



A Celebration of Faith: Mary Sumner Day

As part of your celebrations of 140 years of Mothers' Union, celebrate Mary Sumner day by focussing on Mary Sumner's personal faith, vision and service in the name of Mothers' Union.

The following quote about Mary Sumner is very pertinent to our celebrations this year where we are not only looking back with gratitude, but forward with faith and vision.

Her foresight, her wisdom and judgment laid the great foundation stone for us. And as the building grows, and far and wide her early message goes forth – the same message, though to a different generation – we pray that the faith which shone through her every word and thought may illumine ours, that we, with grateful hearts, may build well and truly, as she did.
Mrs Boustead, Central President of Mothers' Union: December 1927*

Suggestions:

- Consider holding your own festal evensong on Tuesday 9th August.
- If a formal service is not appropriate, you may like to use prayers and reflections from the 2016 resources as part of a more informal act of worship and thanksgiving.
- Use the following quotes* about Mary Sumner's life and service in the name of Mothers' Union to inspire you. Reflect together, or as individuals, on what ways your service for Mothers' Union follows her example. The quotes could form part of a display to highlight the foundations of Mothers' Union service and its ongoing work in the 21st century.

Mrs Sumner's pen was as busy as ever, as the packets of answers to her letters show; some from the Members of Parliament to whom she wrote personally; some from the highest leaders of Church and State.

Referring to her campaign to raise the standards of Christian teaching in all schools; and also in the home:

"Prayer and dogged work will win the day!"

"I and a certain number of earnest friends are praying daily for our present government... I want to live in prayer for them."

- Spend time reflecting on Mary Sumner's personal prayer:

*All this day, O Lord,
let me touch as many lives as possible for thee;
and every life I touch, do thou by thy spirit quicken,
whether through the word I speak,
the prayer I breathe,
or the life I live.
Amen.*

Consider how these words are an inspiration today, both for us as individuals and in our work for Mothers' Union. Reflect on particular initiatives in your diocese and how through these we can touch lives through our prayers, words and actions. You may like to create a prayer focus which uses the prayer to highlight and give prayer points for some of your initiatives.

**Loving Lord,
We give you thanks for the far-reaching vision
of our founder, Mary Sumner.
We look back with gratitude and praise for her witness,
and for all that has been achieved thus far
in the name of Mothers' Union worldwide.**

**As we look forward with faith for all that is to come
help us to build a future together
which will enable our work to flourish;
through far-reaching vision
and commitment to your will.
Amen**

**All quotes are taken from the 1928 edition of
Mary Sumner, her life and work by Mrs Horace Porter.*

This resource has been updated from the original,
produced in 2014