



Diocese of Edinburgh

Scottish Episcopal Church

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The Communicant

News & Notices for the Diocese of Edinburgh

9th December 2020

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I LOOK FROM AFAR

Advent 2020

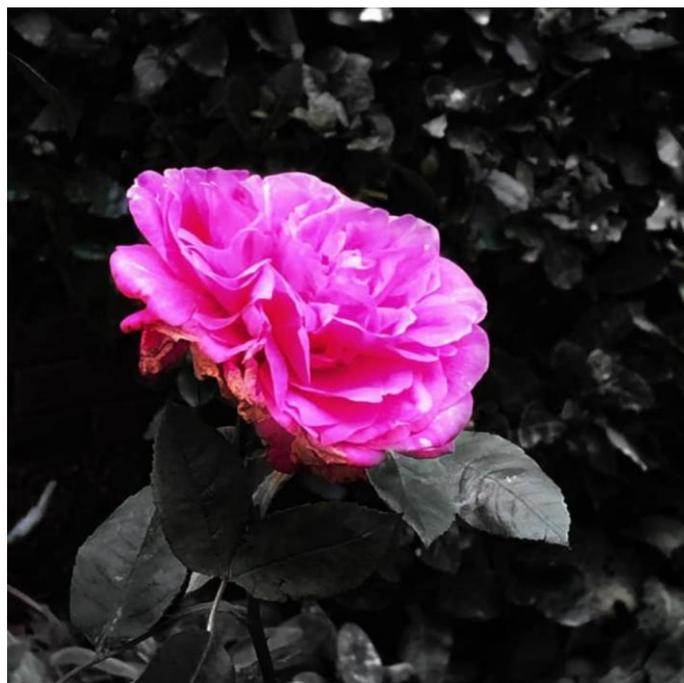
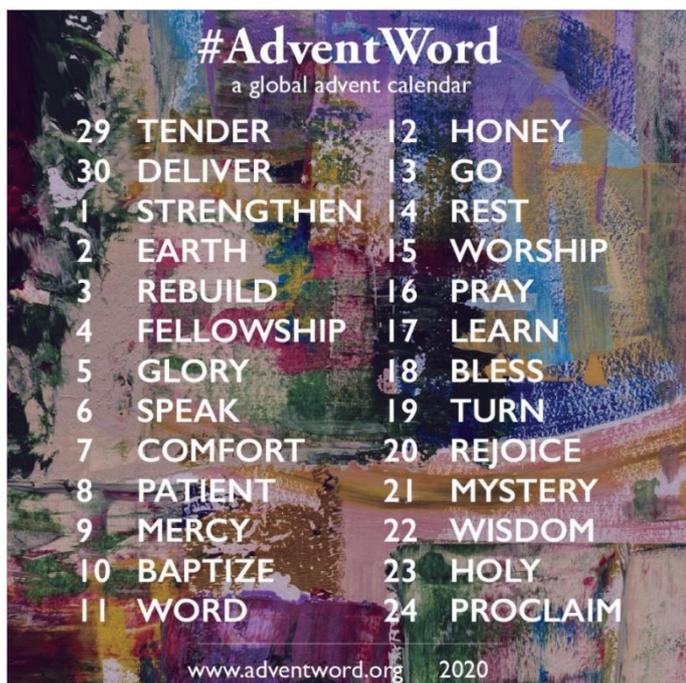
FROM THE EDITOR

Advent 2020 is upon us, making this the first issue of *The Communicant* for the new church year. And with the change of liturgical season we have perhaps begun to sense the first signs of an end to the ongoing pandemic, as just yesterday we saw the first UK citizens receive the long-awaited vaccine. Of course we are still far from being out of the woods, but for me at least Advent has never had more of a sense of anticipation, of hope tinged with sadness, than this year. A member of the Diocese summed it up perfectly recently: with all the anguish and desolation of this year the world is crying out for a way of recognising that the leadup to Christmas 2020 will be a time for thinking about what we are lacking, what we have lost, and what we long for in the future... thankfully the Church already has something for that – it's called ADVENT!

In the Diocesan Office – well, the metaphorical 'office' given we are still working from home – it is very much business as usual... whatever usual is at the moment. We are beginning to collate the results of the Annual Forms, so **thank you** to those incredibly diligent charges that have already sent in your responses. There was a bit of a delay getting the newly approved Safeguarding forms sent through from the Province, but you should be receiving these in the next few weeks. The Bishop's PA will also be putting together the Diocesan Prayer Cycle shortly, so please **send in your Prayer Cycle returns in the next week** if you haven't already done so.

The next edition of the Communicant will be both the last before Christmas and the last of the calendar year, and it would be great to use the opportunity to spread some positivity, especially given the year we have had! We'd like to create some kind of 'message board' from around the diocese - **if your church would like to send in a short Christmas message to all the other charges please email me at dlewis@dioceseofedinburgh.org.**

David Lewis



The Diocese continues to take part in 'Advent Word 2020' – this was our entry for the 29th Nov: "A spotless rose is blowing, sprung from a tender root...". If you have any suggestions contact jparsons@dioceseofedinburgh.org

DIARY

20th December The Bishop will be Presiding at St Ninian's, Comely Bank to mark the beginning of their 100th Anniversary celebrations

24th December Diocesan Office closes until 9am on Tuesday 5th January

25th December The Bishop will attend Christmas Day Eucharist at St Mary's Cathedral

NOTICES

COVID-19: UPDATED GUIDANCE

The most up-to-date guidance regarding the Coronavirus (COVID-19) for the Scottish Episcopal Church can be found at <https://www.scotland.anglican.org/coronavirus-updates/>. The Pastoral Guidelines, along with a set of FAQs (Frequently Asked Questions) can be found on that page.

Please familiarise yourself with this guidance to minimise risk to yourself and others.

The pandemic situation is constantly changing, and the SEC guidelines continue to evolve in response to it. We encourage you to check the guidance webpage frequently, to ensure you are up to date with the latest guidelines and developments of the situation.

HELPFUL LINKS

The Diocesan website has a **list of online resources** that may be of use at this time, and a **list of churches** in the Diocese offering online worship. These can be viewed at <https://edinburgh.anglican.org/coronavirus-resources/>

APPOINTMENTS

The Revd Jane MacLaren will be licensed as Priest-in-Charge of St Philips and St James, Goldenacre in January, and has been appointed as the Ministry Coordinator for the Diocese.

The Revd Iain Lothian has been appointed as the Rector of St James the Less, Leith, to be instituted in April 2021.



Mary Haggart, wife of Alistair Haggart (Bishop of Edinburgh 1975-1985 and Primus from 1977) died on the 8th December. Funeral details TBC. *May she rest in peace.*

CANON 35 CONSENTS

The Diocesan Buildings Committee has granted consent to the following projects:

Haddington **Holy Trinity** – New glass panels into internal door

Edinburgh **St Paul's & St George's "Ps & Gs"** –
Accessibility Refurbishment Project (Basement)

FROM THE YOUTH & CHILDREN OFFICER

GRANTS FOR YOUTH/FAMILY WORK

Would your work with children, young people and families benefit from extra funds this Christmas? Lockdown has led to fewer applications in 2020, so I have nearly £700 to award to churches by the end of the year. You can download an application form from the Diocesan website [here](#) or contact Claire Benton-Evans youthandchildren@dioceseofedinburgh.org. Deadline for applications is 30th November.

Claire Benton-Evans

AROUND THE DIOCESE

DIOCESAN SERVICE OF LESSONS AND CAROLS

As we look forward to Christmas many of us will be wondering about how we can provide spiritually for our congregation and beyond at this time. As a way of praying with each other and seeking to engage in some form of Mission, I'd like to suggest a Diocesan service of lessons and carols.

Does your church have a choir, organist or band that is leading worship during these Covid times? Do you have a soloist who could lead a carol, or readers who could record a reading or a prayer? It would be great to have as many churches contributing as possible. If you are able to get your church involved, please contact me on philipblackledge@gmail.com or 07977330074.

Revd Philip Blackledge
Rector of Holy Trinity, Melrose

Do you have any notable stories from your church or area that you'd like to see included here? Contact me at dlewis@dioceseofedinburgh.org. If it's already included in your church newsletter you can simply send that over!

‘SEASON OF PILGRIMAGE’ 2021

You might be aware that the Scottish Episcopal Church declared 2021 its ‘Year of Pilgrimage’ – one of the hopes the organising committee had for our Diocesan response was to encourage every congregation, group, and individual in the Diocese to consider doing a pilgrimage at some point in the year. With the ongoing Covid situation the plans have been modified to make 2021 the beginning of a ‘Season of Pilgrimage’, but we would like to start thinking about how we can make our own ‘pilgrimages’ even amidst these strange times.

Pilgrimage can mean many things, but it always involves a journey of some sort, together with friends or strangers or alone – but always with God, and it involves sacred space, a destination in mind. It does not need to mean leaving your house, but it can also mean hard, physical work. So I want to ask you all to consider a few things for you where you are:

- Where are your ‘sacred’ places – both near and far? What makes them sacred?
- What journeys, small, great, or in our minds have been most sacred in the past? How did God meet you on the way?
- If you were to make a pilgrimage together to somewhere sacred in your local area, where would it be to, why would you go there, who would you like to travel with and how would you travel?

If you could consider these questions, perhaps at vestry to start with or with the whole congregation through a newsletter, during notices at worship, or in prayer/discussion groups, that would be a great start to thinking about your own response. If you want to feedback some of your thoughts, the Diocese’s ‘Season of Pilgrimage’ committee would love to hear them. Please send any ideas to Revd Willie Shaw at stmarysandstcatharines@virginmedia.com.

While anything involving groups is obviously difficult to organise at the moment, under the current restrictions people could individually do the same journeys at different times and then share their experiences in different ways. It would be great if we could start to get some concrete ideas by the end of February; so we then have the rest of the year to put any plans into action.

Revd Willie Shaw
Rector of Bo’ness & Grangemouth



Food for thought? Edward Burne-Jones’ “Love and the Pilgrim”

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