



Diocese of Aberdeen and Orkney

Scottish Episcopal Church

Newsletter – Wednesday 8 April 2020

From the Bishop

One of the things I am missing most about our lack of collective worship is singing hymns together in church. At this time of year we sing some wonderful hymns from *Ride on, ride on in majesty* on Palm Sunday, to *O sacred head sore wounded* on Good Friday and *Jesus Christ is risen today* on Easter Sunday. Our collective 'Alleluias' will have to wait until we are all together again.

This does not mean that we stop singing of course. We might do this while listening to hymns and music on our radios or tablets, or by joining in with *Songs of*

Praise. So I am not going to be put off! Early on Sunday morning I intend to go out into the garden and sing *Thine be the glory* – all on my own, in a loud voice!

I love this hymn, and this year some of the words will be particularly pertinent;

*No more we doubt thee, glorious Prince of life;
life is naught without thee; aid us in our strife;
make us more than conquerors, through thy deathless love:
bring us safe through Jordan to thy home above.*

There is much talk of us all being in this together, and in some ways we are. However, I know that compared to some of my neighbours in Aberdeen West I am having an easier time of it. I live in a large house with a garden, my income is secure, I get on very well with those with whom I share my home. In my prayers I am including neighbours I usually meet on the bus, many of whom live in single rooms in shared housing with no garden. Some of these also struggle with mental health problems, so the present crisis is a particular challenge for them. Please hold your own neighbours in your prayers.



Provincial Worship – Maundy Thursday to Easter Sunday

Maundy Thursday, 6pm: The Rt Rev Ian Paton & the Rev Canon Dr Carrie Applegarth celebrate a Eucharist from their home in Perth.

Good Friday, 2.30pm: The service will include the Passion Narrative and the Veneration of the Cross, and will be led by the Rt Rev Anne Dyer, Bishop of Aberdeen & Orkney.

Holy Saturday, 8.30pm: The Easter Vigil will be led by the Primus, the Most Rev Mark Strange, from his home in Arpafeelie.

Easter Sunday, 11am: The Rt Rev Ian Paton & the Rev Canon Dr Carrie Applegarth will celebrate the Eucharist in private from St Ninian's Cathedral, Perth.

From Canon Vittoria Hancock, Ballater and Aboyne

My church members have been busy making their own palm crosses out of a variety of materials, from paper to bamboo, twigs to daffodil leaves. The hope is that when we are finally able to resume worshipping in our church buildings, we will bring them with us and bless them all in a large celebration. We are continuing with our church at home, with services and reflections every Sunday, Morning Prayer together on Wednesdays and Compline available on Youtube both Wednesday and Sunday evenings. Those who are able are planning on joining in the RSCM online 'Big Easter Evensong'. Congregation members are keeping an listening ear for each other, local volunteer groups are hard at work, and I am compiling information sheets for the communities I serve on a twice-weekly basis.

We are also holding an on-line Easter Bonnet competition, open to anyone in the community. People are encouraged to make their own Easter bonnet, out of materials they find at home, and to post a picture on our Facebook page or email them to me. The winner gets a small prize - but more importantly, we all get to have some fun.

While there is frustration at not being able to get to the church building, we are busy being church where we are, in the best ways we can. Listening, supporting, helping. To wider Diocesan family, we wish you joy, peace, and safety this Eastertide. May the light of Christ shine in your homes and hearts.

From Tom Ferguson – St John's, Aberdeen

Like all churches, we feel a great sadness in being unable to worship together in the beauty of our spiritual home. Some of us are technically equipped with the tools of social networking while others are more isolated relying on the telephone and mail deliveries. We are trying to minister to all our community using traditional methods as well as try out new ideas. On Sunday mornings at 9.30, through the medium of the Zoom App we meet and interact over Morning Prayer, using the Scottish Prayer Book. Our Deacon, Revd Jenny, leads the service while some of us will lead a Psalm and give a reading. Afterwards, we have coffee together and chat. There are few technological challenges as the host (worship leader) has the bulk of the work. Just remember to turn on the picture (optional) and sound. The internet is relatively quiet at this time of day so there is less chance of 'crashing'.

This bringing together has been a blessing as we enter Holy Week and increasing numbers are joining in. We record the service and put it out on Facebook so others may experience it from a less invasive perspective. However, once we quickly get over the mild embarrassment of seeing ourselves on a shared screen, it becomes a normal occurrence. We are now joining together saying Compline during Holy Week.

Happy Easter to you.

I intend to send out a news letter every week. I would love to hear from you – tell us what are doing with your time, what is helping you to pray and stay close to God, what is helping you to remain hopeful and faithful. **Please send your news to me at : bishopanne@aberdeen.anglican.org**