

# Diocese of Brechin: News Bulletin

## 4th August 2021



Coronavirus  
guidance  
update

### First Minister Announces Further Reduction of Restrictions—with Caution—from 9th August: Masks Still Needed in Church

The First Minister announced yesterday (3rd August) that there are to be further changes in the Covid 19 restrictions from next week. On Monday 9th August the whole country will change to 'Beyond Level 0' with almost all legal restrictions removed. This change is a result of the reduced levels of positive Covid tests in Scotland and the very successful programme of vaccination throughout the adult population.

For churches, the requirement to wear a face covering while in the church building will remain. The present status for e.g. singing with a mask in the congregation but service leaders and music groups not having to wear coverings will be unchanged.

The physical distancing requirement, however, will be removed from 9th August. This removes the need to space chairs apart for households or to blank off every second pew, for example. This will increase the capacity of church buildings to their pre-pandemic level.

The details of safe conduct of worship in the pandemic have always been guidance rather than a legal requirement and the Advisory Group of the SEC awaits further government guidance on the status of the current mitigation guidance. It is possible that measures such as the use of hand sanitiser upon entry and exit, the keeping of personal details for Test and Protect purposes, the ongoing 'hold' on the use of the common cup: these could all potentially remain in place until a church community has agreed that they are no longer required. Watch out for Advisory Group statements and guidance on this complex and contextual matter.

We are still in a pandemic and care still needs to be taken, both with the risk of the virus itself, but also with dealing with potential and very real anxiety in some of our church communities at the removal of restrictive measures that we have now become used to a year after churches were permitted to re-open with mitigations in place. A measured, balanced pace of change is needed to remain united and safe.

### Companionship Diocese of Iowa: The Rev. Betsey Monnot elected the 10th Bishop of Iowa

Congratulations to the Rev. Betsey Monnot on being elected as the 10th Bishop of the Diocese of Iowa during a Special Convention held on July 31st in Des Moines, Iowa.

Rev. Betsey Monnot addressed the convention online saying, "I am beyond excited to be your new bishop-elect! My heart is full. Thank you so much for your confidence in me. I look forward to our ministry together as we follow God's call into the future that God dreams of for the Episcopal Church in Iowa. I am so excited to join you in ministry and to take the next steps soon! May God's blessing be with all of us as we prepare for our future together, as we journey as disciples of Jesus on the road together, and as we continue to listen for God's call for the Episcopal Church in Iowa. Thank you."



The Rev Betsey Monnot

Monnot is the first woman to be elected as the Episcopal Bishop of Iowa since the diocese was formed in 1853. She was chosen from a slate of all-women candidates that also included the Rev. Jennifer Andrews-Weckerly of the Diocese of Virginia and the Rev. Elizabeth Duff Popplewell from the Diocese of Iowa.

"It is with thanksgiving and praise to God that I welcome Betsey Monnot as the Bishop-elect for the Diocese of Iowa," said the Rt. Rev. Alan Scarfe, 9th Bishop of Iowa. "Over these past eighteen years, it has been a great privilege and joy to share in the ministry of Christ with the Episcopal people of Iowa, and I am assured that this will be your wonderful experience as well over many years. We embrace with hope and expectation your leadership as our Tenth Bishop. May I express my hopes in the words expressed in the bishop's prayer over a person reaffirming baptismal vows: 'May the Holy Spirit, who

has begun a good work in you, direct and uphold you in the service of Christ and God's Kingdom. Amen.'"

The service of ordination and consecration will take place on Saturday, 18 December in Des Moines.

All in the Diocese of Brechin look forward to greeting the new bishop and building on the warm and fruitful relationship between Scotland and the US that has grown over the past decades.

### **Companionship Diocese of Swaziland: Elective Assembly to vote for next Bishop: 4th & 5th August 2021**

An Elective Assembly will be convened on August 4 & 5, 2021 to elect a successor to the late Bishop Ellinah Wamukoya for Eswatini.

Please pray for the following nominees who have been nominated for Bishop:

The Revd Charles Mhlaba Kunene

The Very Revd Advent Nhlanhla Dlamini

Election results will be shared as soon as we receive any news.

### **Diocesan Deadline for Covid 'Recovery and Renewal' Fund Applications: Thursday 5th August (Tomorrow)**

This is a reminder that the Recovery and Renewal fund applications deadline for the diocese to receive applications is Thursday, 5th August (tomorrow, as this bulletin is published). This allows the diocesan officers to integrate the charge applications in a single diocesan submission to the province. This fund is to offer modest grants towards activities/kit that will help charges to emerge from the pandemic, build up their ministry, enhance online presence, support clergy wellbeing etc.

Not every church will need or want to make a submission—that is absolutely fine. There will be some 'diocesan-level' elements to the application, so all charges will benefit from the fund whether they make their own application or not. Guidance notes have been sent out to vestry secretaries and clergy. Applications should be sent to Elliott at [office@brechin.anglican.org](mailto:office@brechin.anglican.org).

## **SEC Environmental Action**

### **Diocesan Environmental Working Group**

The General Synod 2021 tasked each Diocese with setting up a group to support charges in meeting the challenging target of the SEC achieving net zero carbon emissions by 2030. In Brechin, this group is being set up as a Working Group of Diocesan Council and will (once established) provide oversight and guidance to all of our churches. Some churches have started their own eco-groups (see cathedral item below)—and support to such groups and guidance in applying toolkits/producing strategies are anticipated priorities for the Working Group. Watch this space for more news.

### **St. Paul's Cathedral Eco-group**

The St. Paul's Cathedral Eco-group reconvened in May and has been meeting regularly since then. We are planning to mark the period leading up to the November United Nations international climate conference (COP26) both in worship and in inviting members of the Congregation to join us in a short challenge aimed at reducing our personal carbon footprints. Groups or individuals in the diocese are very welcome to get in touch and share ideas - please email Julie the group convener at [julie.curran7@btinternet.com](mailto:julie.curran7@btinternet.com)

### **Online Worship for the SEC**

The Scottish Episcopal Church continues to offer 'national' worship online. A Sunday service, each from one of the Dioceses, will continue in the form of a service broadcast at 11am each Sunday. Some changes to the format of this worship are planned: watch for future notices.

This service has an option to hear the worship by telephone for those without internet access. There are more details and downloads of previous weeks' services at:

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

### **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](mailto:office@brechin.anglican.org).