

Diocese of Brechin: Lockdown News Bulletin

15th June 2020

Welcome

...to this edition of the Brechin Lockdown Bulletin. We continue to be limited in our discipleship and life as Christians in the Covid-19 lockdown: but the press is full of indications that the lockdown may be eased in Scotland this week. This may make limited changes to our church communities. An important principle is that no church, no cleric and no congregation member **MUST** make changes as lockdown eases. Risks must be assessed and changes only made when it is safe for all who live and worship in our church communities. Please continue to keep all healthcare workers, essential workers and politicians in your prayers at this time!

+Andrew

COVID-19 Update: Phase 2 Guidelines for the SEC

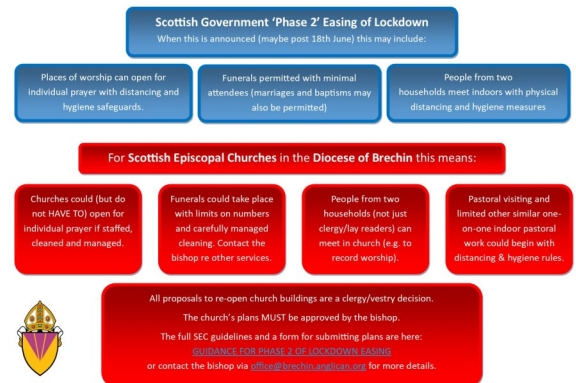


SEC publishes guidelines for individual prayer, funerals to resume in church when permitted by Scottish Government

A [guidance note](#) has been produced for use within the Scottish Episcopal Church to assist Diocesan Bishops, clergy and vestries in relation to Phase 2, which envisages the possibility of places of worship being open for individual prayer and funerals. Phase 2 activities may be started by the Scottish Government from later this week. A [proforma](#) for vestry submission of risk assessments and plans to the Bishop has been drafted.

The cleric/vestry must decide if they wish to re-open the church buildings for Phase 2: if so, they produce a plan and submit this (in the format above) to the Bishop for approval. NO activities should take place

before Scottish Government permission is given for church re-opening in Phase 2, without a vestry decision, and without Episcopal approval. A simple summary has been produced for the Diocese of Brechin: click on the image below:



Whilst many of us may be keen to re-open churches and resume some form of public worship, any such resumption is not expected to be possible until Phase 3 (with limitations) and Phase 4. In the meantime, a wide variety of online worship offerings continue to be available from the province, many of our individual churches, and elsewhere. Some of which can also be accessed by telephone. [Guidance on pastoral activities](#) in Phase 2 has been issued by the College of Bishops.

Activities which are NOT permitted in church buildings during Phase 2 include communal worship, services other than funerals, study groups, children's or youth meetings, meetings for choir practice or bell ringing, access for tourism purposes, or the use of halls for lifestyle, or leisure/recreational activities, such as craft or exercise groups.

Additional guidance will be produced in due course for use in planning for Phases 3 and 4 respectively. The detailed Scottish Government guidance for these phases is not yet available: as and when Government guidance/rules becomes available or changes, the SEC guidance will be amended.

Change to SEC Life: General Synod

Last week should have been the SEC General Synod in Edinburgh. A shorter version of the Synod is planned for later in 2020 for essential business.

News from Eswatini & the Diocese of Swaziland—from Canon Pat Millar

From Pat: Today I received this lovely photo from Bishop Ellinah and want to share it and its back story. Early in the COVID-19 pandemic, I learned from Bishop Ellinah about the extreme food shortages across Swaziland. Providing food for many hundreds of orphans and vulnerable children across the country is a constant challenge for our Companions there and the current pandemic has made a grim situation even worse.



All schools are closed in the lockdown. Pupils are normally provided with a lunchtime meal at school, but, since the schools' closures, no other provision has been made to feed pupils and so hundreds of additional children are arriving at the Neighbourhood Care Points (NCPs) every day, hungry and looking for food. NCPs are already struggling to provide food for the many hundreds of pre-school and out-of-school children and this additional demand, on already overstretched resources, has caused extreme anxiety for Bishop Ellinah, her team and for NCPs across the country.

When I learned of this, I contacted friends in the Swaziland support group in Iowa and we were able to transfer funds immediately to help with food purchases. The photo shows Bishop Ellinah and Ms Thandi Zulu, manager of the Social Development Office, with essential food supplies, which we were able to help provide. The supplies are organised and set out for each community, ready for collection and delivery. Clergy and parish volunteers are collecting and delivering the food supplies to outlying rural NCPs.

It is heartwarming to work together as true Companions and to be able to support each other in practical ways. I am truly grateful to all who supported this latest response and to all those who continue to encourage and support our Companionship work.

Coronavirus Crisis Resources from Faith in Community Dundee: Food and Training Information

Faith in Community Dundee has gathered a comprehensive list of available Food Provision for Dundee. The food provision links are projects running in Dundee that are offering help to people struggling with food poverty or provision in isolation. These projects receive donations of food or money and provide food to people in need. Generally, these projects have the volunteers they need to operate: the local authority third sector agencies or national projects are a mechanism to offer volunteering resource if you are able and wish to.

They also included a link to training that was designed by the British Red Cross for anyone who is responding to the coronavirus outbreak. Whether you've been deployed by a charity or have decided to lend a hand to a neighbour, it tells you what you need to know to look after yourselves and others. The information is at the following links:

[Food Provision](#)

[British Red Cross Training for Coronavirus Volunteers](#)

Other schemes are operating in Perth and Kinross, Angus and Aberdeenshire: check local authority websites and the Courier for details!

Church Life in Lockdown: Online worship

The Scottish Episcopal Church continues to offer 'national' worship. Most weeks 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/>

If there is anything you would like to share in 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 in the UK and Scotland.
- Politicians — called to make difficult and vital decisions with integrity
- Clergy leading a very different ministry
- All those who have died in this difficult time
- Those who mourn them