

Diocese of Brechin: Lockdown News Bulletin

8th June 2020

COVID-19 Update:

No Change for Scotland this week



No Date for Churches in Scotland to Re-open for Individual Prayer: but Planning Continues

Phase 1 of the Scottish Government easing of lockdown continues: there has been no announcement of the date at which Phase 2 in Scotland might start. In England, churches can start to consider opening next week as announced by the Westminster Government: [this statement does NOT apply in Scotland](#). The College of Bishops Advisory Group is continuing to work on guidelines for Phase 2 including opening for individual prayer. These will be released for vestries this week, as announced: read at <https://www.scotland.anglican.org/advisory-group-to-issue-guidance-next-week/>

The SEC Advisory Group is developing guidelines and a process for the College of Bishops to allow the possibility of individual prayer and limited size funerals in churches during Phase 2. The use of church buildings for other activities, all in accordance with government guidelines, is under review. Further guidance will be produced in good time for "extended groups" meeting in churches in Phase 3, which might start to allow the limited recommencing of worship.

There is also a limited range of pastoral and other activities that might start to become possible as the phases of lockdown easing pass: work is being done to match the [Government Route document](#) to these wider activities in the lives of our churches to allow the bishops to advise and guide on these development.

From the Diocese this week:

Vigil for Racial Justice held Virtually by St Paul's Cathedral, Dundee: Bishop Alan Scarfe and Donna Scarfe Address the Meeting

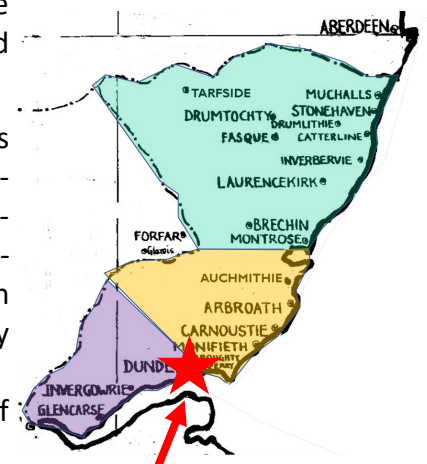
A socially safe protest was held in Dundee yesterday (Sunday 7th June 2020) with a powerful address as the Cathedral hosted a Zoom Vigil for Racial Justice. Donna Scarfe and Bishop Alan Scarfe of the Diocese of Iowa spoke from the situation in the US and addressed some of the inherent issues of racism from centuries ago that still stand today. Over 80 people from Scotland, the US (and at least one from Israel-Palestine) joined in prayer and worship in solidarity and protest at the events that have unfolded in the past few weeks after the death of George Floyd in Minneapolis in the US and the alarming responses by some in power. "Thoughts and prayers are not enough," was the challenge that Donna left us with as she shares from her personal and family experi-



ence.

The vigil was arranged by the Rev David Gordon, Interim Priest at St Paul's Cathedral, Stuart Muir, the Pastoral Musician and hosted on the evening by Elliott Scarfe, the Bishop's PA and Zoom expert.

The service was supported by members of Brechin Diocese and the Diocese of Iowa with liturgy being led by representatives from both areas of participation.



The Cathedral in Dundee

Message from Bishop Andrew

As we pass Trinity Sunday and move into a long period of 'Sundays after Pentecost', sometimes called 'Ordinary Time', we remain in the strange and difficult Covid-19 lockdown. There are signs of easing in the early phases of the Scottish Government route map, but it will almost certainly be a long time before we can ever begin to approach church life in a way that will seem 'normal'. In fact, we may find that a 'new normal' is what lies before us: but one where we can hold on to all that is valuable to us as church communities and focus on the strengths that Covid has brought out in us. There are inevitably weaknesses that we need to face too: a church community thrives with the regular, personal meeting together of a congregation, usually for sacramental worship. We are all weakened by the loss of this gathering and our sacramental life. But we can focus on what we have been able to do, the pastoral care that has actually grown and deepened and the spiritual gatherings that have negotiated the technological pitfalls of Zoom, Facebook live and Whatsapp! My blessing to you all, as we journey on through this time of exile!

+Andrew

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 include 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 led by the College of Bishops

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

There is also a wide range of other services on offer: increasingly, churches are offering 'Zoom' interactive services to their congregations (e.g. image below) or livestreaming or recording acts of worship for people to follow.



If you or your church would like to explore some of these possible ways of worshipping, please contact the office who can direct you to talk to one of our new technical experts in online engagement!

For any news from your church or 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