

Diocese of Brechin: Lockdown News Bulletin

6th July 2020

Welcome

...to this news bulletin for the Diocese of Brechin. The news is full of changes to lockdown life in Scotland: beer gardens opening this week, relaxations on travel and holiday accommodation and many discussions on what will happen when schools return in August.

Faith Communities have been part of the discussions with government and you can be reassured that our voices are being heard at Holyrood! The Scottish Government have been impressed with the way that churches have continued to worship online and keep in pastoral contact with members in lockdown.

From this week we hope to start to plan for Phase 3 and worship in our churches. Guidance on this is imminently due for release and we should hear this Thursday (9th July) the Govt timetable for lockdown easing. As ever, please keep all those planning and managing this process in your prayers

+Andrew

Frequently Asked Questions for Phase 2 (Individual Prayer Opening) of Lockdown easing

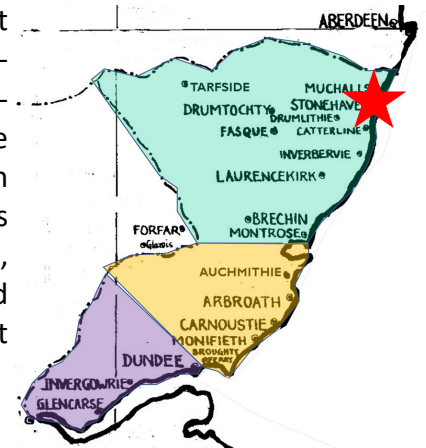
Scottish Episcopal Churches have now been able to open for Individual Prayer for two weeks, if that was something that a vestry and the bishop felt was appropriate for their particular community and setting. Some churches in the Diocese of Brechin have rightly decided that opening is not the right thing: some have decided to open and we will be sharing some of their experiences in the next few weeks of the Bulletin.

There is also a set of SEC "Frequently Asked Questions" on Phase 2 of the Scottish Government lockdown route map. These can be found at <https://www.scotland.anglican.org/wp-content/uploads/Frequently-Asked-Questions-Phase-2-3-July-2020.pdf>

Northern Cluster, Stonehaven: St.

James the Great Opens its Doors

Lockdown is starting to ease for all of Scotland, but the restrictions on how we live continue. All of our churches are keeping connected together in new and creative ways including online worship and pastoral connections. Some churches are now experimenting with opening for individual/private prayer, an activity allowed by the Scottish Government under certain constraints and restrictions. One of the first churches to open this way is St. James the Great, Stonehaven. David Fleming, from St James', writes:



"We were already prepared for opening, having run the water system, cleaned and prepared the church, dressed and put

flowers on the altar and volunteers had already come forward. So we opened last Tuesday (23rd), and will be open now every day (except Mondays) from 10:00 till 15:00. We have had a steady trickle of visitors, including from other denominations (who appear not to have opened), all of whom expressed their thanks that they could come in to our beautiful church for contemplation again. Following the publicity we sent out, we have also had enquiries about future lettings."



Planning for church re-opening...

This week we will receive guidance on Phase 3 planning for resuming worship in our churches and we hope to hear from the government when this might be able to happen.



The process will be one where the vestry needs to decide if the time is right for resuming worship: this may NOT be now, for many reasons. If the time IS right, the vestry will develop a plan for how worship can be safely resumed with whatever physical distancing and hygiene restrictions may be required. This plan will be submitted

to the Diocesan Bishop for approval, as was required for opening for individual prayer.

The College of Bishops is very keen to reassure all church members that Phase 3 worship, if a church re-starts, WILL be a spiritually rich and meaningful experience, even if music might be limited and there are physical distancing and hygiene measures in place.

Resources from Faith in Community

Dundee:

Boredom Busters Every Monday – Friday Faith in Community Dundee will be posting on their Boredom Busters FB page different ideas for activities to do at home (and some ideas for outdoors), from under 5's through to teenagers and families. Each day's activity has a specific age group in mind and all activities are designed to have minimal resources, to make them nice and simple to do! And every day for each age group, they are also posting a link to a free audiobook.

https://www.facebook.com/FICDBoredomBusters/?modal=admin_todo_tour

The Hardship Fund was created by the British Red Cross with our partner Aviva and the Aviva Foundation to help those most financially impacted by the coronavirus outbreak. The fund provides short term financial help for people who can't afford the essentials such as food and toiletries, somewhere safe to sleep, access to a telephone and the internet and fuel to keep the lights on, cook or stay warm.

The British Red Cross's Referral Partner Organisations can register people for cash assistance. They can request a one-off payment of £120 or a three month grant. People registered for the three-month grant will receive £360, paid in monthly instalments of £120 each. <https://hardshipfund.redcross.org.uk/>

SEC Guidance for Churches in Lockdown and in the Pandemic: Check!

Please keep checking the SEC website for updates for our churches on re-opening buildings and for pastoral guidance from the College of Bishops. The Scottish Government is making regular updates and the SEC is responding to these as appropriate. This week there will be significant information. If you are uncertain, please contact the bishop/Diocesan office with any queries.

Website: <https://www.scotland.anglican.org/coronavirus-updates/>

Church Life in Lockdown:

Online worship

The Scottish Episcopal Church will continue to offer 'national' worship online: this will continue indefinitely even as we start to plan for physical gatherings. The two services will be:

- Thursday—'Service of the Word' at 6.30pm
- Sunday—Eucharist at 11am

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

There are also live online worship services at the Cathedral, St Mary Magdalene, St Luke's, & Holy Trinity Monifieth and St Ternan's Muchalls (midweek). Online content is shared by many other churches too.

News for the Bulletin

If there is anything you would like to share from your church, requests for help or other items of new for future bulletins contact Elliott on office@brechin.anglican.org

Prayer Points

- The NHS, Care Homes and all key workers
- Food banks and food distribution and all volunteers supporting them.
- A safe easing of lockdown.
- Politicians — called to make difficult and vital decisions with integrity
- Clergy leading a very different ministry
- Those who have died
- Mourners