

July 2025

Summer is once again upon us and for many it is the season to take a break to recharge our batteries. This month John and I will be heading to Iona, an island we have visited five times before. Iona is a very special place – like most Scottish islands it's not the easiest to get to with a long car journey and two ferry rides – but it's well worth the effort. For hundreds of years people have travelled to this tiny island in search of the sacred; George MacLeod, founder of the Iona Community described the island as a 'thin place' – only a 'tissue paper' separating the material from the spiritual. On Iona God can feel very close.

Hidden away on a remote part of the island is a circle of stones which is thought to be the remains of a beehive cell, where monks would go alone to meditate in the peace and quiet. In Columba's time it's thought there would have been about 600 monks living and working on the tiny island so I'm sure they needed to get away from the busyness of the monastery from time to time! Modern life too feels increasingly noisy and cluttered – the cascades of emails and text messages, the constant juggling of work, school, family and friends. So much to do and so little time! We all need to find time and space to unwind and relax, to be still in a world so full of activity and noise.

A volunteer on Iona wrote: 'I believe that all of us have a hermitage like this ring of stones inside our hearts ... We can be quiet and enter into that space to meet with God.'

So, whether you are staying at home or going away this summer I hope and pray that you will be able to find that time and space. You might even meet with God.

God bless

Revd Sue

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