

Sources: IONA Community, & Reflective Services (Susan Sayers)

Cover Photo: Photo by [Bryan Do](#) on [Unsplash](#)

Wednesday Worship

24th February 2021



Intro music: Veni Sancte Spiritus by Julie Gaulke (Taize)

This is the time when light fades
and shadows lengthen and sounds are subdued
– all as God intended.

Amen.

This is the time when bodies relax,
minds unwind, and tiredness comes
– all as God intended.

Amen

This is the time when others greet the morning
while we meet the night,
and the world continues to sing,
in all the accents of creation,
a love-song to its Maker.

Blessed be God's Name.

Silence

Jesus you have drawn us here,
**From different homes
and from different backgrounds,
to unite us in your love.**

Introduction

Music: 'Come Away with me' Alessandro Marangio

How in tune are we to the song of God; how much attention do we
give it? To what extent are the words of the God's song unintelligible,
like a foreign language.

Lord teach us to sing your song.

Silence

Lord to whom else could we go?,
You alone have the words of eternal life..

We ask you to open our minds to greater possibilities;
to push back the margins of our understanding.

To think your thoughts
And look with your eyes.

Oh Lord our God, to whom else could we go?
You alone have the words of eternal life.

Reading: Jonah 3

The word of the Lord came to Jonah a second time, saying, ²'Get up, go to Nineveh, that great city, and proclaim to it the message that I tell you.'

³So Jonah set out and went to Nineveh, according to the word of the Lord. Now Nineveh was an exceedingly large city, a three days' walk across. ⁴Jonah began to go into the city, going a day's walk. And he cried out, 'Forty days more, and Nineveh shall be overthrown!'

⁵And the people of Nineveh believed God; they proclaimed a fast, and everyone, great and small, put on sackcloth.

⁶ When the news reached the king of Nineveh, he rose from his throne, removed his robe, covered himself with sackcloth, and sat in ashes. ⁷Then he had a proclamation made in Nineveh: 'By the decree of the king and his nobles: No human being or animal, no herd or flock, shall taste anything. They shall not feed, nor shall they drink water. ⁸Human beings and animals shall be covered with sackcloth, and they shall cry mightily to God. All shall turn from their evil ways and from the violence that is in their hands. ⁹Who knows? God may relent and change his mind; he may turn from his fierce anger, so that we do not perish.'

10 When God saw what they did, how they turned from their evil ways, God changed his mind about the calamity that he had said he would bring upon them; and he did not do it.

This is the word of the Lord
Thanks be to God

Brief address

God of strangeness and desire
we bless you for enticing us
to the last place we wanted to be;
the place where we can hide no longer,
where we must face our own emptiness
and see our false gods fall.
We bless you for the immeasurable relief
of self-exposure,
for the miracle of survival,
and for coming to us in unexpected guises.

**Blessed are you,
God of strangeness and desire**

But if we have turned in upon our emptiness,
refused the risks you require of us,
idolised our self-sufficiency,
and clung to our captivity

**Have mercy on us,
God who wrestles and embraces us.
Shatter our illusions,
refuse your comfort of angels,
feed our hope and our hunger
with the adventurous faith
of your spirit
until grace is our only sufficiency
Amen**

Let us pray

Music: Veni Sancte Spiritus by Julie Gaulke (Taize)

...for those who experience life as a wasteland

(pause)

God be near them.
God be near them.

..... for those who are lost, or without meaning or
value in their lives

(pause)

God be near them.
God be near them.

.....for stateless, dispossessed or migrant peoples

(pause)

You never sleep, God. You are always awake, always watching, always
willing the world and its people to turn in the right direction.

So tonight, will you comfort those who cannot sleep because of
illness, or worry, or fear; or for reasons they cannot understand.

(pause)

God be near them.
God be near them.

And tonight, will you be close to those who wonder, who look for
inspiration, who long to be with the one or the ones they love, who
hope to be together, to hug and be close again.

(pause)

God be near them.

God be near them.

And God, listen to us as we share with you whatever joys or sorrows, discoveries or questions we will take with us into the night.

(pause)

God be near us,

God be near us.

Into your hands we commit ourselves – our souls, our bodies, our minds, our futures – for all things come from you and are best kept in your care. **Amen**

Closing responses

The desert will sing and rejoice

And the wilderness blossom with flowers

All will see the Lord's splendour

See the lord's greatness and power

Tell everyone who is anxious

Be strong, and don't be afraid

The blind will be able to see

The deaf will be able to hear

The lame will leap and dance

Those who can't speak will shout

This is the promise of God

God's promise will be fulfilled

But before the day is done,
let God's holy name be praised;
and let God's people say Amen
Amen.