

# Diocese of Brechin: News Bulletin

## 2nd November 2023

### Diocesan Autumn Synod: Being a “Healthy Church”

Diocesan Autumn Synod took place last Saturday (28th October) in St Ninian’s Dundee. Budgets and quota were set for next year, the annual report and accounts for 2021-22 were received. Revised cathedral statutes were amended prior to seeking Episcopal Synod approval next month. Mike Duncan retired as Diocesan Secretary after about nine years’ service, with the heartfelt thanks of Synod.



Mike is thanked!  
(Photo M Swift)



Synod draws to a close in St Ninian’s Dundee  
(Photo M Swift)

Bishop Andrew presented the next development of the Brechin Diocesan strategy: “Being a Healthy Church”. Provost Elizabeth led an exercise aimed at prompting conversations about what a healthy church is. Faced with a long list of resources a church might have, everything from hymnbooks to bishops, they were asked to choose the five they thought were most essential.

Elizabeth writes: This is an exercise with no right answers. Churches are like people – they need different things at different times, and health is different for everyone. So there were lots of different answers and plenty of vigorous discussion. But some ideas came up a lot in different groups around the room:

- Nearly everyone voted for coffee – or some kind of hospitality.
- There was a lot of focus on leadership and how it should be (trained, collaborative).
- Community links, awareness of the local context of the church, and outreach projects emerged really strongly as something people were thinking about.
- Nobody voted for hymnbooks as something vital, and generally there wasn’t a lot of emphasis on keeping everything as it always has been.
- There was a lot of energy, in the discussions and in the ideas as well – people talked about action and the need for action and mission.
- People talked a lot about vocation – it was on the list of resources. ‘It’s not about institutional survival, it’s not about keeping the show on the road’. They spoke about finding what their church was called to be, here and now.

Some groups clustered similar resources together, and noticed that the clusters were a good match with the marks of a healthy church: energised by faith rather than just keeping things going, looking outward, trying to discern what God’s calling it to be, willing to change, operating as a community, making room for everyone, doing a few things and doing them well. (The list is from Robert Warren’s “The Healthy Churches’ Handbook”).

### New Diocesan Officers Appointed at Brechin Diocesan Synod

Two new officers were appointed for Brechin Diocese at the Synod. **Dr Jaap Jacobs** was appointed as **Diocesan Secretary** on the retirement of Mike Duncan. Jaap has been acting as Assistant Diocesan Secretary since the spring. With the appointment of Kenneth Gibson as Dean in the summer, a vacancy had arisen for the post of **Synod Clerk**, a Chapter Canon elected by the clergy of the diocese. **Rev Jim Benton-Evans** was elected to this post and is now a Canon of the Chapter, to be installed at a future date. Thanks to Dr Jacobs and Canon Benton-Evans as they begin these new roles in the Diocese.

## **War in Israel-Palestine: Anglican Emergency Appeal for the Episcopal**

### **Diocese of Jerusalem**

The Archbishop of Canterbury Justin Welby and the Archbishop of Jerusalem Hosam Naoum have issued a joint emergency appeal for the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem. The full text of the appeal letter is attached to the bulletin email. Details of international partners in the UK where donations can be made are: JMECA (UK): <https://cafdonate.cafonline.org/24585> Friends of the Holy Land (UK, Joint Anglican-Roman Catholic): <https://www.friendsoftheholylan.org.uk/donate/christmas>. Please pray for peace in this terrible time of war and violence.

### **Cathedral Lunchtime Concerts Autumn/Winter Term: 3rd November 1pm**

The next Cathedral's lunchtime concert will be on Friday 3rd November at 1.00pm, with sopranos Moira Docherty and Barbara Scott and Robert Duncan on the Piano. Tickets are available at the door and cost £5 for adults or £3 for students.

### **SECMA Service of Thanksgiving - Saturday 4th Nov 2023 at 11.30am**

The Scottish Episcopal Church Mission Association is drawing to a close after many years of faithfully supporting projects in Scotland and overseas. A service of thanksgiving for all of SECMA's work will take place on November 4th 2023 at St Mary's Cathedral, Palmerston Place, Edinburgh, EH 12 5AW

As well as a chance for all to joyfully giving thanks to God, the Most Rev Dr Mark Strange will be preaching, a Ugandan family choir will be singing and we will hear about SECMA's far-reaching impact past, present and future. A light lunch will follow.

For catering purposes it will be good to have an idea of numbers attending so please respond to Gill Campbell at [secma.convener@gmail.com](mailto:secma.convener@gmail.com).

## **Lunchtime Concert at St Mary Magdalene's: 8th November 2023**

The next lunchtime concert at St Mary Magdalene's will be on Wednesday 8th November starting at 12.30. It will be an organ recital given by Geoff Bolton, Director of Music at St. Ninian's Cathedral, Perth. As usual the concert will last about 30 minutes, tea and coffee will be available and audience members are invited to bring their own lunch to enjoy with the music.

### **Provincial Building Grants: Timescales for Additional Applications**

The SEC Provincial Building Grants Group still has a balance of about £91,500 available to award. The Group agreed to schedule an additional meeting in December on Tuesday 12th December to allocate funds against projects. Applications have to have been approved by the Diocese, so a submission deadline of 11th November to the Diocese is suggested to let Council review and approve. Note: the usual requirements apply: three quotes required, up to 50% of the cost of the work, ideally the work identified in a quinquennial report. Contact the office for more information. <https://www.scotland.anglican.org/vestry-resources/buildings/provincial-building-grants-and-loans/>

### **Cost of Living Crisis: Info and Projects**

The Cost of Living crisis continues, and as the colder weather arrives the pressure on people trying to heat their homes with continuing high utility costs will increase.

We are continuing to place information and resources to help with living costs on a page on the Diocesan website. The page can be found here: Cost of Living Crisis page [here](#).



### **Any news to share in the Bulletin?**

If you have details of upcoming events, stories and photos of events around the diocese, please email Elliott Scarfe in the office on [office@brechin.anglican.org](mailto:office@brechin.anglican.org).

