the group has gone on trips and organised a powerful 'Souls of our Shoes' exhibition.

This initiative shows how younger women can find a place within Mothers' Union, with the older members offering support and guidance. Everything they do is rooted in their shared faith in our Lord Jesus. Why not try this in your diocese?

Lisa is encouraging Women Together to expand into other branches. Is your branch ready to explore this exciting opportunity and grow your membership?

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