

## Wave of Prayer:

### Diocesan Fact Sheet

GRAHAMSTOWN, SOUTH AFRICA

#### Wave of Prayer Group:

Group 39: 18-20 May

The Diocese is situated in the Eastern Cape Province. It is semi-urban but also very rural. It covers: Grahamstown, Alice, Fort Beaufort, Adelaide, Keiskannahoek, King William's Town and Greater East London and its rural areas. It has a high unemployment rate and many live in poverty.

There are 2,931 members of the Mothers' Union in the diocese. Members have been supporting their local community by providing orphans and vulnerable children with support such as giving them school uniform. By adopting schools to offer stationery and reading classes. They have provided a bursary for a disadvantaged student to assist them to be able go to Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University.

They run a soup kitchen for the needy which is supplied by the produce from their gardening projects. During the recent flood disaster in Port Alfred they supplied blankets and toiletries to the people affected and managed to find a source of funding that assisted the community regardless of denomination. They found a house for a woman whose shack was demolished by the heavy rains.

They have invited families to a planned seminar on relationships. The keynote speaker will address issues such as drug and alcohol abuse, child molestation, poverty and sexual violence as these all cause instability in their society. It will then be possible for the audience to ask questions who will consist of women, men and young people. Pastoral care will be offered at the end of the session.

Campaigns have been run to address issues around gender based violence, using the 16 Days of Activism material. Sadly one elderly member was raped and killed so the MU organised a service of revival and healing led by the Archdeacon. The members have helped the family find closure on this terrible incident.

The Diocese has a prayer diary which focuses prayers onto the things that affect them and the issues that they have to prayer for. Members have seen some answers to prayer: *"We have prayed to try to stop the number of young men who die as part of the initiation period and recent statistics say the number has reduced."*

#### Bible Verse:

Matthew 12:33

To Love Him with all your heart, with all your understanding and with all your strength, and to love your neighbour as yourself is more important than all burnt offerings and sacrifices.

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MASASI, TANZANIA

#### Wave of Prayer Group:

Group 39: 18-20 May

Geographically, the Diocese of Masasi is located in the southern part of the Republic of Tanzania, bordered by Mozambique to the south, the Indian Ocean to the east and the Selous game reserve to the north and west.

Information provided by the Community development Coordinator shows the activities that the members have been involved in:

- Training on leadership was conducted.
- Training for clergy wives has also been conducted - the emphasis was on how pastors wives can generate income at family level because it was revealed that most of the pastors wives had no ways of earning income themselves and were depending on income from their husbands only. They have now learned many skills including how to make soap, shampoo, tie and die, candle making and cookery. This has led to them establishing small businesses especially soap and candle making, while some of them have started to make cakes and groundnuts mixed with eggs which they sell after Sunday service and to school students.
- Mothers Union in 10 parishes have established new farms where they cultivate maize, rice, groundnuts and other types of legume. Approximately 10 acres have been cultivated, and the Mothers Union office have supported Mothers Union members with seeds and other agriculture input. For better production the Mothers' Union at parish level have been consulted to use an agriculture extension officer for technical support.
- Strengthening of ongoing income generating activities –The Mothers' Union members in 15 parishes are engaging on small business such as animal husbandry especially goats, pigs and chicken rearing.
- At Diocesan level the construction of the Mothers Union Guest House is progressing slowly but surely.

Bible verse:

Ecclesiastes 3:12

I know that there is nothing better for people than to be happy and to do good while they live.'

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AFIKPO, NIGERIA

#### Wave of Prayer Group:

Group 39: 18-20 May

The diocese of Afikpo is located with the Ebonyi State of Nigeria. It was inaugurated as a diocese in 2007. There are 60 members of the Mothers' Union in the diocese.

The Mothers' Union Diocesan President of Afikpo is Mrs Blessing Udogu, the wife of the Diocesan Bishop. Mrs Udogu is a teacher by profession. Her vision for Mothers' Union in Afikpo and across the whole of Nigeria is for it *"to grow in leaps and bounds in maintaining holiness in marriage, taking a stand in scripture, and for the vision of the Mother's Union to be realised in maintaining a stable family, as was Mary Sumner's heart-cry"*.

One of the challenges the Mothers' Union are facing locally is the maltreatment of widows and their outreach programmes to empower widows and prevent discrimination and aggression against them reflect this. Mothers' Union activities also reflect their desire to reach out to the most vulnerable in society and include:

- caring for the old people
- advocating for justice for the oppressed
- fighting against child labour, early marriage, polygamy and poverty.

Mrs Udogu is proud of the Mothers' Union members in the diocese and their commitment to the work of Mothers' Union. She says: "I am most proud of my Mothers' Union in the area of spirituality, keeping the family, child upbringing and standing for Christ and the church".

Prayer requests:

- That God will give us an open door, in our mission and vision to reach the unreached.
- That God will cause the gospel that we preach to make a great impact in the lives of the people.
- That God will equip us with the human, material, financial and spiritual resources to accomplish this purpose.

Bible Verse:

Ephesians 4:2

Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love.

# Wave of Prayer: Diocesan Fact Sheet

## WIAWSO, WEST AFRICA

### Wave of Prayer Group:

Group 39: 18-20 May

The Diocese of Wiawso is a diocese in Ghana, part of the Province of West Africa. It was inaugurated in 2006, carved out of the diocese of Sekondi.

Since the diocese was created seven years ago the Church has grown significantly, with 15 new churches being planted.

In their plans and strategies over the last few years the diocese have placed an emphasis on health work and leadership training. A number of church-run clinics have been established serving local communities who were previously without access to health care. These clinics are helping to tackle health problems such as malnutrition, cholera, typhoid, malaria and HIV/AIDs.

Mothers' Union in Wiawso are active running projects to provide women with vocational skills, and offering workshops on topical issues such as health, marriage and parenting.

### Bible Verse:

1 Chronicles 16:30

'Tremble before him, all the earth! The world is firmly established; it cannot be moved.

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CHESTER, ENGLAND

#### Wave of Prayer Group:

Group 39: 18-20 May



All the above photographs are from the 'Hand in Hand' day to promote faith within families



Members from Chester Diocese on the bus to promote Mothers' Union to the wider public. See [www.mothersuniononthemove.org](http://www.mothersuniononthemove.org) for more information



A Family Fun day at Chester Cathedral

Cheshire is situated in the north west of England and comprises the deprivation of inner cities as well as the affluence of leafy suburbs and attractive rural communities. Chester is a Roman City and a popular tourist destination with many Elizabethan buildings and an ancient Cathedral. The Cheshire plain is agriculturally very productive and scenically beautiful.

The port of Birkenhead in the west of the diocese has been in decline for many years but there is promise of future regeneration along with its neighbour Liverpool. Some of the highest incidence of teenage pregnancies and poorest communities are to be found in urban areas such as Birkenhead, Ellesmere Port, Runcorn and Stockport. Styal Women's Prison and Thorn Cross Young Offenders Unit are in the Diocese together with several hostels and homeless centres.

Mothers' Union have 17 fully qualified Parenting facilitators running groups around the Diocese. Parents share their family concerns in these parenting groups. Two teams take Virtual Babies (they now have 9 virtual babies) into High Schools to encourage responsible parenting. Youngsters on the Virtual baby project say they do not want a baby until they are at least 26; thus addressing the high incidence of teenage pregnancy in our diocese.

Mothers' Union hire caravans for Away From It All (AFIA) holidays. Families given an AFIA holiday say it has enabled them to take time out and rebuild their relationships. A team run a tent for feeding and changing babies at the annual Cheshire Show. Members also provide 'baby boxes', containing essential items for newborn babies, for mothers in prison and run a crèche in a young offenders institute for visiting families. Mothers looking after their babies in prison appreciate the care extended to them by members.



At Deanery and Branch level members support women's and young people's refuges with essential household items and also teach life skills. Help and equipment given to mothers and young people in refuges encourages them to rebuild their lives. Emergency toiletry supplies are given to parents whose children are taken unexpectedly into hospital. Members knit for neonatal units and babies abroad. They make 'fiddle pinnies' for those suffering with dementia or Alzheimer's disease. They also help with Baptism and Marriage preparation, Sunday schools, 'Messy Church' and Toddler groups to name but a few.

Many Deaneries actively promoted the 16 days of Activism on gender violence last year.

Most of the above projects support young people and families at a time of their greatest need. Mothers' Union Diocesan President Angela Klabou comments *"We show that someone cares for their basic needs. The projects also demonstrate our faith in action. All our projects meet a need, sometimes in a small way, but to those on the receiving end it shows that someone cares"*

In 2013 Mothers' Union in Chester supported one family with a holiday after they had been through a very difficult time:

*"Planning for baby number seven's arrival, (February) was overshadowed by the death of the children's maternal grandfather in the previous December. There was much conflicting emotion which was very hard on the whole family. The Mum was exhausted physically and emotionally. She had been unable to share the joy of her pregnancy as her Father was so ill. Mum, Grandma and four of the children are regular attenders at church. The eleven year old has been confirmed since the holiday and is now helping with the Kids Rock project during the holiday. Their situation is much improved at the moment though Dad's job situation is unstable. The holiday was a great success on two levels, the physical holiday and the emotional boost that Mum received from knowing people cared. The baby is now on her feet and toddling around church with great confidence. Thank you to Mothers' Union for supporting this family at a sad and difficult time"*.

Mothers' Union have a presence on many church diocesan committees and work closely with them. Support given to Church activities helps to nurture faith amongst their families and communities. Teams run information stands on behalf of the Church of England at Wedding Fairs. Talking to young couples at Wedding Fairs often encourages them to have their wedding in Church when they previously thought they could not.

### Bible Verse:

Isaiah 41.10

Fear not, for I am with you, be not dismayed, for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my victorious right hand.

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## NORTHERN ARGENTINA, SOUTHERN CONE

### Wave of Prayer Group:

Group 39: 18-20 May



The diocese of Northern Argentina is one of two dioceses in the country of Argentina in South America. The Diocese comprises 150 churches, 90% of which are rural churches in indigenous Amerindian communities (Wichi, Toba, Chorote and Chulupi.)

Currently there are approximately 100 members in the diocese of Northern Argentina but they are currently doing a membership drive and are about to launch AMARE (Agrupacion de Mujeres Anglicanas Renovadas en el Espiritu) – the local expression of Mothers' Union in Argentina.

There are problems of family breakdown, parenting issues, increasing crime and drug/alcohol related problems. A major concern is deforestation, which not only affects the environment but has an adverse effect on family life. Mothers' Union in the diocese have held two Wichi Women's conferences and one Toba Women's conference, providing relevant teaching encouragement and ministry.

They run parenting groups mainly in white Spanish speaking areas, providing practical support for parents and grandparents, and a safe place to discuss issues relating to the family. Work is done with families; setting up the "making disciples in the family" project.

One of their successes is a mixed race couple, trained as parenting facilitators. They have held various successful parenting groups, but have through training become more aware of their own needs and how they can overcome some of their difficulties, strengthening both their marriage and family life.

An answer to prayer has been the growth of the women's work and the development and self-funding of AMARE.

### Bible Verse:

Matthew 22:37-39 is the basis for AMARE (I will love)  
Jesus said "Love the lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind...and love your neighbour as yourself."