

## Aberlour Christmas Appeal

A letter from the Primus, Bishop Mark

To all congregations in the Scottish Episcopal Church:

It's my great pleasure to write to you about an important and long-standing partnership with a Scottish children's charity; one which is especially close to my heart. I write this not just on my own behalf but on behalf of the College of Bishops.

As you may know, Aberlour Childcare Trust, as it's known today, was established in 1875 by Canon Jupp, one of my predecessors as Rector of St Margaret's, Aberlour. It was originally The Aberlour Orphanage but moved away from that work to become one of the foremost providers of children's support and development in Scotland. I have seen first hand the work of Aberlour and have met with many of the young people they work with and care for. I'm proud to say that we, as a church, have an association with Aberlour.

One way to help with this work is to find ways of raising the profile of Aberlour and to also find ways of supporting them. During Advent and Christmas many of our congregations will be organising Services of Light or Christingle services. Christingle was brought to the UK from Germany fifty years ago by The Children's Society, which supports children in England. Since then, members of the Church of England have raised millions of pounds for children through Christingle events. I know from experience that many children and families look forward eagerly to Christingle as one of their main Advent services.

Sadly though, many children and families in our communities around Scotland are facing a very difficult festive season. Aberlour has developed over 40 specialised services around the country to support them. Aberlour continues to provide loving homes for children through residential and fostering services; they give babies a brighter future by building confidence in their parents; they offer support to make life easier for families where a child has a disability and they help parents to recover from drug and alcohol misuse, poor mental health and domestic abuse, so their children can thrive. I believe it would be wonderful for our congregations to support such important work and that's why I'm suggesting we do so through our services this Christmas.

In recognition of the work that Aberlour does in our communities and in honour of 50 years since Christingle came to these shores, perhaps your congregation might consider supporting this wonderful Scottish charity, especially by fundraising through Christmas services.

The staff at Aberlour have said that they would be delighted to visit your congregations if you would like to hear more about the work they do. Just give them a call on 01786 450 335 or email [hello@aberlour.org.uk](mailto:hello@aberlour.org.uk).

Wishing you a blessed and peaceful Christmas.

+Mark, Primus