

Mothers' Union Winchester Diocese

Notes from the Information Day at St Lawrence's Parish Rooms, Winchester

on Thursday 11th July at 10am

1. WELCOME and OPENING PRAYERS

Linda Hoskins welcomed everyone to the meeting and Revd Terry Roberts led the opening prayers. 14 members attended the meeting.

2. Maundy Money

Stella and Terry Roberts gave a presentation about their visit to Worcester Cathedral for Stella to receive Maundy Money from Queen Camilla. Stella's name had been put forward by the Bishop of Winchester to be one of the 75 men and 75 women to receive Maundy money this year, so they travelled to Worcester for the ceremony and had a very memorable time. You can read more about this in Archway.

3. Accounts for 2023

Sue Murphy gave a presentation on the accounts for 2023. Information on the account is also included in the latest Archway magazine.

4. Progress on SW Cluster Pilot / Elections for 2025

Sue Murphy gave an update on the SW Cluster Pilot. The new charity (to be called Mothers' Union South West) will cover the area of 8 dioceses (Bath & Wells, Bristol, Exeter, Gloucester, Portsmouth, Salisbury, Truro and Winchester). A Steering Group has met a number of times via Zoom, and had two face-to-face meetings in Exeter. The constitution is almost finalised, and will be submitted to the Charity Commission shortly. After that, the Steering Group will move onto looking at the Rules and Regulations and the Policies and Procedures, which will allow us to understand exactly how the dioceses will work with the Cluster.

The aim is that the new structure will have very little impact on the members. In particular it is hoped that this change should be cost neutral, and we will still have a committee at Diocesan level to engage with members and organise events and projects. Sue Murphy has been nominated as the representative for Winchester Diocese on the Trustee board of the new charity.

We will continue to need volunteers to run diocesan activities, and nomination forms are included within the Archway packs to go out to branches. Sue was asked whether the Trustee on the board of the new charity will also be the Diocesan President. Sue explained that the Trustee on the Cluster board will automatically be a member of diocesan committee, but not necessarily the Diocesan President. Bev Jullien had suggested that it would be helpful if the Diocesan President and the Trustee on the Cluster board were two separate people as this would spread the workload.

5. News from our Chaplain

Terry Roberts told everyone that when he agreed to become the Diocesan Chaplain he had thought that he would continue to do the tasks that he has been doing in the past to support Mothers' Union. However, he discovered that the job is a lot bigger than that! He was

contacted by Ish Lennox, who has recently joined Mary Sumner House to look after Faith and relationships with the church, and joined an online meeting with chaplains from around the country. One question they considered was how well does the chaplain know the clergy in the diocese. Some Mothers' Union chaplains know all the clergy in their diocese!

Terry was also asked to put together prayers and reflections for the month of November 2025, which involved quite a lot of work, and he thanked those who helped to provide some of the prayers (some of the prayers for November 2025 will now come from overseas, and some of the prayers Terry submitted will be used elsewhere in the Prayer Diary!) MSH are now revising the blue service book, and Terry has been asked to help with this. MSH are also working on a clergy pack which was promised for the end of June but is not yet out!

6. **16 days Campaign**

The Trustee board had discussed the 16 days campaign, and decided that they would prefer to hold the usual prayer vigil outside the west end of the Cathedral. Although we had managed to speak to a number of visitors at the Christmas market and hand out a lot of leaflets, many shoppers did not wish to engage with us. Stella will meet with the Dean to discuss this.

7. **MID-DAY PRAYERS**

Terry then led Mid-Day prayers, before the meeting paused for lunch.

8. **Update on Projects**

AFIA

This year we will be supporting the group from Bournemouth again, and we have also funded a number of other trips, including a trip for the families at the Winchester Refuge to a Longdown Activity Farm. Sue Murphy said that the income we are receiving for AFIA is currently higher than our expenditure, and encouraged everyone to look out for families who would benefit from our support.

Contact Centres

We now have a single Contact Centre in Popley. A number of families have moved on recently, and so the number of families attending the centre is currently low. We now have to process our own referrals, which has generated quite a bit of extra work for the team.

9. **Highlights from the Provincial Conference in Oxford on 22nd June**

Sue Murphy gave a brief description of the Provincial Conference in Oxford on 22nd. It included a Eucharist service led by the Provincial Chaplain, a presentation about "Hymns We Love" (an evangelical programme based around well-known hymns) and stand-up comedy from Andy Kind. Between these presentations, the various clusters within Canterbury Province gave presentations about their activities. The Midlands Cluster was the last to take the stage, and decided to run a session of bingo based around Mothers' Union activities. Sue Murphy ran a similar bingo session for the members at the Information Day, which everyone enjoyed.

10. Any Other Business

Resignation

Terry noted that Sue Murphy has formally resigned as our Secretary and Treasurer so that she can become a Trustee and she has been co-opted onto the Trustee board for the remainder of this year. However, she is continuing to cover the administrative tasks until we can make other arrangements! Terry presented Sue with a card and flower as a thank you for her work.

Christmas Tree Festival

Towards the end of 2023, the vicar in Brockenhurst had given the groups within the parish the challenge of organising an event to promote outreach. Mothers' Union had chosen to run a Christmas Tree Festival, but since there was insufficient time to organise this for 2023, it will be run at the end of 2024. Lesley Munt showed us a knitted angel that she had made. The branch plans to make a number of these to go on a tree for the Christmas Tree Festival to advertise the Angel Tree project, and then they will be given to the children of prisoners who receive our gifts at Christmas. They are also planning to have a prayer tree. Lesley asked members if they would be willing to make a few extra angels for this project.

Mary Sumner Rose

Christine Clode said that she had been approached by Julia Jamieson about getting Mary Sumner Roses for the 150th Celebration in 2026. Christine thought that there was insufficient time to get roses ready for this, but she had given Julia the information about the rose grower who she has dealt with in the past. The current plan is that the main celebration for the 150th Anniversary will be an evening service in St Paul's Cathedral in June 2026. The date for this has not yet been arranged. Dioceses have been asked to start planning activities for 2026 now.

11. Close

The meeting closed with the Grace, and with thanks to the everyone for coming to the meeting,