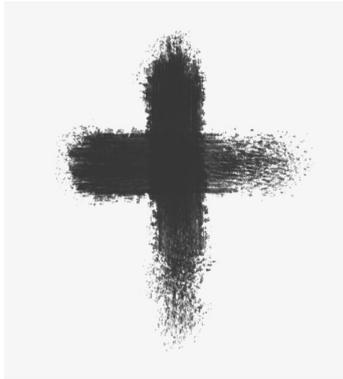




Diocese of Aberdeen and Orkney
Scottish Episcopal Church
Newsletter – 2 March 2022

Ash Cross – Red Cross



On this Ash Wednesday we enter Lent with war in Europe. Today we are reminded in our liturgy of the precariousness of the human condition. We are frail, made of dust, sinners. Even if we wanted to hide the truth of how we are from ourselves, we cannot escape the reality of what we are seeing unfolding in Ukraine. We see the best and worst of humanity before us: aggression, assertions of power, violations, violence and death on the one hand, and bravery, altruism, self-sacrifice, kindness and compassion on the other.

Today many of us will be marked with ash and signed with a cross. We will be exalted to remember who we are, to be humble before God. We will be called to repent. This turning is not just for a day, but for a season. And in our Bible readings we will be exhorted to give alms; to give money to those in need.

In our churches we are praying for the people of the Ukraine, and for a turning of all those whose hearts are set on violence. We remember that Jesus calls us to pray for our enemies, and bless those whose actions bring a curse on us or on others.

As part of your Lenten discipline I encourage you to hold another cross before you – the “Red Cross”, and consider directing some of your Lenten giving to the British Red Cross, as that organisation responds to the crisis facing the people of the Ukraine.

It is very easy to give a donation on-line. **Google: Red Cross Ukraine Appeal**

Aberdeen and Orkney Diocesan Synod
Saturday 26 February 2022

A summary of proceedings

The synod met online, beginning with an opening Eucharist taking the Lambeth Conference theme '**God's Church for God's World**'. The service included two hymns (*Let us build a house*, and, *Christ be our Light*), the passages of the Bible read by attendees from the islands, intercessions led the ordinands of the diocese, and the Bishop's Charge.

The text of this can be found at this link:

<https://aoepiscopal.scot/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/Bishops-Charge-to-Synod-2022-1.pdf>

Dr Lorraine Paisey confirmed to synod that published accounts were up to date, noting what a significant work had been achieved through the changing of diocesan auditors, financial software and oversight systems. The move to on-line banking before the pandemic had allowed good working through an otherwise challenging period. The balance sheet for 2019/20 showed the **finances of the diocese** in very good health, and that for 2020/21 more so.

Dr Leon van Ommen introduced the discussion on the **revision of the 1982 liturgy** (Blue Book). The revisions make some parts of the liturgy gender neutral, and seasonal Eucharistic prayers are available. An indicative vote of synod was taken, with the revisions receiving approval.

Dr Martin Auld and the **Climate Change Group** introduced the topic of the 2030 net zero carbon target set at General Synod last summer. The synod spent time in break-out groups, with considerable positive energy in discussions. There was an acknowledgement that the targets are challenging, but now is the time to take action.

There was then a break for lunch.

The afternoon began with a **Small Church Story**: a presentation on the internal reordering and redecoration of St James the Less, Aberdeen, by Revd Dr Ruth Green and Dr Julia House. As well as showing pictures of the reordered space, they described the impact this has had on the church's hospitality, resulting in a growth in the congregation.

The Bishop introduced the topic of **Five-year Planning**. Such planning was taking place in various contexts in the churches, including in the Anglican Communion, and at Provincial level. Individual charges in the diocese will be encouraged to make a five-year plan, and a diocesan plan will run in parallel. Those present spent further time in small groups

discussing hopes for the future, and processes for good planning that include congregations.

The final item on the synod agenda was the **Aberdeen and Orkney Review**.

The Bishop of St Andrew's, Dunkeld and Dunblane - Rt Revd Ian Paton – addressed synod. He commented that the College of Bishops had received a range of comments about the diocese from a number of perspectives. The Episcopal Synod had established the Mediation Steering Group, and asked it to set up a process to enable reconciliation in the diocese. Bishop Ian said he was very pleased to be at the synod in order to listen to all that was being said.

The Chair of the Mediation Steering Group, David Strang, then addressed synod. He outlined the process of mediation. He took time to explain that investigations and mediation processes dealt with issues in human relating differently, and explained why they were not suitable to run at the same time. He took questions from the floor, seeking to reassure those gathered that the mediators being used were professional, used to dealing with perceived power differentials, and always careful to be impartial and create safe environments for conversations.

Revd Alastair MacDonald presented a motion requesting the Episcopal Synod and the Provincial Standing Committee to set up an investigation into what his motion described as 'allegations of bullying and harassment' in the diocese. In the debate, speakers spoke clearly and robustly for and against the motion. When put to the vote, the motion was not carried.

In the morning the following **Appointments and Elections** included:

Dr Lorraine Paisey to continue as **Hon. Diocesan Treasurer**

Dr Lizzie Finlayson to be **Hon. Diocesan Secretary**

Revd Canon Terry Taggart to be **Synod Clerk**

Newly Elected Reps to General Synod:

Clergy – Revd Canon Neil Brice, Revd Alastair MacDonald

Laity – Brian Harris

Newly elected to Diocesan Standing Committee

Revd Canon Neil Brice, Dr Julia House

Newly elected to Finance and Property Board

David Rose



Episcopalians and Their Ethics:

A six-part series in Lent 2022

Revd Dr Michael Hull

A free event open to everyone.

Episcopalians, like all Christians, desire to lead lives worthy of their calling in the Lord Jesus Christ. How do we lead such lives?

'*Episcopalians and Their Ethics*' is an overview of Christian Ethics from an Episcopal/Anglican perspective. It aims to develop a well-informed understanding of Christian deliberation on behaviour, and of the ways in which Anglicanism both informs and shapes the morality of individuals and communities, with case studies relating to contemporary ethical issues.

The series is offered on the six Mondays of Lent in 30-minute webinars, each of which will be recorded and available thereafter on YouTube. The series serves as a resource for Episcopalians to use creatively during the Season of Lent, for example as a refresher course for individuals or a discussion starter for a church group. The presenter is the Revd Dr Michael Hull. Time: 19.00 -19.30 on Monday evenings in Lent 2022 via Zoom. Registration is free. All are welcome.

Register here:

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/episcopalians-and-their-ethics-a-six-part-series-in-lent-2022-registration-251853920857>

-
- | | |
|------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Monday 7 March: | What is Christian ethics? |
| Monday 14 March: | Why should I choose good over evil? |
| Monday 21 March: | How do I tell good from evil? |
| Monday 28 March: | What is conscience? |
| Monday 4 April: | Why follow conscience? |
| Monday 11 April: | Where do I go with Christian ethics? |

From the Bishop's Diary – for your prayers

Wednesday 2 March – 7pm, Holy Communion with Ashing, St Mary's Pro-cathedral

Thursday 3 March – Lambeth Bishops Conversation via zoom

Sunday 6 March, 11am – Holy Communion, Kincardine O'Neil

Monday 7 March – Visit to Peterhead Prison

Thursday 10 March – Pioneer Ministry Training Day

Sunday 13 March, 11am – Holy Communion, St Peter's Fraserburgh

Tuesday 15 & Wednesday 16 March – Provincial Faith and Order Board

Wednesday 16 & Thursday 17 March – College of Bishops

Sunday 20 March, 11am – Holy Communion, St John's Aberdeen

Wednesdays 23 March and 30 March – College of Bishops

Sunday 3 April, 10am – Holy Communion, St Mary's Pro-cathedral

2pm – Holy Communion, St Machar's, Bucksburn

Monday 4 April – Scottish Episcopal Institute Council

Thursday 7 April - Lambeth Bishops Conversation via zoom

Friday 8 April – Shetland visit

Provincial Services

Service links are available from the Scottish Episcopal Church website, and on the Provincial Facebook page

Sunday at 11am Services from the Dioceses

'Children's Chapel' is back on the first Sunday of every month.

Other services

Details of services live-streamed or broadcast by churches across the diocese and province are available from the churches' websites and facebook pages.

This **newsletter** comes as a PDF, and an on-line copy can be read on the Diocesan website.