

Pershore Abbey Iona Service 24th March 2024 5pm Theme: Ashes to Hope

Welcome and Introduction: - Welcome to this service where we can bring our concerns, the 'ashes' from our lives and the world, to Jesus, as well as focus on our hopes as we journey to the other side of the cross.

Gathering Song 1: 🎵 *a song from Malawi*

- 1. Humbly in your sight, we come together, God, -
grant us now the blessing of your presence here.**
- 2. These, our hearts, are yours, we give them to you, God,
purify our love to make it like your own.**
- 3. These, our eyes, are yours, we give them to you, God,
may we always see the world as with your sight.**

Opening Responses:

Leader: God of hopes and joys, when our hearts ache from brokenness,

All: **you nourish us with your love;**

Leader: when the world's pain fatigues us,

All: **you carry us in your arms;**

Leader: when the loneliness of our souls drains our very being,

All: **you come and live with us. You are our God.**

Psalm 103

All: **My soul, bless God and God's holy name,
and do not forget God's benefits.**

A: God forgives the wrong you have done,
heals you of your diseases,

B: *redeems your life from the grave,
crowns you with goodness and mercy,*

A: keeps you with care as long as you live
so your life is renewed like the eagle's.

All: **My soul, bless God and God's holy name,
and do not forget God's benefits.**

A: God brings justice to those who are oppressed,
as shown to Moses and his people.

B: *God is gracious and merciful,
slow to anger, constant in love.*

A: God will not always be the accuser
or keep anger hot for ever.

B: *God does not deal with us as we deserve,
nor punish according to our sins.*

A: God's love for all faithful people
is as high and vast as the heavens.

B: *As far as the east lies from the west,
God removes the wrong we have done.*

All: **My soul, bless God and God's holy name,
and do not forget God's benefits.**

Leader: 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.**

Prayer:

Leader: Loving God, we lay down our doubts and concerns,
our fears and our worries,
our weariness and our frustration,
our apathy and our misunderstanding,
at your feet,
trusting and believing
that you will forgive what is sinful,
and make whole our brokenness,
that ashes from our lives and the world
will be transformed into hope for tomorrow.

All: **Amen**

Time of Reflection: *Take time to:*

- *pray,*
- *draw or write things that are on your heart, on the cross of ashes,*
- *draw or write what gives you hope, on the cross of hope,*
- *add quotes or images to the crosses.*

Song 2: 🎵

A: **Jesus Christ, Lord of all, stay with us now.**

B: *Day is almost ended:*

A: **Jesus Christ, Lord of all, stay with us now.**

B: *Find your way among us:*

A: **Jesus Christ, Lord of all, stay with us now.**

B: *Sit beside the lonely:*

A: **Jesus Christ, Lord of all, stay with us now.**

B: *Contradict the callous:*

A: **Jesus Christ, Lord of all, stay with us now.**

B: *Comfort and disturb us:*

A: **Jesus Christ, Lord of all, stay with us now.**

B: *Do not ever leave us:*

A: **Jesus Christ, Lord of all, stay with us now.**

B: *Even when we doubt you:*

A: **Jesus Christ, Lord of all, stay with us now.**

B: *Maker of tomorrow:*

A: Jesus Christ, Lord of all, stay with us now.

B: *Keep us through the darkness:*

All: Jesus Christ, Lord of all, stay with us now

Song 3: 🎵

1. Christ's is the world in which we move;
Christ's are the folk we're summoned to love;
Christ's is the voice that calls us to care,
and Christ is the one who meets us here.

*Chorus: To the lost Christ shows his face,
to the unloved he gives his embrace,
to those who cry in pain or disgrace,
Christ makes, with his friends, a touching place.*

2. Feel for the people we most avoid –
strange or bereaved or never employed
Feel for the women and feel for the men,
who fear that their living is all in vain.

Chorus:

3. Feel for the parents who've lost their child,
feel for the women whom men have defiled,
feel for the baby for whom there's no breast,
and feel for the weary who find no rest.

Chorus:

4. Feel for the lives by life confused,
riddled with doubt, in loving abused;
feel for the lonely heart, conscious of sin,
which longs to be pure but fears to begin.

Chorus:

Song 4: 🎵

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, promised to be always near.

Time of sharing of ashes and hopes:

Affirmation:

Leader: We believe in a God who sees potential,
who brings colour into our world and delights in all creation.

All: **We believe in a God who hurts when we hurt,
who holds us and confronts us and stands beside us in solidarity.**

Leader: We believe in a God who is with us in each breath,
who amazes us and shocks us, and invites us to join the dance.

All: **We believe that life is God's gift. Hallelujah!**

Closing responses:

Leader: Jesus, wounded by the nails in our hearts sends us out,
All: to bring healing with God's love.
Leader: Jesus, who continues on the journey invites us to follow,
All: cradling the broken hearts of the world as we go.
Jesus: Jesus, whose Spirit fills us with hope,
All: gives us courage and strength.

Blessing:

All: May Jesus who cares for us, who stands with us, who inspires us,
bless us as we journey into the unknown. Amen

.....
Iona Abbey Music Book © The Iona Community

Iona Abbey Worship Book © The Iona Community

Common Ground © The Iona Community

Pershore Abbey Licence No.44611

'Like Cloaks Laid Down' © Thom Shuman 'A Liturgy of Death and New Life' by Zam Walker from Winter © Ruth Burgess
.....

NEXT PERSHORE ABBEY IONA SERVICE WILL BE AT 5PM SUNDAY 28th APRIL

All that remains of our list of suggested themes for an Iona service, are the topics below.

If you are particularly interested in one of these, or would like to help with the service in any way, please email

Helen on:- iona@pershoreabbey.org.uk

- *Interfaith*
- *Sexuality and gender issues 'Living in Faith and Love'*
- *Barriers, vulnerability (Race?)*
- *Faith, AI, digitisation, personal agency*

.....
Saturday April 6th 10.30-4.00

Regional Iona Plenary, at Coventry Cathedral (St Michael's House)

Fractured Faith:

Talking of Peace in a Time of War

Speakers: Rev'd Ruth Harvey (Leader of the Iona Community)

Rev'd Mary Gregory (Canon for Arts and Reconciliation at Coventry Cathedral)

ALL WELCOME