



**Provincial President's Message for
Provincial Week – West Indies**

30th April to 6th May 2017

**Theme:
“Faith in Action”**

***Let us not love with words or speech but with actions and in truth.
1 John 3: 18***

Dear Mothers' Union Family,

I greet you as the Church in the Province of the West Indies observes *Mothers' Union Provincial Week 2017* from 30th April to 6th May. The Third Sunday of Easter, 'Provincial Sunday', begins a week of activities when each Diocese highlights the work of the Mothers' Union offering prayers and thanks within our respective Churches for God's mercies. This year we continue our special project when each member is asked to contribute at least one United States Dollar or its equivalent to assist us in our work across the Province. I take this opportunity to remind all Diocesan Presidents of our annual fundraising event to be held in each Diocese, proceeds of which are for the work of the Mothers' Union in the Province of the West Indies.

This year's theme "**“Faith in Action”**" reminds us that Mothers' Union is a community of Faith. As outlined in our theme resources, (available on the website) 'we now look to the future trusting that God will continue to help us as we share his love in the world through our Christian care for families and communities. We do this by actively putting our faith into action to serve God and his world'. This year's theme grants us an opportunity to consider new ways in which to live out our faith through action.

As we approach the Silver Jubilee of the **Mothers' Union Society of the Church in the Province of the West Indies**, the following quote about Mary Sumner is very pertinent where we are not only looking back with gratitude, but forward with faith and vision. Mrs Boustead, Central President of Mothers' Union: December 1927* said about Mary Sumner:

Her foresight, her wisdom and judgment laid the great foundation stone for us. And as the building grows, and far and wide her early message goes forth – the same message, though to a different generation – we pray that the faith which shone through her every word and thought may illumine ours, that we, with grateful hearts, may build well and truly, as she did.

As we look forward to the future with faith and vision, it is with deep emotion and grateful thanks to God that I share with you some of the highlights of my recent Mothers' Union experience in Ireland.

Ireland was the location for a truly global gathering of over 100 Mothers' Union leaders from 26 countries. The Worldwide Board of Trustees, Provincial Presidents, Representative Members and Diocesan Presidents from Britain and Ireland all met at An Grianán. This was the first global gathering of Provincial Presidents and the

Board of Trustees since 2014, and the first time in many years that so many leaders from across the world had come together. It was a rich and very fruitful week.

Worldwide Council Meeting

The Worldwide Council met from lunchtime on Sunday, March 12 to lunchtime on Monday, March 13, 2017.

- The main purpose for convening the Worldwide Council was to approve submitting a modernisation of the Worldwide Constitution to go before the Privy Council and Charity Commission, prior to final approval by Worldwide Council and the Board in May, 2018.
- The proposed **revised constitution** had been developed through a process of consultation with the wider membership. During the meeting the outcomes of the consultation were shared and there was further opportunity for questions and clarification before the resolutions were put to the vote. All resolutions were passed unanimously. These resolutions were subsequently approved by the Board at their meeting on March 18, 2017.
- In addition, there was a celebration of the work of Mothers' Union across the world, with posters from each Province, sharing between delegates and a Quiz. The **posters, presentations and quiz** are all available on the website.
- **Prayer** - Active participation was encouraged worldwide in the Archbishop of Canterbury's prayer programme, "*Thy Kingdom Come*". This would be held between Ascension and Pentecost in 2017 following on from the success of last year. There will be a "*Global Moment*" on May 31, 2017, when all Mothers' Union will be encouraged to pray, and there is the aim to have a service which can be streamed online to members at 12.00 GMT.
- A new video celebrating the faith activities of members was also launched, and is now available on You Tube and through the Mothers' Union website.

One of the most touching moments at the Worldwide Council meeting was on the occasion of Former Worldwide President Lady Christine Eames' address to the Council. Lady Eames' passionate words of encouragement and love earned her a standing ovation, leaving many of us in tears of joy and hope.

PROVINCIAL PRESIDENTS AND THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Under the theme ***In Mary Sumner's Footsteps: Co-creating the future for Mothers' Union*** Provincial Presidents and the Board of Trustees met from the afternoon of Monday, 13th March to the evening of Friday 17th March.

The **aim** was to co-create the future of Mothers' Union, building on its heritage and involving members, communities and partners, so that there is a clear framework and direction that reflects local realities, revitalises the movement globally, and facilitates mutual and external accountability. The **outcomes** were:

- A shared understanding, as leaders, of how Mothers' Union makes a difference in people's lives.
- Clear steps to enable people at all levels to contribute to developing a shared global framework to support and strengthen the contribution the movement makes.
- Short-term operational strategies concretised in provincial action plans and global next steps.

- An equipped, active leadership working together (with ideas, tools and strategies to take forward).
- Individuals left the workshop positive, inspired, God-centred and enriched.

➤ **A Shared way forward**

Delegates worked together to “co-create” a view of the essence and ways of working of Mothers’ Union in 2026 (the 150th Anniversary). Everyone agreed to deepen our understanding of that future and how to get there by extending the exploration to include grassroots membership across the world. It was agreed to call the process MULOA – Mothers’ Union Listens, Obeys, Acts, and the aim is to conduct the process over 2 years.

➤ **Provincial Contributions**

Provincial Presidents across the world agreed to share the burden by contributing financially to the global movement by offering an annual sum. Each left with their action plan to take forward.

➤ **Communications**

Valuable insights were gained on the challenges of communicating within and across the movement. Practical actions were identified for Mary Sumner House, the Zones and Provinces.

➤ **Programmes**

Delegates mapped out which programmes they were involved with, and which they were considering for the future, so that this could be shared amongst them.

➤ **Wave of Prayer**

Delegates were reminded of the third objective of Mothers’ Union, “*to maintain a worldwide fellowship of Christians united in prayer, worship and service*”. Mothers’ Union Wave of Prayer was updated in 2014. Informed prayer through communication not only inspires but engages and strengthens. All were encouraged to communicate the importance of this bond which is special to our movement.

➤ **Stories**

A rich tapestry of stories was shared of ways, great and small, in which members were making a difference in their communities. All agreed that touching even one life was of incalculable value. Every small act mattered - and ultimately the impact of Mothers’ Union worldwide was made up of a myriad of small individual actions.

➤ Priorities for advocacy and campaigning were also mapped. Speaking up against gender based violence, especially domestic violence, was a very strong theme, as was peace and reconciliation, at family, community, national and global levels. There was a will to strengthen the ways in which (for example at the UN) we “give voice to the voiceless”, and speak up on behalf of our 4 million members worldwide.

Our Chief Executive Bev Jullien, Worldwide President Lynne Tembey, Head of Development and Policy Nicola Lawrence, the entire Board of Trustees and the Mary Sumner House team must be commended on their hard work, dedication, commitment and support during our time together. I give God thanks for the wonderful time of fellowship and love shared with my Zone B Trustee Sheran Harper; Provincial Presidents from across the world, including those within our Zone - Alice – Canada; Annie - USA and Catherine - South America.

The Global Gathering ended and all departed for home feeling blessed that they were chosen for such a time as this – ***In Mary Sumner’s Footsteps: Co-creating the future for Mothers’ Union.***

As we continue the work of the Church in the Province of the West Indies, we give God thanks for the love, support and prayers of our Patron The Most Rev. Dr. The Hon. John Holder, CBE, LLD and our Bishops and clergy across the Province of the West Indies. I ask your continued prayers for the Mothers' Union in the Diocese of Barbados as we plan for the Provincial Council Meeting to be held in my home Diocese of Barbados in September. We are looking forward to welcoming our delegates to the meeting and other guests who will be joining us as we celebrate our **Silver Jubilee** with a Service of Thanksgiving in the Cathedral Church of St. Michael and All Angels on Sunday 3rd September with His Grace, Archbishop John Holder as the Celebrant. The Provincial President, Provincial Executive Committee and Provincial Council will be hosting an anniversary Dinner under the distinguished patronage of His Grace Archbishop John Holder and Mrs. Betty Lucas-Holder – Patron of the Mothers' Union in the Diocese of Barbados. I am delighted to inform you my dear Sisters that our featured speaker will be Chief Executive of the Worldwide Mothers' Union Bev Jullien. The 25th Anniversary Dinner will take place on Friday 8th September at the Almond Bay Hotel and the contribution is US\$75.00 or BDS\$150.00. My dear Sisters, I ask you to devote some time to pray and focus on our anniversary theme **Faith in Action – Committed to Serve**. I also wish to remind all members that our website was launched a few weeks ago and I remind you of the importance of submitting your articles through your Diocesan President who has already been briefed on all relevant information pertaining to the website.

As we commence our series of “conversations” on *Co-creating the future for Mothers’ Union* may we have the energy and courage to accept change and let go of all that may hold us back. As God continues to embrace each one of us may we be filled with enthusiasm to abide in his love, wherever that may take us. God chose each one of us and so, I ask each one of us to listen to his voice and feel his love, protection and peace.

Sometimes we feel outside our comfort zone, but believe that “whom God calls, he enables.” We are “carrying out God’s family business” as His Son did, and He called us his disciples, learning from Him and following him. “Faith without works is useless.” James 2:17, 20. We experience God’s strength which He gives us and His calling/leading when we ask His guidance in putting our faith into action.

(Mothers’ Union member)

May God continue to bless each one of us in our works.

With my love and prayers.

J. J. Maynard

**Jennifer Maynard
Provincial President – West Indies**

April 2017

