



Brechin Bulletin

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Obituary: The Right Reverend Neville Chamberlain, Bishop of Brechin



Bishop Neville Chamberlain died on Monday 8th October 2018, after some time of illness. Bishop Neville was elected Bishop of Brechin in 1997, when he was serving as the Rector of St John's, Princes Street, Edinburgh.

Bishop Neville was married to Diane, who died some years ago and they had four children. He studied for a BA at Nottingham University, then trained for the ministry at Ripon Hall, Oxford. He served three periods of curacy in the Diocese of Birmingham, the third being in the ecumenical context of St Michael's Gospel Lane. He then became the Vicar at St Michael's for three years, from 1969 to 1972.

He then spent three years outwith the ministry, working as a probation officer. He returned to the church, serving as Executive Secretary of the Social Responsibility Committee of the Diocese of Lincoln and also became a canon of the cathedral. In 1982 he was appointed the Rector of St John's, Princes Street, in Edinburgh, where he served for 15 years. This ministry was a rich and full time, with occasional controversy with, for example, the famous temporary murals painted outside the church with comments on political and social issues of the day.

His ministry as Bishop was overshadowed by an extended and very public period of conflict between him and his Provost, the Very Rev Miriam Byrne. The press coverage of this difficulty was hard for Bishop Neville, the cathedral congregation and all in the Diocese and the need for reconciliation of the conflict by Archbishop Desmond Tutu shows quite how severe the breakdown in relationship became.

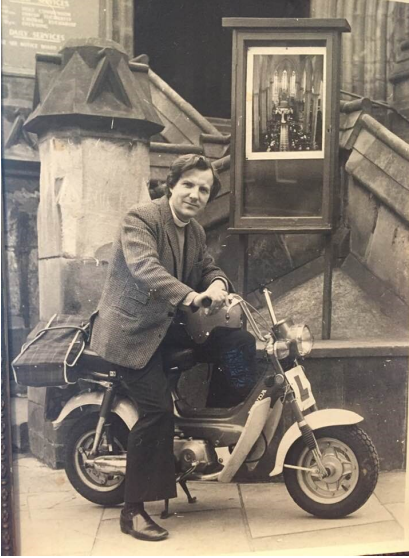
His time in Brechin is remembered for his positive energy and enthusiasm for the Diocese and its people. He continued to have a focus on social justice and ensured that the SEC in Dundee carried on its work in Urban Priority Areas: his theology was one that had to have a practical outworking in the wider world. He developed Diocesan training in Faith and Mission, appointing a Diocesan Adviser in Ministry and starting regular clergy training and support meetings, which continue to this day. He also supported the diocesan companionship links with visit to Iowa and fundraising and visits to Swaziland.

Bishop Neville retired in 2005 after his sixty-fifth birthday and retired initially to Edinburgh. In due course he became the Master of Hugh Sexey's Hospital in Bruton, Somerset.

Michaelmas Jubilees

In the October & November edition of the Brechin Bulletin we celebrated two 40 year ministry anniversaries: of the Rev Canon Fay Lamont and the Very Rev Dr Francis Bridger.

We have two other anniversaries that were celebrated this Michaelmas – the 50 year anniversary of the ordination as deacon of the **Rev David Shepherd** and the 50 year anniversary of priesting of the **Rev Canon Michael Turner**. It may be unique in the 21st century to be able to celebrate, in one month, golden jubilees of ordination for two priests who are still serving as instituted incumbents.



David was ordained deacon in the Diocese of Brechin, at St Paul's Cathedral at Michaelmas 1968.

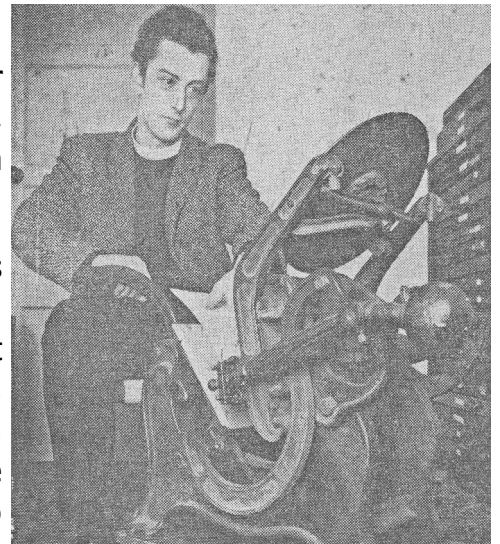
Having been at St John's College, Durham David had trained for the ministry at Edinburgh Theological College, then came to Dundee to do his curacy as chaplain at the cathedral, a post in which he continued to serve for 11 years. Then he was asked by the Bishop of Brechin, a certain Ted Luscombe, to become the Rector at St Mary Magdalene, a church that was struggling and needed to be built up, in 1979. In his time in Dundee he has been a chaplain to both universities, a chaplain to Ninewells hospital and has served on many diocesan and provincial boards and committees.

Michael was ordained deacon in the Diocese of Birmingham in 1967, having trained at Chichester Theological College after being at St John's College, Durham (he knew the ordinand David Shepherd from this time together at college in Durham).

He served his first title in St Philip and St James Hodge Hill in Birmingham from 1967 to 1971.

His second curacy, a norm at that time, was a short spell from 1971 to 1972 at Testwood and Marchwood, Eling, in the Diocese of Winchester. He then became, in 1972, a Team Vicar in the same benefice, a post he held until 1977. In that year Michael came north to the Scottish Episcopal Church: and very far north, as

he was appointed the Rector of St Olaf's in Kirkwall, Orkney, in Aberdeen and Orkney Diocese. Michael served in Orkney for 8 years, until, at Bishop Luscombe's suggestion, in 1985 he was appointed the Rector of Laurencekirk, here in Brechin (as well as the Rector of Drumlithie, Drumtochty and Fasque). He has served for 33 years as the Rector of those charges, also being appointed an Honorary Canon of St Paul's Cathedral Dundee in 2013.



All in the Diocese of Brechin and the wider church wish to congratulate David and Michael on these extraordinary milestones, and offer prayer and support for their on-going ministries!