

Registered Charity No. 251394



REPORT TO THE CHARITY COMMISSION

ANNUAL REVIEW 2021



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ANNUAL REVIEW AND ACCOUNTS 2021

INTRODUCTION

Ely Diocesan Mothers' Union is a registered charity (Charity Registration No. 251394) and is an affiliated diocesan organisation of The Mothers' Union (Charity Registration No. 240531). The constitution of Ely Diocesan Mothers' Union is in accordance with the Constitution of The Mothers' Union dated 2018.

PURPOSE, AIM AND OBJECTIVES

The Purpose and Aim of the Ely Diocesan Mothers' Union is that of the Mothers' Union:

The Purpose of the Mothers' Union is to be especially concerned with all that strengthens and preserves marriage and Christian family life.

The Aim of the charity is the advancement of the Christian religion in the sphere of marriage and family life. In order to carry out this Aim, its Objectives are:-

- to uphold Christ's teaching on the nature of marriage and to promote its wider understanding
- to encourage parents to bring up their children in the faith and life of the Church
- to maintain a worldwide fellowship of Christians united in prayer, worship and service
- to promote conditions in society favourable to stable family life and the protection of children
- to help those whose family life has met with adversity.

ORGANISATION

Ely Diocesan Mothers' Union is managed by the Board of Trustees headed by the Diocesan President and Diocesan Vice-Presidents. The Board of Trustees is serviced by a voluntary non-voting Minutes Secretary. There is a maximum of 17 voting Trustees, 11 of whom are elected by the Council of the Society; one (the Treasurer) is nominated by the Board of Trustees and the Life Vice-President is nominated and appointed by the trustees and ratified by Council. There are up to 3 co-opted trustees. Nominations for Diocesan President by the trustees must be approved by the Bishop of Ely before election by all members. Elections are held every 3 years.

The work of the Charity is organised in Task Groups each headed by a Leader who is a Trustee. The task groups are Praying our Faith, Faith in Action, Finance & Administration and Fundraising & Communication.

As an affiliated diocesan organisation of The Mothers' Union, the work of the Charity follows the policies of the central organisation. There is close liaison between the central and diocesan units. The Central Mothers' Union organises a training day for trustees at the start of each triennial and the diocese provides new trustees with a welcome pack detailing their responsibilities. In the diocese the work of the Charity is carried out by volunteers in parish and deanery based branches and by diocesan members.

The Charity no longer has the use of a central office and since the beginning of the Covid Pandemic in March 2020 all officers have been working from home. There is a voluntary Diocesan Secretary. Branches work closely with the local parish or deanery of the Church of England.

TRUSTEES

2021

Diocesan President	Hazel Williams, MBE	(4)
Cambridge Archdeaconry Vice-President	Jan Frost	(2)
Cambridge Archdeaconry Vice-President	Jo Wibberley	(4)
Huntingdon & Wisbech Archdeaconry Vice-President	Sarah Bradbury	(4)
Huntingdon & Wisbech Archdeaconry Vice-President	Irene Porter	(3)
Praying Our Faith Task Group Leader	Helen Banyard	(4)
Faith in Action Task Group Leader	Jean Webb	(4)
Finance & Administration Task Group Leader	Catherina Griffiths	(4)
Fundraising & Communications Task Group Leader	Debbie Tye	(4)
Co-opted Trustee	Kristy Leach	(3)

The number of meetings attended in 2021 is shown in brackets after each name. One meeting was held in person but three of the meetings were held virtually via Zoom due to the Coronavirus pandemic.

All trustees listed under 2021 above were serving as trustees on 13th March 2022 except Jan Frost, Sarah Bradbury and Irene Porter. A new triennium began on 1st January 2022.

The Revd. Mike Banyard, Honorary Chaplain, attended four meetings at which he led the prayers.

Derek Tye was elected Honorary Treasurer in March 2021 and attended 3 meetings to report on the financial affairs.

The Trustees confirm that there were no serious incidents, or any other matter, which should have been brought to the attention of the Charity Commissioners. The Trustees have had regard to public benefit, as stated in the Charity Commissioners' guidance.

This Report, Review and Account was approved by the Trustees on 16th March 2022 and will be presented to the society's AGM.

Signed: Hazel Williams, MBE
Diocesan President 2019-2025

Ely Diocesan Mothers' Union



ANNUAL REVIEW 2021

During the year the Diocesan Trustees met on four occasions to plan for and review the work of the Mothers' Union in the Diocese of Ely in meeting our stated objectives. Due to the coronavirus pandemic three of these meetings were held virtually via Zoom.



The triennium ended in December and the new Board of Trustees was commissioned by Bishop Stephen in Ely Cathedral in October.

The Annual General Meeting was cancelled due to the pandemic and so was the Autumn Day. The Annual Report and accounts were circulated to members and accepted.

The General Meeting of the Worldwide Mothers Union was also held virtually via Zoom.

The on-going support of our bishops, the Chapter of Ely Cathedral and other senior clergy has enabled us to maintain a high profile for the Mothers' Union in the Diocese and our President is an ex officio member of the Diocesan Synod. We continue to enjoy good working relationships with Diocesan staff. However, the Diocesan Office closed due to the pandemic in March 2020 and everyone is working from home. The office is due to be relocated in Ely.

Members have continued to support Mothers' Union initiatives in the diocese and worldwide in spite of national lockdowns and restrictions during the year and fundraising efforts were quite innovative.



The work of our society is detailed in the four Task Groups:

PRAYING OUR FAITH

The theme for 2021, Rebuilding Hope and Confidence, was very apt as here in Ely Diocese as the Mothers Union continued to adjust to the changes required for our organisation during the Covid pandemic. Our opportunities to work, meet and pray together may have altered but our Faith and prayer strengthened, as we remember all our members, their families and friends, locally and worldwide, who have suffered during the past year.

Worldwide Links

Gill Uttin has led this aspect of our prayer and has kept us updated, despite difficulties, with the circumstances of our fellow MU members in Lusaka (Zambia), Shyogwe (Rwanda), Sokoto and Ikka (Nigeria) and Karimnager in India. Also, we have remembered our Diocese-to-Diocese Links with Kilgali in Rwanda and Vellore in India.

We have maintained our fellowship through prayer with our Link Dioceses despite the problems experienced with the global spread of Covid. Concern has been felt when communications have been restricted through the pandemic, religious persecution in



parts of Nigeria, the extremes of weather conditions affecting crops and other local problems. We are grateful to Gill in keeping us in touch with our Link Dioceses through a difficult time. She has continued to produce excellent prayers and facts for our Ely Diocesan Wave of Prayer in December. I would like to thank Gill for the memorable displays and thank her for her diligent working this area as she completes her term of office and now becomes an ADVP for the South of the Diocese.

Indoor Members (IMPC)

Joanna Saunders has kept between 17 - 20 indoor members in contact with the Mothers Union in the Ely Diocese. They have received large print copies of the Thursday Prayer booklet and our MU Diocesan prayer diary. Indoor Members are also sent birthday, Christmas, and Easter cards plus a letter. Many of these members no longer live in their own homes and I'm sure appreciate these communications. I would like to thank Joanna for her time and effort with our more mature members. It is important that we keep them in our thoughts and prayers.

Clergy Liaison

Della Fletcher has kept in regular contact with Clergy in the Ely Diocese who have a Mothers' Union branch in their parish. She has also sent MU ordination cards to the 20 priests and 15 deacons (4 of whom are MU members), who were ordained at Petertide in Ely Cathedral. She also welcomes new Clergy to the Diocese on behalf of the MU. Mothering Sunday resources were sent to all Clergy in the Diocese, including Bishops and Archdeacons. Mothers' Union information on the 16

Days of Activism including our 3-minute vigil outside Ely Cathedral were sent to all the Clergy.

Della has been keen to develop the role of Clergy Liaison with the MU as it is an area which has a readymade link in every parish to promote its work in the Church. Earlier in the year Della made MU materials available to Clergy for Mothering Sunday.

With the Revd. Mike Banyard, Della is proposing a meeting with the Ordinands at Westcott Theological College in Cambridge to encourage and inform trainee Clergy of the work of the Mothers Union. Thank you, Della, for your thoughtful and practical ideas in this area.

Thursday Prayer

We are now using zoom regularly to bring our Thursday Prayer meetings to members in place of our three meetings in Ely, Cambridge, and St Ives every month. It has provided an excellent opportunity to pray together with a larger group of members, family, friends and supporters and our attendance numbers have increased. A big thanks to Sue Claydon, Debbie Tye and Hazel Williams for their technical skills and helpful input.

As the Covid restrictions eased Thursday Prayer meetings were moved to Ely Cathedral Presbytery on October 21st and continued to be zoomed. This allowed members a choice of attending in person or continue to use zoom. This has been a positive outcome from the pandemic which has given us the opportunity to use zoom quicker than we probably would have done.

A big thank you to all those who have led Thursday Prayer during the past year for your excellent and varied contributions.

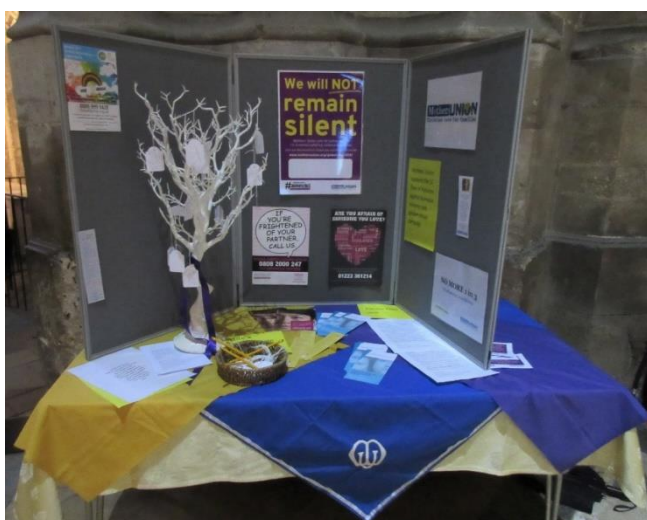
Lady Day Service - March 25th, 2021

Usually there would be many individual branch or deanery Lady Day services taking place in Ely Diocese to celebrate Lady Day. St Neots held an in-person service in Eynesbury Church and Granta Deanery held a zoom service led by Revd. Petra Shakshaft. We invited the Diocese to a Lady Day service on zoom led by our Chaplain Mike Banyard. Details for both zoomed services were advertised in the MU March newsletter and were well attended

Diocesan Quiet Day - September 14th, 2021

We were delighted to have the opportunity to gather together in person as Covid restrictions relaxed for the first time since the pandemic started. Our Quiet Day was held at St Mary's Church Burwell from 10am - 2.30pm and was led by our Chaplain Revd. Mike Banyard. We were given the time to learn and reflect on questions posed in the Old Testament books of Genesis and Job and the Gospel according to St. Mark. The Day closed with a Eucharist. Despite torrential rain experienced in our area on the day, 22 members attended and were delighted to be able to gather together in thought, meditation, worship and enjoy companionship with refreshments. Our grateful thanks to Mike for leading the meditations and Hazel Williams and Wendy Smith from Burwell, whose practical

help contributed to an enjoyable and memorable day.



The 16 Days of Activism - 24th November - 10th December

This annual MU supported worldwide campaign against domestic violence and gender abuse encourages MU members to advertise awareness of these social problems wherever possible.

Just inside the West Door of the Cathedral, Ely Diocesan MU held a prominent display, organised by members of the Cathedral branch (our thanks to Eunice Reddish, Penny Hall, and Jean Webb). It gave rise to much discussion from worshippers and visitors alike and showed how MU aids the victims of this abuse throughout the year, mainly in Women's Refuges. Again, the display of shoes around the Font drew many responses.

As part of the MU Global Day 2021 we led a 3-minute silence at 1.03pm on Saturday 28th November outside the West End of Ely Cathedral. Despite inclement weather, a dozen members plus Canon

Jessica Martin (Ely Cathedral) stood in silence to remember 1 in 3 women in the world who suffer from physical/mental abuse during their lives. Thank you to all who attended and to Debbie Tye for successfully placing a photo and report in the Ely Standard newspaper.



Edward Bear - (MU led Worship Group for Toddlers and Carers)

Like many Church groups with which MU is involved, Edward Bear Toddler Worship group at Ely Cathedral was unable to meet during the past 2 years. During that time the leader Angela Jones and another long-time helper and MU member Moira Soutter suffered from ill health and were unable to continue their involvement. Three MU Ely members now run the group. Eileen Thompson (Ely St Mary's), Jean Webb and Helen Banyard (Cathedral group). Canon James Reveley from the Cathedral who is also a MU member is also involved. Edward Bear reopened in September 2021 and it was encouraging to have families we knew and some new faces enjoying gathering together for Worship and friendship safely within Covid restrictions and Safeguarding guidelines.

We pray for all MU worship groups that they will be able to continue their work with families post - Covid.

As I concluded my time as Praying Our Faith Co - Ordinator I became increasingly aware of the many changes that had taken place over the past 6 years. Praying Our Faith as a team/task group has aimed to encourage both our members and our Diocese, no matter what the situation to pray and support marriage and family relationships,

During the past few years, we have facilitated a variety of opportunities to extend the ways we worship together (zoom) and in personal prayer (Ely Diocesan Prayer Diary). At the end of 2021 Catherine Kyte from MSH asked Praying Our Faith Co-ordinators to contribute to the 2022 MU Prayer Diary and I enjoyed the experience of researching, planning, and writing the prayers for the last week of December. I would encourage the use of both this Prayer book and the Ely Diocesan monthly prayer leaflet as part of your prayer life. Together they can help our prayerful awareness of the work of the MU both locally and worldwide.

My grateful thanks to everyone who has been involved with Praying Our Faith - to all our contributors including our monthly newsletter. To our Diocesan Secretary, Ros Wright for all her printing skills and to the two Chaplains who worked alongside me, Valerie Kilner and Mike Banyard for their help and guidance. Finally my thanks to Hazel Williams and our Trustees who have given positive support and friendship. And to all of you for a memorable time of sharing the Faith, Fellowship and Fun provided by involvement with the Mothers' Union in this Diocese.

This report is once again about an unusual year with several of our projects on hold. However **Local Projects** have been very busy supporting locally and overseas “those whose lives have met with adversity”, which is one of our Mothers’ Union aims.

Support for the 3 Women’s Refuges and the 3 Young People’s Hostels we support has been



most encouraging, and we have adopted Mary’s Child, a charity working with the homeless and needy families in the Peterborough part of our diocese. Many deliveries have been made with items to ease settling into a refuge or hostel and with equipping a house to be a new home, for those ready to move on to a new life.

Supermarket vouchers were gratefully received at Christmas and gave the

recipients a chance to choose something for themselves, rather than relying on handouts. This gives them dignity and raises their self-esteem, helping their preparation for the next step. We have had many letters/emails of thanks from the charities concerned.

The Sick Children’s Trust at the Rosie Maternity Hospital has received emergency toiletry packs (when possible) and at Christmas one of our branches delivered Christmas Gift Bags, containing chocolates/sweets/biscuits, hand cream and lip balm, and signed Christmas Greetings cards.

Several deliveries of knitted lap blankets and soft twiddle muffins have been made to Hinchingsbrooke Hospital’s Frailty Unit, and to various Old People’ Homes and a Care Agency. Baby and young child knitted items have been gratefully accepted at Ely Baby Bank, and Fenland Family Bank.





A carload of items for delivery to Mary's Child. Another loaded car of knitted blankets and children's jumpers, hats etc. went to Christian Hope International in December for delivery to families in areas of strife and need.

Away From It All Holidays

Fortunately, we were once again able to send five families to Hunstanton for a half-term break in October. The families all benefitted from the opportunity to relax away from the strains of home and build new family bonds. One of these families had been living in one room since before Lockdown with 3 children under 6 years, while another family had lost their mother to Covid, and Dad was coping with the 3 bereaved children, and needed new memories for them.

Once again, our members have risen to the challenge of supporting others, and we will continue to do so.



FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION

This Group continued to ensure that the Charity complies with the requirements of the Charity Commission and associated legislation through providing administrative services and observing correct accounting procedures.

The Group prepared the Annual Review and Accounts. Our Administrator Claire Booth resigned at the beginning of the year and so for a short time we were without a treasurer and administrator. Derek Tye was appointed as treasurer at the March trustees meeting and has taken on the administrator's role too. Due to Covid restrictions, the Annual Meeting could not take place and so the Annual Accounts for 2020 were circulated to all members and accepted. As branch activities have been mostly virtual during the year, funds again are lower than usual. The budget for 2022 was presented to Trustees at their December meeting.

A fund, named the "Susan Baker Family Fund" was set up in memory of our immediate past president, Susan Baker who died in 2020. It was agreed by trustees that this should support family work in the diocese. The Wisbech Fund, set up after a bequest to support the Children's and Families Worker in Wisbech, has now closed and the project is now being funded by Ely Diocese.

Kristy Leach, Safeguarding Officer, has been working with the diocese and Mary Sumner House to produce an updated safeguarding policy which will be reviewed annually.

Notice was also taken and implemented of the Charity Commissioners' Guidance for Charity Trustees to show public benefit in the advancement of the Society's Charitable Purposes, namely: the advancement of religion, the prevention or relief of poverty, the relief of those in need by reason of financial hardship and the advancement of community development.

The task group continues to underpin the charitable purposes of the Society through offering guidance and support in finance, training and general administration to Trustees, Deanery and Branch officers.



FUNDRAISING AND COMMUNICATION

Another year of variable Coronavirus restrictions has meant many scheduled “in-person” meetings and events have not taken place as usual, so our communication with our members has continued to be even more important. There are several ways in which our Group communicates, supports, and engages with members, as well as promotion and informing others on a local, national and worldwide level.

Our monthly Diocesan Newsletter produced by Hazel Williams was expanded most months to include more news, as we have not been publishing our bi-annual Diocesan Magazine “Grapevine”. The monthly Family:Faith:Fun Activity Sheets (produced by Ros Wright) have been a great resource for members, and available to be shared with families and parishes. Our MU page on the Ely Diocesan website is regularly updated with the Newsletters, Family:Faith:Fun Activity Sheets, Prayer Resources, and events. Relevant items are posted on the Facebook page which continues to attract interest, both locally and nationally, and also overseas. <https://www.facebook.com/MUElyDiocese/>



Some of our services and prayer meetings were held via Zoom, and posted on our YouTube Channel, to enable those members who could not join in at a set time to be able see the videos. This included our monthly Thursday Prayers, Lady Day Service on 25 March, and the Commissioning Service for the new Board of Trustees for the next triennium on 23 October, which was led by The Bishop of Ely, The Right Reverend Stephen Conway. We began in-person Thursday Prayers again in Ely Cathedral in the Autumn but were still able to share these on Zoom. We have been able to join in with the Live Mothers’ Union Midday Prayers held daily on Facebook, thoughtfully led by staff from Mary Sumner House, and other MU members from around the country and worldwide. Other Live Services have been shown via Facebook as well and were made available on the MU YouTube Channel afterwards.

We were pleased that we could hold our Garden Party in the Bishop of Ely’s garden on 25 July: **“Celebrating 145 years of Mothers’ Union”**. Attended by around 55 members, we were blessed with fine weather and enjoyed afternoon tea together. Bishop Stephen spoke encouragingly about the work Mothers’ Union had continued to do, and Hazel Williams updated us with the latest MU news. There was a card and gift stall, a Worldwide Links display, and a raffle was held. Together with donations and raffle proceeds, £286.95 was raised for MU Projects.

The MU Noticeboard in the Cathedral was restored to its original position by the Prior's Door, but has since moved to the south-west transept, which is to the right inside the main West Door. The Noticeboard is now located near St Catherine's Chapel, which will enable it to be seen by everyone entering the Cathedral, and people coming for private prayer, not only those who have purchased entry tickets. Penny Hall and Mary Finney will be looking after the displays, as Angela Jones has stepped down at the moment.

DIOCESAN MEMBERS

Diocesan Members were written to or emailed each month with the Newsletter, Family: Faith:Fun Activity Sheets, Prayer Resources, and other relevant documents and leaflets, with membership totaling 78 at the end of the year.

Unfortunately, because of the ongoing Covid restrictions, we were still not able to meet up during the year for any social events, but as soon as it is possible to arrange a gathering, we will be thinking about how to organise an event in the future.



Signed: Hazel Williams MBE
Diocesan President 2019-2025