

Diocese of Brechin: News Bulletin

2nd March 2021



Coronavirus guidelines

What can we plan for Easter worship?

Last week we shared the Scottish Government statements on possible easing of restrictions for churches. **IMPORTANT:** This is all dependent on actual virus levels remaining low/going lower still over the next few weeks. As a reminder, the Government said:

- Easter weekend (precise date to be confirmed—but just before 5th April) - easing of restrictions in 'level 4' allowing limited worship in churches. As before, this is limited to a maximum of 20 people attending with all the restrictions and safety constraints that were in place at the end of 2020. Congregation members cannot cross a local authority boundary to worship.
- Three weeks later, (so probably 26th April 2021—the exact Sunday is not clear) a planned return to a full geographical varying 'levels' model of restrictions. The hope is that 'level 3' would be the default for all of Scotland, which would mean the limit on worship would be 50 people and the congregation could cross local authority boundaries again.

Sundays at 20 limit:

4th April (hopefully)
11th April
18th April
25th April (possibly)

Sundays at 50 limit (hopefully)

2nd May onwards

Possible Sundays and limitations

Easter Planning: the possibility of re-opening for Easter Sunday is a positive development, but may not be straightforward. We DO NOT think that Holy Week services in person are going to be possible. If re-opening is allowed, the limit of 20 people and the restriction on travel across local authority boundaries needs to be taken into account: a church re-opening will have to decide how to choose who can attend and how they will handle keeping at the 20 person level (the number includes ALL people in the

church: cleric/service leader, musicians etc.). Some churches choose to remain closed for another few weeks until 'level 3' applies and larger numbers can attend.

REMINDER: As we said last week, there is no pressure for any church to open until the clergy and vestry are entirely happy that they are ready. When a church decides that they are ready to open, the church should be cleaned and made safe and all those involved in administration and delivery of worship prepared to support this work.

Opening for Private Prayer, with a suitably staffed church, can also be assumed to be allowed once in-person worship is permitted: i.e. from the date around the 5th April as announced by the Scottish Government.

Please let the bishop know of your plans to re-open once you make a decision: If you opened for worship back in 2020 you do not have to re-submit applications but please do follow the safe re-opening guidance as the buildings have been empty for some weeks.

Scottish Churches Webinar: COP26, Divestment and Investment in Just & Green Recovery

Taking place this week:

Eco-congregation Scotland, Christian Aid, Operation Noah, Justice & Peace Scotland and Friends of the Earth Scotland are hosting a webinar this Wednesday 3 March to explore how Churches in Scotland – both locally and nationally – can support a just and green recovery by divesting from fossil fuels and re-orienting investments towards a clean energy future ahead of COP26. This event is well timed as we have a session at Diocesan Synod this coming Saturday to discuss what the Scottish Episcopal Church becoming 'carbon neutral' by 2030 might involve.

You can find out more about the webinar event from the attached poster and register for the event using the Eventbrite link below:

<https://scottishchurcheswebinar.eventbrite.co.uk/>

Date and Time: **Wednesday 3 March from 7.00-8.30pm**

Diocesan Synod 2021

The annual Brechin Diocesan Synod is this coming Saturday: 6th March 2021—and due to the pandemic will be 'virtual', taking place on the video conferencing software 'Zoom'. Diocesan clergy and lay representatives have been invited, along with various people who serve on Provincial boards and committees. All are welcome to attend as observers: contact Elliott in the office if you wish to attend and he can send you the Zoom link.

The agenda and papers are available for download from the resources page of the [Diocesan website](#). Business at the Synod will include discussing a motion from the General Synod in Dec 2020 starting a process for the SEC to become carbon neutral by 2030. The Synod will also review work on changes to the Canon for electing bishops. Reports will be received on mission and ministry in this last, very unusual year, as well as the usual business of finance reports on the past year and budget and quota for the year ahead. Diocesan Quota will be reduced next year to help charges who may be feeling financial pressure after so much constraint in the pandemic.

Nominations are sought for candidates for various posts: open to anyone from the diocese are three posts as 'Alternate Lay Representatives' for the General Synod in 2021. These attend if the existing elected reps are unable to attend. If you are interested in standing as an alternate for General Synod, contact your local clergy, lay rep or Elliott in the office and they can guide you on how to be nominated.

Please keep the delegates and business of the Synod in your prayers. This body makes key decisions that affect the support and ongoing life of all our churches, especially important as we, hopefully, emerge from the present lockdown restrictions.

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 to register for a place and receive a Zoom link.

Dundee Women's Festival



Dundee Women's Festival starts this Friday and runs from 5-14 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

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. 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.