

## About The Mothers' Union

In 1876 Mary Sumner, wife of the Vicar of Alresford in Hampshire, invited a group of mothers and grandmothers to meet at the vicarage to pray and study for the spiritual and moral well-being of the whole family. So the Mothers' Union began.

### Worldwide Family

From this original base, the membership has broadened out to include anyone who is concerned to **support and encourage family life by helping people to take control of their lives and well-being.** Now the MU is the largest voluntary, worldwide women's organisation with 122,000 members in the UK alone and more than three and a half million members in 76 countries; united by a common commitment to Christian family life and active in their communities in all sorts of ways. Projects can range from small-scale farming initiatives in Uganda to family support groups in prisons around the UK.

There are also a number of national programmes, like the 'Away from it all' holiday scheme, enabling families in need to take a much appreciated break. Other schemes include the Parenting Programme and a range of MU resources on drugs and media awareness which are used by parents and concerned professionals across the UK and Ireland. The MU is involved in self-help/income generating projects and community outreach projects, including orphanages,



HIV/AIDS awareness projects, cafeterias and sewing projects.

### In the Joint Benefice Of Shipton, Milton, Fifield with Idbury

32 members meet on the first Tuesday of every month in Milton Church room. We have excellent speakers covering a wide range of topics from 'Working to help the needy in Peru' to 'Jewish Food'. We hold a summer garden party

and a Christmas party. On the fourth Tuesday of each month we have a Communion Service at Milton Church for both members and non-members, with coffee afterwards. Fund-raising events, like our shepherd's pie lunch and coffee mornings allow us to send donations to the St. Francis Polio Hospital at Kwamkono in Tanzania and to the MU Action and Outreach funds, as well as paying for the Christingles and Mothering Sunday flowers. This year, alongside our work with local projects, such as sending cards to children on the anniversary of their Baptism and knitting baby clothes for the Special Care Baby Unit, we have been involved with the 150 year celebrations for Milton Church.

*Membership of the MU is open to all - men, women, married or single and we are always delighted to welcome newcomers or visitors. If you would like to know more about the Mothers' Union please contact Kathleen Walker on: 01993 830059*

**Ann Stokes**