

Diocese of Brechin: News Bulletin

8th December 2021



Coronavirus
guidance
update

'Omicron' Covid Variant—Take Extra Care, Lateral Flows and Contingency Planning

The news is still full of the 'Omicron' variant of the Covid virus with much concern over what this might mean for the spread of the virus and possible restrictions. The UK and Scottish governments have made some changes to some rules and guidance, but for us as churches these do not change how we are operating.

The place of worship rules have not changed, so we can continue to operate as before, with the same restrictions as we have got used to.

The government is urging extra care and focus on the existing restrictions. Please take a **Lateral Flow Test** before you attend church (a recent change in government guidance), take care with wearing your face covering, exercise extra care with hand hygiene, pay attention to cleaning church buildings between services and activities and be very careful with busy social activities. Consider ventilation and a degree of personal distancing, especially at busy events.

For Advent and Christmas, with so many extra services and activities, please carry out some **contingency planning**. If clergy, musicians, keyholders etc. require to test and self-isolate and/or if they test positive for Covid, please plan who can fill the gaps this may produce for the self-isolation time. Communication plans in case activities have to be cancelled at short notice could also be produced.

International travel rules have now changed with some African countries with on the 'red list' and much more onerous testing requirements for all travellers (vaccinated and unvaccinated) entering the UK. Check on <https://www.gov.scot/coronavirus-covid-19/> for details.

The SEC Advisory Group will issue guidance if there are any further changes that may affect how we operate as church communities—please watch out for any email bulletins from the General Synod Office.

Companionship News: A New Bishop for the Diocese of Swaziland

The Very Reverend Dr Dalcy Dlamini has been elected by the Bishops of the Anglican Province of Southern Africa to be the next Bishop of the Diocese of Swaziland, following Bishop Ellinah's death earlier this year.



Bishop-elect Dalcy (Photo: Facebook)

From the ACSA release: "Dr Dlamini was elected on the third ballot at a meeting of the Electoral College of Bishops conducted online from Bishops court in Cape Town on Thursday December 1.

"She becomes the second woman bishop in Eswatini, and the fourth woman bishop in the Province of Southern Africa. She succeeds Bishop Ellinah Wamukoya, who died of Covid-related causes early in 2020.

"After an early career as a teacher, Dr Dlamini was ordained in the Diocese of Swaziland, where she ministered in various capacities, including at the University of Swaziland, until 2020. Her PhD in Practical Theology was awarded by the University of Pretoria in 2020. In that year, she moved to the Diocese of St Mark, where she was Diocesan Dean of Studies and Rector and Dean of Christ Church Cathedral in Polokwane. She has served on the international Anglican/Lutheran Commission and is a member of the Steering Group of the International Anglican Women's Network."

The full press release is on the ACSA website:

<https://anglicanchurchsa.org/dr-dalcy-dlamini-elected-bishop-of-swaziland/>

Bishop Alan Scarfe: Diocese of Brechin Retirement Celebration

This Sunday 12th December at 9.30pm by Zoom.

An online celebration of Bishop Alan's ministry and relationship with the Diocese of Brechin will take place on Sunday 12th December at 9.30pm (to allow for the time difference) by Zoom. The Zoom access details for this worship service are:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84992767869?pwd=Q3R3aXRtL01qVU1kZ0p1MUdWTG1Vdz09>

Meeting ID: 849 9276 7869

Passcode: 105285

This will be an evening prayer with music to allow us to give personal thanks for the many years of support that Bishop Alan has given to the Diocese of Brechin. We hope you can make it on Sunday night!

16 Days of Activism—Mothers' Union

This United Nations campaign against gender based violence is held annually from Nov 25th to Dec 10th. It is strongly supported by Mothers Union who are raising awareness with their #nomore1in3 message referring to the 1 in 3 women and girls worldwide who will be impacted by some sort of violence in their lifetime.



The theme of the '16 Days' was marked at St Mary's Broughty Ferry on Dec 5th by incorporating it in the sermon given by lay reader Sue Rowe and also in the intercessions. Leaflets and bookmarks were given out to the congregation by mothers union members.

Brechin Diocesan Training Sessions: 'Pastoral Care' Training for lay members: January 2022

From Dean Fay. Following the successful Zoom training sessions held earlier this year, and as requested by some of those participants, the next training to be

offered is three lay training workshop sessions on 'Pastoral Care'.

These will be held on Zoom on Sundays 16th, 23rd and 30th January 2022 at 2.30pm each day.

The titles for the 1hr 45min sessions are:

- Week 1 – The stories that form us
- Week 2 – The God who calls us
- Week 3 – The community that sustains us

They will be led on Zoom by the Rev Liz Crumlish, an associate of the Institute of Pastoral Supervision and Reflective Practice. We are very fortunate to get this input and I would be grateful if you could put these dates in your diary and as many people as possible would sign up for this.

If you could email flamont53@sky.com to register interest and Dean Fay will send you the ZOOM link for the sessions.

Christingle Planning? 'Shine a Light for Scotland' with Aberlour

Since April last year, Aberlour has supported some of the most disadvantaged children and families in communities across Scotland. We've awarded over £1.5million from our Urgent Assistance Fund in small cash grants to 5,090 families to buy basic necessities such as food, clothing and utilities.

With the end of furlough, the removal of the Universal Credit uplift and winter setting in, families already living in poverty are being left in desperate situations. We have already seen a further increase in the number of applications to our Urgent Assistance Fund, with numbers doubling from September to October.

This Advent, you can donate to our Christingle appeal (which includes a section to let us know which church you attend) and show children across Scotland that there is hope. Your support will help children and families suffering from the worst effects of poverty. Aberlour's family services will be able to provide practical and emotional support to those who are struggling.

With your continuing support, Aberlour will be there to help children for as long as it takes. Thank you.

Read more at: <https://www.aberlour.org.uk/christingle/>

Any news to share in the Bulletin?

Email Elliott on office@brechin.anglican.org