

Peacemakers

Pershore Abbey Iona Service 5pm Sunday 24th November 2024

Welcome

Introduction 'We celebrate that God wills for the world peace with justice, known in the Middle East as 'Shalom' or 'Salaam'. This is not an abstraction or something only possible in another world or eternity, but a real hope for this place and time. This justice is proclaimed by the Law and the Prophets, and is embodied in Jesus. It flows from the simple fact that God loves the world. When what God loves is threatened, those who love God cannot remain neutral.' (*Iona Abbey Worship Book p93*)

Our worship this evening is based on the reflections and themes in 'Live in the Light' by Ruth Harvey, leader of the Iona Community. We will be moving around the Abbey, focussing on:

- ❖ Inner Peace
- ❖ Peace Concerns
- ❖ Peacemakers

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

Reflection A: (*from Live in the Light by Ruth Harvey*)

'First, we are invited to be reconciled with ourselves – with all those parts of our self we struggle to embrace, those character traits that we perhaps even deny, or push away. The God of love loves each part of us, for God is within and without.'

Opening Responses:

Leader: To be a healer,
All: **it helps to know how it feels to be in need of healing.**
Leader: To be a peacemaker,
All: **it helps to know how it feels to be at war with oneself.**
Leader: To be a reconciler,
All: **it helps to know how it feels to be reconciled to oneself.**
Leader: To love our neighbour as we love ourselves,
All: **first we must know what it means to love our self from the inside out.**

From Psalm 139:

You have searched me, Lord, and you know me.

You know when I sit and when I rise; you perceive my thoughts from afar.

If I go up to the heavens, you are there; if I make my bed in the depths, you are there.

If I rise on the wings of the dawn, if I settle on the far side of the sea,
even there your hand will guide me, your right hand will hold me fast.

Pause for Reflection

Prayer:

Leader: Trinity of love,
All: **forgive us, that we may forgive one another,**
heal us, that we may become people of healing,
and renew us, that we may be makers of peace. Amen

Reflection B:

Living Adventurously *(from Live in the Light by Ruth Harvey)*

'With the children in our local Quaker Meeting we explored what it might mean to 'live adventurously'. For some, this meant planning and taking trips to wild parts of the country. For others, living adventurously meant standing up to school bullies, speaking 'truth to power', coming forward with ideas rather than holding back. Yet others reflected that to live adventurously would mean to give up busyness. Comfort in activity can mask a deeper discomfort in stillness. To stop, seek out stillness in busy lives may lead us on an inner adventure.'

- What does 'live adventurously' mean to you?
- How do you seek God's guidance in your decisions?
- How open are you to any surprise that may emerge as you wait?
- What comfort zones do you inhabit?
- What could nudge you out of familiar patterns?

Song: 🎵 *(Sing twice seated, then continue singing whilst we walk out and around the Abbey, to the table with candles)*

All: **Bless the Lord, my soul, and bless his holy name.
Bless the Lord, my soul, who leads me into life.**

Leader: Whilst we are gathered around this table, you are invited to choose a candle and hold it. You are welcome to share any thoughts about 'Living adventurously'.

Song: 🎵 *(During this song we will walk back to our seats)*

All: **Send out your light, Lord, send your truth, to be my guide.
Then let them lead me to the place where you reside.**

Sharing of Concerns for Peace - situations close to us and around the world

Time of Open Prayer: *(with lighting of candles)*

Leader: Let us pray.
From deep within our being, we call upon you, God,
for through you all can be made whole.
Hear us as we raise to heaven our concerns for the people of earth.
God of peace and justice,

All: **rain down upon us your peace.**

We remember those groups who are victimised because of their race, background, culture or history, simply because they are different; and for communities who are abused, abandoned or degraded.

(Time of quiet and naming of concerns.)

God of peace and justice,

All: **rain down upon us your peace.**

We pray for people who feel powerless or despairing, not knowing when their misery will end or who will hear their cry, or how to keep themselves and their families safe.

(Time of quiet and naming of concerns.)

God of peace and justice,

All: rain down upon us your peace.

We pray for communities in which people deal with disaster or terror, hunger or poverty; for their leaders and individuals who step up in the time of crisis.

(Time of quiet and naming of concerns.)

God of peace and justice,

All: rain down upon us your peace.

We pray for national and international decision makers who draw up plans which affect everyone. May they value all life on earth rather than prioritise their own agendas.

(Time of quiet and naming of concerns.)

God of peace and justice,

All: rain down upon us your peace.


We pray for organisations and individuals who listen and are open to understanding the concerns of others. Bless those who enable communication and negotiation, who are the means of change, preventing history from repeating itself. May they in turn be listened to, telling the stories of those whose voices would not otherwise be heard.

(Time of quiet and naming of concerns.)

God of peace and justice,

All: let every heart be filled with peace. Amen

Time of Quiet

Song:  *(During this song we will walk towards the war memorial.)*

All: God of peace and justice, rain down upon us your peace.

God of peace and justice, let every heart be filled with peace.

Prayer:

Dear Lord,

we pray for a round table –
a United Nations negotiating table;
a Number 10 oval office table;
a communion kitchen table –
any such sacramental table.

A table where the corners have been replaced by curves,
and where the stuff (and word) of life is blessed
and sent around (like salt and spice),
where the Holy Spirit loops the bend to rest –
these are holy round tables:
places of reconciliation.

Where rough edges have been smoothed,
where hard opinions have been softened,
we give you thanks that, here,
is the space for reconciling love.

All: Amen

Time for Quiet Reflection: *Take time to have a look at the stories, reflections, reconciliation*

charities and petitions, all related to Peace, Forgiveness and Reconciliation.

Opportunity to Share Thoughts: *Please share with your neighbour, thoughts about the stories and reflections that you have seen or story of your own.*

Further time for Reflection and Action:

Please choose candles and prayer cards to take home with you for your personal use and, to pass on to someone.

Closing Prayers:

Leader: Creator of all, Saviour of all, Spirit in all, one God in perfect community,

All: **stay with us now.**

Leader: Where there is apathy,

All: **kindle the flame of your love.**

Leader: Where there is deceit,

All: **confront every lie with your truth.**

Leader: Where there is hopelessness,

All: **reveal deep wells of compassion.**

Leader: Where there is joy,

All: **let your kindly protection be known.**

Leader: Where we hesitate to serve you,

All: **make us restless until we change.**

Leader: Yours is the kingdom, the power and the glory,

All: **for ever. Amen**

Blessing:

Leader: May the peace of God –

All: **the demanding peace of emotional engagement**

the dangerous peace of imaginative action

the dynamic peace of Holy Dreaming –

fill our hearts with joy, our lives with courage,

and our world with change. Amen

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© The Iona Community: 'The Iona Abbey Worship Book' 2016; 'Come All You People'; 'We Walk His Way'; 'Live in the Light - Reflections on Peacemaking & Reconciliation' by Ruth Harvey

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NB. THERE IS NO PERSHORE ABBEY IONA SERVICE IN DECEMBER!!!

The next Iona service will be at **5pm on Sunday 26th January in Pershore Abbey**. The theme will be reconciliation and restorative justice, at the start of the Jubilee year - 2025. Emily Miller will be talking to us about her experiences of Restorative Justice in school.