

# Mothers' UNION

Christian care for families

St Faith's Mothers' Union is led by Branch Leader Liz Emery who welcomes any enquiries on 023 9255 6618

This year Mothers' Union celebrates 140 years and there are several special events in our branch, diocese and countrywide – see our programme below.

We were delighted Liz Emery, pictured below by the Mothers' Union Banner, was commissioned as our Branch Leader at St Faith's on Sunday 7 February, the occasion was made even more special since our branch member Revd Elizabeth Groves is our new Diocesan President.



Picture right shows Elizabeth Groves with newly enrolled members and our new Branch Leader Liz Emery



Liz's commissioning and the enrolment of new branch members was an occasion well supported by branch members. Our MU Chaplain Trevor Reader preached at the service

See our current programme (below) for news of what we have planned for the year.

## PROGRAMME 2016

### MOTHERS' UNION THEME - CELEBRATION OF FAITH



#### **JANUARY**

Thu 7 at 1415 Christmas Leftovers (Branch Meeting)  
Wed 20 at 1200 Commissioning Service at St George's, Portsea  
Thu 21 at 1130 Corporate Communion

#### **FEBRUARY**

Thu 4 at 2.15pm AGM (Branch) with Paul Chamberlain  
Sun 7 at 0930 Commissioning of Liz Emery as Branch Leader and enrolments  
Thu 18 at 1130 Corporate Communion

#### **MARCH**

Thu 3 at 1230 Lent Lunch followed by meditation led by Steve Dent  
Fri 4 (various times) Women's World Day of Prayer at various churches in Gosport Deanery  
Thu 17 at 1130 Corporate Communion

#### **APRIL**

Mon 4 Apr at 1100 Lady Day Service at St Mary's Hook with Warsash  
Thu 7 at 1415 Flower Arrangements for the Lady Chapel: Margaret Hunt  
Sat 9 1030 start Spring Council Meeting at Cathedral House  
Thu 21 at 1130 Corporate Communion

#### **MAY**

Thu 5 at 1415 Churchers Solicitors: Chris Matthews  
Thu 19 at 1130 Corporate Communion

#### **JUNE**

Thu 2 at 1415 Old Images of Lee: Bob Harrop  
15-17 Wave of Prayer (date and time to be confirmed)  
Thu 16 at 1130 Corporate Communion  
Sun 26 Jun from 1230 Garden Party at Bishopsgrrove, Fareham (by kind permission of the Bishop)

#### **JULY**

Thu 7 at 1415 Anniversary Service & Tea  
Thu 21 at 1130 Corporate Communion

#### **AUGUST**

Tue 9 Aug at 1700 Evensong, Westminster Abbey to mark Mary Sumner Day  
Thu 18 at 1130 Corporate Communion

#### **SEPTEMBER**

Thu 1 at 1415 Christian Solidarity Worldwide: Claire Adhern  
Thu 15 at 1130 Corporate Communion  
Thu 22 Service at Winchester Cathedral to celebrate 140 years of Mothers' Union  
Fri 23 MU General Meeting in Basingstoke

#### **OCTOBER**

Thu 6 at 1415 Rainbow Toddlers: Becca Chamberlain  
Thu 20 at 1130 Corporate Communion

#### **NOVEMBER**

Thu 3 at 1415 Celebration of Faith and MU Overseas: Pauline Wale  
Thu 17 at 1130 Corporate Communion

#### **DECEMBER**

Thu 8 1200 for 1230 Christmas Lunch  
Thu 15 at 1130 Corporate Communion

## WHO WE ARE AND WHAT WE DO

Don't be misled by the name "Mothers' Union"; this international Christian membership charity aims to demonstrate the Christian faith in action through the transformation of communities worldwide. It is open to all baptised people: female, male, married, single, divorced, parents or childless. What unites us is a shared belief in the value of families and the wish to encourage family life and values.

You may be surprised to hear that the Branch at St Faith's is the longest-running organisation in Lee-on-the-Solent and was established in 1903. We are now part of the Fareham and Gosport Deanery within the Diocese of Portsmouth. Throughout the world there are over 4 million members from 83 countries.

Our Branch meets on the first Thursday every month (except August) at 2.15 pm and usually in the Lowry Room - see our programme for full details. We welcome newcomers and visitors to our meetings and we hope they may later join us as members.

At our meetings there is always a short service; have speakers on all types of subjects, some from our own Church, others from around the area. Over the years we have heard about other religions and beliefs, the work of local organisations and other general subjects. We hold discussions on current issues within the Christian Church and matters of interest to people in general. At times we have a quiz or a musical afternoon. During Lent we hold a Lent Lunch followed by a meditative afternoon. Whatever the style of meeting we aim to enjoy each other's company and have a sociable time together.

Our MU members are involved in all areas of church life and activities - we can do lots more than make tea and cake! There are people on the PCC and other committees, many read and lead intercessions at services. You will find our names on many rotas: welcomers, flower-arranging, pastoral care and the cuppa and company group. Some members serve refreshments at the church Rainbow Toddlers group this also gives a chance to meet the Mums, babies and toddlers who attend.

We have a corporate communion on Thursday morning once a month, when our members prepare the Intercessions and do all the readings. Over the years we have donated a lectern, flower stand and candlestick for the Lady Chapel and made altar cloths for all three altars.

Every summer we have a delicious Strawberry Tea and in December there is a home-cooked Christmas Lunch. Guests are invited from other MU branches and also other local Churches. Of course we prepare tea and refreshments following a Mothers' Union Deanery Service when it is held at St. Faith's.

We support local organisations by using our skills as well as raising money. Our needle-workers have made toiletry bags for Queen Alexandra Hospital emergency patients - then filled them with essential supplies. Also for the hospital we have made medical dolls for traumatised children and clothing for premature babies. We support the local women's refuge but donating unwanted bedding and towels.

But our own Church activities and meetings do not tell the whole story. We have people serving on MU Deanery and Diocesan committees, helping to organise the wider work of the MU: for example, raising funds for the Diocesan 'Away from it all' holidays for needy families. One member is a Trustee and looks after Diocesan Members and volunteers on the MU stand at wedding fairs, giving information and advice about Church weddings. Two of our members bake for the same project; they are part of a team who make a celebration cake which serves as a prize for the competition run from the MU stand at wedding fayres.

We are united in our Christian belief. The worldwide Mothers' Union takes part in the Women's World Day of Prayer each spring and at St Faith's we always have a good attendance for our own contribution to prayers throughout the world. Each month there is Corporate Communion at Portsmouth Cathedral with each Deanery taking their turn to read and lead intercessions.

St Faith's Mothers' Union has links with two separate Australian MU branches and we share news and information about activities. Our correspondent organises a folder with all the emails, cards, letters

and magazines so that all our members can enjoy reading about the very different life-style and the activities of our Australian friends.