

WAVE OF PRAYER 20 - 22 APRIL 2021

Linking our dioceses of:
OXFORD and SOUTHWARK (England);
VICTORIA NYANZA (Tanzania);
KINSHASA (Democratic Republic of Congo);
AHOADA and WARRI (Nigeria);
PORT MORESBY (Papua New Guinea)

Our Theme: Rebuilding Hope and Confidence

God is unchanging. He will never leave us. So we trust him and know he will be at our side. Whether online or on paper, the Wave of Prayer is open to all, so feel free to invite non-members to join you. Please use it too as a resource for your prayers, both now and throughout the year.

Lines in purple bold are to be said in unison.

Trust in God

We pray

Together we weave a web. Strong and shining, with ties of love linking and growing. A hope to cling to, a shelter and support; weakened but not destroyed. A Gift from God for all who trust in Him.

We rebuild

Together we grasp the web. Strong and shining, with ties of faith linking and nurturing. Clinging to each other, we stand united. His gift protects us. Our confidence returns.

We grow

Together we reveal our web. Strong and shining, it lights the world. We act together to set it free; it is a gift to share. The power of God made known to all.

Faithful God, you are the rock on which we rebuild our life in steadfast hope and confidence. **Marion Gunning**

Hymn - Through The Night of Doubt & Sorrow vv 1-4.

B.S. Ingemann 1825/Baring-Gould

Reading

On that day, when evening had come, Jesus said to them, 'Let us go across to the other side.' And leaving the crowd behind, they took him with them in the boat, just as he was. Other boats were with him. A great gale arose, and the waves beat into the boat, so that the boat was already being swamped. But he was in the stern, asleep on the cushion; and they woke him up and said to him, 'Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing?' He woke up and rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, 'Peace! Be still!' Then the wind ceased, and there was a dead calm.

Mark 4:35-39[NRSV]

Strengthened by our faith and our life in Christ we are building ourselves anew. In a world turned upside down, where so many lives are lost or changed beyond recognition, so many dreams crushed, we try to ride out the storm. Many of us are isolated and stressed beyond bearing. Yet slowly things begin to change and we see in the darkness of grief and loss, a light of hope beginning to shine. A hope built on the belief that we can overcome what has befallen us. Now we face the future together.

Faithful God, you are the rock on which we rebuild our life in steadfast hope and confidence.

Rebuilding Hope

'Hope has two daughters; their names are anger and courage. Anger that things are the way they are, and courage to see that they do not remain as they are.'

St Augustine

Reading

Jesus went to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, and on the Sabbath day he went into the synagogue, as was his custom. He stood up to read, and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was handed to him. Unrolling it, he found the place where it is written: 'The Lord has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed, to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and release to the prisoners; to comfort all who mourn; to give them a garland instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, the mantle of praise instead of a faint spirit. They will be called oaks of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, to display his glory.' **Luke 4:16-21 and Isaiah 61:1-3 [NRSV]**

Hymn - Lord of All Hopefulness, Lord of All Joy
Jan Struther © OUP 1931

Prayer

Lord Jesus, you free those who are in darkness and distress. We know that we can come to you and you will rebuild our broken hearts and minds. We pray for everyone in need of comfort and gladness, for those whose life has become hopeless and the world a dark place. Restore in them a sense of belonging, and a knowledge of the love and care which you extend to all who suffer. We pray for all our members as they serve people marginalised and victimised through violence, poverty, mental or physical health and lack of education. Make us bearers of hope for all.

Faithful God, you are the rock on which we rebuild our life in steadfast hope and confidence.

Rebuilding Confidence

Acclamation

'I have set the Lord always before me, for he is at my right hand so that I will not be shaken; therefore my heart was glad, and my tongue rejoiced; moreover, my flesh will live in hope. You have made known to me the ways of life; you will make me full of gladness with your presence.' Psalm 16 and Acts 2 vv14, 25-26, 28[NRSV]

Prayer

Gracious God, whose loving kindness has no limits, teach us afresh the way of Christ. Where we have felt discouraged, renew us through signs of hope. Where we have been tempted to give up, grant us strength and faith to face the day. Where we have grown anxious about the future, give us courage to plant the seeds of tomorrow in acts of radical love today. Renew us by your Spirit and set us free to serve you so that the whole of creation may rejoice in your name. Amen. Richard Andrew, Darlington Methodist District Chair

Reading

Just after daybreak, Jesus stood on the beach; but the disciples did not know that it was Jesus. He said to them, 'Children, you have no fish, have you?' They answered him, 'No.' He said to them, 'Cast the net to the right side of the boat, and you will find some.' So they cast it, and they were not able to haul it in because there were so many fish. John 21 vv4-6 [NRSV]

Trust and faith in God will be the source of our confidence and by working together we will achieve great things in his name. We know this to be true. Nehemiah's belief in God's power was unshakeable. Eventually, despite all the odds and many setbacks, he and his team succeeded in rebuilding and strengthening the Holy City of Jerusalem.

Many years later in Jerusalem, the Apostles prayed, studied the Word together and waited. Until Passover, when the overwhelming power of the Holy Spirit touched them and the whole world changed.

Prayer

Almighty God, just as you have empowered and transformed others before us, we pray that we may become as you need us to be. Different in our individual gifts we will find our strength in working together. May our commitment never falter.

Reflection on the Mothers' Union Prayer by Rev. Lady Denise Brown



Take time to reflect on the meaning of these very familiar words.

Loving Lord, we thank you for your love so freely given to us all

We are so blessed to be created, protected and held by our all loving God, strengthened and nurtured to be ready to serve the world created in that love.

We pray for families around the world

We are not alone. What it is to belong to a family, a gathering of love in which we find our home, the people through whom we learn to love, through good times and bad. This is the ideal.

Think of your own experience of family life – the easy and the difficult times, joy and loss. What do you give thanks for? What needs healing? Can we forgive and be forgiven?

Bless the work of the Mothers' Union as we seek to share your love through the encouragement, strengthening and support of marriage and family life

And yet so many families are broken through poverty, ignorance, pain and sickness, anger, fear, violence and abuse. Lord, show us what we need to do to help heal broken families both near and far.

We give thanks for the programmes that Mothers' Union undertakes.

Think of the specific work that you know of and have been involved in. Is there more that we can do?

Empowered by your Spirit, may we be united in prayer and worship, and in love and service, reach out as your hands across the world.

The Holy Spirit is beside us in every moment and especially when we pray together, whether we are gathered physically or not, at the same time, as in Midday Prayers and the Wave of Prayer, or using the same words and thoughts at different times. *Think of all the MU members thinking and praying together, being empowered by that same Spirit, to share God's love and serve his world.*

What a joyful enterprise and opportunity! Following in Christ's footsteps, becoming his hands and feet in the world.

In Jesus' name. Amen

Faithful God, you are the rock on which we rebuild our lives in steadfast hope and confidence.

The Mothers' Union Worldwide & Our Link Dioceses

Heavenly Father, strengthen our commitment to the worldwide Mothers' Union with whom we share vision and values. We know that members everywhere are praying for us as we pray for them. We are all affected by the Covid-19 pandemic and we pray for lives and livelihoods lost, health and communities torn apart. Yet still our work goes on. We hold before you our Archbishops, Bishops and their wives and all Mothers' Union leaders, workers and their families. We pray for each of them as they work to bring about change, to tackle issues caused by poverty, unemployment, sickness, violence and the lack of stable family life. All we are doing across the world to combat modern-day slavery and gender-based violence is offered to you for your blessing. May we all remain strengthened by the love of God in Christ Jesus. Amen

CENTRAL AND WORLDWIDE MOTHERS' UNION

We name: our Worldwide President Mrs Sheran Harper, Our Chief Executive Mrs Bev Jullien, our worldwide Zonal Trustees, The Archbishop of Canterbury Justin Welby, The Central Mothers' Union Chaplain Rt Revd Emma Imeson

We pray for everyone at Mary Sumner House and our Central Trustees during this challenging time and we thank each of them for their service and commitment. Our mission continues, supported by power of God and the love and generosity of so many people who care about what we do.

We will walk in hope and confidence, trusting each other, loving each other and together we will rebuild the hope and confidence of families and communities everywhere - always reaching forward as God's hands and feet and reflecting a life filled with purpose and meaning, grace and love, peace and joy. Sheran Harper

DIOCESE OF OXFORD (ENGLAND)

We name: Our Provincial President Mrs Kathryn Anderson, Our Diocesan President Mrs Maureen Weston, Our Chaplain Rev. Mary Harwood, our Board of Trustees, our Diocesan Bishop Rt Revd Steven Croft

Heavenly Father, we bring to you everything we do across our diocese in your Name. We thank you for sustaining and guiding us through these troubled times when Covid-19 is affecting all communities throughout the world. We thank you for the many “small acts of love” which have enabled members to care for each other and those in special need. We bring before you the work being done to raise awareness and prevent gender-based violence and modern-day slavery. We pray for the needs of prisoners and their families, those who are suffering in hospital and at home. We remember people of all ages and backgrounds who are experiencing loneliness and hardship of many kinds. Although we are all missing our times of worship, friendship and fellowship in person, help us to be patient, thoughtful and caring in reaching out to those who would value a phone call, an email or a letter. Please help us all to support and comfort one another as we trust and hope in you. **Amen**

DIOCESAN PRAYER 2021

Loving God, We give thanks that your spirit enables us to work to your praise and glory in all that we do. Renew our hope and confidence to live our lives worthy of the Gospel. Help us to reach out in faith and loving service to all who are struggling in our communities; those who are together and those who are isolated; that every tongue will confess Jesus Christ as Lord. Amen

DIOCESE OF SOUTHWARK (ENGLAND)

We name: Mrs Comfort Fearon, Rev. Esther Foss, the Trustees, Bishop Christopher Chessun and his staff

Dear Lord, we pray and give thanks to you for all our members in Southwark Diocese. Thank you for the past year with all its difficulties and for the many different ways you have enabled us to handle the changing situations through the pandemic. We bring before you the future of our programme Communicating English to Women. Following the training on Metamorphosis, our plan is to engage with women and girls to enable them to value themselves, encourage their mental health and well-being. Our plans to have an increase in clergy participation in the diocese and to re-energise our prison work. We pray also that branches that are inactive will become active and that Branch Leaders will be enabled to find strength and vision to lift their members. **Amen**

DIOCESE OF KINSHASA (DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO)

*We name: Rev. Mme Gertrude Mbongo Diela, Mme Martha Viera,
Bishop Achille Mutshindu*

With the Lord's help we have been able to continue our work to overcome the effects of violence, poverty and displacement for women and families across the diocese. We give thanks for our literacy and numeracy projects which will train and enable many widowed and uneducated women to run small enterprises, and for all the financial support we have received for this.

Covid-19 effects are very severe so we praise God for the generosity of many who gave money for materials and advice on preventing the spread of the virus and we pray for better times to come. We have continued to meet and share God's blessings with mothers across the diocese and we thank everyone in Oxford diocese for your support and prayers. **Amen**

DIOCESE OF VICTORIA NYANZA (TANZANIA)

*We name: Mrs Rahel Jeremiah, Seraphina Rusibamayila,
Mrs Margretha Massawa*

Lord God, we seek guidance from the Holy Spirit in all things as we pray for peace throughout your Church. We ask for prayerful counsel and discernment for everyone who is even now tasked with appointing a new Bishop for our diocese and your wider Church.

We pray for the Mothers' Union, asking you to be with us as we prepare for and then participate in our Triennial Conference this year. We pray for the successful nationwide savings and credit groups we have established with Tearfund and give thanks for the gifts we have received from the Bishop of Oxford's Outreach Fund.

Amen

DIOCESE OF AHOADA (NIGERIA)

We name: Mrs Edna Ekpeye, Bishop Clement Ekpeye

DIOCESE OF WARRI (NIGERIA)

We name: Mrs Patience Ide, Bishop Christian Ezezi Ide

We remember all our sisters in Christ, across the dioceses of Warri and Ahoada as they carry out their vision for Mothers' Union. We pray for all they are doing in his name to support the poor, the disadvantaged and those who do not know the love and grace of our risen Lord. Strengthen their endeavours and may they know that we hold them and their work in our prayers at all times. **Amen**

DIOCESE OF PORT MORESBY (PAPUA NEW GUINEA)

We name: Louise Werner, Mother Grace Meakoro

May Mothers' Union continue to reveal the love of God across the diocese in places where life brings special risks and hardships, and family life is threatened by unemployment, gang violence, poverty and disease. The Worldwide Parenting

Programme is at work to strengthen family ties and to change public opinion on domestic abuse. We pray for all the members who help families in desperate need, in our care homes and day centres, visiting and praying for the elderly, and for those who train women to become self-sufficient. May our collaboration with other organisations in the diocese continue to bear fruit in improving literacy and community leadership. **Amen**

Faithful God, you are the rock on which we rebuild our lives in steadfast hope and confidence.

We speak together the Lord's Prayer

Hymn - Great is thy Faithfulness

Chisholm/Runyon 1923

The Grace

Contributors:

Rt Reverend Olivia Graham, Bishop of Reading

Helen Broadbent, MU member

Revd Lady Denise Brown, Trustee, Oxford MU

Fr Guy Cole, Rector Easthampstead Parish, MU member

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Rosemary Pierce, Congo Churches Association, MU Member

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Maranda St John Nicolle, Partners in World Mission, MU member

Maureen Weston, Diocesan President Oxford MU

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CCL listings to be recorded by individual parishes.

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Music by Liz Helyer

The choir of St Martins in the Fields.