

Diocese of Brechin: News Bulletin

9th December 2020

General Synod 2020 Report

A 'virtual' General Synod met on Saturday 5th December using 'Zoom'. Up to 130 members and visitors attended, interacting using a specially designed 'Synod Hub' alongside the video conferencing software.



The base for the Synod broadcast in Ps and Gs church, Edinburgh

Brechin delegates joined in to appoint board and committee chairs and members and set the budget and quota for 2021. The quota requested from dioceses is being reduced by approximately 20% to allow the financial effects of the Covid-19 shutdown to be eased. Dioceses will decide how to use this reduction to help churches within their areas.

The General Synod also passed a motion committing the SEC to becoming carbon zero by 2030: a target that will ask all church members as well as the churches themselves to take actions to reduce carbon consumption by adopting green technology and habits. This will be a challenging target, but the need for the church to show leadership in this area has been widely acclaimed on social media. Read more at [Synod paves way to net zero emissions commitment - The Scottish Episcopal Church \(anglican.org\)](#)

A 'Season' of Pilgrimage 2020-21

An SEC Province-wide 'Year of Pilgrimage' was planned for 2020 but like much else because of the Covid virus any plans made have had to be deferred or cancelled. The Bishops have now announced that there will be a Season of Pilgrimage beginning on 6th January, the Feast of the Epiphany and will continue until 2022. Bishop Anne Dyer is the lead Bishop and hopes that as many as possible will be encouraged to make some kind of pilgrimage during 2021, whether

locally, further afield or staying at home. This could be done as individual Charges or within the scope of the Clusters. Bishop Andrew has invited the Revd Denise Herbert (dbh.herbert@btinternet.com) to be the point of contact on this and for people to contact her for information or to share ideas. She has written a piece about Pilgrimage and this Season, which you can access on the [diocesan website](#)

Northern Cluster: Tree of Life at St. James, Stonehaven

The Tree of Life in the garden and church yard of St. James will be available again this year from Tuesday 1st December.

The St. James Tree - in the garden and church yard of the Episcopal Church in Arbuthnott Street, Stonehaven - has been decorated at Christmas for many years with baubles in memory of loved ones no longer with us.

The tree is for anyone and everyone of Stonehaven, the surrounding community and visitors to the town who would like to place a bauble on the tree in memory of their loved one.

The effect is very simple yet stunning and the Tree can be accessed from either inside the garden and church yard or from the street.

We wish to see the tree decorated this year but, where in previous years we have provided baubles and suitable marker pens, we would ask everyone to bring their own signed bauble and place on the tree. This way we reduce the possibility of cross-contamination, sadly a consequence of the pandemic Covid-19.

If you would like your bauble back please remove it from the tree before January 6th. The baubles left are removed by 12th Night - 6th January. We will



The 'Tree of Life' in Stonehaven

place uncollected ones by the church door for a few days after that.

Training opportunity for Pastoral Visitors—‘End of life skills for everyone’

Pastoral visitors, are you keen to gain a wider understanding of end-of-life issues, the ways in which they can affect the unwell person, their family, friends and neighbours, and how to relate more comfortably and confidently to people in this situation?

Angus Health and Social Care Partnership are launching a short course in the new year, which you can join from the comfort of your own home. The programme will run for four consecutive Tuesday evenings, 6.30pm to 8.30pm, by Zoom, starting in January. This participative course will be led by Elaine Colville, Senior Palliative Care Nurse, and Sally Wilson, Integration and Improvement Manager, ASHCP. You are welcome to attend whether you live in Angus or any other area covered by the diocese.

An electronic copy of the flyer for the programme is attached to this edition of the Brechin Bulletin. Contact within the Diocese is Peter Smart, Lay Reader, Brechin, Inverbervie and Montrose, smartpeterdr@btinternet.com.

Dundee Nativity: In Search of a Star

People walking in Dundee’s Balgay Park recently were surprised to see three Wise Persons from the East making their way to Mills Observatory. On being approached by a curious dog walker, they told him they were in search of a star, and having travelled to Dundee, the observatory seemed a good place to start.



They had learned that, because of Coronavirus restrictions, there are no live performances of the Dundee Nativity, which over the past ten years has been part of the programme for the traditional Christmas Lights event in the city centre.

However, a professionally filmed version of this year’s nativity play, will be available on YouTube and Vimeo from 11th December. It provides an entertain-

ing and relevant slant on the events of the first Christmas. In this year’s unusual circumstances because of the pandemic, *Dundee Nativity – Celebrating a Covid Christmas* aims to bring a message of hope, encouragement and reassurance to all who are struggling with the situation. Through drama, music and dance, it promotes the celebration of Christmas in a way that is funny, thought-provoking and for all ages.

Thanks to a generous grant from Dundee City Council’s new Festive Fund, copies of [*Dundee Nativity – Celebrating a Covid Christmas*](#) on DVD are being offered to care homes, hospitals, and others unable to access the internet.

From 11th December onwards, the video can be watched online by going to:

<http://thesteepchurch.org.uk/dundee-nativity>

To request copies of the DVD for your housebound folk with no internet access, please order now, to avoid disappointment, by contacting the producer:

allanfwebster@aol.com

SEC Online worship

The Scottish Episcopal Church continues to offer ‘national’ worship online which can support such congregations as well as their own, now well-established, online offerings. The provincial worship will continue indefinitely even as we have a blend of ways of worshipping. The services, which are led by SEC bishops, clergy and lay members from around the Province, are broadcast on Sundays and take the form of a Eucharist at 11am.

There are more details and downloads of previous weeks’ services at:

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

Planning is in hand for Advent and Christmas services that will also be broadcast and available for public access.

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. The Bulletin will come out each week for the foreseeable future.