

Diocese of Brechin: News Bulletin

31st March 2022

Covid Update—Face Coverings in Church

4th April

The First Minister announced yesterday (30th March) that, from Monday 4th April, it will no longer be a legal requirement for face coverings to worn in places of worship or at weddings or funerals. This coming Sunday (3rd April, Passion Sunday) the legal requirement still applies. For other public places (e.g. shops, public transport etc.) there is a phased approach by the Scottish government with the legal requirement for face coverings removed on Monday 18th April, Easter Monday.

All remain very welcome to wear face coverings whilst in church—the two-way protection (to mask wearer and to those around them) means some may wish to continue to do this. The government position is that, although measured cases remain relatively high in Scotland, the statistics of hospitalisation and severe illness underpinning the public health guidance support this relaxation of legal restrictions.

The Advisory group of the SEC will consider issuing revised FAQs and other guidance in due course: each church will approach the change in rules in a way that feels safe to clergy/vestry. Clear communication to congregations that masks may still be worn if people wish is important. Clergy may wish to still wear masks (initially) at key points in leading worship: contact the Bishop if you wish to discuss options.

Strathclyde University Chamber Choir in Dundee, Brechin Diocese

Strathclyde University Chamber Choir, conducted by Alan Tavener BEM, will be giving a concert and joining in with worship in Dundee on the weekend of 9th & 10th April 2022.

Formed in 1980, the Choir attracts Members from the University and beyond to rehearse and perform a repertoire which ranges from plainsong and renaissance music, to the a cappella staples of the 20th century and contemporary works. The Choir has toured widely in the UK and abroad, and undertakes annual periodic mini-residencies in North British Cathedrals, singing the major choral services in place of the regular Cathedral Choir. The Choir has recorded for BBC Radio 2, 3 and 4 (including a live broadcast), and released a CD of romantic Scottish part songs and settings of Robert



Burns. In 2010, the Choir completed a five-year project to give the first performances of a series of eleven new communion motets composed by James MacMillan. First heard in the context of the Celebration of University Mass, the Choir also gave the concert debuts of these Strathclyde Motets. Since its recent return to public performance in the Autumn, the Choir has sung liturgies, presented public concerts, and participated in the premiere performances of Nitin Sawhney's 'About Us' at the Unboxed Festival in Paisley Abbey.

9th April: Concert in St Paul's Cathedral

The first event in Dundee is a free lunchtime concert in the Cathedral at 1pm on Saturday 9th April. This concert will reflect the varied range of styles and genres that the Chamber Choir present. Please do come and support!

Some members in the Diocese may recognise a former Cathedral chorister, Kay Gordon, who currently sings with the Choir.

10th April: High Mass for Palm Sunday in St Salvador's and Evensong in the Cathedral

St Salvador's Dundee is welcoming the Choir for their High Mass this Palm Sunday 10th April at 11am. The Choir will also be singing Choral Evensong in the Cathedral at 6.15 pm that same day.

'Tay Cluster': Easter Youth Days at St. Mary Magdalene's, Dundee

St Mary Magdalene's Church is running three activity days for young people aged 7 up. They will run from 10am to 1pm on Monday 11th, Tuesday 12th and Wednesday 13th April. Activities will include games, singing, crafts, quizzes, Easter gardens and a snack.

You can come for one, two or three sessions but please let them know when to expect you by email to sallycarus@gmail.com or by phone or text to 07815 416158. Please let them know by 5th April.

War in Ukraine: Church Response

The war continuing and worsening in Ukraine dominates the news and thoughts and prayers of people throughout the world. As of 31st March, over ten million people have been displaced and over four million refugees have now fled to neighbouring countries. This remains the fastest growing refugee crisis since the Second World War and it shows no sign of easing.

Scottish Faiths Action for Refugees (SFAR-a multi-faith partnership including the SEC) has some guidance for any church or individual: <http://www.sfar.org.uk/7-things-you-can-do-to-respond-to-the-situation-in-ukraine/>. Some of these are described below:

Pray for Peace

Please pray for peace in Ukraine. Pray that world leaders, especially in Russia and their partners, accept their responsibility to promote peace and stop wars. Churches are continuing to hold services/vigils to offer prayer and comfort.

Donate

The most direct and immediate way to support Ukrainian refugees is to donate money to the major appeals helping in the area. Bigger appeals include:

The UK Disasters Emergency Committee (an umbrella appeal for [major UK aid charities](#)). Donate personally or with any church collections at:

<https://donation.dec.org.uk/ukraine-humanitarian-appeal>

The United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR), also heavily involved in local aid activities for Ukraine:

<https://www.unrefugees.org.uk/where-help-is-needed/ukraine-situation/>

Refugee support—developing schemes

The UK response to refugees from Ukraine is developing, maybe somewhat slowly, and new schemes are coming online for refugees to gain visa-based access to safety in the UK.

The UK Govt 'Homes for Ukraine' scheme <https://homesforukraine.campaign.gov.uk/> has been launched with the Scottish Government as a 'super-sponsor' for Ukrainian refugees: it is hoped that this will allow the local authorities of Scotland to act to co-ordinate the matching of refugee 'guests' and 'hosts' with proper checks, safeguards and support in place for all concerned. The churches are still awaiting details of how to engage via this scheme, as well as local work starting to look at possible available housing stock that might be available for refugee families. Individuals can still register as hosts on the above website.

This remains a fast developing area: watch for church guidance on safe and effective ways to respond directly for refugee support which the Diocese will aim to 'signpost' as it becomes available.

Online Worship for the SEC

The Scottish Episcopal Church continues to offer 'national' worship online every week. A Sunday service, each from one of the Dioceses, is continuing in the form of a service broadcast at 11am each Sunday. This will continue beyond the pandemic. There are more details of each week's services at:

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



Any news to share in the Bulletin?

If you have stories and photos of events around the diocese, we would love to share these in the bulletin.

Email Elliott Scarfe in the office on
office@brechin.anglican.org