

**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**

**15<sup>th</sup> April 2022**

**Our quarterly Diocesan Office Update begins with an Easter Message from Bishop Kevin...**

In the Japanese Shinto religious tradition, if an earthenware pot used for religious observance is broken, that pot must be restored. The pieces are taken and put back together, but into the adhesive is introduced an amount of gold to give it strength. The cracks and the brokenness can be seen; they remain, but the pot is more valuable, is stronger, because holding it together is a golden thread.



This Easter we celebrate the golden thread of God's love which shines through the brokenness of our lives and our world in Hope. The golden thread of God's love which binds us together to strengthen us in the face of fear and allows to know the real Joy of resurrection life which Our Lord Jesus Christ gives us, and the Holy Spirit allows us to share.

The golden thread of God's love that we see shine in Hope is the sure Hope that comes from the knowledge that the sun rises, whether we are always able to recognise that fact or not. At the heart of the resurrection narratives is the fact that Love is stronger than any natural phenomenon we experience, even death itself. The Hebrew concept of Remembrance makes real in this present moment Exodus, Passover that is the concept of Remembrance Jesus used at the last supper. More than memory, but memory teaches much about the nature of God's love when we simply remember those we have known who have died. It is love which lifts the veil between heaven and earth, the golden thread of Hope holds our heaven and earth in the reality of that love, that speaks to us of God.

There is no room for fear in love: we hear that every Sunday. Fear is the most lethal weapon in the world and in our lives. It is lethal because it encourages those facets of our lives that we would rather be without, the questions, the doubts around who I am and why am I the way I am. Why do others seem to have more than me without working for it; why are others stronger, more self-assured, more assertive? The golden thread of God's love runs through that brokenness and reminds us that we are made in God's image to share God's love. The importance of the cross and of the tomb is that Our Lord Jesus Christ

proved that despite failure, disappointment, indeed death itself – we are good enough. Good enough to share God’s love; there is no room for fear in that love. In apparent weakness there is strength: I remember saying at the beginning of the pandemic that we closed our church doors not in fear but in LOVE.

That is the true Joy of Love which brings peace, makes resurrection real. Joy is not the absence of pain or suffering, the absence of doubt and confusion. The joy in love is the recognition that Our Lord Jesus Christ in his suffering and death gives us confidence that, made in God's image, we *are* good enough. God who is love makes something of our pain and guilt and fear and doubt. That is the true joy of love that is of God: it gives us confidence to look for and recognise Hope, the Hope that the sun rises, the Hope that in the cross we may recognise even excellence is not enough, but failure can be redeemed.

+ **Kevin, Glasgow and Galloway**

### **Further Diocesan News**

**Lambeth Conference:** Bishop Kevin will be attending the Lambeth Conference from 26<sup>th</sup> July until 8<sup>th</sup> August. More information about the Conference is at <https://www.lambethconference.org/>

**Bishop’s Lent Appeal:** a further reminder that online contributions can be made at [bit.ly/BishopKevinLentAppeal2022](https://bit.ly/BishopKevinLentAppeal2022) or via the Diocesan Office. Early returns of collected monies from all charges would be extremely welcome as soon as possible now that Lent is over. Many thanks.

**Diocesan Synod for 2023 will be held on Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> March.** We devoutly hope that this will be, at last, an in-person gathering.

### **Clergy and Charge News**

**The Revd Mark Goodman** will be instituted as **Rector of St Columba’s, Largs**, on Monday 18<sup>th</sup> April at 12 noon, and we send Revd Mark, the Vestry and Congregation of St Columba’s all of our wishes, love and prayers for a wonderful future together at this start of another chapter for the charge.

**The Revd Paul Fletcher** has tendered his resignation from his posts at St Mark’s East Kilbride and St Cuthbert’s Cambuslang, and will be emigrating to Australia in the summer. We shall wish him ‘fare thee well’ more fully later in the year.

**Changes in Pandemic Restrictions:** as most readers will be aware, the use of face masks has not been required in worship settings since 4<sup>th</sup> April, and their use or otherwise during services remains a matter of local and personal choice. Similarly, although most charges continue to prefer to offer and receive communion in one kind only, the use of the chalice to receive communion in both kinds is now feasible **where vestries and clergy have agreed their own local policy and practice**, a discussion process that is likely to be ongoing across all of our charges in the months to follow. All Clergy, Lay Readers and Vestry Secretaries have been sent full and detailed advice from the Advisory Group on these matters, but feel free to contact me if you would like a personal copy of these communications.

**New Diocesan Centre:** our new Centre is gradually opening for business, with office staff working there on an *ad hoc* basis whilst final communications and IT matters are sorted as well as staffing policies being prepared for a fuller opening in, we hope, the early summer. Meanwhile, we can accommodate occasional visitors or groups who may wish to use the centre for meetings, but these options will depend on the days that the office will be staffed. Please email [office@glasgow.anglican.org](mailto:office@glasgow.anglican.org) to make further enquiries. **Also please note the reminder below of our new address.**

**Diocesan Council:** we have the inaugural meeting of our new Diocesan Council (the Governing Body of our Diocese) on Saturday 21st May, when Bishop Kevin looks forward to addressing the large range of challenges and opportunities across the Diocese. The new make up and membership of the Council can be found on our website, located by clicking on this link: [Diocesan Council - United Diocese of Glasgow and Galloway \(anglican.org\)](https://www.glasgow.anglican.org/diocesan-council)

Please keep the Diocesan Council in your prayers as it embarks upon another chapter in the life of our Diocese.

Kind regards

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