

Diocese of Brechin: News Bulletin

12th January 2021

Covid and the Scottish Episcopal Church: Frequently Asked Questions



As we continue in the latest 'lockdown' in the Covid-19 pandemic, with worship now suspended, we are now being asked to remain at home as much as is practically possible. Worship and most pastoral care has reverted to 'online' and other models.

Even in the time of enhanced lockdown, there are various clarification questions being asked in relation to the ongoing life of the SEC. The SEC Advisory Group has been responding to these questions, clarifying with the Scottish government as required. A recent query is: **What should a church do when you receive a report that a congregation member has tested positive for Covid, especially if they were present at a church service shortly before the test.**

The answer from the Advisory Group is that the church should not 'do' anything: the NHS Scotland Test and Protect system will pick up the close contacts related to the positive test and they may contact the church for information on who else was present. Please do not carry out your own 'test and trace' system. If onsite worship is allowed, a deep clean of the church might be advisable before another service takes place, although this is almost certainly already taking place.

Another recent question is: **If a priest is filming worship in their church to broadcast or livestream (an explicitly permitted activity under the lockdown rules) can anyone else be there with them?** The Advisory group response is that a person to assist with the livestream is a reasonable other attendee (with suitable distancing & safety precautions), but anyone else being there should not be encouraged given the purpose of the lockdown is to help people remain home as much as possible.

A fuller set of 'Frequently Asked Questions' (FAQs) was produced in November last year, which tries to answer many of the questions that have arisen as

the pandemic and government responses have developed. These FAQs are primarily applicable to periods when worship is permitted (i.e. Phase 3, levels 0 to 4), so many are superseded in the present time of enhanced lockdown, but they are a useful reference for the future.

These FAQs are at <https://www.scotland.anglican.org/wp-content/uploads/Frequently-Asked-Questions-for-Phase-3-Version-6-20.11.20.pdf>

Updates to this list are posted at www.scotland.anglican.org/coronavirus-updates.

If there are any other questions or issues that are unclear, please contact the diocesan office who can get answers from the SEC national Advisory Group on Covid.

Prayers for Companion Links

We can inevitably focus on local lockdown and other matters, so it is good to be reminded to pray for our sisters and brothers elsewhere in the world. Suggested prayer points for our intercessions:



Eswatini: pray for the Covid-19 situation in Southern Africa/eSwatini, and for Bishop Ellinah (and her husband Henry) as she is now ill as she recovers from her recent operation.

Iowa: pray for the political changes in the US and for a peaceful transition of power in the next two weeks. Also pray for Bishop Alan as he approaches retirement later this year.

Brechin: pray for the 'Zoom' interviews being held this week for the Cathedral Provost and for the new priest for Carnoustie & Monifieth. These interviews are to 'downselect' candidates to be invited for 'in-person' visits, when possible.

The joint intercession list for 2021 for the three companion dioceses has been published at: <http://www.thedioceseofbrechin.org/media/resources/Brechin-Joint-Intercession-List-2021.pdf>

“Connecting Scotland” Programme:

Funding for iPads to help people connect with e.g. online worship/pastoral groups

The SEC would like to draw to your attention information regarding the Connecting Scotland Programme which aims to assist those who are “digitally excluded” to get online.



The programme allows organisations to apply for certain categories of individual to be supplied with an iPad with mobile connectivity to enable them to access the internet. This may be of particular interest to congregations with elderly church members or those with disabilities who are not currently digitally connected or families with children on low incomes. The programme is administered via local authorities. As part of the programme, the organisation needs to be in a position to provide a “digital champion”, who could be a volunteer, and who would receive training under the Government scheme (and who need not be an IT expert) to help individuals receiving their iPad to get connected and make use of it.

The closing date for the current round of applications is Monday, 18 January 2021. Information regarding the programme is available at the following link which also gives details about the process for making applications: [Connecting Scotland](#)

Faith in Community Dundee— Food Provision and Money Advice

Faith in Community Dundee continue to provide a Food Provision list for the Dundee area. This will continue—follow the link for the latest status.



They have also provided an updated Money Advice leaflet that includes information on opening times

as the new year starts. We will publish updates to this information.

Please follow the links to the information.

[Food Provision](#)

[Money Advice](#)

Further guidance and information will be supplied as any changes are notified. There remains great need for this help in Dundee—if you wish to support any of the projects listed in the sources above, that help would be greatly welcomed.

Scottish Episcopal Church online worship in the Pandemic—continuing through the January Lockdown

The church is in lockdown: but the church is still very much open!



The Scottish Episcopal Church will continue to offer ‘national’ worship online, of especial importance now that the churches in Scotland have suspended worship during the current lockdown. Many churches are offering local online forms of worship (such as Facebook Live, Zoom, YouTube recordings) but the national, well-established, online offerings are continuing.

The usual Sunday services, each led by one of the College of Bishops, will also continue in the form of a Eucharist broadcast at 11am through the current lockdown and beyond, as restrictions ease.

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

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

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 with updates on Covid issues, news from charges and (hopefully) useful information for our communities.