

Iona Service October 26th 2025

The Lighthouse – a place of safety and help

Welcome and Introduction:

Opening Responses:

Leader: Lord, you have made your home on earth,

All: **and dwell among us.**

Leader: You, the highest in all creation, journey with each and every one of us,

All: **and welcome the weary.**

Leader: You give to all, who thirst for the water of life,

All: **and fill with good things, all who hunger.**

Leader: You welcome us home with open arms;

All: **every new day, you warm us in the fire of your amazing love.**

Gathering Song: 🎵 Let us build a house where love can dwell
(*Common Ground 4 v1,4,5*)

Bible Reading: (Luke 5: 12-14)

Reader: Listen now to the word of God

While Jesus was in one of the towns, a man came along who was covered with leprosy. When he saw Jesus, he fell with his face to the ground and begged him, 'Lord, if you are willing, you can make me clean.'

Jesus reached out his hand and touched the man. 'I am willing,' he said. 'Be clean!' And immediately the leprosy left him.

Then Jesus ordered him, "Don't tell anyone, but go, show yourself to the priest and offer the sacrifices that Moses commanded for your cleansing, as a testimony to them."

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

All: **Thanks be to God.**

Song: 🎵

1. **Do not offer me your money if that is all you have to give
though my clothes may be in tatters and my flesh too frail to live.
For my dignity will clothe me, it does not depend on you.
God intended, God revealing, it will let my spirit through.**

2. Do not offer me your pity, if that is all you have to spare,
though I am spat upon and taunted, and nobody seems to care.
For the light that shines within me, reflects the glory that is God,
and although I walk in darkness, it cannot extinguish God.
3. Do not offer me your answers if that is all that you can do,
though you see me as a problem in the unemployment queue.
I am a person, not a statistic, my life is pleasing to the Lord
by that grace I am of value, holy, human, is the word.
4. Do not offer me your comfort, if you will not give your love,
though I'm bleeding, broken, helpless, caught whichever way I move.
Oh, awake your heart to courage, do not soothe it into sleep,
for to live in faith is costly, but indifference is cheap.

Reading: *The Salt Path by Raynor Winn explores the theme of homelessness, as Ray and Moth lose their beloved family home. Now homeless, they decide to walk the coast path and experience first-hand the hardships and stigma of being homeless.*

The Lighthouse:

Time to hear from Diane Bennett how the Lighthouse in Evesham supports people who are homeless and in need.

Prayers:

- Leader:** Let us bring to God our loving, heavenly father, all those who are in our thoughts this evening. Those who are homeless due to debt or addictions.
God be near them.
- All:** God be near them
- Leader:** Children who have run away from home because of abusive relationships.
God be near them.
- All:** God be near them
- Leader:** Those who are homeless due to the loss of their health and livelihood.
God be near them.
- All:** God be near them

Leader: Those who have lost their homes due to natural disasters such as fire, flood, drought and earthquake. God be near them.

All: **God be near them**

Leader: Asylum seekers and refugees from war, aggression and prejudice trapped in no-mans- land camps and holding centres. God be near them.

All: **God be near them**

Leader: Those who this night will feel cold, lonely and afraid and without a home are unable to access work, benefits or health care. God be near them.

All: **God be near them**

Leader: We pray for everyone who offers support to those in need, for Foodbanks, Community Cupboards, Maggs Day Centre and the Lighthouse.
God be near them.

All: **God be near them Amen**

Song: 🎵 Christ's is the world in which we move (*Common Ground 1*)

Prayer:

Leader: Almighty God of refuge and strength, we are all made in your image.
You are a home to any who are in need or trouble.
Inspire us with your spirit of love, empower us to work for change,
direct our actions towards any who need food, comfort, shelter and sanctuary,
and help us to live as one, with one another.

All: **In the name of Jesus, who had no place to rest his head, 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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<https://eveshamlighthouse.org.uk/>

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Iona Abbey Music Book © The Iona Community

An Iona Prayer Book © Peter Millar

Common Ground © The Iona Community

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NEXT IONA SERVICE IS AT 5pm on SUNDAY 23rd NOVEMBER

PERSHORE ABBEY IONA SERVICES ARE A COMMUNITY EFFORT

Many people contributing, helps to keep the Iona service 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

There are many possible ways to help including: 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

SOME UK GOVERNMENT STATISTICS ON HOMELESSNESS

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/statutory-homelessness-in-england-january-to-march-2025/statutory-homelessness-in-england-january-to-march-2025>

A graph of numbers of households that the government has a duty to help either because they are at risk of homelessness (prevention duty) or are experiencing homelessness (relief duty).

