

DANCE IN THE DESERT

Opening Song **The Kingdom of God (Taizé)**

All sing: The kingdom of God is justice and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit
Come, Lord, and open in us the gates of your kingdom.

The Guest House (Rumi, translation by Coleman Barks ©)

This being human is a guest house.

Every morning a new arrival.

A joy, a depression, a meanness,
some momentary awareness comes
as an unexpected visitor.

Welcome and entertain them all!
Even if they are a crowd of sorrows,
who violently sweep your house
empty of its furniture,
still, treat each guest honourably.

He may be clearing you out
for some new delight.

The dark thought, the shame, the malice.
meet them at the door laughing and invite them in.

Be grateful for whatever comes.
because each has been sent
as a guide from beyond.

—

Welcome, welcome, welcome

Instrumental

Prayer **The Welcoming Prayer (Fr. Thomas Keating)**

All say: I welcome everything that comes to me today
because I know it's for my healing.
I welcome all thoughts, feelings, emotions, persons,
situations, and conditions.

Song **All Are Welcome (Jesse Manibusan)**

All sing: All are welcome in this place. Behold Love's amazing grace.
All are welcome. All are welcome.
Bring your hopes, bring your dreams.
Mercy flows and Love redeems
All are welcome. All belong.

Reading **Mt 4:1-11**

Jesus was led by the Spirit out into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. He fasted for forty days and forty nights, after which he was very hungry, and the tempter came and said to him, 'If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to turn into loaves.' But he replied, 'Scripture says:

*Man does not live on bread alone
but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.'*

Prayer **Prayer of Surrender**

All say: I let go of my desire for power and control.
I let go of my desire for affection, esteem, approval and pleasure.

Reading ctd.

The devil then took him to the holy city and made him stand on the parapet of the Temple. 'If you are the Son of God' he said 'throw yourself down; for scripture says:

He will put you in his angels' charge,
and they will support you on their hands
in case you hurt your foot against a stone.'

Jesus said to him, 'Scripture also says:

You must not put the Lord your God to the test.'

Prayer **Prayer of Surrender**

All say: I let go of my desire for power and control.
I let go of my desire for affection, esteem,
approval and pleasure.
I let go of my desire for survival and security.
I let go of my desire to change any situation,
condition, person or myself.

Reading ctd.

Next, taking him to a very high mountain, the devil showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendour. 'I will give you all these', he said, 'if you fall at my feet and worship me.'

Then Jesus replied, 'Be off, Satan! For scripture says:

*You must worship the Lord your God,
and serve him alone.'*

Then the devil left him, and angels appeared and looked after him.

Prayer

All say: I let go of my desire for power and control.
I let go of my desire for affection, esteem,
approval and pleasure.
I let go of my desire for survival and security.
I let go of my desire to change any situation,
condition, person or myself.
I open to the love and presence of God and
God's action within. Amen.



Song **Take Me As I Am (John Bell)**

All sing: Take, O take me as I am,
summon out what I should be
Set your seal upon my heart and live in me.

Reading

Jesus took with him Peter and James and his brother John and led them up a high mountain where they could be alone. There in their presence he was transfigured; his face shone like the sun and his clothes became as white as light. Suddenly Moses and Elijah appeared to them; they were talking with him. Then Peter spoke to Jesus. 'Lord,' he said 'it is wonderful for us to be here; if you wish, I will make three tents here, one for you, one for Moses and one for Elijah.' He was still speaking when suddenly a bright cloud covered them with shadow, and from the cloud there came a voice which said, 'This is my Son, the Beloved; he enjoys my favour. Listen to him.'

Song **Father We Adore You**

All sing: Father, we adore you, lay our lives before you, how we love you
Jesus, we adore you, lay our lives before you, how we love you
Spirit, we adore you, lay our lives before you, how we love you

Reflection **The Gaze of the Beloved (James Finley)**

When God eases us out of God's heart into the earthly plane, God searches for the place that is most like paradise, and that is the mother's gaze. In the mother's gaze, she transparently mirrors God's infinite gaze of love, looking into the eyes of the infant. And when the infant looks into her eyes it is looking into God's eyes. When God gazes at us and we gaze at God, both of us light up.



Song

All sing:

Jesus Take Me As I Am (Dave Bryant) © 1978 Thankyou Music

Jesus take me as I am,
I can come no other way.
Take me deeper into You,
make my flesh life melt away.
Make me like a precious stone,
crystal clear and finely honed
life of Jesus shining through,
giving glory back to You.

Reflection

Iona Community ©

You are loved by God.
Each and every one of you:
cherished, adored, liked –
just as you are.

God loves you,
Jesus loves you,
the Spirit loves you:
Three-in-One.
No exceptions.

Follow Christ's footsteps,
walk into the wilderness –
and dance in the desert.

Beloved of God,
come on a journey.

Song

All sing:

God of Second Chances (David Haas)

Come now, O God, of second chances;
open our lives to heal.
Remove our hate, and melt our rage.
Save us from ourselves.

Come now, O God, shake our resentment;
open our way to choose
the way of love over revenge.
Show us a new way.



Reading

Luke 13:6-9

⁶ Jesus told this parable: “A man had a fig tree growing in his vineyard, and he went to look for fruit on it but did not find any. ⁷ So he said to the man who took care of the vineyard, ‘For three years now I’ve been coming to look for fruit on this fig tree and haven’t found any. Cut it down! Why should it use up the soil?’

⁸ “‘Sir,’ the man replied, ‘leave it alone for one more year, and I’ll dig around it and fertilize it. ⁹ If it bears fruit next year, fine! If not, then cut it down.’”

Song ctd.

All sing: Come now, O God, and grant compassion;
open our hearts to love.
May we let go of all our hurt. Help us to move on.

Prayer

Let us pray,

All say: God of mercy and love,
We thank you for the grace of compassion
May we be generous in giving others **490** chances
As we walk the road of reconciliation together.
We ask this through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Song ctd.

All sing: Come now, O God, of second chances;
may we forgive ourselves,
may we become your living sign:
children of God’s love.



Reflection

John 7:53-8:11 (The Brothers Pennington)

Chimes – Daybreak... and Jesus reappeared in the temple area where found himself surrounded by the people – **shakers**

He sat down and began to teach them – **drum**

The Scribes and the Pharisees were eager to trap and accuse Jesus and so they found a woman – a woman caught in adultery

They led the woman forward and made her stand in front of everyone

‘Teacher’ this woman has been caught in the act of adultery – the law states that such a woman should be stoned – what do you say? – what do you say?- what do you say? – what do you say?

Jesus bent down and began to write on the surface of the earth with his finger

Jesus stood and spoke – **stop drum and then chimes**

let the one among you who has no sin – be the first to cast a stone at her – **drums**

He found himself alone with the woman – Jesus looked at her

Has no one condemned you?

No one sir – nor do I condemn you – go and sin no more – **drums until the end.**

Surrender of Stones

Song

Give us your Peace (Matt Maher)

All sing:

Jesus, give us your peace
bring us together let all the fighting cease.
Shatter all our hearts of stone
Give us a heart for you alone.



Reading **Luke 15:11-13**

Jesus said, “There was a man who had two sons; and the younger of them said to his father, ‘Father, give me the share of property that falls to me.’ And he divided his living between them. Not many days later, the younger son gathered all he had and took his journey into a far country, and there he squandered his property in loose living.

Song **My Son Has Gone Away (Bob Dufford)**

Reading **Luke 15:18-19**

I will arise and go to my father, and I will say to him ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you; I no longer deserve to be called your son; treat me like one of your paid servants.’

Song **Softly and Tenderly (Will L.Thompson)**

Softly and tenderly Jesus is calling— calling for you and for me;
Patiently Jesus is waiting and watching— watching for you and for me!
Come home! come home! You who are weary, come home!
Earnestly, tenderly, Jesus is calling, calling, O sinner, come home!

Song **The Prodigal (Mark Hall)**

Reading **Luke 15:22-23**

The father said to his servants ‘Bring the calf we have been fattening, and kill it; we are going to have a feast, a celebration, because this son of mine was dead and has come back to life; he was lost and is found.’

Song **Kyrie in C (W.A. Mozart)**

Reading **Luke 15:29, 31-32**

The older brother said, ‘Look all these years I have slaved for you and never once disobeyed your orders, yet you never offered me as much as a kid for me to celebrate with my friends.’ ‘My son, you are with me always and all I have is yours. It was fitting to make merry and be glad, for this your brother was dead, and is alive; he was lost, and is found.’



Song

All sing:

Rejoice (Graham Kendrick)

Rejoice! Rejoice! Christ is in you,
The hope of glory in our hearts.
He lives! He lives! His breath is in you,
Arise a mighty army, we arise.

Concluding Prayer

All say:

Let us pray,

God of generosity and hope:
Help us to let go of our baggage
Make us generous in giving others another chance
Keep us joyful as we dance together in the desert of Lent.
We ask this through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Blessing

(Ruth Burgess)

Bless to us, O God,
the fragility of snowdrops,
the blossoming of orchards,
the dancing of bees.



Bless to us, O God,
the smudge of ashes,
the Lenten journey,
the blazing Easter fire.



Bless and silence us with wonder,
O God of hope and justice.
Gift us with courage.
Warm and quicken us with love.



Song

All sing:

Go Tell Everyone (H.J. Richards)

God's Spirit is in my heart,
He has called me and set me apart.
This is what I have to do,
what I have to do.

He sent me to give the Good News to the poor,
Tell prisoners that they are prisoners no more,
Tell blind people that they can see,
And set the downtrodden free
And go tell everyone the news that the Kingdom of God
has come (2)