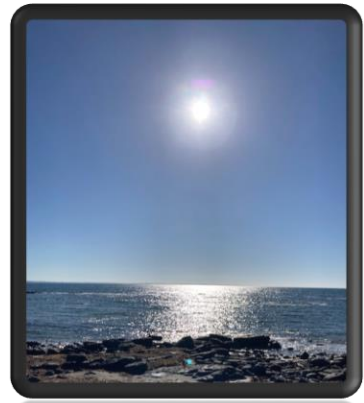




Wendy's Writings November 2024



Fear and doubt and habit must not hold us back *Elizabeth J. Smith*

Dear members and friends,

We had a very enjoyable Country Rally in Albany and I thank the Albany branch and parish for their organisation and hospitality.

This is a very long newsletter as I share with you all the information from our recent AGM and Country Rally.

Executive has approved the purchase of a new caravan for placement at the Anglican Campsite in Busselton. Purchased second hand from a couple in Busselton it is now on site. I thank Diane Hill for working with the campsite manager over a number of months to arrange the sale of our old van and to find a new van for us. She has also undertaken the purchasing of new kitchen supplies for the van. Hopefully I will have photos in the not too distant future to share with you.

We have a week set aside in each of January, April and October 2025 for MU use. If a branch wants to sponsor a holiday in the van for one of these weeks, please let me know sooner rather than later. If we do not make a booking for any of these weeks, the van will become available to others to use.

Our MU banner, first placed in the Cathedral in 1964, has now been returned to us following restoration work and members who were at Country Rally were able to see it. It cost \$2,200 with some 13 hours of work being undertaken to repair. Rinske Car, from Denmark, has done a remarkable job for us. On her recommendation we are now exploring the construction of a glass fronted case to preserve the banner when it is rehung in the Cathedral.

I was able to present to members the proposed design for our new banner, prepared for us by Jillian Green of Kentdale (between Denmark and Walpole). Jillian has since been to visit the Cathedral and met with Dean Daryl Cotton, Diane Hill and Beth Wootton to further discuss the design and where it will hang in the Cathedral. A faculty will need to be applied for by the Dean and approval received as the next step in the process.

Below please find my presidential address which I presented during our AGM, with a few amendments in square brackets:

God gives us a future, daring us to go
Into dreams and dangers on a path unknown
We will face tomorrow with the Spirit's power
We will let God change us for new life starts now.

We must leave behind us sins of yesterday
For God's new beginning is a better way
Fear and doubt and habit must not hold us back
God gives hope and insight and the strength we lack.

Holy Spirit teach us how to read the signs
How to meet the challenge of our troubled times
Love us into action stir us into prayer
Till we choose God's life and find our future there

Elixabeth J. Smith

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It might come as no surprise that our 2025 theme song for Mothers Union in our Diocese will be God Gives Us a Future. While I understand that this has been used before, its wording is particularly relevant for all that we will be embracing in the coming year.

Hand in hand with this will be our 2025 theme: Forward into the future: with hope and love.

As Mothers Union we will be moving forward in 2025. I have recently sent electronic copies of the updated AMUA Handbook to branch contacts. I have [now] provided a hard copy to each branch. It is a much simpler document than its predecessor, more simply arranged and with some outdated, repetitive, and unnecessary information removed. As well as providing information on the history of our organisation, it also provides information on national, diocesan and branch structures and clear guidelines on operational requirements.

I ask that branch leaders read the Handbook and share it with your committee and your members. I have asked members of executive to do the same.

As we move into an election year in our diocese, the formation of our new executive for the 2026-2028 triennium will be guided by the Handbook. There are essential positions that we must fill for executive, others that are optional, and some diocesan positions that we need to fill which may not need to be executive positions. The current executive will be carefully considering what is right for our diocese at our March 2025 meeting in preparation for opening nominations later in the year. Any feedback on this from members and branches who have read the Handbook can be given to me prior to our meeting.

2025 will be my final year as diocesan president and it is my hope that I will have the opportunity to visit every branch during the year. We will have two Lady Day services again, to provide as many members as possible the opportunity to attend this special day in our MU calendar. On Saturday 22 March we will have a service in Albany and we will have a service in Bunbury on Tuesday 25th March.

We will hold a Friendship Day in the first week of July, and I have asked the Boyanup Branch if we can visit their parish for this day. I [am meeting with branch members for their November meeting and] will provide further details as soon as possible

Our 2025 Country Rally and AGM will be held in Mandurah, hosted by my branch. They were the hosts in 2020 during my first year as diocesan president, and so I have asked them to host the final gathering of my term. [The date for Country Rally has now been set as Thursday 16th October.]

At the international level, we will be moving forward in hope and love as we welcome our new World Wide President Kathleen Snow next year, and learn of her vision for Mother's Union during her term of office. We will learn more from our new Zone C representative on the board of Trustees for MU, Dorothy Siep from Papua New Guinea.

We will be moving forward with a new theme for 2025 on a national level, formally adopting our new AMUA framework of 'being inwardly nurtured to be outwardly focused' as our theme. Dr Robin Ray has, in her recent letter to us all, encouraged us to review our 2024 programs and plan our programs for 2025 with this theme in mind, to balance our activities of being inwardly nurtured with our outwardly focused work of service in our communities, giving careful thought as to how our programs reflect the aims and objectives of MU. I encourage you to follow Robin's suggestions for doing this.

Love us into action, stir us into prayer are words from verse three of our 2025 theme song. Mary Sumner believed in prayer and the call to social action that comes from it. She also believed that the core purpose of Mothers' Union was to win the hearts of the nation for Christ – the underpinning call, I believe, of Hope25 - that we would step out in faith and share our belief in Christ with the people with whom we come in contact within the communities in which we live.

At our Diocesan Synod held just a few weekends ago, the members of Synod wholeheartedly adopted a motion to support the Hope25 project - sharing the hope we have in Jesus Christ and encouraging every Parish and Anglican community and organisation to participate.

As reported to our Synod - The Mission and Ministry Commission (MMC) reported to the General Synod Standing Committee their vision for a national season of prayerful preparation during Lent 2025 followed by a season of intentional proclamation in every Parish in every diocese across the Anglican Church of Australia from Easter to Pentecost 2025. The hope and prayer is that this will be the start of a genuine revival in the country and something that will unite the Anglican Church of Australia.

As Mothers Union it is appropriate that we be a part of this. We can as individuals, as branches, and as members of parishes, participate in the Hope25 Lenten Study to prepare us for engagement in activities between Easter and Pentecost - the main season of evangelism where Parishes are being encouraged to hold events.

I would encourage MU branches to consider how they could engage with their parish to be involved in Hope25, to take hold of the future that God gives us, and to not let fear and doubt and habit hold us back.

One of the headings in Robin's Ray's recent letter is 'Finishing 2024 Well'. Still ahead of us is the United Nations campaign of 16 Days of Activism against gender-based violence. I know that once again branches are planning activities, both big and small, during the 16 days which commence on 25 November. [I have given branches who were present at Country Rally a copy of the 2024 16 Days of Activism MU prayers] It will also be sent electronically to branches. The most recent Mia Mia has a section dedicated to the campaign, from which you may draw further resources. There will also be resources available on both the AMUA and Mary Sumner House websites. If any branch would like further help with resources or ideas for activities, please let me know.

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Another opportunity for us to finish the year well, in line with Robin's request that we review our activities over the year, is to complete a vision and strategy feedback form for Bishop Ian on how you embraced our 2024 theme of being salt and light and shining brightly. I have [provided] printed copies of this [for branches] to complete.

For those of you who were in Collie for Friendship Day last year, you may recall that I included in my presentation of MU around the world the saying that was inscribed in Welsh on the back of the King Charles' coronation cross "Be joyful, keep the faith, do the little things'.

As we go Forward into the Future: With Hope and Love, let us, in the name of Mothers Union 'Be joyful, keep the faith, and do the little things' that we can to make a difference as we seek to fulfill our AMUA vision to bring about a world where God's love is shown through prayer and loving, respectful and flourishing relationships.

Let us pray

Lord, let us go forward into the future with hope and love in our hearts. Empower us by your spirit to face tomorrow, not letting fear or doubt or habit hold us back from all that you would have us do in your name. As you stir us into prayer and love us into action, use us to draw people to you. In the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

The following members have achieved membership milestones this year. I was delighted to present certificates and badges in recognition of 215 years of service to four members of Mandurah a few days before Country Rally. I presented two awards at Country Rally and hope to present the rest as I visit branches between now and the end of the year.

5 yrs Anne Coutts	Bunbury
Jan McGeachin	Busselton
10 yrs Chris Demiris	Busselton
Janet Yoxall	Busselton
15 yrs Eleanor Lewin	Busselton
20 yrs Beth Wootton	Bunbury
Marj Quartermaine	Bunbury
25 yrs Ian Mabey	Mandurah
35 yrs Blanche Faries	Collie
40 yrs Lucy Sharp	Bunbury
60 yrs Judy Rule	Mandurah
65 yrs Joy Barrett	Mandurah
Julie Gent	Mandurah



Mandurah members receiving their awards

Every blessing, Wendy Mabey, President, AMUA Diocese of Bunbury

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