

Dear Fellow Members

Covid-19 update - AUGUST 2020

And so we come to my sixth letter...

Well, who would have thought we would still not be having any meetings.

Once again I trust you are all keeping well and will continue to do so.

A reminder that these little updates are for **ALL** members so please do make sure they all know.

Friday 4th September is the first official date for the reopening of the office. The office will be open 10am to 3pm on that day only.

However...

Due to the current situation, there is not really enough to occupy anyone in office work two days a week.

I met with my vice-presidents and Margaret Edwards last week and we made the decision that the office would only be open on Fridays 10am-1pm. We appreciate this is a limited time and hope that it will not last too long although I think it will certainly be until Christmas.

If you want or need to come in to the office but cannot manage a Friday please be in touch with us and we will see what can be arranged.

News:...in no particular order...

Our MU Chaplain – Katie was very pleased with her little gift from Trustees and has written a piece in the Roundabout. Once again, please let me know of anyone you think who could fill this post. Rev. Rosemary Franklin has kindly offered to cover this position until it is filled.

AFIA – Maggie and Kate are beginning to arrange holidays again. Indeed two have happened already and we have had a couple of lovely thank you letters.

Don't forget the BIG AFIA DAY – this has been postponed to 2021 and will take place in Hucclecote on July 10th 2021

Roundabout & Orders – These will be ready for collection from 14th September (Which should have been our Members Day meeting). We will be putting the newest MUE Catalogue with them and also any orders you have made. If you can pick up your branch items on a Friday that would be most helpful and would save your Deanery Leader having to collect and deliver for you, although of course she will if you cannot manage to do so yourself.

However, Doreen is still happy to take your orders so don't forget to be in touch with her to order any cards etc. you would like. Diary and Calendar orders need to be sent in as soon as possible. Email Doreen.mclellan@yahoo.co.uk Or you can order on line – see my previous letter. Doreen would like to inform you that Christmas cards are in the office. There are also 50p packs of Christmas cards for you to buy to address to the people of Eastwood Park Prison (please write 'with love from a Mothers' Union friend' or similar inside and DO NOT seal the envelope) and bring to the office for distribution.

Registered Charity Number 249912

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Eastwood Park Prison- I have been in touch with Alma and although she cannot use the card fronts at the moment she would very much like to have wool. If you have any wool please be in touch with me direct so that we can arrange collection. My address is at the bottom of this letter – my email is kayshensley@yahoo.co.uk

Wave of Prayer – September 3rd -5th - I hope you have all found ways of continuing this prayer wave. Either individually or in small, distanced, groups. Prayer is one thing that we can continue at this time. Why not send a little piece (maybe with a photo) in to Roundabout telling us how you managed!

Mary Sumner House Appeal – this is ongoing so if you are able, either as a branch or as an individual, to donate to this please do so. However, along with most charities, finances are very stretched at this time so the decision has been made to change the subscription...

SUBSCRIPTION FOR 2021

There will not be a Families First magazine separately any longer. A bi-yearly magazine will be included in the subscription and all will receive this by post from Mary Sumner House. It is therefore essential that your membership records are kept right up to date. Please inform the office IN WRITING (by email or by post) of any change.

Subs for 2021 will be

Ordinary Branch member £31.50 (made up of MSH £20: Diocese £9.50: Roundabout £2)

Indoor Members £23.50 (made up of MSH £20: Diocese £1.50: Roundabout £2)

Diocesan Members £36.50 (made up of MSH £20: Diocese £14.50: Roundabout £2)

Your Trustees decided that there would not be any increase in Diocesan or Roundabout contribution for this year. Of course, those of you who have been taking the Families First Magazine will not be paying as much!

When Trustees were made aware of this increase one Trustee sent a really lovely statement which I would like to quote here.

“I see these subs like Parish Share. We can either see PS as a 'tax' on Church attendance, paying as it does for the Vicar's stipend, etc., or we can see it as 'Growing God's Kingdom'. I see the subs in exactly the same way, we are not a club whose members have to pay for what we offer, but an opportunity to help Grow God's Kingdom under the umbrella of the MU with particular reference to families in crisis to help their understanding that they are all loved by Christ and that He is with them in their difficulties. To me, £30+ a year for members seems to be extremely good value for money. We can spend that and more having a Cut and Blow-dry or a shampoo and set; a meal for two at a local cafe can cost that amount. It's not even 60p a week. All our meetings are open to everyone (whether members or not); we do not exclude anyone, but realistically we have to live in the real world and pay our way. I like the new configuration of FWW, etc., as it will ensure that everyone has prayer material close at hand which is our central focus.”

I leave you to ponder..

In a society where people are inclined to say “what’s in it for me?” I find this approach so refreshing.

Diocesan Secretary – We feel that, at this time, we cannot really support a secretary as there really is not a lot to do so a number of us will be keeping the small amount of office business going until such time as we can recommence activities.

OCTOBER COUNCIL; - Again due to the current situation it is obvious that we will not be able to have our Council Meeting as arranged. We were hoping that we would be able to meet as we also still have to have our Annual Meeting which is mandatory. So Thursday October 22nd at 10am will be our Annual Meeting and will be held on Zoom. The connection will be sent to you nearer the time. You do not need to be registered with Zoom to attend this meeting. We usually welcome everyone to this meeting and still

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do but it is essential that all branch leaders attend or their representative along with all office holders. The main item on the agenda will be to ratify the accounts. All reports (including the accounts) will be sent out by email and the meeting will be very short. Please make a note in your diary.

November Retreat at Holland House (3rd-5th) – It is looking very hopeful that this will now take place so look out for more information from Rosemary.

It's interesting that these updates seem to get longer and longer...

My apologies that this one is a little late.

Keep in touch and keep praying. It's certainly a strange way of living at the moment but, so long as we are careful, we can at least meet here and there.

With love Kay (and all your Trustees)

A couple of Prayers from the 'Dear Lord...' prayer book

For Advent

Lord Jesus Christ, as we prepare for your coming, we read the words of the prophets written long before your birth, giving us hope and encouragement that all people will be united and the land will be filled with the knowledge of the Lord.

Help us, Lord to open our hearts and minds to these truths and to gladly receive you, our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen

Margaret Devlin, Diocese of Newcastle, UK.

Times of Change

Comfort us, Lord, when we feel overwhelmed and insecure

Help us through the challenges we face

Although we feel safe with familiar ways

Never let us become resistant to new ways

Give us grace to be open and receptive

Entrusting us to work to your praise and glory. Amen

Carolyn Peuleve, Diocese of Leeds, UK

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