

Diocese of Brechin: News Bulletin

Christmas and New Year 2022 Edition

Christmas Greetings from Bishop Andrew

To all in the Diocese of Brechin and friends and supporters throughout the world: as we approach Christmas 2022 and the start of 2023, my prayers for a peaceful and rich celebration for you and your communities.



Free Image: clipart-library.com

As the carol services are sung, the mince pies eaten and the mulled wine drunk, it is a joy and privilege for us to be able to celebrate the coming of the Christ child in our diverse contexts in this beautiful part of Scotland. The pandemic severely limited our ability to worship in the past two years: this year, while there is still some anxiety over Covid, there are no special restrictions on our community lives. Please continue to take care with weather and illness and have a safe and a joyous end to Advent and Christmas.

We still face so many challenges in the world, with the environmental crisis looming, war in Ukraine and so many other places raising fear and bringing financial pressure to so many throughout the world: there is still so much call for prayer and practical support. I am so proud of the work that so many in our church communities are doing to help those who are vulnerable at this time of year.



Free Image: clipart-library.com

As we reach Hogmanay, we can look forward to a new year in our churches' lives, where alongside our ongoing worshipping and community life other themes such

as pilgrimage, discipleship and community outreach can all be explored and developed further. The signs of life in church communities are a great encouragement. And as we reach 2023, I am looking forward to the privilege of walking with you for another year of our journey together.

Every blessing for Christmas and the New Year!

+Andrew

Christmas Services in the Diocese: online resource & information

The Diocesan website (www.brechin.anglican.org) continues to have updates on the details of the special events, services and other activities planned in the churches of the Diocese for the end of Advent and the Christmas season. This resource is to help anyone looking for worship in our city and towns this year. All can access the information using the link above: please feel free to share this link onwards. Via social media and other means of local publicity. Any churches who have not yet shared their Christmas services and events, please contact Elliott (office@brechin.anglican.org) at the Office who will add them to this webpage.

Brechin Youth and Young Adult Events Coming up in 2023:

Burns Night Youth Event 28-29 January

An exciting Youth Sleepover Event will be hosted by St Mary & St Peter's Church, Montrose at the end of January! It is open to teenagers (S1-S6) in the Scottish Episcopal Church and their friends. There will be fun activities, games and food with a Burns Night theme. It will be led by the Children & Youth Officer and a team of trained youth leaders. This is an overnight sleepover event: young people and leaders will sleep in the church and help lead worship on Sunday morning. There is an option to attend for Saturday only. It costs £5 per person – snacks, dinner and breakfast included. Please encourage any teenagers connected to your church to come! Full details and booking [here](#) or contact Claire Benton-Evans youth@brechin.anglican.org

Companionship Diocese Youth Pilgrimage to the USA: August 2023

Plans are afoot for the exciting third leg of the Youth Pilgrimage with our companion dioceses in the USA and southern Africa.



Image: Claire Benton-Evans & Mike from Pixabay

Previous pilgrims from Scotland and Iowa travelled to the Diocese of Swaziland in Eswatini in 2014, then Americans and Africans came to be hosted in Dundee for the second leg in 2016. In August 2023, young pilgrims will be travelling from the Dioceses of Brechin and Swaziland to Iowa, where we will be hosted by Bishop Betsey and her team.

Is there a young person (aged 18-25) connected to your church who would like to be a pilgrim? Further information will be shared and a flyer can be found [here](#). Anyone who is interested in taking part should contact Claire Benton-Evans: youth@brechin.anglican.org.

Cost of Living Crisis: Info and Projects

Resources to help with living costs

There is lots of helpful guidance for anyone struggling with the current cost of living crisis. Local authorities are gathering information together on benefits, energy and food support and other ways that help can be found: churches can share this with members or anyone who approaches for help. Some good resource sites for the areas covered by the Diocese are:

Aberdeenshire: <https://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/communities-and-events/cost-of-living/>

Angus: <https://www.angus.gov.uk/benefits-and-money-advice/help-with-the-cost-of-living>

Dundee: <https://www.dundee.gov.uk/costofliving>

Perth and Kinross: <https://www.pkc.gov.uk/costofliving>

All Scotland: <https://costofliving.campaign.gov.scot/>

Various projects and other initiatives are taking place in churches in the Diocese. These include:

St Luke's Foodbank/Clothing Bank/Café

Since the start of the pandemic "lockdowns", St Luke's has operated the above. It has settled into a fixed pattern of opening 1000-1500 on Tuesdays and Wednesdays providing food, clothing, warmth and companionship. Around 20 to 25 food parcels are provided daily and the café is busy with locals dropping in and Foodbank visitors taking advantage of the cakes and toasties provided at next to cost prices. It's a very happy and cosy place to be and number of non-church volunteers help out regularly. Encouragingly, there is modest growth in church worship taking place, as those attending find out first-hand what the church is all about. If you happen to get an offer of food or clothing (sorry, can only accommodate clothing for adults) and are looking for somewhere to direct it, please consider St. Luke's if you can.

There is a reception shed in the car park outside the hall which is signposted, and permanently unlocked, where items can be safely lodged. It's checked regularly. Food stocks have been going down as need has increased – and it is anticipated that the winter energy crisis will result in even greater attendance at the Café for warmth and for food parcels.

"Big Coat" Project at St. Mary Magdalene's Church, Dundee

Donations of warm winter jackets and coats are needed for St. Mary Magdalene's 'Big Coat' Project over the winter months. Women's and men's coats are accepted but they are especially short on men's. Please contact Rev Canon Kenneth for further details: Tel: 07825554419 or email: kenneth.gibson1@btinternet.com

Warm Spaces/Cosy Spaces: Maps

Many churches are offering warm spaces this winter as part of various Council-led initiatives. Look for info on social media and on Council resource pages. There is a Dundee City Map here: <https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/ddf901a89522437a9e5c3e1c0ccf2c7e>

And a national 'warm spaces' map that any church can register with is here: <https://warmspaces.org/register>