

# Diocese of Brechin: Lockdown News Bulletin

## 18th May 2020

### The Bishop writes:

Greetings to all in the Diocese of Brechin as we continue to stay at home and save lives as the Covid-19 lockdown continues in Scotland. I continue to pray for you all at this difficult time.

This bulletin comes as the end of Christian Aid week 2020 (10-16 May) - in this year it has been hard to carry out the services and activities that would usually happen: but please visit <https://www.christianaid.org.uk/> to see the work that they are doing and to support them if you are able!



### Thy Kingdom Come: 21-31 May 2020

Thy Kingdom Come is a global prayer movement that invites Christians around the world to pray for more people to come to know Jesus. What started in 2016



as an invitation from the Archbishops of Canterbury and York to the Church of England has grown into an international and ecumenical call to prayer. The SEC has supported this project and I would encourage churches and individuals to pray and support the project. More information is at: <https://www.thykingdomcome.global/>

### Statement from the College of Bishops about planning for SEC emerging from lockdown

The College of Bishops issued a short statement last week to confirm that planning is starting to help churches work out when and how they can resume activities once the Scottish Government eventually eases the lockdown. A group with skills and expertise is being created to assist with planning. Once a church feels this might be possible, the final decision on whether they will re-open will lie with the Bishop. The statement is at: <https://www.scotland.anglican.org/bishops-plan-for-eventual-easing-of-lockdown/>

### Spotlight on Brechin Church Communities in Lockdown

All of our churches are keeping together and in contact in new and creative ways. In the spotlight this week we have St Martins in Dundee, St Marys in Arbroath, and St Peters in Auchmithie.



### *Arbroath and Auchmithie: Lockdown news from St Mary and St Peter*

From Rev Pete Mead: During Lockdown, although the buildings in Arbroath and Achmithie are currently closed, the church is not. Prayer is still central to the life of both congregations, where individuals pray Compline or read the psalms at 9pm each night – it brings great comfort knowing that other members are praying and thinking of each other at the same time each night. The Ecumenical prayers and lighting of candles on Sunday evenings at 7pm also brings people together.

On Sundays, some of those with the internet are joining in with the Scottish Episcopal Church broadcasts on Facebook and YouTube, some are also tuning in more regularly to [glenstal.com](http://glenstal.com) and watching various services including the Eucharist.

In terms of support, a cell structure has been established - 14 small groups of 5-7 people that pray for one another and keep in contact by phone and post. Each Cell is led by a member of vestry and has autonomy to do their own thing, reaching out to the Rector for support as needed - three groups are currently discussing 'situation ethics and absolute morals' and another group is sharing poetry and psalms (using good old fashioned letter writing and supplemented with regular telephone calls).

Pastoral activities (funerals and telephone calls) continue with many relationships deepening as all sorts of topics are discussed.

Additionally, there are two well established foodbanks in Arbroath and Angus: Angus Foodbank - <https://angus.foodbank.org.uk/> and the Old and Abergay Church of Scotland Foodbank - <http://old-and->

[abbey-church.org.uk/](http://abbey-church.org.uk/) The Rector is an authorised referrer for both foodbanks and people (mainly out-with the two congregations) continue to contact the church and be supported as appropriate.

### ***Dundee: Lockdown news from St Martins***

From Rev. Helen Bridger: Regular activities are:

She phones members of the congregation regularly. A “phone tree” system is in place to ensure congregants are contacted weekly by a team of lay callers

Fortnightly Saturday coffee mornings by “Zoom”

A weekly reflection on the Sunday Gospel passage is written and circulated by Rector given to the congregation either by email or by paper mailshots. For those with impaired cognition or literacy difficulties, regular cards/prayer messages are sent (It's worth saying that about 50% of the congregation are online. Other 50% do not use computers at all, and a small but significant proportion of our folk have some difficulty with cognition and/or reside in nursing homes/very sheltered housing).

A daily hymn circulated electronically using YouTube clips, with added devotional commentary. The church is working on a proposed midweek service of Morning Prayer to be offered by Zoom each week.

None of the digital activities is open for public access owing to security considerations. Participants are invited from the congregation.

### **Coronavirus Crisis Resources from Faith in Community Dundee:**

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 of provision in isolation. These projects receive donations of food or money and provide food to people in need. 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!

## **Companion Dioceses: Iowa-Swaziland-Brechin Clergy Conference**



Despite the Covid shutdown, Clergy from the three Companion Dioceses in the US, Southern Africa and Scotland shared a ‘virtual clergy conference’ by Zoom last week. Bishop Ellinah from Swaziland led sessions on environmental issues called, “Responding as God’s Church to God’s Creation”.

Canon Michael Turner (Laurencekirk) said, “I enjoyed the experience and appreciated the content of Bishop Ellinah’s talks. What was said in part reflected what probably most of us have thought and considered in the past, but there were some different emphases and it was refreshing to hear someone speak from a different cultural and social background and context.”

Rev Roxanne Campbell, (curate in Dundee), said, “...this conference was a really valuable time to take a step back and theologically reflect upon our response to the Climate Emergency.”

Future ‘Zoom’ events will be proposed for the ongoing link partnership.

### **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 led by the College of Bishops

This week the Thursday service will be Eucharist for Ascension Day, led by Bishop John of Edinburgh.

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

### **News to share?**

Please share news of life in lockdown (via clusters or directly to the office). [office@brechin.anglican.org](mailto:office@brechin.anglican.org)

### **Prayer Points**

- The NHS, Care Homes and all key workers
- Food banks and food distribution and all volunteers supporting them.
- All those at home in social distancing or self isolation.
- Politicians—making difficult and vital decisions
- Clergy leading a very different ministry
- All those who have died in this difficult time
- Those who mourn them