

To: All Clergy, Lay Readers, Lay Representatives, Alternative Lay Representatives, Vestry Secretaries and Treasurers – and for passing on to your congregations...

From John Mitchell, Diocesan Secretary

16th February 2021

Message from Bishop Kevin

Lent – The Season of Hope and Opportunity

Dear Friends,

Hope is much more than mere optimism: that is the lesson of faith and that is why Lent is the Season of Opportunity.



Optimism, that feeling, view of life, that everything will work out well and that things can only get better and we have a right to expect everything to go well. That view of life offers a fraudulent certainty. Lent presents us with the God given opportunity to recognise true Christian Hope, which is different from optimism.

Hope, true Christian Hope, is based on the vision that we want to be with God who is already with us in the love we experience; but that love gives us a vision of peace, fulfilment, security that we experience here and now but also teaches us to trust in God. That trust is the essence of faith – the vision. In other words, we live in what by tradition we call, ‘the Hope of Heaven’.

It was the late Lord Jonathon Sacks, who made the distinction between Optimism and Hope. Lord Sacks, as Chief Rabbi, said that the history of European Jewish community in the twentieth century meant that they could not be optimistic, but they lived in Hope. Without that Hope in God, their community could not have continued. Their experience taught them that things do not always just turn out well, but that God is faithful to his people and Hope in God and in God’s faithfulness leads us into a new reality.

That is the Hope that makes Lent the season of opportunity. That is the Hope that in Lent 2021 gives to each one of us the opportunity to embrace our own new reality. In tiny, trivial ways, giving up biscuits for instance. Amidst all that we have been denied, had to give up in these past months, during Lent, as we reach for the biscuit tin, reflect on the many people who have found themselves at food banks for the first time in their lives.

Take that thought and that reflection into bible reading, prayer, and Zoom worship. Listen, read, the scriptures assigned for these weeks of Lent. Notice the optimism of the disciples from the mount of Transfiguration to the glory of Palm Sunday. On Palm Sunday they felt, they knew, they were on the winning side, but that soon proved to be false optimism.

The desolation of Holy Week and the tomb, but God's faithfulness, Jesus, with us in the desolation, *there* is Hope. Hope of the glory of light and life on Easter Day. The new reality that God is with us but the excitement that *we* can be with God, God who is love.

Hope lives. The scriptures teach us that, as our communities reflect on the need for food banks, a more just and equitable society must be our hope of the new reality. The Holy Spirit spoke through Isaiah, the prophets, that justice, peace, security are God's yearning for us all.

During Lent, there are many opportunities online, in books, in conversations with those leading our congregations, for us all to reflect on scripture in prayer. Seize the opportunity to embrace the new reality, the journey to and with God, offered this Lent. To bring to ourselves, to share with others, the Easter new reality of Hope that is eternal.

I wish you all a happy and Holy Lent

+ Kevin

Glasgow and Galloway bishop@glasgow.anglican.org

Bishop's Lent Appeal 2021

Bishop Kevin has chosen Aberlour as the subject of our Lent Appeal this year. Aberlour supports children, young people and families to give them the best chance to flourish, and has been doing so for over 140 years. The origins of the Charity have a fascinating history and explain the strong link with the Scottish Episcopal Church (see the history section on their website, which also tells you much more about the charity: www.aberlour.org).



Normally, we would have had a presentation at Synod to explain the charity's background; however, this will not be possible in 2021. As an alternative – open to many more than simply those who attend Synod – Aberlour have offered a live Zoom presentation (lasting approximately 30-40 minutes, including time for questions) to anyone across the diocese who is keen to learn more. If you would be interested in such an event, please email me at diocesansecretary@glasgow.anglican.org (preferred method) or call me on 07798 662711. Please state your preferences (if you have any) to attend a session on a weekday (daytime or evening) or a Saturday. If demand is sufficient, but split across time preferences, we will organise two events.

See overleaf for details of how to donate to the Lent Appeal...

A New Way to Donate: Bishop's Lent Appeal JustGiving Page

The preferred and easiest way is to donate electronically and instantly to the appeal, either for individuals or for treasurers sending collected charge donations. For individual donations, it means that Gift Aid can be added to your donation, adding 25p to every pound donated (if you pay tax). **Whether donating as an individual or as a Church via your Treasurer, please add the name of your church to the Donation Notes** (even if you are an individual who prefers to remain anonymous). Please donate through *this* page (which donation goes directly to Aberlour) rather than through Aberlour's own JustGiving page:

<https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/diocese-of-glasgow-galloway>

For those who prefer to send cheques, they can be sent directly to Aberlour (including details of the church they are sent from), but it will be administratively much simpler – for us and for Aberlour – to send them via the Diocesan Office to ensure they are added to our final total. See below.

Other Ways to Donate

Cheque Payments should be made payable to **Diocese of Glasgow and Galloway**, Please include a note to confirm the name of your charge and your contact details. Send to:

Diocese of Glasgow & Galloway, Bishop's Lent Appeal, 5 St Vincent Place, Glasgow G1 2DH

Our post is being redirected to Christine Hughes at home, who will bank cheques and acknowledge receipt by email to your Treasurer, copying in Iolanthe Stack. Money will be transferred to Aberlour on a regular basis, and included in the final JustGiving total. This will also apply to the following method....

Electronic Transfer to the Diocese: although it remains easier to transfer electronically via our own JustGiving page, it remains possible to do so through the Diocesan account. Send by BACS to the following details: Sort code 83-41-00, Account Number 00162089. Account name is ***GW & GALL GEN FUND 7***. Please use the reference **Lent21** and your quota number for ID, and **also** email Iolanthe Stack at iolanthe@glasgow.anglican.org to confirm a donation has been sent, and from which charge it has been sent. Iolanthe will acknowledge receipt by email. If you are sending a personal donation, also use **Lent 21** and your surname for ID, again copying in Iolanthe for information, and she will reply to confirm receipt.

Finally...

People sometimes ask about the fees that are levied by JustGiving, but Aberlour have asked me to point out that *any* transaction of donations involves a fee of some kind, and that JustGiving is a very easy, time-saving (as well as cost-saving) platform for them to use, meaning these charges are a very effective investment, and cover the varying costs of processing different payment types. JustGiving also gives donors the option to make a voluntary contribution to the cost of maintaining the platform, which enables them to keep charges to *all* charities low, but this is **completely optional**. In short, it should be stressed that the increased donations and smaller administrative costs of using JustGiving far outweigh the small charges that they make.

Diocesan Synod 2021

As previously advised to all clergy and lay representatives, and in common with a number of other dioceses, the decision was taken at the last Diocesan Council meeting to postpone our Synod until later in the year, on a date yet to be advised, when it is hoped that we will be able to host an online virtual event from our new Diocesan Centre.

Having said that, the elections that would have taken place at our March Synod are being conducted throughout February to enable the requisite Diocesan places to be taken for General Synod 2021 (scheduled for June 10th to 12th, another virtual event). The other matter that required a response from our Synod, and to be submitted before 31st March, will therefore have to be considered by vestries and/or individuals rather than through the channels of a Synod response. Please read on...

Canon 4 Discussion and Responses Required by 31st March

Anyone involved in the process during our Episcopal Vacancy over a lengthy period between 2018 and 2020 should be interested to comment on Canon 4, the process by which we elect our Bishops.

Miriam Weibye, our Provincial Church Relations Officer, writes:

At General Synod 2018, the Faith and Order Board brought the following motion: *That Canon 4 "Of the Election of Bishops to Vacant Sees" be revised and amended as necessary.* This motion having been passed, the Faith and Order Board appointed a small group to review Canon 4, chaired by the Bishop of Edinburgh. The review group have considered the existing Canon 4 in detail, and sought views from around the province. It now presents the attached document (*Canon 4: Consultation with Diocesan Synod Members*) for detailed consultation with a number of church bodies.

Vestries and/or Individuals are therefore invited to submit responses by clicking on [this Google form](#) by **Wednesday 31st March 2021**. Although a pdf of the questions is provided (*Canon 4 Review Group Consultation – Google form*) so that people can see them all at once and read them through before answering online, we would ask people to only respond via the Google form, as the General Synod Office is not in a position to deal with physical responses due to Covid-19 safety precautions. If anyone wishes to make a separate written response, it can be emailed directly to Miriam (address below), again by **Wednesday 31st March 2021**

The review group has also provided an example document of what a commentary or guidelines for a revised Canon 4 might look like (*Canon 4 Draft Guidelines Commentary Examples*) as explained in the final point of the consultation paper. Following this second phase of the consultation, the review group will prepare a report for General Synod 2021, which will be asked to indicate support of the direction of travel with a view to preparing a revised canon for General Synod 2022. If you have any queries, please contact Miriam Weibye, Church Relations Officer at churchrelations@scotland.anglican.org.

If you would like to have your say about our Episcopal Election process, please do try to respond to this consultation exercise, either as a vestry or as an individual – or even both if you would like to do so...

Children's Chapel

If you've got young children (pre-school to early primary years) anywhere in your church or family, please join in with the enchanting mix of games, activities, songs and Bible teachings that form the 10-15 minute episodes of *Children's Chapel* every week, an offering from the Province that's co-ordinated by our very own Canon Missioner, the Rev Canon Audrey O'Brien Stuart.

This new service came about after Lorraine Darlow, an expert in Christian Formation and member at St. Ninian's Prestwick, reported to the Mission Board about the unique needs of children and families in lockdown. A rota of leaders from around the province has been assembled and will be sharing in the weekly presentations very soon. Back episodes and new weekly videos can be found at either of the SEC *YouTube* or *Facebook* pages, i.e.

<https://youtube.com/c/TheScottishEpiscopalChurch> or

<https://www.facebook.com/scottishepiscopalchurch>.

Related to this, Audrey would welcome involvement from others across the Diocese (and Province) to take part in these programmes, or even simply to give feedback: please contact her at astewart@glasgow.anglican.org if you'd be able to help out in this vital work for the future of our Church – or just to let her know what you think of *Children's Chapel*.

New Diocesan Centre

Building works have now begun at 49 Cochrane Street. A progress update should appear in our next Office Update.

Smoke Detectors in Clergy Housing or church-owned properties

Rebecca Cadie, Diocesan Architect, draws attention to forthcoming legislation that is coming in to place for all housing in Scotland, new and existing. It was to be implemented in March 2021, but the government has put the deadline back a year to March 2022. However, vestries should be aware of it and should ensure clergy housing or church owned properties need to have detectors fitted. Here is the link <https://www.gov.scot/publications/fire-and-smoke-alarms-in-scottish-homes/>

Church Security

I've recently been in receipt of communications from a Motherwell-based company specialising in building security incorporating bespoke CCTV and alarms, and currently offering churches a reduction of 40% based on an individual site visit. Please note that we have no diocesan experience of using the company, although I gather they have installed security systems at a number of Roman Catholic churches within the Glasgow area, who may be contacted for referrals. If you would like further details, please email me at dioesansecretary@glasgow.anglican.org.

Institutions

St Margaret's, Newlands: the Rev Canon Gordon Fyfe, was installed as Rector of St Margaret's on 2nd February, in a 'first' for our Diocese: much of the Institution was conducted 'remotely' and by recorded contributions on Zoom to enact the Deed of Institution, with no gatherings permissible inside the church except for the new Incumbent being filmed leading prayer. Subsequently, Gordon met with his new congregation (on Zoom once again) for Evening Prayer and a social gathering. It was different – but it was enjoyed by all in these difficult times. A similar service will be enacted for Institutions at future times of serious restrictions on gatherings. You can watch the institution on Youtube:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FKb5SVgVXCY>

Cathedral News

Our Cathedral hosted a recent BBC broadcast, when The Very Rev Kelvin Holdsworth, Provost of the Cathedral, lead a communion service, with intercessions from the Rev Canon Oliver Brewer-Lennon, who also delivered the Bible and Gospel readings. Congregational singing and choir performances came from St Mary's recordings in the BBC archives. The broadcast can still be viewed until mid-March at <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/m000s75q>

Also of note, the Cathedral is hosting a badge exhibition to celebrate LGBT History month. No travel is necessary to view, as it's all online...

<https://thecathedral.org.uk/lgbt-history-month-online-badge-exhibition/>

New Diocesan Website

The new, redesigned website, should soon be ready to launch, with a significantly more attractive appearance offering intuitive and easier access to the items for which most people launch searches and seek information. Many thanks to Petko Marinov for all of his work on this. The new version will be available at the same address as before, <https://glasgow.anglican.org>, where you should find an opening page that looks like this...



Kind regards

John Mitchell, Diocesan Secretary (diocesansecretary@glasgow.anglican.org)