



*Forward into the future:
with hope and love*



*Mothers' Union
Diocese of Bunbury
Spring 2025
Djilba -Kambarang*

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'Mia Mia' Magazine*



Hello everybody and welcome to Spring ...

though at the moment it doesn't feel like it! I wonder if mustard trees don't grow much in this weather, because this one is taking its time. However, I must begin somewhere.

On Saturday August 9th here in Busselton we celebrated Mary Sumner Day with a Eucharist, followed by morning tea. It was an inspiring morning!

During the service the homily gave us a lot to think about. We were reminded that -

“ In Matthew 4, we witness a decisive moment: Jesus walks by the Sea of Galilee, sees two brothers—Simon Peter and Andrew—and simply says, “Follow me.” No lengthy explanation, no carefully crafted recruitment plan. Just a call—and an immediate response. *“Immediately they left their nets and followed him.”*

It's easy to overlook how radical that was. These were working men with responsibilities, families, routines. Yet, at the voice of Jesus, they let go of everything that gave them security and identity.

Mary Sumner heard a similar call—not by the seashore, but in the quiet spaces of prayer, in the observing of family life, and in her deep concern for women and mothers. She saw that raising children in the Christian faith was not a private matter, but a Kingdom task. In 1876, when she first gathered a small group of mothers to pray and support each other, I doubt she imagined that that gathering would spark a global movement.

What Mary Sumner understood was that discipleship—like that of Peter and Andrew—is not confined to pulpits or mission fields. It's lived in homes, in the mundane and sacred rhythms of domestic life, in relationships forged in prayer, hospitality, and service. She recognised that if you shape a mother's faith, you often shape a whole household. And if you strengthen a family, you can transform a community.

Mary Sumner built the Mothers' Union not on power or prestige, but on this Gospel truth: God listens when we ask. God opens doors when we knock. And God gives **good** gifts—not stones, not scorpions—but the very Bread of Life. She urged women to pray not as a last resort, but as the first act of courage.

So today, we don't just commemorate Mary Sumner—we recommit ourselves to the vision she caught from Christ: the transformation of family and society through prayer, Christian teaching, and practical support. Whether you are raising young children, nurturing grandchildren, supporting friends, or serving in the community, you are part of a divine calling.

Just like those first disciples, the invitation still comes: *"Follow me."* It may not involve dropping fishing nets, but it may mean stepping out in faith—starting a new prayer group, mentoring a young mum, visiting a lonely neighbour, or advocating for those whose voices aren't heard.

And as we do these things, we hold fast to Jesus' promise: *"How much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!"* The Spirit is still poured out on those who ask—not just for personal strength, but for the building up of God's kingdom in ordinary lives, in family homes, in every corner where love is shared and hope kindled.

So today, we honour Mary Sumner, not simply by remembering her, but by imitating her...by following Jesus with courage, and trusting that every small act of faithfulness can, in God's hands, change the world. "

Yes! Mary Sumner saw what needed to be done, and did it. How often so we see what needs to be done, but for some reason don't do it? Let us try to bring these opportunities to God in prayer and, if God if says "Yes!" then - let's do it!

Priscilla

mubunburymt@gmail.com



From the President

O worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness, bow down before him, his glory proclaim... John S.B. Mansell

I wonder if you have worshipped outside your cultural context. Have you worshipped in another country? Another diocese? Another parish? Another Christian denomination? Another faith? Take a moment to reflect on your worship experience when you felt outside your normal comfort zone. What amazed you, what bothered you, what confused you, what delighted you? See if you can answer the question of why?

For the people of South Sudan that I met while living in Coffs Harbour, much of their history is the story of the Old Testament. They are a displaced people, they live in exile, a woman living here with her children may be wife number two, three or four, (with her husband still in South Sudan), a man might be replacing his dead brother as a husband and may father children in the name of his brother. This is the context in which they attended church in their new homeland of Australia.

Church in Coffs Harbour was a space where not all of them understood the words spoken from the sanctuary, a space where only a few of them could read the words in the prayer book and on the overheads, a space where the practice of men and women sitting side by side in couples and family groups was alien to them. Yet, each Sunday they came to worship. Such was the strength of their faith.

Mary Sumner, in her book "Home Life: addresses to members of the Mothers' Union", wrote of worship:

'But does it follow that everyone goes to Church from a right motive? I am afraid not. Some go because they like to criticise and find fault with the manner in which the service is carried out, or they like to pick holes in the sermon; others, because they have smart clothes, a new bonnet

or coat, and they wish their neighbours to see them; others, because they like to meet their friends; others, because they enjoy the music; others, because the preacher is eloquent; others, because they were always brought up to attend church. Some understand the true object of going to their Father's house. They expect a blessing; they hunger and thirst for the Lord Jesus Christ; they feed on Him by faith, and their souls are satisfied with "the pleasures of His House."

... In church we speak to God in company with our fellow-creatures in united or common prayer. We praise Him, we adore Him – this is called worship. "O come, let us worship and fall down, and kneel before the Lord our Maker." "O worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness," "Let us come before His presence with thanksgiving, and show ourselves glad in Him with psalms." The Lord God loves to see and hear His children joining together in prayer and praise.'

Do you agree with Mary? Are there aspects of what she had to say that resonate with your experience of worship? Just as Mary Sumner called the mothers of her day to worship regularly so we too, as members of Mothers Union here in Australia in 2025, are called to pray regularly and to worship in community with others.

Blessings

Wendy

From the Branches - Albany

We have had a busy three months.

Our 'High Tea' in May was a great success. The Dorothy Wood hall was beautifully set out with pretty tablecloths and lots of lovely china getting its rare outing. (And no breakages!) We enjoyed delicate sandwiches, homemade goodies with tea and coffee and a general air of conviviality prevailed.

We were pleased to welcome about 35 attendees, both ladies and men, MU members, parishioners and other friends (one of whom has since joined MU.) All in all it was a very enjoyable afternoon.

Our June meeting focussed on the history of our branch, although this is an ongoing project. We were presented with the findings from about 1989 onwards, split into categories such as visits, guest speakers and events. Many photos had their subjects identified and members are now going through half-forgotten papers at home.

At the July meeting the group made up some more Joy Bags for distribution to those in need of an uplift.

Wendy Minchin

Boyup Brook

Boyup Brook had three members attend the Friendship Day which we really enjoyed. Catching up with other MU members is always great and the mandalas as prayer was a thoughtful and spiritual exercise.

Blessings, *Jan Ritson*

SOCIAL ISSUES AND ACTION REPORT

I am on Facebook and I find some very interesting posts about MU Groups and special events not only here in Australia, but all over and from Mary Sumner House in England. It is good because it helps us to appreciate the breadth of groups and in many cases the way they help in their communities, especially in countries like those in Africa.

In Australia and in our Diocese some of our Branches have an older membership and, apart from members knitting beanies etc for Missions to Seafarers, we are not as active as we used to be. We do try to influence younger women and our branch intends to have a special Eucharist at Broomehill St Elizabeth's and follow this with a special Morning Tea at the Henry Jones Café, visit the local Museum and check out some wildflowers.



The world situation has changed and things have not improved too much as far as the war in Ukraine or the problems between Israel and Hamas and the people of Gaza are concerned. The recent Intervention by President Trump in meeting with President Putin has not seemed to have made a lot of difference. We hope that one-on-one talks between President Zelensky of Ukraine and President Trump may offer us some glimmer of hope of an end to this conflict.

The Church of St Elizabeth of Hungary, Broomehill.

There is a need for more homes in Western Australia and I hear the State Government plans for smaller two bedroom homes to be built in Albany. We are thankful for our care agencies such as Anglicare, Mission Australia and Caritas who provide counsellors and emergency relief. In our Diocese we appreciate funding for Boniface Care.

Again we lift our prayers to God in thankfulness and hope for the future. Our MU Theme song for 2025 for our Diocese is: "God Gives us a Future". May we take the words of this beautiful hymn to heart.

God Bless.

Sylvia Spicer

Social Issues and Action Coordinator

Busseilton Branch has been very busy in the last few months.

- In June we were joined by the Diocesan Chaplain, Rev'd Cathie, in celebrating the Candle Liturgy, followed by a simple lunch,
- In July several of us went to GMAS to participate in their 'Scams and Scones' program. This involved working with some Year 9 students who helped us understand how to protect ourselves from online scams and deal with other online concerns.... while partaking of delicious homemade scones and a cuppa. Another one is happening in September.

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- At our regular July meeting we were delighted to welcome the Rev'd Carol Reid who shared her knowledge about Praying with Icons - something about which I knew very little. Thank you Carol !
- August 9th was Mary Sumner Day. A memorable occasion, though not as many members made it as last year, partly, I think, because of it being on a Saturday. The Eucharist was celebrated by Father Nick who joined us for morning tea afterwards.
(Next year Mary Sumner Day will be on a Sunday - imagine what we can do with that!)
- Our August gathering was given over to craft! Following a quick meeting we made a Christmas card and small gift box under the direction of card-maker extraordinaire, our Parish secretary Annie Evans-Pascoe. Most of us left satisfied with the results, albeit some with sticky and ink-smudged fingers.
- Unfortunately we were not able to attend Friendship Day because it coincided with the funeral of our late, much loved member Joy Poustie.
Thank you God for her life, and may she rest in peace.

Priscilla Broadbent



Hard at work ... and the results

And a new reporter from Mandurah Branch ! Welcome!

Greetings from Mandurah Branch. As this is my first attempt at being Publicity Person I am definitely beginning my apprenticeship.

When Wendy suggested I might like to join Mothers Union a couple of years ago, I pondered over it for some months. I am so grateful and inspired to be part of this group of women and feel blessed to be part of Mothers Union.

Recently, a number of members from our branch attended Friendship Day at Boyanup. What a fantastic day we had. I travelled with two ladies, the Rev'd Jacqui Chesley-Ingle and Robyn Chalk, who drove us safely there and back. We chattered and laughed as we drove through lush green paddocks and bushland.

As we entered the township of Boyanup we spotted the Op Shop with an 'open' sign so we pulled into the carpark and went for a browse on the lookout for something we really needed!! We then drove to the community centre for Prayers and morning tea provided by Boyanup members. These visits to our rural branches aren't good for the waistline but oh! so delicious!

The afternoon started with Isobelle Shortreed from Mandurah branch leading us in colouring in printed Mandalas which is a prayerful activity - while our hands are busy we allow God to flow into the space of our mind. Colouring a mandala is a very personal act and participants were

invited to share their thoughts when we finished. It was amazing listening to the diversity of the sharing from members.

Wendy Mabey our Diocesan President spoke about the AGM and Country Rally which will be held in Mandurah and includes the election of executive members for 2026 - 2028 inclusive.

At this time there are no nominations for these positions. .. *but there are some now! Ed.*

Wendy was passionate in her comments about the worldwide work of Mothers Union. As a fairly new member of Mothers Union I am still learning about the organisation but I felt so inspired that I volunteered to take on the role of Mandurah Publicity Person for the Mustard Tree. Small steps for now as this is a work in progress.

In June our Assistant Priest Fr. Alex Scutt, who is an excellent musician, led us in a quiet afternoon of Music for Prayer which took us through the ages, demonstrating prayerful and contemplative prayer. The afternoon was well attended and deeply appreciated by all.

See you in October for the AGM and Country Rally in Mandurah. *Maggie Goss*
(See p11 for details about using Mandalas as a prayerful activity, kindly provided by Diane Hill)

From our Chaplain, the Rev'd Cathie Broome -

My dear brothers and sisters in Christ,
The Lord be with you.

I was reflecting on Mothers Union recently after being asked "why I continue with my busy ministry load being the diocese MU chaplain". It was a great question, and one that I went away and prayerfully reflected upon.

The truth is that the various branches and members have become a much loved family for me. Quite unexpectedly this worldwide Christian ministry that seeks to support families has become a special part of mine.

While all ministries have seasons, I feel that I am still in the midst of this season. Through Godly guidance, friendships and experiences I have grown as a person, a wife, a mother and now a grandmother. Throughout this journey I have had the loving support of my MU family, both within the Diocese and in Kapsabet.

So as we continue to journey together, my friends, may we keep our eyes on Christ. Remembering that travel companions are important, and like any journey, life involves changes, challenges, and unexpected events that test faith and offer opportunities to encounter God.

Psalm 121:8 - The Lord will watch over your coming and going both now and forevermore".

This is a beautiful reminder that God is present and watching over you throughout your journey, both literally and figuratively

Hebrews 10:24-25 says - And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.

In essence, these verses remind me of the wonderful MU ministry because it highlights the importance of Christian community and mutual responsibility. It is a call for believers to actively participate in the lives of others, offering support, encouragement, and accountability to one another as they journey toward their eternal hope. With God's grace and blessings,

Cathie

News from Dunsborough

Dunsborough MU hosted the Anglicare Standing Together Workshop about Family and Domestic Violence on the 14th August. It was marketed as a community forum, and we invited over 30 community groups from the Dunsborough and Yallingup areas.

We had over 40 people attend, including police officers and city councillors and had some meaningful conversations around Family and Domestic Violence (FDV). After the one-hour presentation and morning tea, we broke into groups for an organised conversation to discuss these great questions posed by the attendees:

- How to get the message about FDV to younger people, busier people and males?
- What is the most effective issue to target?
- is it the 'small' jokes or should we be targeting larger inappropriate things?
- How can we stop these behaviours happening behind closed doors?
- How do you lift someone up when they've hit rock bottom - after being exposed to FDV for 20 years or more?
- How can we volunteer or help at the women's refuge?

There was an overwhelming consensus that the messages of the workshop need to be more widely broadcast – particularly to schools and sporting clubs. We had two formal requests for us to be involved in other community partnerships going forward and many people added their names to the list to be kept informed of future events, information and conversations.

Many thanks to the wonderful MU members who provided the delicious morning tea – it was good to host our guests with such abundant hospitality. We are also grateful to Morwenna from Anglicare for her informative presentation.

I highly recommend MU branches consider hosting a workshop and I am happy to assist anyone thinking of running their own event by sharing from our experience.

Rev'd Justine Richmond

Thank you for the Dunsborough Branch for doing this. Definitely recommended!



BUNBURY BRANCH - June & July

We have had a couple of busy months. Members continue to knit squares which are made into blankets, knee rugs, and beanies which are either donated to Kapsabet or to Mission to Seafarers. A group of our ladies continue to cater for morning and afternoon teas at wakes and other functions – they do an exceptional job.

Our 5th June meeting, held on the Feast of St Boniface, was held with a Eucharist in the chapel kindly performed by our lovely member Marion Prowse, our sincere thanks Marion for filling in at very short notice when Dean Darryl was unexpectedly not able to join us. We had 14 members and 1 guest, a young woman who is very interested in joining us, attending. There were 5 apologies.

Our guest speaker for the morning meeting was former lawyer, Gordon Hill (my hubby) who spoke on the importance of making a will (some 68% of Australians die without making a will – what a nightmare for their families!!). He also spoke of what other documents we should ensure we have as we age – Enduring Power of Attorney, Power of Guardianship and Advanced Health Care Directive. It was also pointed out the issues associated with not having a will, cost and time involved to family. A bottle of red wine was given as a thank you. We also held a bring and buy stall on the morning. A thank you to all members who contributed, and purchased. \$86.55 was raised – many thanks ladies. A couple of our members have been unwell and thank you letters from them were read to members.

Our July meeting started with a Eucharist in the chapel on Thursday 3rd July with Dean Darryl officiating and the lovely Barbara on organ. We had 13 members and 1 guest, a friend of Margaret Henderson's – Elaine from Esperance - attending. There were 3 apologies. Letters from Margaret Rennick and Jenni Drennan who were two of the apologies were read. One of our former members, Elaine Hosking, passed away and we gave our condolences to her family.

Lyn A'Vard had been to visit Jeannie and Peter Cornish in Melbourne and gave us Jeannie's best wishes, and told us of her progress which was positive – slowly but surely, which is great news.

For our July meeting Dean Darryl was our guest speaker and it was a really interesting talk on Mission to Seafarers – an Anglican Church ministry which is doing fantastic work, not only in Bunbury and many other Australian ports, but around the world. It was a very informative talk and we all were surprised by some of the revelations (small amount of pay for seafarers in general, time they are at sea compared to time they are in port, lack of communication at sea with families etc.) One huge issue Dean Darryl highlighted was the difficulty in getting voluntary staff which is how Mission to Seafarers operates. If any member or members of their family would like to donate some time, I'm sure Dean Darryl and Mission to Seafarers would be very grateful – no experience needed. A bottle of Tokay (fortified wine) was given as a thank you and note of our appreciation – the tokay is actually made at Seven Hills Winery (Monastery) in the Clare Valley in South Australia where the alter wine for the Catholic Church is made.

Friendship Day was held on Friday 11th July 2025 at Boyanup. Many thanks to the lovely ladies from Boyanup Branch for the delicious morning tea, and for arranging the venue.

It was a lovely day of fellowship and prayer with 8 Bunbury ladies attending, and a total of 24. The Prayer through Mandala Art was a lovely exercise. Isobelle Shortreed, President of Mandurah Branch ran the session with some members attending sharing what it meant to them and their thoughts.

August is scheduled to be a card making and Christmas cracker making morning so will report on that next time. *Diane Hill President*

From the MU website...

ON MONDAY, 21 JULY 2025, MARY SUMNER HOUSE MARKED A MAJOR MILESTONE - 100 YEARS SINCE ITS OFFICIAL OPENING IN THE HEART OF WESTMINSTER.



29 Jul 2025

First opened in 1925, the building was named in honour of Mary Sumner, founder of Mothers' Union – an international Christian movement of women committed to strengthening families and communities worldwide.

Designed by architect Claude W. Ferrier, also known for his work on Arsenal Football Club's former Highbury Stadium, Mary Sumner House was established as the headquarters of the Mothers' Union, with over 2000 members present on 18 July 1923, when the foundation stone was laid by Mary Sumner's daughter, Louisa Gore-Brown. A century later, it remains the central offices for staff of the global movement, while also serving as a welcoming London conferencing venue available for hire for a wide range of events and gatherings.

Throughout its 100-year history, Mary Sumner House has witnessed remarkable events reflecting its enduring place in the local and national landscape. On 6 January 1928, the building endured a dramatic moment when the Thames burst its banks. Floodwaters surged down Horseferry Road and Great Peter Street, converging at the corner of Tufton and Great Peter Streets. Water burst through the entrance to the on-site bookshop and flooded both the boiler room and the room now known as the Conference Hall.

During the Second World War, the building once again played a vital community role. The Assembly Hall was requisitioned by Westminster City Council and repurposed as a public air-raid shelter. Meanwhile, staff sought safety in a specially constructed shelter in the basement, reflecting the building's capacity to serve even in the most challenging of times.

Mary Sumner House features beautifully preserved architectural details, including a Conference Hall ideal for larger gatherings, a peaceful chapel designed by Messrs. Paul Waterhouse & Co, and several commemorative stained glass windows, which were installed after the original windows were blown out in the Second World War.

Over the years, Mary Sumner House has hosted royal visits, key moments in the charity's history, and many functions in its role as a charity event venue. A highlight was when on Tuesday, 4 June 1985, Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II (then patron of Mothers' Union) unveiled a plaque, made of Welsh Slate, in the reception area to mark the Diamond Jubilee of Mary Sumner House. Today, the refurbished conference and meeting rooms are fully equipped to support workshops, corporate meetings, and special events.

When choosing Mary Sumner House as a venue, visitors not only enjoy a central London location steeped in heritage—they also support Mothers' Union's vital work in 84 countries to end poverty, violence, and social injustice.

And now for some fun! These 'easy steps' can be passed on to your children and/or grandchildren - depending on their age!

Twelve easy steps to parenthood ...Preparation for parenthood is not just a matter of reading books and decorating the baby's room.

Here are 12 simple rules for expectant parents to help prepare them for the real-life experience of living with small children.

1. Ladies - to prepare yourselves for maternity put on a dressing gown, stick a bean-bag down the front. Leave it there for 9 months. After 9 months take out 10% of the beans.
Gentlemen - to prepare yourselves for paternity go to the local chemist. Tip the contents of your wallet on the counter and tell the pharmacist to help himself. Go to the supermarket and arrange to have your salary paid directly to their head office. Go home and do something relaxing for the last time.
2. Before you finally go ahead and have children, find a couple who already have children and lecture them about their methods of discipline, lack of patience, appalling low tolerance levels and how they have allowed their children to run riot. Suggest ways in which they might improve their child's sleeping habits, toilet training, table manners and general behaviour. Enjoy it! It will be the last time in your life that you had all the answers!
3. To discover how the nights will feel, walk around the living room from 5pm until 10pm carrying a wet bag weighing approximately 3 - 5kg. At 10pm put the bag down, set the alarm for midnight and go to sleep. Get up at 12, pick up the bag and walk around the living room until 1am. Set the alarm again for 3am. As you can't get back to sleep get up and make a drink. Go to bed at 2.45am. Get up again at 3am when the alarm goes off. Sing songs in the dark until 4am. Set the alarm for 5am. Get up. Make breakfast. Keep this up for 5 years. *Look cheerful !!* *(More in the next issue)*

What is a Mandala and what use is it in prayer?

History of Christian Mandalas

It is perhaps the magnificent windows that decorate the world's churches and cathedrals that best exemplify the mandala's use in Christianity. While large, coloured glass windows were developed in these spaces, the earliest examples of Christian architecture use a simple round shape – or oculus – that was cut out of the top of a building's dome.

The oculus was first found in Roman structures and served the main purpose of letting in light and air. However, because they also opened to the sky, oculi further represented a direct connection with the spiritual realm.

On its most basic level, a mandala is a circular form with geometric patterns that builds off of a central point, most often used to connect with God through meditation and contemplation.

Therefore, some of the most common Christian symbols and ritual tools are actually mandalas, including rosaries.

The process of contemplating rosary beads – which are held together in a circular shape – includes meditating on each bead in a rotating circle, a use of the mandala that is common to almost all cultures.

Other typical mandala designs and circular symbols in Christianity include:

- The crown of thorns
- The halo
- The Celtic cross
- The apse part of a church, particularly during Gothic periods
- Some baptismal font designs
- Communion wafers

Active Prayer to Quiet the Mind

Today we are colouring ready printed mandalas, but it is much more than simply colouring in. Take the time to look at your design, and to think why you picked this particular one, what it means to you. Colouring a mandala is a respectful prayerful activity – while your hands are busy allow God to flow into the space of your mind. We shall keep a time of quiet when we draw.

There are some scripture quotes at the end of this sheet that you might find useful to get you started.

There is no right way, no wrong way – only your way, and your meaning vested in the work.

Colouring a mandala is a very personal act. After going deeply within to focus on your work, it can be a pleasure to share what you have done. Sharing your mandala can add a further dimension to your work, so at the end of our time together there will be a time for sharing, or not, however you feel.

I hope this time together will be a blessing to you and encourage you to explore this way of prayer further.

Scripture which may be helpful for your prayer.....

1. **Luke 1:45:** "Blessed is she who believed that the Lord would fulfill His promises to her."
2. **Proverbs 31:25:** "She is clothed with strength and dignity, and she laughs without fear of the future."
3. **Philippians 4:16:** "Don't worry about anything, instead, pray about everything."
4. **Matthew 6:34** - "Do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own."
5. **Mothers Union Prayer Diary** prayers for April (for members)

AMUA Diocese of Bunbury 2025 Events and Dates of Importance
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September	16th	Branch annual reports to Diocesan secretary
	16th	Executive annual reports to Diocesan secretary
	20th	Agenda items for AGM to Diocesan secretary
<i>Public school holidays 26th Sept - 12th Oct.</i>		
<i>Synod October 10-11th in Albany</i>		
October	Branch annual meetings to be held this month	
	8 th	Annual Report Book to be distributed (electronic copy)
	11 th	AGM agenda to all branches and executive
	11th	Executive members report to all executive
	15th	Executive meeting in Mandurah
	16th	Country Rally in Mandurah with AGM and election of executive members for 2026 – 2028 inclusive.
November	Branch annual meetings to be held if not held in October	
	14th	Mustard Tree contributions to Editor
	30th	Branch annual returns to Diocesan Secretary
December	31st	Financial year ends for branches