

Pershore Abbey Iona Service 24th September 2023 5pm

Theme: Shared Journey

Welcome and Introduction:

Gathering Song: 🎵 **God welcomes all, strangers and friends.
God's love is strong and it never ends. (x3)**

Opening Responses:

Leader: Creator of the world, eternal God,
ALL: **we have come from many places for a little while.**
Leader: Redeemer of humanity, God-with-us,
ALL: **we have come with all our differences, seeking common ground.**
Leader: Spirit of unity, go-between God,
ALL: **we have come on journeys of our own, to a place where journeys meet.**
Leader: So here, in this shelter house, let us take time together.
For when paths cross and pilgrims gather, there is much to share.
ALL: **In your name, three-in-one God, pattern of community. AMEN.**

Welcome Prayers:

Reader A: Welcome, you come in God's name.
Reader B: God's blessing on this place, your home.
ALL: **You bring us new insights and energy.**
Reader A: You open up to us a wider world.
Reader B: You offer us a space to be ourselves.
ALL: **We share God's care and challenge;
Offering and receiving welcome we become Christ to one another.**

Song: 🎵

1. The love of God comes close, where stands an open door,
to let the stranger in, to mingle rich and poor:
the love of God is here to stay, embracing those who walk his way.
2. The peace of God comes close, to those caught in the storm,
forgoing lives of ease, to ease the lives forlorn:
the peace of God is here to stay, embracing those who walk his way.
3. The joy of God comes close, where faith encounters fears,
where heights and depths of life, are found through smiles and tears:
the joy of God is here to stay, embracing those who walk his way.
4. The grace of God comes close, to those whose grace is spent,
when hearts are tired and sore, and hope is bruised or bent:
the grace of God is here to stay, embracing those who walk his way.

Bible Reading: (*Matthew 8 v18 – v27*)

Reader: Listen now to the Word of God.

The Cost of Following Jesus

¹⁸ When Jesus saw the crowd around him, he gave orders to cross to the other side of the lake. ¹⁹ Then a teacher of the law came to him and said, “Teacher, I will follow you wherever you go.”

²⁰ Jesus replied, “Foxes have dens and birds have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lay his head.”

²¹ Another disciple said to him, “Lord, first let me go and bury my father.”

²² But Jesus told him, “Follow me, and let the dead bury their own dead.”

Jesus Calms the Storm

²³ Then he got into the boat and his disciples followed him. ²⁴ Suddenly a furious storm came up on the lake, so that the waves swept over the boat. But Jesus was sleeping. ²⁵ The disciples went and woke him, saying, “Lord, save us! We’re going to drown!”

²⁶ He replied, “You of little faith, why are you so afraid?” Then he got up and rebuked the winds and the waves, and it was completely calm.

²⁷ The men were amazed and asked, “What kind of man is this? Even the winds and the waves obey him!”

Reader: For the word of God in scripture, for the word of God among us, for the word of God within us,

All: **Thanks be to God.**

Song: 🎵 (*Sing 3 times*)

Don’t be afraid. My love is stronger, my love is stronger than your fear.

Don’t be afraid. My love is stronger and I have promised always to be near.

Invitation to share refreshments and our thoughts

Grace: (*adapted from a grace by Chris Polhill*)

ALL: **The Maker’s blessing be upon this food**

the Christ’s blessing be upon each one

the Spirit’s blessing weave through words and listening; taste and digesting.

God’s blessing be upon our sharing. Amen

Time for sharing thoughts:

Today we have this Open Space as Community, to reflect and share with one another our thoughts and feelings about our Iona services.

- *As a time for worship*
- *Spiritual renewal*
- *Learning from one another*
- *Shared Pilgrimage*
- *To reflect and consider on our commitment to share in leadership of worship for our gathering here.*

Prayers:

Leader: Together we gather, glad of these strong walls which have given refuge to the broken and the poor through the centuries, aware of the countless prayers of joy and of suffering that have been uttered in this place. Jesus, comfort and inspire us with your presence, and challenge us to be a people of sharing and hospitality. Christ in your mercy,

All: **Hear our prayer.**

Leader: Jesus, you sat at table with the betrayed and rejected of Palestine. We pray today for those who do not feel welcomed in their daily lives. Christ in your mercy,

All: **Hear our prayer.**

Leader: Jesus, you identified with the naked and with those who had no place to lay their heads. We pray for homeless people, on the streets or in unsafe or temporary accommodation. Christ in your mercy,

All: **Hear our prayer.**

Leader: Jesus, you belonged to a refugee family. We pray for the millions of displaced people in our world, and for those who are so desperate that they rely on people traffickers and unseaworthy boats. Christ in your mercy,

All: **Hear our prayer.**

Leader: Jesus, you cared for your companions and those you met. We pray for those God has given us a special care for. Christ in your mercy,

All: **Hear our prayer.**

Leader: Jesus, you prayed that we might be as one, as you and the Father are one. We pray that we may treasure this time spent with each other and you in our midst. May we value what others have to bring and be willing to share our gifts on the journey. Christ in your mercy,

All: **Hear our prayer.**

Our Father in heaven, holy is your name.

Your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as in heaven.

Give us today our daily bread.

Forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us.

Save us in the time of trial and deliver us from evil.

For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours, now and for ever. Amen

Song: 

(a candle is lit)

- 1. Here in this place new light is streaming,
now is the darkness vanished away,
see in this space our fears and our dreamings,
brought here to you in the light of this day.
Gather us in – the lost and forsaken,
gather us in – the blind and the lame;
call to us now, and we shall awaken,
we shall arise at the sound of our name.**
- 2. We are the young – our lives are a mystery,
we are the old who yearn for your face,
we have been sung throughout all of history,
called to be light to the whole human race.
Gather us in – the rich and the haughty,
gather us in – the proud and the strong;
give us a heart so meek and so lowly,
give us the courage to enter the song.**

3. Not in the dark of buildings confining,
not in some heaven, light years away,
but here in this place the new light is shining,
now is the Kingdom, now is the day.
Gather us in and hold us for ever,
gather us in and make us your own;
gather us in – all peoples together,
fire of love in our flesh and our bone.

Time for bringing our thoughts together:

Closing Responses:

Leader: The blessing of the Trinity ...

All: **the blessing of God**

Leader: who is in this place and every place;

All: **the blessing of Jesus**

Leader: who is among us, often unrecognised;

All: **the blessing of Holy Spirit**

Leader: encouraging us to welcome, and to feel at home;

All: **... be with us all.**

Leader: As we meet here in worship, sharing this place and time, may our lives in community reflect the dance of the Trinity,

All: **by which the world is blessed. Amen**

The Grace:

ALL: **May the grace of Jesus Christ, the love of God
and the communion of the Holy Spirit, be with us all,
this night and always. Amen**

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NEXT IONA SERVICE IS AT 5pm on SUNDAY 22nd OCTOBER