

MIA mia

ANGLICAN
MOTHERS UNION
AUSTRALIA

LISTENING OBSERVING ACTING



LISTENING observing acting



ISSN 1326-7701

Autumn 2019

LISTENING OBSERVING ACTING

Mia Mia

A quarterly magazine of
Anglican Mothers Union Australia.

MIA MIA is an aboriginal word
for 'home' and also stands for
Mothers
in Australia.

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ANGLICAN MOTHERS UNION AUSTRALIA

Vision:

Our vision is of a world where
God's love is shown through
loving, respectful, and flourishing
relationships.

Aim & Purpose:

To demonstrate the Christian faith
in action by the transformation of
communities worldwide through
the nurture of family in its many
forms.

Objectives:

1. To promote and support married life
2. To encourage parents in their role to develop the faith of their children
3. To maintain a worldwide fellowship of Christians united in prayer, worship and service
4. To promote conditions in society favourable to stable family life and the protection of children
5. To help those whose family life has met with adversity

from MU Australia Handbook Dec 2009
2/AUTUMN 2019

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are welcome.

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A NEW WORLD WIDE PRESIDENT

Mothers' Union made history in October 2018 in electing its first ever Worldwide President from outside the British Isles. A record number of Mothers' Union leaders from across the globe voted for Mrs Sheran Harper, who hails from Guyana, to represent and lead the 142 year old movement's four million members in 84 countries.

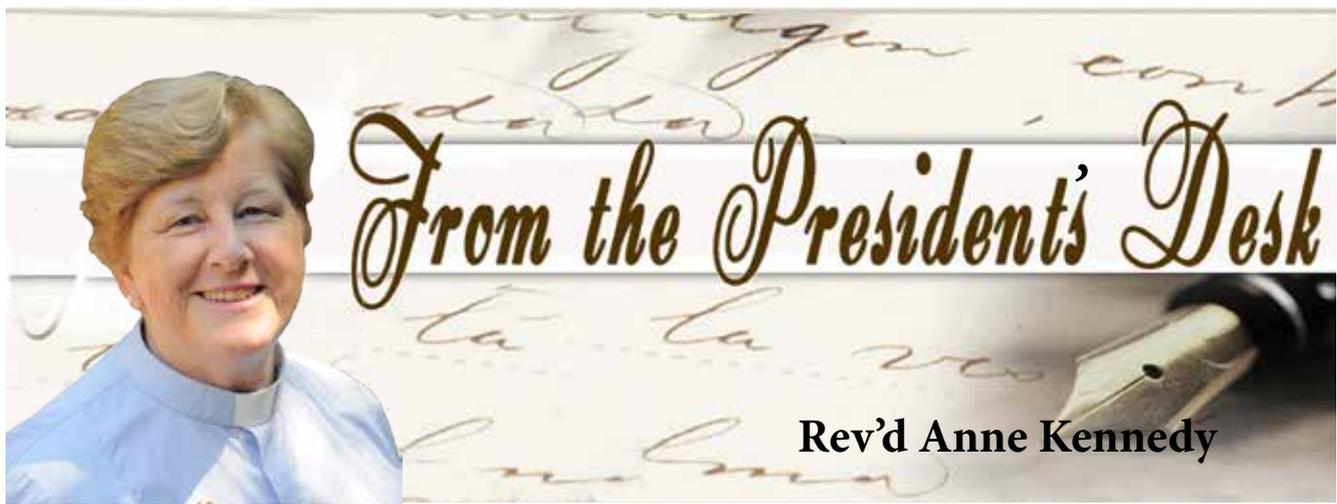
'I am delighted to accept the role of Worldwide President for the new triennium. I feel very excited and privileged and I extend my heartfelt gratitude to our members who voted to make this dream a reality,' Mrs Harper said. 'Mothers' Union is as relevant today as it was 142 years ago as the call to support families globally is now even greater. We are working alongside governments and other organisations in tackling issues which affect families wherever they are. In remote areas, where there is no access to social services, it is often Mothers' Union that is leading the way,'

Sheran Harper was born in the United Kingdom and grew up in Guyana where she studied at the University of the West Indies School of Physical Therapy. She undertook her Clinical Practice at Guy's Hospital in London and then worked with the Ministry of Health in Guyana where she opened and managed new physiotherapy departments in hospitals throughout the country and lectured on the Rehabilitation Therapists Programme. She stopped working in this area 17 years ago to focus on her calling of serving Mothers' Union.

She has served as a volunteer at all levels from Parish, Diocese and Province and is currently a Worldwide Trustee. Until recently, she was the Worldwide Parenting Trainer where she rolled out Mothers' Union Parenting programmes in 23 countries across the globe. Her expertise is often called upon and she has been a spokesperson in her region for Mothers' Union on various inter-faith, and international panels and forums.

Sheran has been married to Roger Harper for 31 years. They have two grown up sons, Richard and Reginald and a daughter-in-law, Akilah.





Rev'd Anne Kennedy

MOTHERS' UNION – LISTENING, OBSERVING, ACTING

When I first met 'Ernie', a parishioner of advanced age, I was captured by his detailed recall of small items of information in every story he told. I was literally *captured* – I couldn't get away from him as he rambled on, and on, and on! I had to keep dragging my mind back to listen to him waffle on.

As he aged, and mobility became difficult for him, I volunteered to drive him home from church. Captured again, in my car for 10 minutes (or longer), with Ernie each week I learnt a big lesson – *How To Listen And Really Hear*. And I learnt a lot of local and personal history, stories of walking through onion weed to get to the new church on the hill in rural Camberwell (now truly inner-suburban), about the life of the parish over many decades, odd bits of history and 'interesting facts' about this and that. I began to know and understand the person he was.

How often do we actually listen to someone – or are we just waiting for our turn to talk?

MULO A CORE QUESTIONS

Listening is one of the three legs of the tripod that is **MU – Listening, Observing, Acting** (*Moo-lo-uh*). It's learning to listen to each other, to our church congregations, to our communities around us, as we ask these questions: Who are we as Mothers' Union?

- WHO – Whose lives are we (or could we be) touching and who or what else influences them?
- WHAT – What difference are we (or could we be) making?
- HOW – How do we (or could we) effectively make a difference?

If you've already answered those questions – You Are Not Listening! We need to engage with others before trying to form our own answers.



Rev'd Libbie Crossman and Jeanette Lawrence Regional Development Officer from MSH hold a workshop in Auckland

MULOA PRINCIPLES

Mothers'

Union:

Listening – to God, to each other, to the marginalized, to external learning, to creating safe space

Observing – Identifying and celebrating what we have, looking to the future

Acting – taking responsibilities, feeding back honestly



MULOA –Auckland New Zealand

THE BEGINNINGS OF MULOA - TERMONFECKIN, IRELAND

The first trial of **MULOA** occurred at the Trustees and Provincial Presidents Global Gathering in 2017, where we tested the process. We met in family groups, geographical groups and Zone groups



MULOA gathering in Kinshasa Democratic Republic of Congo

for prayer, Bible study, reflective and active learning. We didn't have the opportunity to gather information from our members, but we made decisions in Zone Groups, e.g. better communication between Zone members, and on behalf of our own Provinces, e.g. an increase of the annual \$0.10 per member contribution to the work of Mary Sumner House, subject to AMUA Council approval. The process was then reviewed before being introduced to the Worldwide Mothers' Union, Zone by Zone.

MULOA –AUCKLAND, NEW ZEALAND

MU Zone C representatives - Aotearoa New Zealand (including women from Samoa, Fiji and Tonga), Australia, Melanesia, and Papua New Guinea gathered for **MULOA** in Auckland, New Zealand, last August. They met to learn about **MU – Listening, Observing, Acting** - part of the worldwide survey generated by Mary Sumner House in the UK.

The aim of **MULOA** was to help develop our key priorities for the Worldwide MU for the next five years. Just as we had the Millennium Goals, and the 20/20 Vision for MU in the past – this is the next step on our journey.

We were not the only people to participate in **MULOA** – it has reached over 10% of MU members globally (that's over 400,000 people involved in the co-creating process all wearing
AUTUMN 2019/ 5



MULOA meeting at Amare Northern Argentina

Photo Credit Bishop Nick Drayson

badges the same or similar to yours!).

Each Zone gathering has sent those who attended back to Dioceses and Branches to ask those four questions, and to gather answers from local groups and communities – not just MU, but talking to groups within the church, people outside the church, other organizations, and really anyone who was willing to have a discussion with them, and document and submit their findings.

MULOA FOLLOW-UP - BRISBANE

Then it was off to Brisbane to review what had been done, to hear the comments, learn who had been reached and what the survey revealed through the views of our members and other contacts.

We found that even though we thought we had not done or achieved very much as individuals, as a group the results were huge. Some **MULOA** reps in some smaller dioceses had managed to visit every branch to gauge their views from MU members and the community, whereas others managed to visit fewer, due to distance, the short time-frame available, and the inability of some groups to shift 'more important' set programs.

These consultations will continue in the coming year, so keep your eye out for announcements of **MULOA** training days coming to a venue near you, if you haven't had the opportunity to contribute yet!

Our feedback in Brisbane was charted and refined, and left us with what was important to AMUA in an Australian context and in our local context. It will be further refined to include PNG and Melanesian





MULOA Gathering at St John's College Brisbane in January 2019

members input, as few were able to attend the Brisbane gathering. Then all the responses worldwide will be collated by Mary Sumner House staff, who will help us to set our global and local goals for 2019-2023.

MULOA - STEPPING OUT IN RWANDA

Yes, Rwanda! In June this year, the Provincial Presidents will gather in central Africa for the Worldwide Council Meeting to hear the results of this global survey, and learn how MU, and AMUA by extension, plan for the next part of our journey as witnesses for Jesus Christ through our efforts to empower women and families around the world, and in our local area.

MULOA – IT'S NOT A MAGIC FORMULA

People have asked me for reports about **MULOA**, and this is a brief one. But I can't write down a list of

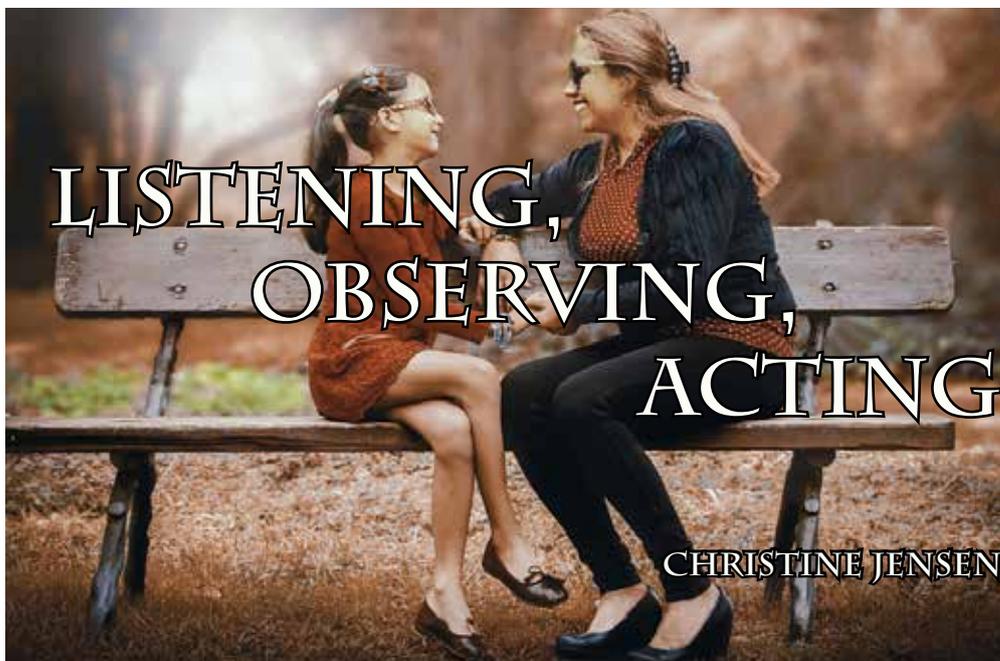
things that you can do to improve membership, or create branches or groups. **MULOA** is a process – something you need to experience with your own community, and to look at MU as others see it, and to focus on the answers to those four questions above.



Charting our progress with Facilitator Rev'd Bronwyn Pagram.

Our aim is to get out to every group, either individually or in areas, to help you experience the **MULOA** process so that you can encourage your co-members in really listening, really observing and really acting out our Vision and Objectives in your local situation.

Please join us!



Do you ever pray explicitly regularly and passionately for our nation? As the years go by, it becomes more and more clear that we are losing our Christian heritage. What effects is that having?

Last year I attended the MULO A conference in Auckland. We learned the importance of listening, observing and acting. Now this applies to many situations and is probably a good approach for Christians and non-Christians alike.

But what happens when we as Christians follow this pattern in regard to our community? Especially in the light of our MU aim, 'to strengthen and preserve all that upholds marriage and Christian family life'.

First, we listen. We listen to the stories good and bad of those around us about marriage and family life. We seek to understand the joys and the struggles of ordinary people living in a world in which marriages are unstable and so many children are being brought up without their father and mother providing the security and model they need. We listen.

Second, we observe. We go beyond our own immediate experience and learn from the statistics and the experts what is actually happening in the homes of our nation. Did you know, for example, that the modern preference for 'living together' is generally more unstable than marriage? Many people are living alone, or struggling to bring up children on their own?

Many of our educationists are observing that parents are bewildered about the task of parenting

and are expecting schools to do more and more to take their place.

It is like the government advertisement I once saw: 'you're not his mate, you're his Dad.'

Third, we act. What can we do?

First, we pray explicitly, regularly, passionately for the homes and especially the children of our nation. We pray that our homes will be stable, loving, secure places for the nurture of our children, taught by the word of God.

Second, we care. We do all that we can to promote the knowledge of God's pattern for family life and we extend our love to those in our circle, our family, our friends, our church, our neighbourhood who have been hurt by the failures of the contemporary world to care for the family.

Third, we teach. What a good idea it is for the different MU Dioceses to offer a course on Marriage and Christian family life such as the parenting course 'Families Equip'. If this is not possible, we could at least see that our Diocese develops one.

As ever, the Churches have a God-given gift, as a blessing for our community. We listen and we observe. Let's make sure we love those around us by acting as well, in prayer, care and teaching Christian family life!



LISTENING, OBSERVING & KNOWING HOW TO ACT EVERYDAY

ROBIN RAY

Since our move from North Queensland, travelling to church has taken a new format. Instead of walking next door, across the road or driving a short or long way (often long in NQ), we now travel by train.

This new form of transport to church offers an additional opportunity to encounter a range of people. You see, I'm a people watcher who thinks about who I see and what might be their purpose in travelling on this train. Since attending the MULOA sessions in January, my sense of connection with the people around me and their welfare, has been strengthened. Renewed reflection and discussion about living up to Mary Sumner's vision and our Christian calling puts people in need more prominently at the centre of our focus as members of Mothers Union. Not just the usual groups like homeless, single parents and refugees but people in need in everyday situations.

Anyway back to the train experiences and the people I observe. Today there were two older men in our carriage who in their deafness were inadvertently sharing their conversation with people in the seats near them. They were struggling with the modern communication systems, discussing the prospect of using skype and then deciding they didn't have a smart phone necessary to connect via skype with a younger relative for his birthday. The tone of their conversation conveyed a sense of disconnection at that point. Another passenger sitting a few seats away but facing us was anxiously peering out the window at each station – perhaps not sure when to get off. Little incidences like these are times when help could have been offered in an easy manner (although I need to be surer of the train network before advising about stations in between our stops).

A more complex situation recently confronted my husband and me when we were doing our grocery shopping. As we rounded an aisle we saw an incident that disturbed us both. It appeared that a

man deliberately rammed the shopping trolley into his female companion, obviously hurting her. She yelled at him and he just laughed it off, saying it could be worse next time. What to do? We were sharing a supermarket aisle – some would say it's not your business, others would be afraid to intervene for fear of retaliation. From a quick assessment of the woman, she could walk away with the trolley but obviously in a state of discomfort. They disappeared around into another aisle as we looked at each other trying to make sense of such a deliberate violent act. Reflecting

***some would say it's
not your business,
others would be
afraid to intervene***

on the situation I feel I should have had the presence of mind and the courage to at least ask if she was alright. As MU we observe the 16 days of Activism against gender based/domestic violence issues, but what do we

do at other times of the year in our own communities and among our neighbours or even in our churches? These are urgent issues calling us to follow Jesus example. In John 5:6 Jesus asks the sick man 'Do you want to be made well?' We also need to be intentional in our approach and to ask the 'help' question.

The MULOA initiative encourages us to be more proactive in our Listening and Observing, but also requires us to Act within the framework of our AMUA Purpose and Objectives. Our programming needs to include more focused prayer along with communication training and practice opportunities to equip us to safely and effectively Listen, Observe and Act. I challenge you to discuss these skill building opportunities in your branches and friendship groups as we intentionally work to make MU more relevant among our families and communities.

TUNE IN



CHRISTINE BRAIN

IN OUR HOUSEHOLD LISTENING TO THE LATEST NEWS ON ABC RADIO IS ONE OF THE LITTLE RITUALS WHICH BEGIN OUR DAY. NOT FOR US THE BREAKFAST TV PROGRAMS, OR THE ON-LINE NEWS SERVICES; A TINY TRANSISTOR RADIO IS OUR LINK TO THE WIDER WORLD.

Every now and then the messages we receive become disjointed, with some words or phrases disappearing into the mysterious ether of Radio Land, or the message obscured by static. My first reaction is to shout, 'Turn that off!' The muddled, fuzzy noise grates on the ear and sets my teeth on edge.

The MULO process has given Mothers Union members world-wide the opportunity to listen to each other, to pay attention to the needs and aspirations of people beyond our immediate circle, to discuss ways in which we can assist each other in our efforts to fulfil the Objects of MU and serve God by serving others. This has to be good for us as individuals as well as an organisation. The temptation now might be to forget all about it, and to metaphorically shout 'Turn it off!' by ignoring the voices of others and forgetting what we may have learned. This would obviously be selfish and blinkered, and do no-one any good.

In MU we have a mandate to show 'Christian care for families worldwide'. However, in seeking to do this well, we must ask ourselves some important questions. For example, what does it mean to show *Christian* care? How will that differ from showing any other kind of care? What kind of behaviour will we show in our efforts to do this? Where will we find

the strength to do it? How will we know where our priorities should lie? We are surrounded by needs and competing claims for our attention, and our own personalities and personal preferences incline us to answer these questions in different ways, which can ultimately lead to disharmony, or even to abandoning our distinctiveness as a Christian organisation.

To answer our questions and to remain distinctive we must listen carefully to another Voice. A Voice which speaks for all time and to all people. A Voice which speaks clearly and with authority. This Voice is one which is both embodied in the person of Jesus¹, who promises to be with us by his Spirit,² and in the written word of the Bible, which is able to protect, direct and correct those who claim to follow Jesus.³ Sadly, though, it is all too easy for this voice to be drowned out by the static of other noise-popular opinion or general busyness of life to name but two. When this happens it's as though our 'dial' isn't properly tuned to the right frequency. We need to adjust our thinking so that it matches that of our Master. We need to tune in to him and tune out the static. As Christians, turning Jesus' voice off is not an

1 John 1:1,14

2 John 17:1-15

3 Psalm 119:104; 2 Timothy 3:16

option. The problem doesn't lie with the sender of the message, but with the receiver!

Sometimes our attempts to listen to Jesus' voice are piecemeal, patchy or spasmodic. We read only snippets of the Bible, thus missing the whole story and getting a distorted understanding. We rely on short passages read in our Sunday services, or take our Bible reading in minute morsels, often predigested for us in the form of devotional readings which may lift our spirits for a while, but which also give us a patchy understanding rather than a wide-angled view. Or we rush our Bible reading, instead of giving it plenty of time and concentration, rather like reading the newspaper headlines instead of the full article.

Just this week I accompanied two of my grandsons to their swimming lesson. As learners, they are restricted to the shallow water, and, indeed, find the thought of venturing into *the deep end* quite terrifying. Perhaps we find Bible reading to be like that. Perhaps the Bible seems too big, too deep, too complex for us to understand, so we paddle around in the shallows. Just as my grandsons are developing the skills and confidence to tackle *the deep end*, we can develop confidence and skill as Bible readers. I have found that two things in particular have helped me to do that.

Firstly, having repented of the habit of reading tiny morsels, I go for the big chunk! Unlike the eating of chocolate, I have found this to be most beneficial, and surprisingly easy to do. It's amazing how clear a passage becomes when I read it in the context of a whole chapter, or even a book! (Did you know that Mark's gospel or the book of Ruth, for example, can be read in their entirety in just over an hour?)

Secondly, I have benefitted from reading books which give an overview of the whole Bible. Two great ones are *GPS-God's Plan for Salvation* by Allan Chapple and *God's Big Picture* by Vaughan Roberts. Both are available from Koorong Books and both are excellent introductions to the story and meaning of the whole Bible.

As Christians and Mothers Union members we do need to listen to others, both within and outside our organisation. Most importantly, though, we need to listen to God by removing the static of other voices, making sure that our agenda fits with his and remaining tuned in to him.

TO REALLY LISTEN ...



Toni Mitchell

My son, Joshy, has multiple disabilities and is hearing impaired. He had no hearing until his first hearing operation when he was 6. A recent hearing test showed his hearing has diminished. He has bone conduction hearing aides, but doesn't like to use them much as background noise can be overwhelming and too much for him to cope with.

He was born hearing impaired, didn't respond to sounds around him, didn't hear the hospital machines beeping; he didn't hear me. He needed to see me, to be able to hear me, see my face, read my lips and expression, to see my eyes. He needed to see my body... to read my body language to make sure of his place in my communication, to know I was talking fully to him, to read my hands as I signed to him and see my facial expression echoed my body language. He needed to know what I was saying was genuine. When I told him I loved him, he needed to know it was true by seeing my face and reading my body language and the tone of my voice.

With Joshy's limited comprehension, he needs things to be said simply and directly. He does not understand jokes, sarcasm or hidden meanings. He takes everything literally. When Joshy is talking to me, he needs to know I am listening. By seeing me look in his eyes, that I am actively listening and responding to his words. He uses a lots of sound effects, gestures and hand movements when he talks. A lot of this words aren't clear and to understand what he is saying, you need to look at his body too, read his hands and body language, and to know what has been going on around him so you can understand what he is saying.

Communication is two way. Joshy has taught me this more than anyone else. I have to stop working, stop what I am doing, put the phone/book/FB down, switch off TV, pay attention and really listen to what he is saying to have a conversation with him. When I am fully engaged with him, listening, talking, giving him my full attention, having a conversation, he knows I love him.

Three sparks that kindle love.: A face, demeanor, speech.
(Triads of Ireland)



MULOA IN LENT

MOTHERS' UNION LISTENING, OBSERVING, ACTING LESLEY MCLEAN

LISTENING

I heard the voice of Jesus say is the first line of each of the three verses of a hymn by Horatius Bonar. TiS 585, AHB 500. *Come unto me and rest* is the first of the biddings voiced by Jesus.

Lent could be just the time to improve your listening. Lent is a time of rest in the sense of doing something different; a change after all is as good as a holiday.

We could begin with thinking about what we listen to – radio, TV, telephone, Facebook, idle chatter. This is hearing, it's not exactly listening but information input beaming into our being, clogging up the little grey cells, jamming our thought processes like that vast *fatberg* clogging up that English sewer.

In all this, the result may be that we are no longer able to hear the voice of Jesus. No longer do we *have ears to hear*, nor can we *listen* as Jesus would want us to. We do need all our attention to hear his Voice, because his teachings were not clear statements but puzzles. The gospels show clearly that Jesus did not deliver his message of Salvation with dot-points. Mark 4:2-3a *He began to teach them things in parables and in his teaching he said to them Listen!*

Jesus, Son of God and Son of Man understood the complexities and mysteries of our human life and society. He taught *a very large crowd* and we know that Roman soldiers, scribes and Pharisees, business men and common folk gathered. He expected them to *Listen*.

St Benedict opens his book, *The Rule of St Benedict*, with the entreaty to his reader to *listen with the ear of the heart*. He seems to be suggesting that we bring caring attention to our listening, that we use our emotions to judge what is going on. If we are in a conversation, our heart's care goes into the effort with which we listen.

Then the person to we are listening is the focus of our thoughts and our heart. This is often very difficult to do. Perhaps the person is talking about themselves and our own inward voice is crying out, 'but what about me?'; 'I had an operation too you know'; 'my grandchild has just topped the state'; 'I've been a widow longer than you so I know more about it'.

A heart-guided listener yearns to listen attentively to and for the other person. At this point in time the listener's needs are not paramount. Of course it goes without saying that we are not perfect listeners. Perhaps you might undertake the practice of rest as Jesus bids, keeping quiet and listening this Lent.

OBSERVING

Behold I freely give the living water, thirsty one, Stoop down and drink and live is the second bidding voiced by Jesus.

In John's Gospel, Chapter 4: 1-30, Jesus encounters the Samaritan woman at Jacob's Well and asks her to give him a drink. Their ensuing conversation tosses their observations backwards and forwards. 'You're a Jew', (she noticed); 'Why ask me?

If you knew who I am, you would have asked me for living water', (urging her to be more observant). Jesus, the giver of living water and the Samaritan woman, with her questioning and honesty: their conversation continues in this vein with demands and questions. She receives living water freely.

True observation demands as much self-abnegation as listening. When we are fully aware of the other person, we are in the position to notice body language, clothing, and such mannerisms that tell a story. We are like a tracker, a detective, with sharpened wits and skill.

However, when we observe, we can be burdened by the baggage of our prejudice and fears. We may jump to conclusions, we may have decided we have the answers and not be prepared to have our opinions changed, let alone be informed.

We can see in the meeting of Jesus with the Samaritan woman that they are both alive in their encounter. With the gift of living water, we too can be fully alive, fully aware when we observe; drinking in the blessings of godly gifts that can enable us to make the judgments necessary for our Christian mission.

ACTING

I am this dark world's light, look unto me is the third bidding voiced by Jesus.

In chapter 8 of John's gospel we find one of Jesus' great I AM declarations: *I am the light of the world*. It comes straight after the account of the woman caught in adultery; bursting like a ray of sunshine and hope on the darkness of sin and condemnation. Jesus had challenged those who condemned the woman, saying, *Let anyone among you who is without sin, be the first to throw a stone at her*. And to the woman he says, *Neither do I condemn you*.

A dark world of condemnation indeed and into that dark world Jesus declares his Godhead using the word uttered by God on Mt Sinai *I am who I am*. He named himself *the dark world's light*. *I am the light of the World* promises that we shall live in that light, the light of life and we can walk in that Light of life.

There is no threat of power failure when we walk in the light of Christ. I have read (most) of the Report of MULO A South Pacific. The testimonies of participants are resonant with enLIGHTenment:

- **“This has encouraged me so much – I have renewed my faith.”**
- **“I feel encouraged to take risks for God.”**

- **“Australian indigenous people are not here – I pray that will change!”**

Lent is the perfect time to consider how and why we act and how and why we don't and now we should act.

Maybe you feel with each step of the Way of MULO A there is a danger of overwhelming people with OUR schema, plans, ideas, beliefs, demands gets exponentially greater.

After all we have invested time and patience, put our topic of conversation on hold, resisted the temptation to jump in and make suggestions. We have taken time to shine the Light on our actions to make sure they are free of any motivations of prestige, or the enhancement of our own reputation.

But NO

How wonderful to be encouraged to take risks for God; to throw away the old rationalisations – we can't interfere, get involved, we're too old, too young, too busy, I need me time, I've worked all my life, I deserve a real rest.

WE CAN ACT

Action Stations under the Light of Christ.

Remember:

Christ has no body but yours,
No hands, no feet on earth but yours,
Yours are the eyes with which he looks
Compassion on this world
Yours are the feet with which he walks to do good,
Yours are the hands, with which he blesses all the world.
Yours are the hands, yours are the feet,
Yours are the eyes, you are his body.
Christ has no body now but yours,
No hands, no feet on earth but yours,
Yours are the eyes with which he looks
compassion on this world.
Christ has no body now on earth but yours.

Teresa of Avila (1515–1582)

AND PRAY

O God of truth and mercy, whose voice we miss in the distractions of our lives, penetrate the core of our being, that we may hear and be glad, knowing ourselves accepted in your love, able once again to live in your truth and forgiveness. Jim Cotter *Into the Silence* p.143

Lesley McLean

National Prayer and Spirituality Coordinator.

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My Grandson Notices Lots of Things

Kerry Holland



Alex with his binoculars (Photo supplied)

It is a hot day and I am tired because my 3 $\frac{3}{4}$ year old grandson has been playing at my house for the day. I have been looking after him one day a week since he was weaned. Although I'm feeling a little worn there is a bubble of joy inside me as I think about the day. I remember the way my grandson played cheerily in the garden, chopping off dead flowers, resting the toy cars in the hedge, chatting to himself, checking out the grasshopper, standing hands on hips watching the tiny lizard and just running around. The freedom and happiness of his play touches me and I am warmed by the memory of it.

Usually I have a few activities planned on these days. But every time the plans change as the day unfolds. Alex will have picked up the recorder and so there is an impromptu music lesson, or he wants to look through the binoculars or decides he is hungry and we stop for food.

Alex knows what he wants most of the time and I enjoy allowing him to notice and make decisions about what he likes or doesn't like. I guide him at times but only where necessary...for example when it is too hot to go outside.

There will be plenty of times in his life when he will be encouraged not to notice what he wants and to put his needs aside. So I figure that his time with me, being given space to listen interiorly to what he desires and to observe the things around him is important. Things don't always work out the way he wants and my plans don't always come to fruition but I am hopeful that as he grows up he will be able to observe what is happening around him and articulate his feelings and thoughts. This will help him to decide how to act.

I think about how I tune out to my own thoughts and feelings at times, how sometimes I don't notice what is happening within or around me. God speaks with a quiet voice most of the time so noticing is essential.

Jesus was a great observer of his interior energies and of what was happening around him and he acted on what he noticed. We see it a lot. He was doing this when he stopped for the haemorrhaging woman who had touched his cloak. He noticed and he acted.

When I think of my little grandson happily stooping to look at the flowers just as Jesus must have done as a little boy, my hope is that, like Jesus, he grows up to be sensitive to life within and around him, and to God's quiet voice, and as a result acts with wisdom and grace.

It was a privilege to be one of over sixty Leaders from Australia, New Zealand, Melanesia and Papua New Guinea who travelled to Auckland for the MULO A 1 Conference 19-23 August 2018. The venue, the Quality Hotel Parnell proved ideal with its comfortable shared rooms, good service and excellent meals and large Conference room.

We began with a Choral Eucharist in the magnificent Holy Trinity Cathedral where all Mothers Union visitors were warmly welcomed. The Conference began with a special Maori Song of Welcome and a welcome from the Archbishop of New Zealand, the Bishop of Auckland and Provincial President Joan Neild. Then it was down to work with our facilitators Bronwyn and Tagolyn who introduced us to the global process of MULO A. With over 4million members in 84 countries we are part of a worldwide organization and the aim of the MULO A process is to hear voices from around the world, by listening to members and working with churches and communities to co-create the future of Mothers Union.

MY MULO A EXPERIENCE

BEVERLEY PERRY
BRISBANE DIOCESE.



We were divided into family groups from different diocese and cultures and worked in workshops. The aim was for us to gain understanding of how Mothers Union makes a difference in peoples lives and how we can be more effective in our church and community, and to feel equipped to take MULO A back to our Diocese. MULO A is a process that get us **Listening** to God, each other and the vulnerable, and to learn **Whose** lives we touch or could be touching, **What** difference we are making or could be making and **How** to effectively make a difference or could.

In our workshops we looked at the origins of Mothers Union by learning from the Mary Sumner Story. We reflected on the Bible passage of Blind Bartimaeus to see what makes Mothers Union effective in bringing changes to people's lives. We identified the helps and hindrances we encounter in our Mothers Union work and through a mime *Crossing the River* discussed important factors in overcoming hindrances and reflected on Bible verse that could help. These were just three of the eight workshops that helped us understand the MULO A process and to feel encouraged and enthusiastic about the future of Mothers Union.

The five days proved to be a wonderful experience as we enjoyed much fellowship, sharing, listening and working with our Mothers Union sisters as we explored the essence of what it is to be Mothers Union. Over meals there was a time to renew friendships, make new friends and build relationships. Then there was the social night when each country presented an item representing their culture. The girls from the Solomon Island with their songs, dance rhythm and energy outshone us all.

Finally, it was the challenge to take MULO A home and share what we have learnt. We were given a toolkit for putting faith into action and the task of planning workshops to be held in branches and deaneries throughout our own diocese.

This having been achieved I am now looking forward to our follow-up Conference held at St. John's College St. Lucia Brisbane 21-25 January. Here the same leaders will gather to collate and share their experiences and from this process it is hoped a clear framework and direction for Mothers Union globally will emerge helping to create a new vision for the future.

CAREY PARK MARY SUMNER DAY



In August 2018, Carey Park branch in the Diocese of Bunbury celebrated Mary Sumner Day with a lovely candlelight service complete with a spray of Eucalypt. Many members were involved in the reading and the final prayer was:

May the Australian Eucalypt with its diverse species, its unique blossoms, its perseverance to survive in tough time and its healing properties, inspire us in our commitment to MU Australia. Binding together people of different backgrounds, encouraging us to persevere in our faith so we may share the good news of our Saviour, Jesus Christ, and bring hope, beauty and wholeness to God's world.

MALENY FESTIVAL DIOCESE OF BRISBANE

For a number of years the Uniting Church in Maleny has hosted a Christmas tree festival, raising money by donations to various charities. Each year has a different theme eg. *Christmas around the world*, and this year *Christmas growing up*. MU represented the Anglican Church this year, using handmade decorations as we did when growing up, and advertising the work of MU. Here is a picture of our entry and our president, Judy Payne, and secretary Ruth Blackburn.



LONG SERVICE AWARDS WEST WYLONG

St Barnabas Mothers Union West Wyalong, part of the Bathurst diocese in NSW, enjoyed an end of year Christmas luncheon together on Sunday 18 November 2018.

Certificates were presented to members celebrating important milestones in their association with our group by St Barnabas Rector Father Daryl McCullough. Pictured standing (left to right) are Father Daryl McCullough, Mary Staniforth: 10 years, Beryl Henley: 15 years, Jenny Taylor: 55 years, Joy McGee: 55 years and Jean Maitland: 15 years. Missing from our picture was Mary Ford who achieved 30 years of membership.

An anniversary dinner is planned in June 2019 to mark the 60th birthday of Mothers Union in the Parish of West Wyalong. Our group are currently busy locating those who have had any association with us over the years. We would welcome communication from anyone who would like to join us for this celebration. Contact can be made through our Parish Rector.

Susan Haines



LONG SERVICE AWARDS IN GLEN WAVERLEY



The long and faithful service of three members of our branch was celebrated on 7 October 2018. They have all served in various positions within the branch and deanery.

Gwyneth was admitted to MU in 1958 at Emmanuel Anglican Church in Oakleigh and has represented MU at Deanery and Diocesan functions. Gwyneth has been actively involved in MU and GFS, taking office and always willing to serve. She is a great encourager and worker, always with a friendly smile and is a valued member of our MU group.

Veronica was admitted to MU in Adelaide in 1968 and attended there until 1982. Upon moving to Melbourne Veronica has been involved in many aspects of MU life serving as Link Secretary, Secretary, Deanery Rep, Vice President, President and Hostess for lunches for over 70's. She has also served in many roles within the church community and is a very kind and caring person. She always has some crochet or knitting on hand!

Faye was admitted in May, 1968 and has served as Treasurer, literature Secretary for 26 years, President and hostess in the MU shop for over 30 years, Deanery Rep to the Prayer Dept as well as hostess for lunches for over 70's.

Pictured are Elaine Longford (Diocesan President), Veronica Barclay (50 years), Gwyneth Harrison (60 years) and Faye Brace (50 years)

16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM ROCKHAMPTON

Rockhampton Diocese organised three main activities for the 16 Days of Activism in 2018.

A Community Vigil on 25 November was led by Bishop David Robinson, our Diocesan Bishop and AMUA Chaplain in the parish church in North Rockhampton. We followed the Service outline from Mary Sumner House, making it locally appropriate with Community involvement. It included last year's Global Moment, which we found particularly meaningful. Guest Speaker Jen Korn, the Family and Domestic Violence Facilitator at Uniting Care, spoke on her main themes of prevention through education, don't be a bystander, using kindness, and what can each of us do in our community when it comes to Domestic Violence. We will become more involved with Jen in the future.



Prayer Trees were on display in parishes during the whole period. Initially this was to be a branch initiative in parishes where there are branches, then we invited all parishes in the Diocese to participate, and some have.

The prayers were offered up in services on 9th December in whatever way the local priest chose. Some planned to use the prayers as part of their intercessions at services during the period. Photo shows members attaching prayers to the St Paul's Cathedral Branch Prayer Tree.

Branches also filled *pamper packs* of toiletries for the local Women's Shelter or Community Centres.

COMBINED CELEBRATION _ 100 YEARS



In November 2018 a wonderful celebration of 100 years of service by branch members of Mothers Union (MU); 40 years for Nelson Bay and 60 years for Williamtown, Medowie and Mallabulla.

The Newcastle Dioceses Mothers Union executive travelled from Newcastle along with Rev Gary Harman and his wife Dorothy. Others came from as far afield as Morpeth, Raymond Terrace and of course the Williamtown and Nelson Bay members. The weather was perfect and 47 friends and members gathered in our church, which was decorated with a birthday party theme including balloons in the Mothers Union colours of blue and white.

The service opened with a reflection on the history of the two parishes. Parish Mothers Union Presidents; Pauline Hockings from Nelson Bay and Lola Reinhard from Williamtown joined together to present a potted history of the beginnings of the Williamtown and Nelson Bay Parishes and the formation of the MU branches in these churches.

Rev Gary connected this year's theme, 'mission' with the prayer practice of MU and called on us to be even more prayerful. Especially in today's context where we must look at what is happening to us as a church and be prepared to rebuild on the good things that are happening and be open to change where needed. In this light, Mothers Union should continue to pray for the world and the church and uphold Jesus' challenge to us all to go forth and make disciples.



Another cause for celebration followed with Pauline Hockings being recognised by the Diocesan MU President and awarded a scroll for her outstanding 40 year service to Nelson Bay MU and especially for her 30 plus years as president.

A beautiful cake was cut as a witness to our Mothers' Unions united in celebration, service and prayer.

The lifeblood of Mothers' Union is the commitment, faith and compassion of its members and friends. Generations of women and men have invested in Mothers' Union, so that today it is healthy, alive and growing. Now the future is in our hands



'like a tree planted by water, with roots that reach deep by the stream...' Jeremiah 17.8

Legacies can make a lasting difference to MU Australia's future. To find out how you can include us in your Will, you can contact:

MU Australia,

Marilyn Robey,
Australia Council Secretary,
8 Darwin Drive,
Bathurst NSW 2795
email muaustsecretary@telstra.com





THE COMING OF THE LIGHT

AND THREE LESSONS AND CAROLS

In December last year a special Advent occasion was held at St. Bartholomew's Church in Alstonville. The whole church community worked together to make the night a special outreach event, with its focus on families and on the coming of Christ, hence the title, "The Coming of the Light".

The idea grew from seeing a photo of a Church decorated with ropes of LED lights and from the feeling our lovely sandstone Church would look wonderful decorated in this way and provide a exciting and unexpected backdrop to our Advent night. Our Rector, Rev. Dr. Desiree Snyman, was very supportive of the concept and of it being planned and organised by our Alstonville Branch of Mothers Union. The Parish Council also supported this special focus on Advent, offering finances to purchase of over 300 metres of fairy lights and providing a meal at the beginning of the event.

Much planning, ingenuity and artistry went into the putting up, by several men from our Church, of the long ropes of lights. 80 metres of lights became entangled and only with the patience, good humour and dextrous untangling of the men were we rewarded with success. Years of unknottng their children's fishing lines paid off!

The evening commenced in our Ministry Centre, with a Christmas game involving all ages – children, parents and those who were quite a lot older! Team members, for two teams, were randomly chosen as they came in and given a red or gold tinsel badge to identify them. The aim was for the teams to compete in placing their set of decorations on their tree. Where a team member had mobility issues, the tree was carried to them! The game caused a great deal of laughter and was enjoyed by participants and spectators.

After their meal, people were asked to make their way to the Church where Choir members were waiting to sing as people came in to the sound of their lovely music and to the surprise of finding our historic stone Church illuminated only with the soft glow of fairy lights, candles and lights strung through the flower arrangements in the Sanctuary. The Choir helped create a unique atmosphere and were vital to the atmosphere and message of the night with their Advents hymns.

Several different people were invited to be readers of the Lessons. Children were involved in a Nativity activity for which our MU President had made the outfits for Mary, Joseph and the Angel Gabriel. A rustic cradle was made by our Op Shop leader and filled with straw. All the children present joined in with instruments to accompany the singing of *Joy to the World* as Mary and Joseph entered and placed baby Jesus into the cradle, with Gabriel watching over all, having earlier had his wonderful message delivered by a reader. Coloured lights were now turned on around the cradle.

As the service concluded and the last hymn was sung, people sat, enjoying the special atmosphere the evening had created. During the Three Lessons and Carols, the darkness had fallen completely and the fairy lights had become even more beautiful, adding to the wonderment of honouring the coming of Christ – the coming of the Light, in such a meaningful and family-centred way.

Gerri White ,St. Bartholomew's Church, Alstonville

MORE THAN A DRY SPELL



REV'D PAUL MITCHELL

Large parts of our state and large parts of Australia have been devastated by drought. It is more than just 'going through a dry spell'.

There have been some recent rains but they have not changed the underlying problem of patterns and seasons which have made sustainable crops and feed for animals almost impossible.

The generous responses from coastal benefactors have provided some relief. The donations are welcomed yet they are a stop-gap which do not change the fundamental problem. We are going through a time when there is simply not enough rain falling in many places. There will be times when that pattern reverses and there are floods. That will happen, but the overall patterns of climate change in Australia has led to less sustainable reliable rainfall.

Our federal government, and society, are well populated with people who deny that climate change as a result of human activity actually exists. There are many reasons why people choose ignorance and denial. The science is overwhelming and undeniable. Yet other factors intervene. To accept that human activity has changed our climate, making it more unpredictable, requires change. Change in attitudes and change in behaviour. It WILL cost us. It will cost because we will be inconvenienced by recycling, reusing, opting for products and practices which are less immediate. Easy options have brought us to this place.

To recognise that we have all been part of the accumulated total of the factors which have led to climate change calls us to look at how we use the resources available to us. How much do we drive when we could walk? How much do we look for ways to share rather than consuming petrol and other finite resources solo? How much and in what ways do we use the particular plastics which are causing increasing devastation to marine life and becoming embedded in ecosystems and the world food chain? Do we even realise how much plastic we eat in our food?

Our parish had a stewardship program in 2018, a program which was about far more than just our finances. It is a call to pay attention to all that has been entrusted to us. Caring for our world, being aware, being awake and responding well, are all aspects of stewardship. In the opening chapters of the Bible we are called to be 'good stewards' of the world which God has given us.

Advent is the call to 'wake up'. In its narrow sense this is a call to be awake to what God is doing, preparing for the birth of Jesus. In its broader sense this is a call to be awake to the message and invitation and challenge of God. That call includes being good stewards of the world entrusted to us.

So, how will we honour this call into the year ahead? How will we act in ways which lead to long term change in behaviour, conserving and reusing and cherishing our world and its resources? If the plight of those affected by drought touches us at all, will we let this flow into our awareness of our part in the life of this world? Yes, respond generously to those in immediate need. Yes, care and give and donate. AND look at the opportunity to be champions of deeper awareness.

AMUA DONATION TO WESTERN QUEENSLAND DROUGHT RELIEF

Following the successful Queensland and Northern Territory Provincial Council held in August, \$3,000 was sent to the AMUA National Disaster Relief Fund. We applied for this donation, with some suggestions from the Longreach parish as to how to spend it, as there are no AMUA branches beyond Rockhampton and the coast. The Western Queensland Drought Relief Fund was chosen as the channel – and we received \$10,000 from the Disaster Fund (a loaves and fishes miracle). The money has recently been sent.

In her letter of thanks, the Secretary of the Drought Committee (all volunteers) wrote: ‘Thank you for the very generous donation made to our Appeal recently. We are truly appreciative of your very thoughtful support to our outback communities.

Your funds will be loaded onto prepaid debit cards or vouchers and distributed directly to landholders in western Queensland, for them to spend on personal needs in their local communities. This keeps the money in the region, allows landholders to choose how they spend the money, and gives local businesses a boost with the extra trade. Every donated dollar is spent locally, guaranteeing that both a farming family and a town business family is helped. In 2018, we aim to surpass \$1M in donated funds distributed to drought impacted households across 18 Shires throughout Western Queensland’. So 40 families will benefit from the AMUA National Emergency Disaster Fund. Thank you to all.



I came home from the MULO conference in Brisbane to find a big parcel – what a wonderful surprise!



A Tambo Teddy named Malta Mary (Malta is a station in the area as explained in the card around her neck) as a thank you for the donation to the Drought Appeal! I sent the cheque in a MU card with Mary Sumner’s prayer on the front and explained a bit about her, trusting that the recipients of the vouchers would be blessed as Mary had prayed. So it is a really appropriate name.

I have heard of Tambo Teddies on the ABC at various times, now to see one – and actually have one – is almost unbelievable. Those who make them are truly gifted – the workmanship is exceptional. *Mothers’ Union Rockhampton* is embroidered on the pad of her foot. Looking up the website, our Teddy is the top of the range, complete with leather stockwhip, swag and Akubra. The Drought Appeal logo is embroidered on her coat, too.

It is a truly beautiful gift, and I want everyone to know about her, especially all those who were at Queensland Provincial Conference when the initial donation was made - but everyone in Australia too, as the balance of the donation came from Australian Disaster Relief Fund.

Noelle Frazer, Diocesan President Rockhampton.

AMUA SUPPORTING CANDIDATES FOR ORDINATION



AMUA Brisbane Diocesan President, Bev Perry presented certificates for the 2019 CPE Bursaries to three Candidates for Ordination at a recent meeting. CPE (Clinical Pastoral Care) is a compulsory unit for formation students in the Brisbane Diocese. This year's recipients pictured above are (left to right) Juliana Bate, Quinn Humphries and Elizabeth McConnell. Each year AMUA awards bursaries to three students. The college is responsible for choosing the recipients. Photo Credit: Chris Martin

Elizabeth has completed the unit and shared her thoughts on the effectiveness of CPE training. Here is her story.

MY SPIRITUAL JOURNEY

ELIZABETH MCCONNELL

CS Lewis writes in his book *The Problem of Pain*: "Pain insists upon being attended to. God whispers to us in love, speaks to us in conscience, and shouts to us in suffering."

Last year I had the good fortune to complete the three month course of Clinical Pastoral Education and I wanted to talk to you about the effect that this has had on me.

Thanks to your generous bursaries to formation students, you are having a direct impact on our ability to become caring, empathetic ministers who have at least begun some of our own hard spiritual work. This will see us able to walk with others who are in transition and find that life has taken an unexpected turn.

For me, the time I spent studying and practicing during CPE was transformative. I was being lifted up and made into something new. Through caring for patients at hospital during their transitions and my subsequent supervision, I came to understand some of my own pain. Pain that I didn't know existed, that is how good I was at protecting myself from it. This is precisely why programs like CPE are crucial to the formation of our clergy. Imagine if I never found that pain... it would be like a bomb waiting to explode. I was invited to deal with it in a safe space with people around me who could care for me. It was excruciating. I had to relive it. I had to dissolve some of my own foundation.

I went searching for where the truth of God existed, and then I had to rebuild. All the while, continuing to care for *others* in *their* transitions. This dual caring for people and being cared for while in transition allowed me to understand how vulnerable these places are. So, while there are so many things

that patients were sharing with me that I've not experienced, I *was* experiencing deep vulnerability. I was experiencing what it means to have my foundation shaken. This opens up my ability to be empathetic.

In Jesus, God's commitment to participate fully in creation was realised. God knows what suffering is: what pain is... what it is to have a child die... what it is to be subjected to violent abuse... what it is to grieve the death of a parent... what it is to die a human death. God has experienced all these things as a human does, in Jesus. For me, this is one of the most important ways that Jesus saves: **We are never without compassion.** Even when we despair, Jesus is there; Jesus despaired on the cross. We are always, completely, and *wholly* understood and loved by God.

This revelation is life-saving!

If I can help to shed a sliver of light on this profound truth for a single person, I will spend my entire life trying. In completing CPE, I found my calling: To go out and help people find where God is already sharing their lives with them.

So much is the Spirit calling me to this work, that I searched for a position in a hospital and was offered a place beginning the same day I was to return to my previous role, for the same number of hours per week, at the same rate of pay. More than a coincidence.

As I said before, my experience of CPE has led to wholeness for me. At the end of CPE while I was in the midst of this transformation all my senses were engaged, quite literally. As life returned to a state of normality that has settled somewhat; but I could smell things I would never have smelled before, and I am still drawn to express that which I experience in poetry, art, and music (something I had shut down over the years). I never felt so alive.

This is what you offer to students when you award a bursary for CPE. Empathetic ministers who are fully alive, who with the help of the Holy Spirit can hold the pain of others while helping people understand where God has been holding them in their pain. I will be eternally grateful for the opportunity to learn from the most wise people I've ever met.

Thank you.

Why did I join Mothers' Union?

On Sunday 27 January 2019 I was inducted into the MU and was asked to write an article explaining why I did this. The real question I suppose is – Why not join Mothers' Union! I have been the Vicar



of the Anglican Parish of Box Hill in the Diocese of Melbourne for just over three years.

It is in some ways a typical suburban Anglican parish with two elderly English-speaking congregations; struggling to pay our bills and keep our ministry life alive! But then again, on the other hand we are not typical in that we also have a thriving Chinese congregation and an energetic Sudanese congregation. It is a multicultural mix that presents joys and sorrows. Why mention my context at all – well – because – right in the middle of our community life is our MU group – a group of committed and loyal women (about half-a-dozen- to dozen).

Our MU group faces many of the same issues other MU groups face in Australia – can we keep going? Are we strong and vital enough to survive? My answer to these issues is to roll my sleeves up and dive in and be part of the solution! Instead of staying on the sidelines and letting things unfold as they may – I have decided that since the parish has a MU group – I need to be part of it and add my voice, energy, ideas and prayer to the mix. We may not survive and God's will be done BUT it will not be for my lack of prayer and endeavour.

So I put the challenge out to all clergy and Anglican men – why not be part of MU Australia! While facing difficult times in Australia – the MU is strong and vital in many parts of the world - so instead of reinventing the wheel – let's use the organisations we *already* have to see where God is leading us.

The Reverend Shane Hübner

Vicar

Anglican Parish of Box Hill Diocese of Melbourne

Queen Elizabeth honours former Mothers' Union Worldwide President Lynne Tembey

Former Mothers' Union Worldwide President, Lynne Tembey, opening a new MU Centre in Tukuya, in the Southern Islands of Tanzania, last year.

Photo Credit: Mothers' union on Twitter



The former Worldwide President of the Mothers' Union, Lynne Tembey, is to be awarded the Order of the British Empire (OBE). The award is part of Britain's system of honours and is presented by the Queen or a senior member of the royal family acting in her place. The announcement of the award was one of a number made as part of the annual New Year's Honours list published by the UK government. Last year, the Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby, honoured Lynne Tembey with the Cross of St Augustine, ahead of her retirement at the end of 2018.

The award of the OBE has been made in recognition of her 'services to Mothers' Union, women and families', the official awards list said.

'When I learned that I was to be awarded with the OBE, I was filled with amazement', Lynne Tembey said. 'I feel truly privileged. I have greatly loved my time as Worldwide President. Our members are incredible in all they strive to achieve, changing hearts, minds and lives in wonderful ways.'

'To receive the OBE from Her Majesty and the Cross of St Augustine from the Archbishop of Canterbury is so humbling. I accept these awards through God's grace and in recognition of the worldwide members it has been an honour and joy to serve.'

Lynne Tembey has been involved with Mothers' Union for almost 40 years. She has served in leadership roles locally as branch leader and deanery leader and regionally as Vice President of the Diocese of Carlisle and Provincial President of York. For the past six years she has served as Worldwide President. She will receive the award at an investiture ceremony later this year.

She has been succeeded as Worldwide President by Mrs Sheran Harper, from Guyana – the first Worldwide President from outside the British Isles. In February, Mrs Harper will be commissioned in her new role by the Archbishop of Canterbury during a special service in Southwark Cathedral, London.

Posted by Anglican Communion News Service on 11 January 2019

acnslst@anglicancommunion.org

24/AUTUMN 2019



ANNIE'S STORY

Annie is a member of the Busselton Branch of MU in Western Australia and she is visually impaired. This makes it extremely difficult for her to read the Mia Mia.

When Annie and her friend, Eleanor, were in Launceston in September 2017 for the MU 125th Anniversary of MU Australia, Annie made her first contact with the Sandra Chambers who is the producer of the Mia Mia on a CD.

In 2018 Annie received the Spring and Summer editions of the Mia Mia on CD. Annie was 'delighted, over the moon'. Now she could listen to all the articles and readings and even the songs which were sung and played on the CD. So for the first time in years Annie now had access to the Mia Mia from the front cover to the back page.

Prior to that, Annie had a reading machine which magnified the written word on to a screen but it wasn't effective. In fact it was quite unsatisfactory. Annie is so happy with the Mia Mia CD—she said it was the best gift she had ever received. In her own words, 'she is one ecstatic MU member'.



ATTENTION

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**For further information;-
Contact your Branch Treasurer or
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FAMILIES WORLDWIDE

-OUR WINDOW ON THE WORLD

Have you ever found yourself lost for words when asked, 'So, what does Mothers Union actually *do*?' In the pressure of the moment it's easy to get tongue-tied, or give a lame answer like, 'Oh we meet in the church on the second Wednesday of the month ...' all the while watching our questioner's eyes glaze over. Some years ago Reg Bailey, then the CEO of Mothers Union, challenged Australia Council members to come up with an 'elevator explanation' (something succinct which could be delivered in the time it takes to travel a few floors in an elevator) in answer to this question.

In formulating such an explanation we have a great treasure in Families Worldwide. Although small in size, this guide to the work of Mothers Union Worldwide, and the associated reminders to pray, is an invaluable resource. As we pray daily for the work of Mothers Union worldwide our understanding is broadened and our enthusiasm renewed. As a spin-off, we are better equipped to develop that 'elevator explanation'.

Every edition has information about the activities, challenges and joys faced by Mothers Union members around the globe as well as articles of special interest. I also love the verses of scripture which accompany each topic, which remind me not just to pray, but to pray according to the will of God. The current edition has helpful articles on how the Wave of Prayer works as well as copies of Mary Sumner's prayer, the Mothers Union prayer and the two forms for Midday Prayers. Although every article is interesting, my attention was particularly drawn to that on South Sudan (page 24) and the prayers for Peace and Reconciliation on page 47- both highly relevant to AMUA's current overseas focus.



Where there is conflict there is also hope, as the Mothers' Union members of South Sudan have been discovering this year

Whether it is in our private prayers, in our public gatherings or in answer to the question, 'What does Mothers Union do?' the information in Families Worldwide is informative, encouraging and often sobering. It is a daily reminder that we're not just a bunch of old women who like to drink tea and gossip, but a worldwide powerhouse of over 4,000,000 members working and praying together for the enrichment of families and the glory of God. Let's read it, mark it and inwardly digest it so that we can pray for and share about what Mothers Union does with confidence and enthusiasm.

Christine Brain

26/AUTUMN 2019



Toronto MU President Rae Richardson presenting a Certificate of Recognition to Mary Hansford on her achievement of knitting 100 beanies for the Mission to Seafarers during 2018. It is estimated she knitted around 350,000 stitches on these beanies to be given to complete strangers.

Her fellow MU members saw this as Love in action. Other members of the Toronto MU knit for Mum's cottage which cares for young mothers and small children, jackets for the NICU at John Hunter Hospital and baby bundles given to new/young mothers at the John Hunter Hospital.

Cynthia Hardie



In late October, some Mothers' Union members from Aotearoa New Zealand and Polynesia (above) attended the Anglican Women's Studies Centre Hui in Nadi, Fiji.

At right, Mrs Kelera (Nai) Cokanasiga, MU leader in Fiji, models the pieces of superb tapa cloth presented to Karena de Pont to acknowledge her wonderful work in her position as Administrator of Anglican Women's Studies Centre. Behind Nai is fellow MU member Adi Lilieta Tukana.



... IN NEW ZEALAND

In the Diocese of Waikato and Taranaki in October, St Mary's, New Plymouth branch welcomed three new members, Beverley Hall, Elizabeth Trundle and Margaret Maechler.

A recent donation to the Te Puna Trust used to buy stick blenders, mixing bowls, spoons and small containers suitable for freezing baby food. The young mothers are learning the joy of making freshly prepared food for their babies.



... IN SAMOA



Rachel Hunt-Solomona, our MU Leader is working on establishing MU Samoa, although she is very busy as a School Principal.

There have been a couple of small group meetings to sound out interest and, a Diocesan women's meeting in early December.

Information from Fiji, Samoa and New Zealand supplied by MU New Zealand

GOING, DOING, BEING.

JOHN CRONSHAW

GOING

As I write this, we are at the CMS Summer School in the Blue Mountains, NSW, where, because of the focus of the event, there is much emphasis on the sending of Missionaries throughout the world. People from a variety of Christian experiences, backgrounds and skills speak of their call of and from Jesus to *Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations...* (Matthew 28:19)

In *going* there is a cost, not restricted to the financial aspects, but a cost in separation from family and friends and the need to learn a new culture and how to fit into the new scene to be effective witnesses and teachers of the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Some readers may be experiencing the heartache of separation as members of your own family may also be going - going to another city for employment, accompanied by their families - your children's children.

DOING

For many, every spare moment and ounce of energy is absorbed by the things we "do" within our communities, whether these communities be church, gatherings such as VIEW clubs, CWA, Volunteering and so on. *Doing* occupies a great part of our life. We hear the expressions often about the busyness of retirement, or *Retirement! What's that?*

The classic case in the Bible is that of Mary and Martha that we read about in Luke 10. Many can relate to Martha's sense of frustration in her desire to host extra guests, and Jesus' answer *Martha, Martha, you are anxious and troubled about many things, but one thing is sure, Mary has chosen the good portion which will not be taken away from her.* (10:41-42) does not seem to help in *doing* what has to be done.

We are *saved to serve*, and our Christian experience is very tightly linked to deeds of service, and to balance the scales of the Mary-Martha enigma, we read in Matthew 10 about giving a cup of cold water in Jesus' name.

BEING

My wife Nancie and I hosted a lunch for five octogenarians from our church when one saintly lady proclaimed *I spend my time now being and not doing.*

Because she had cut out a lot of *doing* activities, she had more time *being available* for friends in need. Most of the time in *being* was devoted to being available. She had time to visit, and time to chat. Her ministry, while not *going* or *doing* had grown into *being* and most of the time in this being ministry is devoted to listening.

Often, after spending time with a friend, we come away stating that we just spent an hour or so in a *listening ministry*. Having the time to listen, particularly to a friend or neighbour who may be going through a rough patch is a great example of *being*. Being available to lend a listening ear is invaluable, so it is a ministry that can be equated to giving a glass of cold water. It may not seem a lot, but in God's plan, it may be the exercise of listening that extends God's compassion.

Pause 4 Poetry

THREE OF US

Three of us gather
at the neighbourhood
bus station.
One man is perplexed about
what service to catch.
An older lady listens
attentively to him,
clearly advising
the best route.
Standing close by
I ponder how confusions
draw people together,
contrasting with a society
running like clockwork
where we all know
our places embedded
in efficiency.
In such a world
we would be strangers
to our neighbours,
but in confusion
we reach out,
helping one another -
hands linking together

Sarah Muller

MY FLORAL FRIENDS

They have no eyes to see me
No ears to hear me
No mouth to speak to me
No legs to run to me
No arms to hold me

But they have colours to entice me
Scents to tantalize me
Windy dances to beguile me
Juices to soothe me
Crisp flavours to tempt me

Some have thorns to prick me
A simple message 'Don't pick me'
No bars to sharing colours and scents with me
In life my floral friends surround me
In death they will cover me.

Indrani Ganguly

BEEING

Sitting by the basil
I could hear the bees a humming
Quite a pleasant sound it was –
a dozen banjos strumming.
Busy though the bees were
buzzing around the blooms,
I was happy being still,
my mind in peaceful rooms.

What if I could be – just be
and learn to be at ease,
a hive of inactivity—
lazy if you please!
Would all the nectar gatherers
so busy in my mind,
discover once for all a life
beyond the daily grind?

Resting by the fireside,
reposing in my chair,
pondering on the present
and the comfort that is there.
In the flicker of the flame
I see a mystery,
and feel a calm within that's part
of knowing how to be.

Helen Morris

SCENT FROM THE PATIO

A sweet once-familiar scent
drifts in from the patio
evoking memories
of evening companionship
after dinner conversation
amusing stories of your day
thoughts from the past
hope for the future
old cane chairs with threadbare cushions
clouds sweeping across a moonlit sky.
I close my eyes
and breathe deeply.
You're not here
but our tobacco plant is blooming again

Susan Skowronski

*Flowering Tobacco (Nicotiana) has a distinctive sweet
smell. Flowers open in the cool of the evening and at
night.*

RECIPES

CRANBERRY MACADAMIA SLICE

Ingredients:-

1 cup Cranberries
¾ cup Crushed raw Macadamia nuts
185g Melted butter
1 ¼ cups brown sugar
1 Egg
Vanilla Essence
1 ½ cups S.R. Flour

Method:-

Cream butter & sugar
Add beaten Egg & vanilla then nuts & cranberries. Lastly add flour.
Press into greased or lined slab tin.
Bake 20 minutes @ 160°C
Cut while warm.

COCONUT LOAF

Ingredients:-

1 cup Sugar
1 cup Coconut
1 cup SR Flour
1 cup Coconut cream

Method:- Mix all together pour into small loaf tin.
Cook @ 200°C for 40minutes

EASY APPLE SLICE

Ingredients:-

1 Pkt. Cheap Vanilla cake mix
1 cup Coconut
125g. melted butter
410g tin Pie apple
Sml. tub light sour cream
1 Egg.

Method:-

Blend cake mix, coconut & butter
Then press into grease, or lined Lamington tin.
Bake @ 160degrees for 10 minutes
Remove from oven & cool for 5minutes
Spread pie apple over base
Mix beaten egg & sour cream together
& spread over slice. Sprinkle with cinnamon
Bake for further 20 minutes.

The recipes in this column are favourite recipes from Williamtown, Medowie, Mallabula MU Branch members.

CHILI CON CARNE

Ingredients

500 gms mince 1 can (420 gms) tomatoes
1 can kidney beans (baked beans works well)
1 tsp – 1 tblsp chili powder
1 tsp sugar garlic powder, to taste
1 tblsp plain flour Salt to taste

Method

Mix ingredients and microwave on High.
Onion powder may be used in place of garlic powder.

BOLOGNESE SAUCE

Ingredients

500 gms mince 125 gms tomato paste
420 gms canned tomatoes ½ cup red wine
Generous shake garlic powder

Method

Mix all the ingredients and microwave on High,
15 – 30 mins, or to taste

SULTANA LOAF

Ingredients

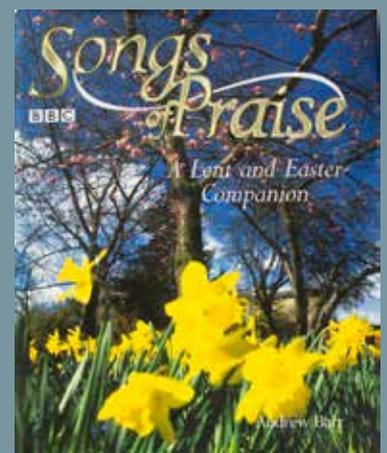
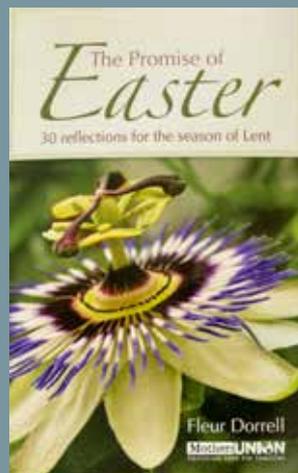
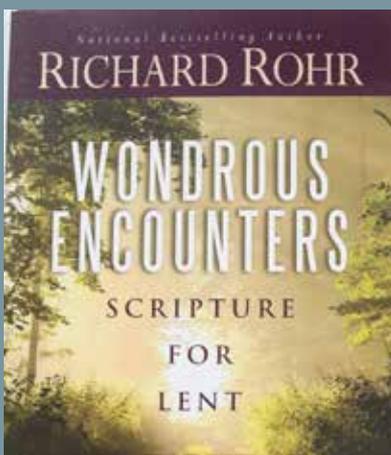
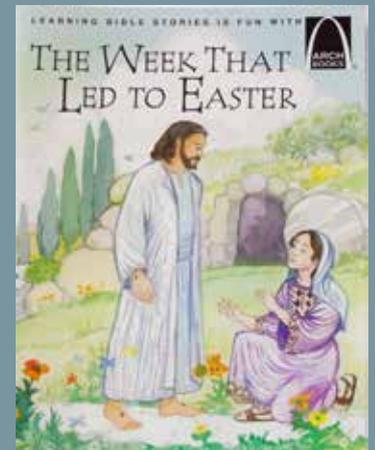
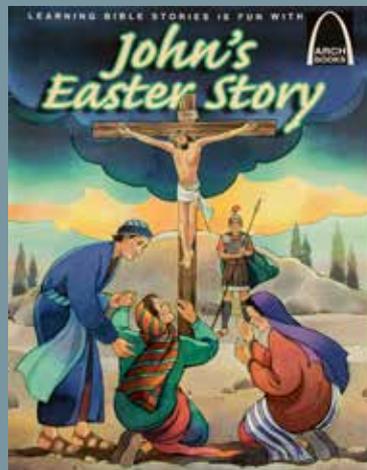
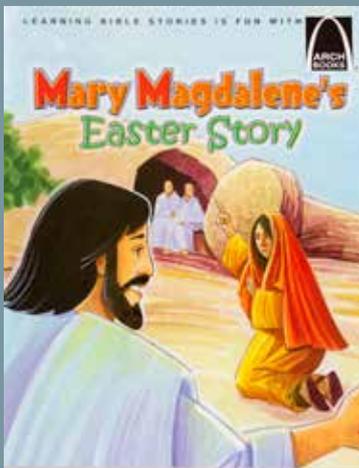
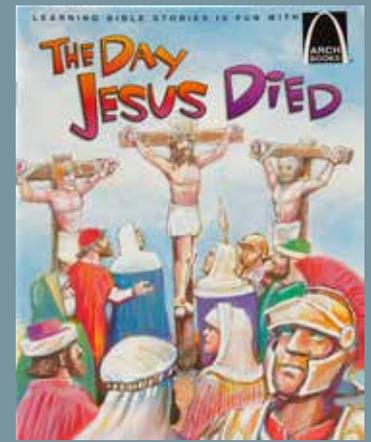
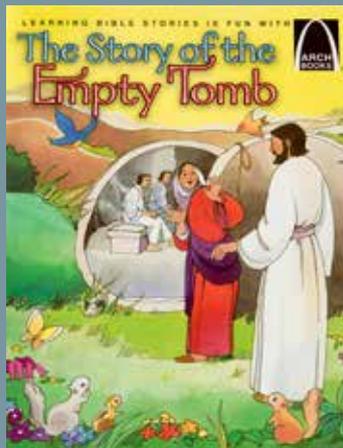
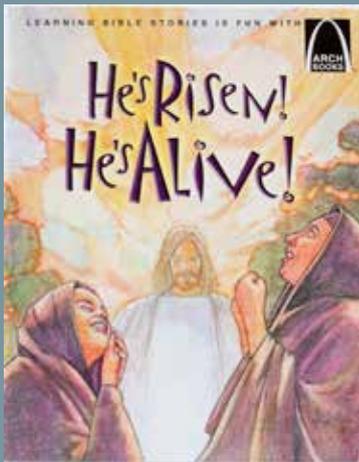
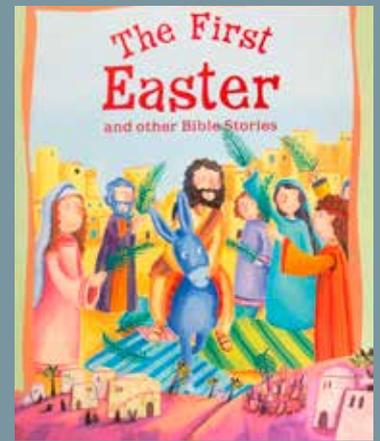
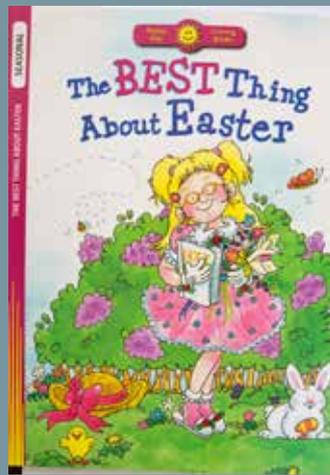
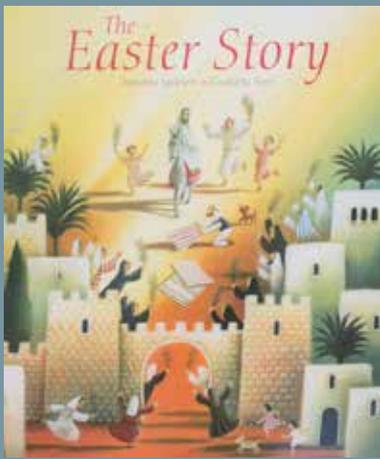
1 cup sultanas ¾ cup sugar
1 cup water 1 tblsp butter
1 egg 1 ½ cups SR Flour
Pinch salt Small tsp carb soda

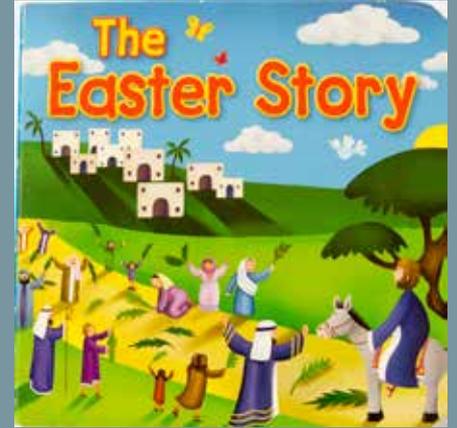
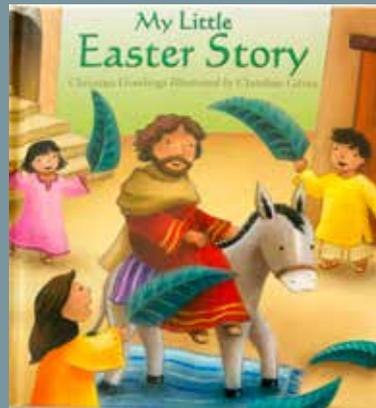
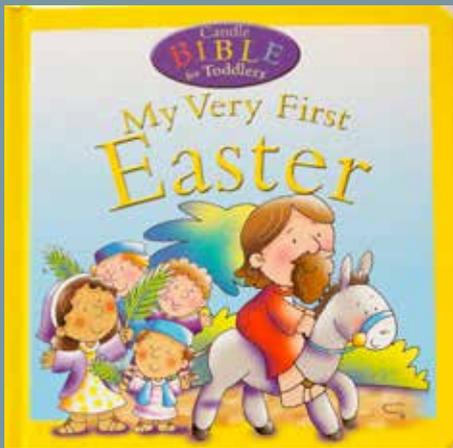
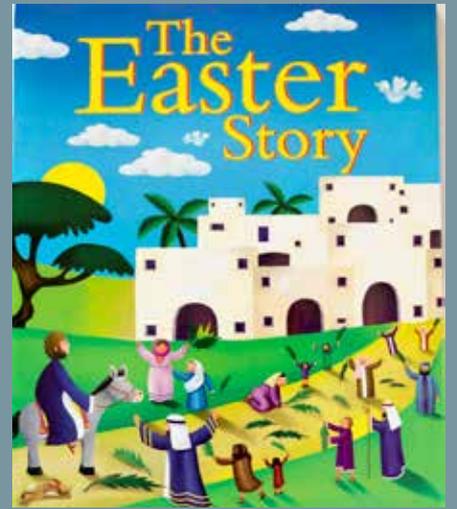
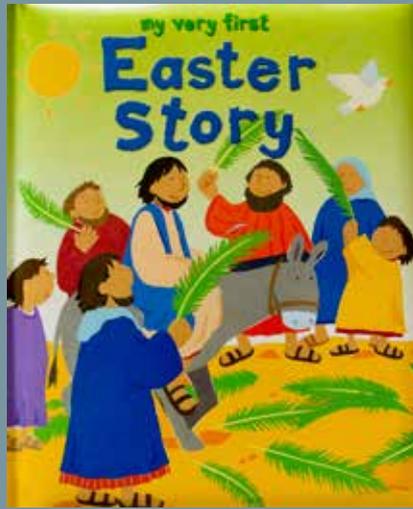
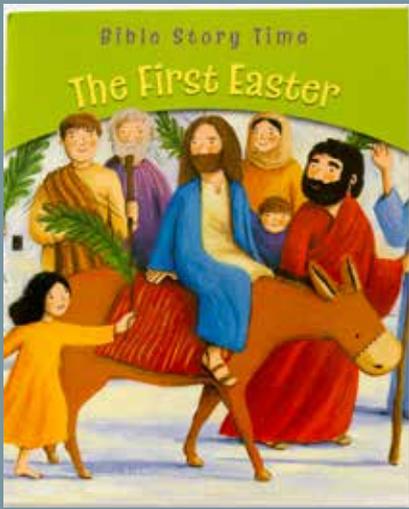
Method

Bring sultanas, sugar water, butter to the boil. Cool slightly. Add beaten egg, sifted dry ingredients. Bake in loaf tin 30-35 mins, moderate oven. Cook pasta on hot plate approx 15 mins. Drain. If sauce needs more liquid, add some of pasta cooking water. Freezes well – this can improve flavour.

Recipes from Kath Waddell (East Maitland. NSW) who writes: Some of my trusted recipes, evolved from more complicated ones as I have aged! I used to be an enthusiastic cook, attempting exotic food and entertaining friends at dinner parties, but 60 years up the track I prefer to let it cook itself if possible!

Contributions to this page
would be greatly appreciated.





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