

Mothers' Union

The vision of Mothers' Union is of a world where God's love is shown through loving, respectful, and flourishing relationships. The aim and purpose of Mothers' Union is to demonstrate the Christian faith in action by the transformation of communities worldwide through the nurture of the family in its many forms.

In furtherance of this aim and purpose Mothers' Union Guildford will carry out all or any of the following Objects.

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

Mothers' Union is firmly rooted in a voluntary ethos. Its governance, leadership, and activities are driven by and undertaken through its members.

Members of Mothers' Union believe firstly, in the value of each individual and their unique qualities, in the value of relationships. Jesus said, "Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: Love your neighbour as yourself." And secondly, in the value of family in its many forms as a source of love and support for individuals and as the basis for a caring community.

Membership is open to all those who have been baptised in the name of the Holy Trinity and declare their support for the Aim, Purpose and Objects of the charity.

The Mothers' Union movement began in 1876. Mary Sumner, the wife of a rector in Hampshire, set up a group to support mothers of all kinds in bringing up their children. After delivering a speech in 1885 to churchgoing women at the Portsmouth Church Congress, she inspired many of them to go back to their parishes and set up similar groups.

Over time the groups who met as Mothers' Union became embedded in their communities. They forged strong links with local people and the Anglican Church. They worked to support one another and give a voice to disadvantaged women while addressing wider social issues. Driven by Mary Sumner's passion for the role of women in bringing about a better society, the groups proved very popular. By 1892, membership had reached 60,000 in 28 dioceses, which was to grow to 169,000 members by the turn of the century. In 1893, annual general meetings were organised, and, in 1896, Mothers' Union Central Council was formed.

The movement today is made up of hundreds of individual Mothers' Union charities spread across 84 countries. Mothers' Union is unique in that members work together to solve challenges in their local communities. By helping to restore and strengthen relationships in families and communities, the movement gives a sense of belonging and acceptance to the stigmatised and vulnerable.

Globally, Mothers' Union focuses its efforts on

1. Creating a peaceful and safe environment for all,
2. Fighting for gender justice, and
3. Building individuals' self-reliance.

The movement is led by a worldwide board of trustees. The Board meets at least twice a year and comprises the elected roles of Worldwide President as chair of the Board, and up to 12 members who are elected from the different regions of the world, 5 of whom from Britain and Ireland, which is the prime source of funds for the central charity. Elections take place every 3 years, and any individual is eligible to stand for a maximum of 2 terms. In addition, from 2019 there will be up to 4 appointed trustees to provide professional skills to complement those of the elected members.

Local groups and branches are at the very heart of all that Mothers' Union does. Across the world, there are thousands upon thousands of groups coming together to work, pray and campaign together, and the principle of meeting in fellowship has been central to the unique way that we work since we were founded in 1876.

Membership involves paying an annual subscription of £36, of which £22 is sent to Mary Sumner House to fund the work of the central Mothers' Union while the balance is retained for running costs and projects of MU Guildford.

Included in the annual subscription you will receive two magazines. Connected is a twice yearly membership magazine issued by Mary Sumner House. This magazine brings a mix of content from across the whole movement. It contains regular updates about Mothers' Union projects across the globe. The second magazine, is sent out by Guildford Diocese MU so covers local branches and issues. It is called The Angel.

All funds raised at Branch level through raffles and events are donated to the various MU projects. In 2022, New Haw supported the MU Disaster Fund which at the time was focussing on relief following the floods in Pakistan.

As a Branch we meet monthly, usually on the afternoon of the first Monday of the month. We issue the annual programme in December. Additionally through the year, there are Deanery and Diocesan events which members are welcome to attend.

Should you decide to join us, you will be welcomed into membership. The admission ceremony includes your agreement to uphold the Christian principles for which the Mothers' Union exists.