

## **St Mary's, Riverhead Mothers' Union Branch**

We have not held our monthly meetings this year. Our members still continue to support, through prayer, the aims and objectives of the Mothers' Union. using the Families Worldwide Prayer Book and through the Emergency Prayer Circle.

The Rochester Diocese Mothers' Union provide a yearly programme of events, for all Branch members, where they can meet with other branch members and, get involved with the activities provided.

This year, Mothers' Union celebrated 140 years. Mary Sumner, our Founder and Clergy wife, realised young mothers, were at home looking after the family and, brought them together to meet for fellowship, friendship and worship. This evolved to create branches attached to Churches in Great Britain. Her vision created branches overseas and now, Mothers' Union is for everyone – no one is excluded.

We continue to raise monies through Tea @3, making fiddle blankets and fiddle muffs for people living with Dementia in care homes or hospitals. Have raffles and Lent and Advent Blessings.

We held our Commissioning Service at Rochester Cathedral in April. Our new Diocesan President is Julia Jamieson. This was an important event made special for all members with a mix of worship and celebration. Bishop James presided and Canon Rev Paul Francis, who is now based at the Cathedral attended.

At our Autumn Meeting, our new CEO, Bev Jullien was our speaker and, delivered a very uplifting speech, giving thanks to our members for all they do within their parishes.

Our Annual Pilgrimage at Rochester Cathedral, is held on 9 August every year. Evensong has a visiting Choir. Very well attended by members and Cathedral visitors.

Our Quiet Day was led by Revd Steven Varney, Vicar of St Mark's, Bromley. This was held at The Bromley & Sheppard Colleges. Again, this was very well attended and enjoyable.

I was the Branch Leader for six years and the role allows for one stint. I am a Trustee, with the responsibility of the Faith & Policy Unit for the Diocese and, branch contact for our St Mary's. Our Branch looks forward to welcoming you to join us. When our branch membership numbers increase, we will be able to meet in the Church Hall. Our Diocesan events are open to anyone – so come along and meet other members.

Our grateful thanks go to Martin, Parishioners, to Margaret Nicholas and Robert McLintock (for advertising our events in the Mini Mag and on the website) and for the continued support shown and given to us.

Karen Forster-Pearce December 2016

