



# TRANSFORMING LIVES TO CHANGE THE WORLD

Our Community  
and our Vision

The Iona Community  
is an international,  
ecumenical Christian  
movement working  
for peace and justice,  
the rebuilding of  
community and the  
renewal of worship.

#### PHOTOGRAPHY

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<b>5</b>	Welcome
<b>7</b>	Our Focus
<b>8</b>	Our Story
<b>11</b>	Our Grounding
<b>12</b>	Our Community
<b>15</b>	Our Gathering Places
<b>16</b>	Our Common Concern Networks
<b>19</b>	Our Rule of Life
<b>20</b>	Our Strategic Objectives
<b>24</b>	Our Values & Working Principles
<b>31</b>	Our Ways of Working
<b>32</b>	Resourcing Our Work
<b>34</b>	Be Involved

In work and worship  
God is with us  
Gathered and scattered  
God is with us  
Now and always  
God is with us



# WELCOME

These are the words we use daily – in Iona Abbey, at our kitchen table, in small groups across the globe, and as we meet in community.

Prayer and reflection motivate us to take action for justice and peace in the world. As a community, movement and organisation we pursue our purpose wherever we live, and in our centres in Glasgow and on Mull and Iona.

We are convinced that the radical, inclusive community we seek must be embodied in the community we practise.

5

As you weave your way through this booklet, we introduce you to our work and our life together. Ours is an evolving story. So too will these words, stories, concerns and values evolve as we live out our faith. We invite you to join with us.





# OUR FOCUS

## Our Vision

*What we ultimately long to see*

We long for a just and peaceful world in which all of life can flourish.

## Our Purpose

*Why we exist*

Inspired by our faith and loving concern for the world and its people, we pursue justice and peace in and through community.

7

## The Impact we Imagine

*How we hope lives may be changed*

Our hope is that through our witness and work, ordinary people will be enabled to do extraordinary things in their local communities, through the Church and other organisations. It is in partnership with others that we can pursue social and environmental justice and peace.

Being a Member of the Iona Community gives me a vibrant link with people of faith and action who inspire and challenge.

– IONA COMMUNITY MEMBER

# OUR STORY

*Our roots and the story that shapes our present.*

Our Community was founded in Glasgow, Scotland in 1938 by Rev George MacLeod. A visionary and a social reformer, MacLeod was driven by a belief that faith is grounded in action. In rebuilding the ruined accommodation at Iona Abbey, on the island of Iona, trainee ministers and unemployed workers from Glasgow lived, worked and worshiped together.

This physical rebuilding became, and remains a sign of hope for the rebuilding of individual lives and of community in Scotland and beyond. The community and living spaces of Iona Abbey were reopened in 2021 after extensive renovation. We are glad still to be part of the life and economy of Iona and Mull. These are beautiful islands where thriving local communities are layered with a deep spiritual tradition, and inspiring landscape and wildlife.

In an age where society is fragmented, families are dispersed and many real social networks have broken down, people live with a hunger for relationship, a sense of belonging and a desire to counter inequality, injustice and exclusion. We find hope, courage and challenge in our faith which calls us to unity in diversity.





10

# OUR GROUNDING

*Who we are, our strength and uniqueness.*

## Our Community

We believe in the transformational power of community to change lives and the world. Only in community can justice and love be done.

11

## Our Faith

We are part of the global church.

Our Members are inspired by a shared commitment to Jesus Christ.

## Our Commitment to Action for Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation

We believe that work for justice, peace and an equitable society is a matter of extreme urgency and that we have a responsibility to live in a right relationship with the whole of God's creation.

# OUR COMMUNITY

*The people who have made a commitment  
to belong together in community.*

We are a movement, a community and an organisation enabled by our Members, Associate Members, Young Adults, Friends, staff and others who work with us to advance the purpose of the Iona Community.

We are now about 280 Members scattered globally, mostly in the United Kingdom. We have a growing Young Adults Group and around 2000 Associate Members and Friends worldwide.

We meet in small local groups, called Family Groups, clustered into Regions. It is through our Regions and our Family Groups that Members account to one another for living, and keeping our Rule of Life.

Our staff – both paid and voluntary – support our values and are integral to how we host community and deliver programmes. Staff at our island centres share a rhythm of common life with each other and our guests.

As a Member of the Iona  
Community I have found an  
international network of friends  
with shared values.

- IONA COMMUNITY MEMBER

13



# OUR GATHERING PLACES

*As family groups, in regions and around our common concerns we meet globally, in person and online. People come to our three centres in Scotland to join us in community and learn with us in person.*

15

Our Islands Centres on Iona and Mull are places of hospitality and encounter. Guests and staff share a rhythm of common life and are invited to explore the concerns of the Iona Community – on Iona at the Abbey, Welcome Centre and Shop, and MacLeod Centre; and on Mull at Camas.

Our Glasgow Centre houses our administration, programme, publishing team and resource group and has space for meetings, events and workshops.

# OUR COMMON CONCERN NETWORKS

*The concerns that bind us together in action for justice and peace.*

Along with meeting in regional and local groups, we also support one another to take actions for justice and peace across a range of common concerns. In each of these networks, meeting online and in person, we stand alongside those with lived experiences of injustice, and with partners who share the same concerns.





# OUR RULE OF LIFE

*The commitment which Members affirm annually.*

Inspired by Benedictine and Columban communities, our Members commit to a common Rule. The Rule is central to the life and witness of the Iona Community and binds us to mutual accountability in our family groups.

We share a common discipline of:

- 1 Daily prayer, worship with others and regular engagement with the Bible and other material which nourishes us.
- 2 Working for justice and peace, wholeness and reconciliation in our localities, society and the whole creation.
- 3 Supporting one another in prayer and by meeting, communicating, and accounting with one another for the use of our gifts, money and time, our use of the earth's resources.
- 4 Sharing in the corporate life and organisation of the Community.

*In our organisational life we mirror our Rule in our four Strategic Objectives.*

# OUR STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

*How we give life to our vision and purpose.*

- 1 Enable mutually accountable relationships between diverse people locally and globally.
  - ♦ **Support and enliven** our membership in living by the Rule of Life through hosting accessible gatherings and events, in-person and on-line, which strengthen Family Group and Regional structures, the Common Concern Networks and the New Members Programme in order to broaden the inclusivity and diversity of the membership and witness of the Iona Community.
  - ♦ **Increase** the voice, visibility and agency of young people in developing programmes in partnership with youth work agencies, ensuring membership and participation can be accessed by people of all ages.
- 2 Harness the power of communal action to tackle poverty, seek justice and peace, protect the environment and renew worship.
  - ♦ **Equip** people with the spiritual resilience, skills and knowledge they need to be advocates for justice and peace in their own places, modelling radical hospitality in an environmentally sustainable way.
  - ♦ **Empower** our publishing arm and our worship renewal teams to inform, inspire and equip for action, people committed to the renewal of worship.



**3** Empower people to be reflective agents for community transformation.

- ◆ **Establish Iona Learn** as a blended platform offering virtual and in-person programmes of events, courses and qualifications based on the Rule of Life, while developing partnerships with faith and church networks and key learning institutions to ensure relevance and accreditation.
- ◆ **Develop our islands centres as an Iona Community Campus**, integrating with the local economy and connecting, including digitally, to a global network of students, trainees and pilgrims.

**4** Build systems to become a financially sustainable and increasingly resilient organisation.

- ◆ **Invest** in a long-term, ethical Finance Strategy which offers sustainability, opportunity for growth, health and well-being of all staff, robust evaluation processes, sound governance and appropriate risk assessment.
- ◆ **Develop** healthy and sustainable community relationships undergirded by a Communications and Marketing Strategy, encompassing the data system, website, social and print media, public and on-line events and learning material and all management software, ensuring there is clarity of the Community's key messages.

22

May Peace Prevail



STANDING?



Being part of the Iona  
Community helps me to be  
daring in prayer and politics.

– IONA COMMUNITY MEMBER

# OUR VALUES & WORKING PRINCIPLES

*The qualities and characteristics that guide how we are and what we do.*

## OUR PASSION

We are motivated by our shared commitment to Jesus Christ's proclamation of a just and generous new order; by our own experience of the common life, and by a creative spiritual practice of prayer, song, silence and sacrament.

## OUR MOVEMENT

We seek to offer practical support, mutual encouragement, challenge and inspiration to our members, staff and friends in our 'common task'. We are committed to ongoing dialogue and learning and to prayer and action for health and well-being.

Demanding common task: a wholehearted and cheerful commitment to engage with others in the specific work of the present moment, for as long as it takes.

## OUR CENTRES AND HOSPITALITY

We are committed to the joyful welcome of friend and stranger into our homes, and at our centres and events in such a way as to enable mutual, deep, personal and communal change and engagement, alongside mutual recognition of the need for personal space. Our centres on Iona and Mull strive to be places of this radical hospitality, sanctuary and challenge, which offer the experience of 'the common life' and engagement with the concerns of the Iona Community to those who live in them and those who visit.

The common life: Life together in a specific setting, where the gifts and needs of each are understood and honoured, while also freely subordinated to the common good of all, within the framework of the overall purpose of the Movement.

## OUR PUBLICATIONS

We seek in all our publications to inform, reflect, inspire and bring about personal and political transformation. We have a bias to material that is based on practice, and which furthers the task of the Community.

As members account for the use of gifts, time, money and the earth's resources, so as a community we share this commitment through our working principles.



## OUR ENVIRONMENTAL VALUES

We strive in our practice for the highest environmental goals. We travel by public transport wherever possible. We are committed to reducing our energy consumption and environmental impact. We actively seek suppliers who share these goals.

## OUR SOCIAL VALUES

We deplore social injustice. We respect all our members, staff, guests and partners, irrespective of age, race, gender, religion, sexuality, disability, or health status. We actively campaign for social justice at all levels and have a particular commitment to inclusion of people living in poverty.

## OUR ECONOMIC VALUES

We deplore economic injustice. We are committed to the common good, to trade justice and to a critique of economic policies that increase poverty and inequality. We support our work through our own giving and our trading operations. We operate a balanced budget, try to bank and invest ethically and purchase fairly-traded goods. Our residential staff are paid the same, regardless of job. We seek to minimise salary differentials for non-residential staff.

## PARTICIPATION

Ours is a common task. All in membership have the opportunity to share in leadership in policy-making and spiritual practice. Our structures are democratic, and we strive for consensus. We give our leaders a mandate to act fast and effectively, while expecting them to listen and respect the views of all. In particular, we are committed to extending the full participation of young people, within and beyond our movement.

## MUTUAL ACCOUNTABILITY

Our Rule binds us to a discipline of mutual openness in relation to the fundamental aspects of the Christian personal and communal life. We aim to be fully transparent and accountable for our use of gifts, money, time and the earth's resources and to operate with ethical codes of conduct.

## CITIZENSHIP AND PARTNERSHIP

We seek social transformation, and encourage our members to be engaged in civic and political structures at all levels. We actively seek collaboration with all people of goodwill who share our commitment to just and non-violent action. Working both outside and within military organisations, members are committed to standing against militarism and the arms trade and in favour of mediation and reconciliation founded on justice

A photograph showing a group of approximately 20 people walking away from the viewer on a paved path. They are dressed in outdoor clothing like jackets and backpacks. The path is lined with grass and small yellow flowers on the left, and a wooden fence and more greenery on the right. In the background, there's a low wall and some buildings.

Iona changed my life  
– I left the island more  
confident, happy and at  
peace with myself.

– VOLUNTEER, ISLAND CENTRES



30

# OUR WAYS OF WORKING

*The ways we try to be with one another,  
to shape how we respect and honour  
difference and diversity.*

**Respectful listening:** we listen in order to understand, with the intent of being influenced, not necessarily to agree.

**Respectful talking:** we allow one voice to be heard at a time; this includes 'stilling the voice in my own head'.

**Respectful tone:** we take care with the words, and with the tone we use in conversation.

**Respectful sharing:** beyond this room/space, we agree to share only non-attributable wisdom.

**Respectful air-space:** we monitor how much, and how little we speak.

# RESOURCING OUR WORK

*To do all this we seek resources – time and money, partnerships and peoples' talents. We need to care for and steward all these resources responsibly and creatively.*

## PEOPLE

Staff at our centres work hard to offer radical hospitality to all we encounter. In small teams of skilled individuals we bake, mend, pray, resource, administer, steward, preach and pause. Volunteers are integral to our staff team. We are resourced by gifted and wise people who steer and advise us through Council, Committees and groups. We are committed to extending the full participation of young people within and beyond our movement. We are committed to being a learning community, always reaching for new learning edges and knowledge.

Volunteering on Iona broke my world wide open with new languages, cultures, food, and faces

- IONA COMMUNITY MEMBER



## PARTNERS

We are not alone. We know that the transformation we seek can only be realised through working in partnerships across the globe. We actively seek partnerships, formal and informal, with agencies, networks and communities that share our vision and our concerns. We are particularly delighted to work in partnership with Iona Cathedral Trustees and Historic Environment Scotland, and in close collaboration with other island organisations.

33

## MONEY

All in membership tithe a proportion of their income to the work of our Community, while also supporting other charities. We seek funding to ensure the long term sustainability of our movement and the transformation of the world. A proportion of our income will continue to be dedicated to supporting those who are marginalised in society.

# BE INVOLVED

## ⊕ Join

### As a Member

Commit to the four-fold Rule of Life where you live

### As an Associate Member

Deepen your connection with us; receive our Prayer Book and Coracle Magazine

### As a Young Adult (16+)

Explore what it means to belong to the Iona Community through our young adults group

### As a Friend

Support and be part of our work

## ∅ Pray

Join our Prayer Circle and pray together with our worldwide network for healing and peace

## ♡ Support

Make a donation as a one-off gift or more regularly

Contribute to our **Access Fund** and help us welcome people who would otherwise be excluded from staying with us

Leave a gift through your will

## ⌚ Visit

Visit our centres on Iona, Mull and Glasgow

## ★ Volunteer

Volunteer at our islands' centres

## 👍 Follow

Connect with us on social media and advance our concerns through your networks



Being part of the Iona  
Community has helped  
create a world where  
everyone, everywhere  
can be themselves,  
can play their part.

- IONA COMMUNITY MEMBER



PRAYER FROM OUR MOVEMENT

O Christ, the Master Carpenter,  
you at the last, through wood  
and nails,  
crafted our whole salvation.  
Wield well your tools  
in the workshop of your world,  
so that we who come rough-hewn  
to your bench  
may here be fashioned  
to a truer beauty of your hand.  
Amen.

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