

THE MOTHERS' UNION AND 20+ CLUB



'The Mothers Union at Holy Trinity Birchfield'

Established in 1876, the Mothers Union's mission is for mothers to encourage the spiritual development and care of their children and to strengthen the bonds of family. 142 years on, that mission has expanded to take on the challenges of the 21st century, and the redefinitions of family and community that continue to evolve. Mothers Union is a worldwide Christian charitable organisation and is very popular in the Caribbean and African countries.

The Mothers' Union at Holy Trinity in its current manifestation has been working in the community for past five years. Holy Trinity church records show that between 1968 and 1978, a Mothers Union was in existence. The enrolling officer was Mrs Wilmot, the wife of Rev. Wilmot (1963-1978), who regarded the MU as a 'loyal band of ladies' who she urged to band together.

The main activities of the Mothers Union back then were to assist in the organisation of the church fairs, lead prayer meetings, supervise activities such as flower arranging and summer outings, and to visit the bereaved and the elderly. However, the group met infrequently and by 1978 there were references only to the annual meetings. It appears it was a challenge to attract and maintain membership and by 1978, when Rev. Thorley began his ministry, the Mothers Union no longer operated.

Today, the Holy Trinity Mothers Union is run by Veronica Flowers, the branch leader, Jillian De Costa and Christine Harris, the treasurer. Anthony Pitts is the secretary.

The Mothers Union offers two important social services to the community – the Lunch Club, which meets every other Wednesday, providing delicious meals for everyone. The Job Club assists unemployed people in their search for jobs, giving advice and guidance on developing CV writing skills and interviewing techniques.

20+ Club

The 20+ Club was active in the 1980s and 1990s. **Faye Forrest** described the club: It was vibrant, it was really good. I was shy when I was younger but being in the 20+ group at church was fantastic. I felt a sense of belonging, it developed my confidence. We had events inside and outside of the church – we went for meals, out bowling, salsa dancing; we had a lot of events. Father Richard Hunt would ask us, 20+ what's happening this week, and someone would stand up and let him and the congregation know what we were doing. We'd invite our friends who didn't come to church – one of my friends who I invited got confirmed and ended up coming to Holy Trinity. It was so nice to be part of the group -we supported each other, laughed together – we went to each other's houses and we took part in the church service as well.