

Diocese of Brechin: News Bulletin

20th January 2021

Bishop Ellinah Wamukoya RIP

Yesterday (19th January) we heard the sad, sad news that Bishop Ellinah Wamukoya of the Diocese of Swaziland had died of complications related to infection with the COVID-19 virus. Bishop Ellinah had been recovering well from some recent surgery when she fell ill with the virus. We had heard that she was holding her own with the virus, but on the morning of January the 19th she died.



Bishop Ellinah was elected as the Bishop of Swaziland (the country, but not the diocese, is now called Eswatini) in 2012. She was a university chaplain and also the Town Clerk and CEO of the City Council of Manzini when she was elected. She was the first female Anglican bishop in the whole continent of Africa. She had a particular interest in environmental matters and was a vital part of the 'Green Anglican' movement which has inspired many young people to engage effectively in green initiatives in Africa and elsewhere. Coming from a kingdom and part of the world where coal mining is a major industry, this was a challenge which she was very willing to embrace.

She also worked tirelessly in her diocese, for example to improve care for orphans through a network of care points, gender equality in the church and building up the diocese's financial and structural capacity, examples of which are the piggery and wattle forest projects. She started other agricultural initiatives and had a constant focus on effective stewardship. She also led the diocese in the building of the first post-colonial church building and in building safe hostels for female students in communities where they might be at risk. She was well known in the wider Anglican Communion as both an environmental campaigner and an effective advocate for the African church. Archbishop Justin Welby had invited her to preach at the opening eucharist at the (Covid-postponed) Lambeth Conference that would have been held in summer 2020.

Bishop Ellinah was a gracious and committed partner in the three-way companionship link between Swaziland, Brechin and the Diocese of Iowa in the United States of America. She led a joint Clergy retreat on environmental issues for all three dioceses last May online via 'Zoom'. She came to Brechin Diocese on several occasions with Bishop Nigel then Bishop Andrew welcoming her. She supported the three way 'Youth Pilgrimage' that has seen young people travel to Eswatini and Scotland: the third leg to Iowa is planned for the next year or two, Covid permitting. The last occasion Bishop Ellinah came to Brechin Diocese was for the consecration of Bishop Andrew in August 2018.



Bishop Alan Scarfe of Iowa and Bishop Ellinah with Bishop Andrew at the consecration in August 2018

Bishop Andrew said, "It is a devastating news that Bishop Ellinah has died. She has been a great friend and support of the Diocese of Brechin for her time as Bishop of Swaziland and I found her a wise and insightful colleague as I have developed an understanding of my episcopacy. It was a privilege to have her attend my consecration and for Canon Pat Millar and me to visit her diocese in 2019. She planned to retire later in 2021, so her death before she was able to end her ministry and spend retirement with her husband Henry and their family is very cruel.

"Please keep her husband Henry, her family and the Diocese of Swaziland in your prayers. She will be greatly missed by all who knew and loved her."

Pandemic Updates— as we continue through the pandemic restrictions

Following yesterday's (19th January) announcement by the First Minister that the current restrictions will continue to at least mid February, this continues to impact our church lives. The Scottish Government have let us know they understand the impact of these restrictions. Communities Minister, Aileen Campbell MSP, wrote to the SEC (and other faith communities) this week saying,

"I am writing to Scotland's diverse faith and belief communities about the new regulations instructing places of worship to close for both communal and individual worship (as part of the latest Covid Level 4 restrictions). I appreciate how hard this is for faith communities and want to assure you that places of worship will be amongst the first sectors to be seriously considered for any easing of restrictions.

"I would like to thank you all for the measures you have put in place to protect and support your congregations since the first lockdown in March 2020, and for all of the work you continue to do to help your communities through these difficult times." She also said,

"I understand and appreciate the significant role communal worship plays in supporting people's mental and spiritual well-being, and its importance as a lifeline for many in preventing social isolation and loneliness. We do not want to keep these measures in place a minute longer than is necessary."

The full letter can be read [here](#).

The Scottish Episcopal Church continues to offer 'national' worship online. A Sunday service, each led by one of the College of Bishops, will continue in the form of a Eucharist broadcast at 11am through the current lockdown and beyond, as restrictions ease.

There are more details and downloads of previous weeks' services at:

<https://www.scotland.anglican.org/broadcast-sunday-worship/>

Many churches are offering local online forms of worship (such as Facebook Live, Zoom, YouTube recordings). In the Diocese of Brechin, each weekday during lockdown there is a short prayer service live-streamed by either St. Ninian's or St. Mary Magdalene's.

All are most welcome to join in. The current times are as follows:

- Monday: 6pm - Evening Prayer live-streamed on the St. Mary Magdalene's Facebook page
- Tuesday - 9pm - Compline live-streamed on the St. Ninian's Facebook Page
- Wednesday - 9am - Morning Prayer live-streamed on the St. Mary Magdalene's Facebook page
- Thursday - 9pm - Compline live-streamed on the St. Ninian's Facebook Page
- Friday: 6pm - Evening Prayer live-streamed on the St. Mary Magdalene's Facebook page

Link to [St. Ninian's Facebook Page](#)

Link to the [St Mary Magdalene's Facebook page](#)

Making the Word Live - Sound Advice!

"Easy!" "Nothing to it." "Stroll to the lectern and read!"

Well you can do it that way but a little thought and a little planning can make all the difference.

The Bible is a dramatic and exciting story book and no one expects an Oscar-winning performance from you, but the most thrilling and momentous passages need a little drama.

The Diocese has planned a ZOOM session to help you to this important part of the liturgy well.

Please join us for an hour on **Sunday 31st January 2021 at 3.00pm** and will be led by Colin Lamont who is a drama teacher in Glasgow and ex Radio presenter.

Please contact Very Rev Fay Lamont on flamont53@sky.com or 07931222092 to sign up and you will be sent the ZOOM link .

News to share? Please send...

If you have any events, ideas with worship or anything else to report, please send copy to Elliott at office@brechin.anglican.org. The Bulletin will come out each week for the foreseeable future with updates on Covid issues, news from charges and (hopefully) useful information for our communities.