

Pershore Abbey Iona Service - Sunday 26th November 2023 5pm

Theme: Healing of Creation

Welcome and Introduction:

Gathering Song: 🎵 God welcomes all, strangers and friends.
God's love is strong and it never ends. (X 3)

Opening responses:

Leader: Believing that God made and loves the world,
All: we gather.
Leader: That it may be restored to fulfil God's purposes,
All: we pray.
Leader: To seek a wisdom deeper than our own,
All: we listen.
Leader: To honour God who gave us a voice,
All: we worship.

Song: 🎵 (*Common Ground 44 - from an ancient Celtic prayer*)

- 1. God's will for creation, is Jesus' to do:
new branches to wither, old trees to renew.
Jesus! Jesus! Jesus! How can we help but praise him.**
- 2. Each plant in its growing, each shape in the strand,
are filled with God's blessing, are stirred by God's hand.
Jesus! Jesus! Jesus! How can we help but praise him.**
- 3. All life in the river, all fish in the sea,
Earth's numberless creatures, God summoned to be.
Jesus! Jesus! Jesus! How can we help but praise him.**
- 4. Each bird in the morning, each star in the sky,
proclaim the Lord's goodness, which never can die.
Jesus! Jesus! Jesus! How can we help but praise him.**

Reflection: (*from: 'Meditations with Julian of Norwich'*)

I saw that God was everything that is good and encouraging. God is our clothing that wraps, clasps and encloses us.

God showed me in my palm, a little thing, round as a ball, about the size of a hazelnut.

I looked at it with the eye of my understanding and asked myself: 'What is this thing?'

And I was answered: 'It is everything that is created.'

I wondered how it could survive since it seemed so little it could disintegrate into nothing.

The answer came: 'It endures and ever will endure, because God loves it.'

And so, everything has being, because of God's love.

Song: 🎵 (from 'We will tread the earth lightly' by Chris Polhill. Tune: *Aus der tiefe (Heinlein)/Forty days and forty nights*)

1. **God our Maker, hear our cry, sorrow for our lack of care.
We have used your gifts for life, without thought and without prayer.**
2. **Gifts unfairly shared around, though you gave enough for all.
We preferred to store up wealth; fear and greed has us in thrall.**
3. **We regret our carbon use, now we know it hurts the earth;
caught in systems hard to change, lead us on a wiser path.**
4. **Breathe forgiveness over us, free our souls to pay the price,
serve creation day by day, follow Christ in sacrifice.**

Time of quiet

Reading: (Genesis 9 verses 8 - 17)

Reader: ⁸ Then God said to Noah and to his sons with him: ⁹ "I now establish my covenant with you and with your descendants after you ¹⁰ and with every living creature that was with you—the birds, the livestock and all the wild animals, all those that came out of the ark with you—every living creature on earth. ¹¹ I establish my covenant with you: Never again will all life be destroyed by the waters of a flood; never again will there be a flood to destroy the earth."

¹² And God said, "This is the sign of the covenant I am making between me and you and every living creature with you, a covenant for all generations to come: ¹³ I have set my rainbow in the clouds, and it will be the sign of the covenant between me and the earth. ¹⁴ Whenever I bring clouds over the earth and the rainbow appears in the clouds, ¹⁵ I will remember my covenant between me and you and all living creatures of every kind. Never again will the waters become a flood to destroy all life. ¹⁶ Whenever the rainbow appears in the clouds, I will see it and remember the everlasting covenant between God and all living creatures of every kind on the earth."

¹⁷ So God said to Noah, "This is the sign of the covenant I have established between me and all life on the earth."

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.**

Time for Sharing

Prayers of Concern: (If you wish, during the prayers, add your hazelnut to the spiral from the cross.)

Leader: O Christ, your cross speaks both to us and to our world. In your dying for us, you accepted the pain and hurt of the whole of creation.

Chant: 🎵 **Veni, veni, veni, veni, veni, veni Immanuel.** (*O come Immanuel*) (*We Walk His Way p70*)

Leader: O Christ, creation groans. May we use the pain we feel, to speak up for justice for the most vulnerable ecosystems and communities.

Chant: 🎵 **Veni, veni, veni, veni, veni, veni Immanuel.**

Leader: May we and those attending COP28, respond to your spirit disturbing and challenging us. Shake us out of our complacency and fear, to act imaginatively for a healthy tomorrow.

Chant: 🎵 **Veni, veni, veni, veni, veni, veni Immanuel.**

Leader: The arms of your cross stretch out across the broken world in reconciliation. May we recognise that we are but one part of your beloved creation; that we have need of healing as much as the rest of creation.

Chant: 🎵 **Veni, veni, veni, veni, veni, veni Immanuel.**

Leader: You have made peace with us. Help us make peace with you, open to new ways of thinking and being, walking humbly where you lead.

Chant: 🎵 **Veni, veni, veni, veni, veni, veni Immanuel.**

Song: 🎵 *(Common Ground 134)*

**1. Touch the earth lightly, use the earth gently,
nourish the life of the world in our care:
gift of great wonder, ours to surrender,
trust for the children tomorrow will bear.**

**2. We who endanger, who create hunger,
agents of death for all creatures that live,
we who would foster clouds of disaster,
God of our planet, forestall and forgive.**

**3. Let there be greening, birth from the burning,
water that blesses and air that is sweet,
health in God's garden, hope in God's children,
regeneration that peace will complete.**

**4. God of all living, God of all loving,
God of the seedling, the snow and the sun,
teach us, deflect us, Christ re-connect us,
using us gently and making us one.**

Affirmation:

Leader: We believe that this is God's world and all that lives in it;

All: **we believe that living gratefully and giving generously are marks of faith.**

Leader: We believe that all creation should have fair access to the earth's resources,

All: **and that every individual is called to share in healing creation,**

so that the children of tomorrow will not be burdened by the mistakes of today.

Leader: And so, we commit ourselves,

All: **to respect all life, to think globally and live locally,**

to speak prophetically, trade fairly, and live responsibly,

and to walk humbly with all life, and our God. Amen

Blessing:

Leader: Deep peace of the running wave to you
Deep peace of the flowing air to you
Deep peace of the quiet earth to you
Deep peace of the shining stars to you
Deep peace of the Son of peace to you. **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 28th JANUARY 2024

(There is no Iona service in December!)

In our September service, we produced the following list of suggested themes for an Iona service. If you are particularly interested in one of these, and have ideas about it, or would like to help with the service in any way, please email Helen on iona@persshoreabbey.org.uk

- Time of quiet reflection/ music/ craft
- Interfaith
- Sexuality and gender issues 'Living in Faith and Love'
- Agape/ communion
- Barriers, vulnerability (Race?)
- Art Prayer, Mental health, Community needs. (The Soul's journey through life)
- A Walk (weather permitting) Social, Celebration service
- Faith, AI, digitisation, personal agency