

Rebuilding hope and confidence: Ideas for celebration and thanksgiving

2021 remains uncertain as to how free we will be through the year to gather together in person. However, the events of 2020 have shown us what can be achieved virtually, and so the opportunity for celebration and thanksgiving is still open to us, albeit in a different way.

The ideas below can be used and adapted to suit your particular context. If there is the possibility of an actual gathering, then the elements can be used as a basis for this.

- Use some of the components of the Act of reflection and remembrance for part of your thanksgiving
- Record members talking about and showcasing the work they've achieved in 2020 e.g. making masks, helping at foodbanks, keeping in touch with those self-isolating....
- Or, put images of these activities into a presentation with accompanying music
- Include any information you have about how your link dioceses are faring through the pandemic; have someone lead a time of prayer for them
- Use recordings of music and hymns (check the rules for online use of professional recordings)
- Beforehand, collect examples of what people have been thankful for during 2020, both personally and in Mothers' Union. Use these during the celebration, either all at once or a few at a time throughout the event
- Also encourage the sharing of prayers and Bible verses which have been meaningful for people through the year. Some may be happy to write a prayer which can be used in the service
- Foster a sense of fellowship by having a moment where all light a candle or make another symbolic gesture as a sign of your unity, though physically apart
- At the end, encourage people to stay on the call with a cup of tea to enjoy catching up with each other (or join one if you've pre-recorded your celebration for YouTube or Facebook). If the numbers allow, consider delivering biscuits or cake beforehand to accompany their cuppa!

You will have your own good ideas for a thanksgiving event. Please do share these with us and we'll make them widely known.