

Diocese of Brechin: News Bulletin

23rd February 2022

Prayer for Peace in Ukraine

Bishop Andrew writes: You will have seen the news from Eastern Europe, as a war in Ukraine seems to be coming closer and closer. The recent developments as Russian forces enter disputed areas in eastern Ukraine makes war look even more likely. The potential loss of life and immense impact that this would have in the Ukraine and throughout Europe and the world seems unthinkable.

As Christians and as Christian communities please, please pray for peace in that troubled region of the world. World leaders have a responsibility to protect the vulnerable in their countries and throughout the world: please keep them in your prayers as this situation develops.

Rt Rev Dr Dalcy Dlamini consecrated as Bishop of Swaziland

The Rt Rev Dr Dalcy Dlamini was consecrated as the 6th Bishop of Swaziland last Saturday (19th Feb) in a service in All Saints' Cathedral Mbabane, livestreamed on Facebook. Friends from Brechin, Iowa and all over the world were able to watch and pray as Archbishop Thabo led the service with siSwati sung and English spoken, from the Kingdom of Eswatini.



Bishop Dalcy with retired Bishop Mesack, the 4th Bishop of Swaziland
(Image: Facebook)

We look forward to when Companion Bishop Dalcy will be able to come and join us in the Diocese of Brechin.

Covid Guidance & Ash Wednesday

The First Minister has announced on Tuesday 22nd Feb the framework and timings for relaxation of Covid restrictions in Scotland. The Advisory Group for Covid in the SEC will send out analysis for guidance of these changes, but it would appear that by 21st March the legal requirement to wear masks in churches will be removed, and the guidance on restrictions on how we meet and worship will be softened in the same timescale. It will be very important to carefully manage any relaxations so that as things change it happens at a pace that will be slow enough to feel safe but fast enough for those who are keen for 'normal' life. The pandemic is still with us, so there remains need for care and clear communication.



An immediate issue is Ash Wednesday and the beginning of Lent, before these changes. The Advisory Group issued a note last week stating that 'Imposition of Ashes' at Ash Wednesday services is possible, with care and following local judgement. As implied in the note, there remain concerns in Govt guidance with potential virus transmission from close contact of e.g. a priest touching the faces of large numbers of congregation members. Mask wearing remains the single most important (legally required) measure to be followed. Whatever measures are taken, the key thing is a cleric/vestry's local judgement on what their congregation will be ready for. The detailed public health guidance does not state in detail what is 'right' or 'wrong' - we need to judge, within the guidance, what feels safe for us and our congregations. If a vestry or cleric is unsure please contact the Bishop for a discussion on how best to decide and communicate.

Bishop's Lent Appeal

Bishop Andrew's Lent Appeal this year will be equally shared between two areas that urgently need support in 2022. As in previous years, there will be 'global' and 'local' elements.

The 'global' half will be donated to our ongoing projects in the Diocese of Swaziland, where Covid-19 and ongoing civil unrest have made a fragile society even more vulnerable. The help that Companion Dioceses Iowa and Brechin give to projects such as the 'Neighbourhood Care Points' (NCPs) in Eswatini makes a massive difference in food and care for vulnerable children and families throughout the country. <http://www.thedioceseofbrechin.org/groups/swaziland/>

The 'local' share of the appeal will be donated to 'Energy Action Scotland' - a charity working to end fuel poverty in Scotland. The current UK situation with soaring fuel prices and rising costs of living is making many vulnerable people's situations unbearable. From EAS's website: "EAS aims to develop and promote effective solutions to the problem of cold, damp and expensive to heat homes." <https://www.eas.org.uk/>

Diocesan Synod 2022: Could You Fill Any 'Situations Vacant'?

Diocesan Synod is being held 'in-person' at St Mary's Broughty Ferry on Saturday 5th March. A key area of business is electing people to posts in the Diocese and the Province. It is so important that charges are represented in the Diocese and the Diocese is represented in the Province. This year there will be elections for all of the **Diocesan representatives at General Synod: 6 lay and 6 clergy members**. Some of those previously serving are eligible to stand again, but we need new people willing to come and serve for a new four year term. There are also **vacancies on Diocesan Council for one clergy and two lay members**. Some of the previous members can serve again: but we do need new people willing to stand. A full list of the posts that require to be filled is on the [Diocesan website](#). Please do consider if you might be able to serve in this important way!

Normally, anyone would be welcome to attend to observe proceedings, but to take care with a 'pandemic-safe' meeting we are limiting in-person attendance to voting members of Synod. We will livestream the Synod on the Diocesan Facebook page. Contact the office for details of how to stand or if you wish to attend in person.

Some Lent Resources...

With Ash Wednesday next week, most church groups will have made plans for the season, but some other ideas are offered below.

The [Scottish Episcopal Institute](#) is offering an online Lent Course: 'Episcopalians and Their Ethics: A six-part series in Lent 2022'.

The Series is offered on the six Mondays of Lent in 30 minute webinars, each of which will be available on YouTube. The Series serves as a resource to be used creatively during the Lent, for example as a refresher course for individuals or a discussion starter for a church group.

Time: 7pm to 7.30pm on Monday evenings in Lent 2022. Registration is free. All are welcome. Register [here](#).

- 7 Mar: What is Christian ethics?
- 14 Mar: Why should I choose good over evil?
- 21 Mar: How do I tell good from evil?
- 28 Mar: What is conscience?
- 4 Apr: Why follow conscience?
- 11 Apr: Where do I go with Christian ethics?

[Church Army](#) have developed a Lent Resource to give you, your small group and your church space and time each day throughout Lent to listen to God, reflect on the Bible, and see how and where you can listen to His leading in your actions and attitudes. Each pack contains 40 beautiful cards divided into Action Cards, Character Cards, and Reflection Cards and Marks of Mission Cards. Available as both free email reflections or as a stunning pack of cards from <https://churcharmy.org/growing-faith/lent-2/>

Online Worship for the SEC

The Scottish Episcopal Church continues to offer 'national' worship online every week. A Sunday service, each from one of the Dioceses, is continuing in the form of a service broadcast at 11am each Sunday. This will continue beyond the pandemic. There are more details of each week's services at:

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

Any news to share in the Bulletin?

If you have stories and photos of events around the diocese, we would love to share these in the bulletin.

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