

# **Pershore Abbey Iona Service 28<sup>th</sup> September 2025 5pm**

## **Theme: Departures and Journeys**

**Welcome and Introduction:** In this service we celebrate the life of Kathy Galloway, former leader of the Iona Community, passionate campaigner for justice and inspirational wordsmith.

“A blessing on our departures; without them, we cannot walk the way.”

**Song:** 🎵 *(Common Ground 111 words by Kathy Galloway)*

1. **Sing for God’s glory that colours the dawn of creation,  
racing across the sky, trailing bright clouds of elation;  
sun of delight succeeds the velvet of night,  
warming the earth’s exultation.**
2. **Sing for God’s power that shatters the chains that would bind us,  
searing the darkness of fear and despair that could blind us,  
touching our shame with love that will not lay blame,  
reaching out gently to find us.**
3. **Sing for God’s justice disturbing each easy illusion,  
tearing down tyrants and putting our pride to confusion;  
lifeblood of right, resisting evil and slight,  
offering freedom’s transfusion.**
4. **Sing for God’s saints who have travelled faith’s journey before us,  
who in our weariness give us their hope to restore us;  
in them we see the new creation to be,  
spirit of love made flesh for us.**

### **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.**

**Reading:** *(from <https://iona.org.uk/sounds-of-iona-september-2025/>)*

**Reader:** Following the news of Kathy Galloway’s death, Ruth Harvey, the current leader of the Iona Community, reflects on Kathy’s perceptive wisdom. Ruth shared how Kathy described the way we are called to be community:

***“A common story:* we are people who, in an extraordinary variety of ways, have heard our name called by God, and have answered ‘yes’.**

***A common life:* we are people whose life together, like the bread at communion, is constantly being broken open to be shared and enlarged.**

***A common task:* we are people who bear witness to the triumph of life over death.”**

Kathy’s words remain, challenging us to reflect on our response to God’s love both in this Iona service time, in our lives and in the world.

### **Time of quiet for reflection**

**Song:** 🎵 *(written for Christian Aid by Kathy Galloway) (tune – I heard the voice of Jesus say)*

1. **When out of poverty is born, a dream that will not die,  
a landless, weary folk find strength, to stand with heads held high.  
It's then we learn from those who wait, to greet the promised day:  
'The Lord is coming; don't lose heart, be blest: prepare the way!'**
2. **When people wander far from God, forget to share their bread,  
they find their wealth an empty thing, their spirits are not fed.  
For only just and tender love, the hungry soul will stay.  
And so, God's prophets echo still: 'Be blest: prepare the way!'**
3. **When God took flesh and came to earth, the world turned upside down,  
and in the strength of a woman's faith, the Word of Life was born.  
She knew that God would raise the low, it pleased her to obey.  
Rejoice with Mary in the call: 'Be blest: prepare the way!'**

**Bible Reading:** *(Romans 12) NIV*

**Reader:** Listen now to the word of God

Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship. Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.

For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the faith God has distributed to each of you. For just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. We have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us. If your gift is prophesying, then prophesy in accordance with your faith; if it is serving, then serve; if it is teaching, then teach; if it is to encourage, then give encouragement; if it is giving, then give generously; if it is to lead, do it diligently; if it is to show mercy, do it cheerfully.

Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good. Be devoted to one another in love. Honour one another above yourselves. Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervour, serving the Lord. Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer. Share with the Lord’s people who are in need. Practice hospitality.

For the word of God among us, for the word of God within us,

**All: Thanks be to God.**

**Prayers:** *(The pattern of our days p53– Kathy Galloway)*

**Reader:** We are here, God.

We have felt your touch in the sunlight, seen your power in the salt waves.

We have wondered at your mystery in the stars and we marvel that the maker of the universe knows us by name.

We are here, God.

**All: We are here to praise and worship you**

**Reader:** We are here, Jesus.

We know that you came to find us. We have listened to your words and smiled at your stories.

We have felt the warmth of your love, and we thank you that you have called us friends.

We are here, Jesus.

**All: We are here to praise and worship you**

**Reader:** We are here, Holy Spirit

We are grateful for your presence,

grateful for the way you bring us close, for the way you comfort us, challenge us and keep us right.

We are here, Holy Spirit.

**All: We are here to praise and worship you.**

**Reader:** We are here, God, in this moment, in this place

and we thank you that you are here with us.

You know us, God; we do not have to pretend with you.

In the silence of your love, we bring you the things that trouble us, that harm us

that make us feel ashamed or afraid. *(Silence)*

God have mercy on us

**All: Christ have mercy on us**

**Reader:** God have mercy on us. *(Silence)*

Listen to the words of Jesus, words that we can trust:

‘Don’t be afraid - your sins are forgiven.

I love you - come and follow me.’

Thanks be to God.

**All: Amen**

**Reading:** *(from ‘Love Burning Deep’ - Kathy Galloway)*

**Resurrection**

I do not know

what resurrection is

(though I’m almost sure

it has something to do

with hallowing the common ground).

Of course, that’s not all of it.

I expect one day I’ll get up

and find that it sneaked up on me

while I wasn’t looking,

and maybe even that it’s been there all along.

That’s as may be.

There’s no point in trying to see things

before you’re ready.

You have to walk before you can run.

In the meantime,  
I believe in it.  
And that feels like an initial step.  
For now,  
it will do.  
It is enough.

**Time for Sharing:**     *You are welcome to share any thoughts about Kathy or reflections on this service.*

**Prayers:**     *(The pattern of our days p44 – Kathy Galloway)*

Leader: Look at your hands, see the touch and the tenderness

**All: God's own for the world.**

Leader: Look at your feet, see the path and the direction

**All: God's own for the world.**

Leader: Look at your heart, see the fire and the love

**All: God's own for the world.**

Leader: Look at the cross, see God's Son and our Saviour

**All: God's own for the world.**

Leader: This is God's world

**All: we will serve God in it. Amen**

**Song:** 🎵     *(Common Ground 97 words by Kathy Galloway)*

1. Oh, the life of the world is a joy and a treasure  
unfolding in beauty the green-growing tree,  
the changing of seasons in mountain and valley,  
the stars and the bright restless sea.
2. Oh, the life of the world is a fountain of goodness  
overflowing in labour and passion and pain,  
in the sound of the city and the silence of wisdom,  
in the birth of a child once again.
3. Oh, the life of the world is the source of our healing.  
It rises in laughter and wells up in song;  
it springs from the care of the poor and the broken  
and refreshes where justice is strong.
4. So, give thanks for the life and give love to the Maker  
and rejoice in the gift of the bright risen Son,  
and walk in the peace and the power of the Spirit,  
till the days of our living are done.

**Blessings:**     *(Talking to the Bones - Kathy Galloway)*

Leader: A blessing on our departures, without them, we cannot walk the way.

**All: A blessing on our companions, bread of friendship, bread for the soul.**

**Leader:** A blessing on all travellers, border-crossers, wanderers in strange lands.  
**All:** **A blessing on all the stages on the way, and those who gave us guidance.**  
**Leader:** A blessing on all those we leave behind, and on their journeys.  
**All:** **A blessing on our lostness and delays, these too are life.**  
**Leader:** A blessing on our arrivals, homecomings, new beginnings, bright horizons.  
**All:** **A blessing on the Trinity of journeys.**  
**Leader:** With the Giver of the Way, Jesus of the Way, Spirit of the Way,  
we share with each other, the Grace.

**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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*Iona Abbey Worship Book © The Iona Community      Iona Abbey Music Book © The Iona Community*

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*Talking to the Bones, Kathy Galloway, SPCK, 1996*

*'Love Burning Deep', Kathy Galloway, 1993*

<https://www.christianaid.org.uk/news/christmas-appeal/when-out-poverty-born>

<https://iona.org.uk/sounds-of-iona-september-2025/>

## NEXT IONA SERVICE IS AT 5pm on SUNDAY 26<sup>th</sup> OCTOBER

These services are a community effort, which helps to keep it a varied, inclusive time. If you feel you could help with Iona services in whatever way, please talk to someone after the service or email Helen on [iona@pershoreabbey.org.uk](mailto:iona@pershoreabbey.org.uk)

Possible ways to help include: coming up with ideas for services or suggesting a speaker, setting out chairs, welcoming people as they arrive, choosing or playing music, reading, helping put together service sheets, giving feedback, tidying up, hospitality....

Thank you

"A common story, a common life, a common task."