

# Diocese of Brechin: News Bulletin

## 10th March 2021

### COVID-19 Update: Re-opening for Holy Week may be possible

The First Minister announced (9th March) that, subject to reducing virus levels continuing, Places of Worship may be allowed to re-open for communal worship from Friday 26th March 2021 (the Friday before Palm Sunday). The 'level 4' limit on worshipping numbers of 20 will also be relaxed, to a level of 50, as long as the building has the physically distanced capacity to hold 50. A final decision will be taken (say the government) on 23rd March.

At this stage details such as permission to cross local authority boundaries etc. have not been mentioned by the Scottish Government: more details will become available nearer the time. The SEC Advisory Group will also meet later this week to review the detail of the announcement and more communication may be possible then.

### Brechin Diocesan Synod 2021

Brechin Diocesan Synod met 'virtually' by Zoom on Saturday 6th March 2021 with 62 people gathering electronically. The Bishop celebrated a 'virtual eucharist' to constitute the Synod and business started.

Points of note included:

The GSO rep, Donald Walker, the director of communications, was welcomed. He spoke about starting his role just before lockdown started in March 2020 and the wide range of digital activities that had become so essential.

A motion passed at General Synod 2020, to commit the SEC to working towards 'net zero carbon' by 2030 was discussed in small groups. The feedback included nine years was not long to make fundamental changes, that methods for auditing where we are on 'net zero carbon' are needed, there was concern about changes in e.g. heating systems for old churches and rectories. But there was a sense that something does have to be done.

A consultation on possible changes to Canon 4, on the election of bishops, was reviewed. Dean Fay, part of the provincial review group, presented the options to be looked at. One was to retain the principle that a diocese (lay reps and clergy) elect the bishop, but that the process could be refined. The second was to change to an 'electoral council' system where a smaller group of people with greater

expertise, still with a diocesan majority, would conduct the whole process through to election. A 'straw poll' held in the Synod gave a majority (46%) for the first option, a significant minority (36%) for the second and quite a few (18%) undecided.

Finance was reviewed, with the outcome of last year, a small underspend, explored. Tight control of unrestricted stipend support and reduced staff costs due to pandemic restrictions were the main reason



A sample of those attending by Zoom

for this unplanned underspend. The budget and quota for the present year were tabled, with a reduction of quota requested across the board. The province has reduced the quota that they are requesting and have increased the ministry and mission grant, so the forecast for this coming year is a small, circa £15k overspend. This budget and quota were unanimously approved by Synod.

Elections and appointments took place to provincial and diocesan bodies, reviews were presented of various aspects of diocesan life in the pandemic, statistics were reviewed, updates on the diocesan strategy were given, as work has continued despite the pandemic and the various officers and others were thanked for their part in the life of the diocese. The bishop then confirmed the acts of synod and we were blessed and invited to depart. Synod 2022 is planned for Saturday 5th March, and will hopefully be an in-person meeting by that stage.

### Announcement: Fr John Skinner

Fr John Skinner, Transitional Minister at Montrose, Brechin and Inverbervie, will be finishing his ministry with us this coming May. John, who started in August 2019 had planned for an initial three year ministry, but is finishing early for health reasons. Please keep him, Linda and the charges in your prayers.

Looking for something to take on this Lent?... missing singing?... this might fit the bill!

## **60 Minute Sing**

In response to so many folk missing getting the chance to sing, a friend of Stuart Muir (the pastoral musician at the cathedral) has started a weekly online 60 Minute Sing. The singing session takes place every Friday at 11.00 am. There is a lovely mixture of well-known popular classics to sing along to... some folk songs... and some songs to 'dance, twist and stretch to' as well, if you feel like it!... so, not just exercise for the vocal chords!

There's also some time just to chat to one another and catch up on each other's news. There is no charge to join a session (although any donations towards the running costs are welcome). You can get details about the sessions and how to register for them here: <https://www.60minutensing.org.uk/home>

## **Provincial Youth News**

The latest **Provincial Youth Newsletter** is out now: <https://www.scotland.anglican.org/wp-content/uploads/Winter-21-Provincial-Youth-Newsletter.pdf>

Find out how young people across the Scottish Episcopal Church have been keeping connected during lockdown, plus news of the Provincial Youth Week, and the Provincial Children's Chapel offering online worship for young children and their families

**Glen 21:** Nothing can stop the Provincial Youth Week! Last year, in the middle of the pandemic, Glen 20 took place entirely online, and participants learnt that no matter what, they could still see each other's faces, talk, laugh, explore their faith, have fun and worship together. It has yet to be decided what form Glen 21 will take: in person, online, or a blend of the two. Information, FAQs and preliminary booking here: <https://glen21.online/>



## **Invitation to Lenten Quiet Day**

All Souls' Invergowrie, are hosting a Lenten Quiet Day on Saturday 13th March via Zoom. It will be led by Brother Joseph Emmanuel, Franciscan Friar at Alnmouth Friary, Northumberland. There may be space for others who wish to attend.

The day will begin at 10am with Morning Prayer and an address from Brother Joe. As would be the case,

were we able to go away for such a time of quiet and reflection, there will then be time for us all to do what we need in order to sustain ourselves spiritually, whether that be going for a walk, spending some time reading, reflecting, praying, etc. We will come back together in the afternoon with more input from Brother Joe. The day will conclude with Evening Prayer and will end at 4pm. Brother Joe will also preach for All Souls the following day at our Zoom Service on Sunday 14th March, the 4th Sunday in Lent.

If you would like to be part of this Quiet Day, please email [david.gordon@brechin.anglican.org](mailto:david.gordon@brechin.anglican.org) to register for a place and receive a Zoom link.

## **Dundee Women's Festival**

Dundee Women's Festival started last Friday and runs till 14 March with a range of online activities - all free. 2021 is the centenary of International Women's Day so this virtual festival will help celebrate this important anniversary.

Details are at [www.dundeewomensfestival.org.uk](http://www.dundeewomensfestival.org.uk)

These events are open to all wherever you live, locally, in Scotland, elsewhere in the UK and across the world. The full programme can be downloaded [here](#)

## **Online Worship**

In lockdown we can find ways to worship online. Many churches in the diocese are Zooming or gathering in similar ways—see link below.

The Scottish Episcopal Church continues to offer 'national' worship online. A Sunday service, each led by one of the College of Bishops, will continue in the form of a Eucharist broadcast at 11am through the current lockdown and beyond, as restrictions ease.

This service has an option to hear the worship by telephone for those without internet access. There are more details and downloads of previous weeks' services at:

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

[Link to online services within the diocese](#)

## **News to share? Please send...**

If you have any events, ideas with worship or anything else to report, please send copy to Elliott at [office@brechin.anglican.org](mailto:office@brechin.anglican.org). The Bulletin will come out each week for the foreseeable future with updates on Covid issues, news from charges and (hopefully) useful information for our communities.