

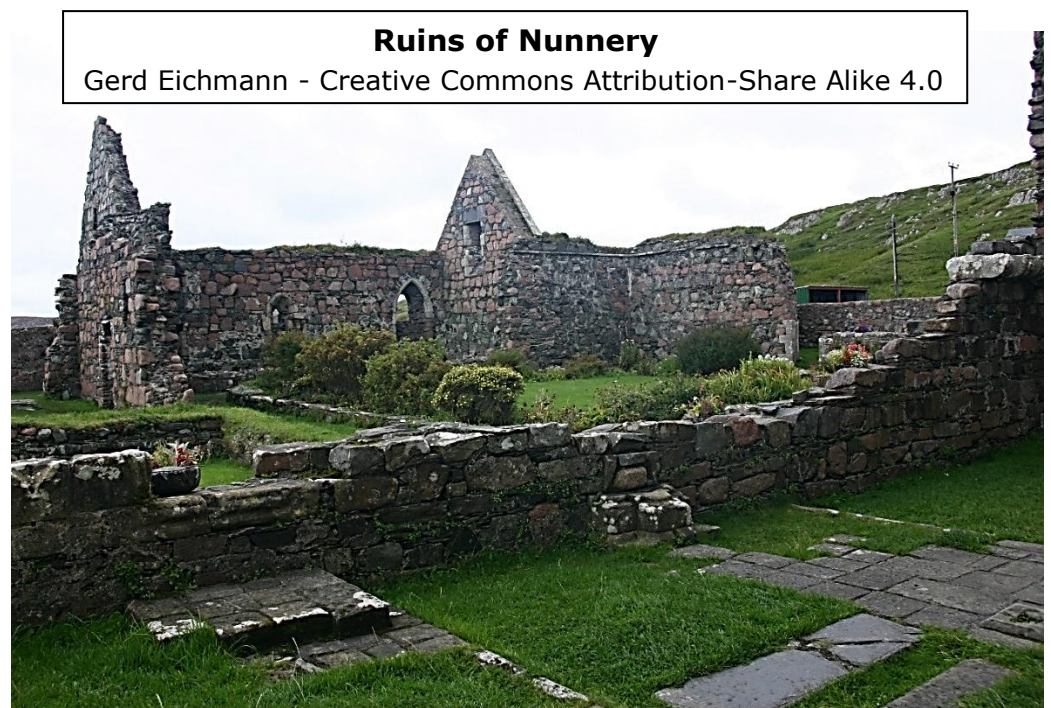
Iona



In August 2021 I wrote a reflection featuring Iona, we had just started the third wave of Covid, the Delta variant. I never thought I would still be writing reflections let alone revisiting Iona. But here we are!

Iona is a tiny and beautiful island, barely 3 miles long, off the west coast of the Isle of Mull. Columba and his 12 monks landed on the island in 563AD and established a simple religious community. From Iona Columba and his followers set out to evangelise much of Scotland. It became the cradle of Christianity in Scotland. Over the centuries it became a centre of Celtic learning and an important centre for European Christianity.

The monastery on Iona was subject to a number of Viking attacks and during the third attack, in 806AD, the monks left the island. There was also an impressive Augustinian Nunnery on Iona, all that remains are these medieval ruins.



Around 1200 Richard MacDonald set out to revive the tradition, lost in part due to the Viking invasions. During this time the St Ronan's Church was built and service as a parish church until the Reformation in 1560.



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St Ronan's Church was built in the 19th century and was restored in 1923 and again in 1993.



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Today Iona is known better for the Iona Community:

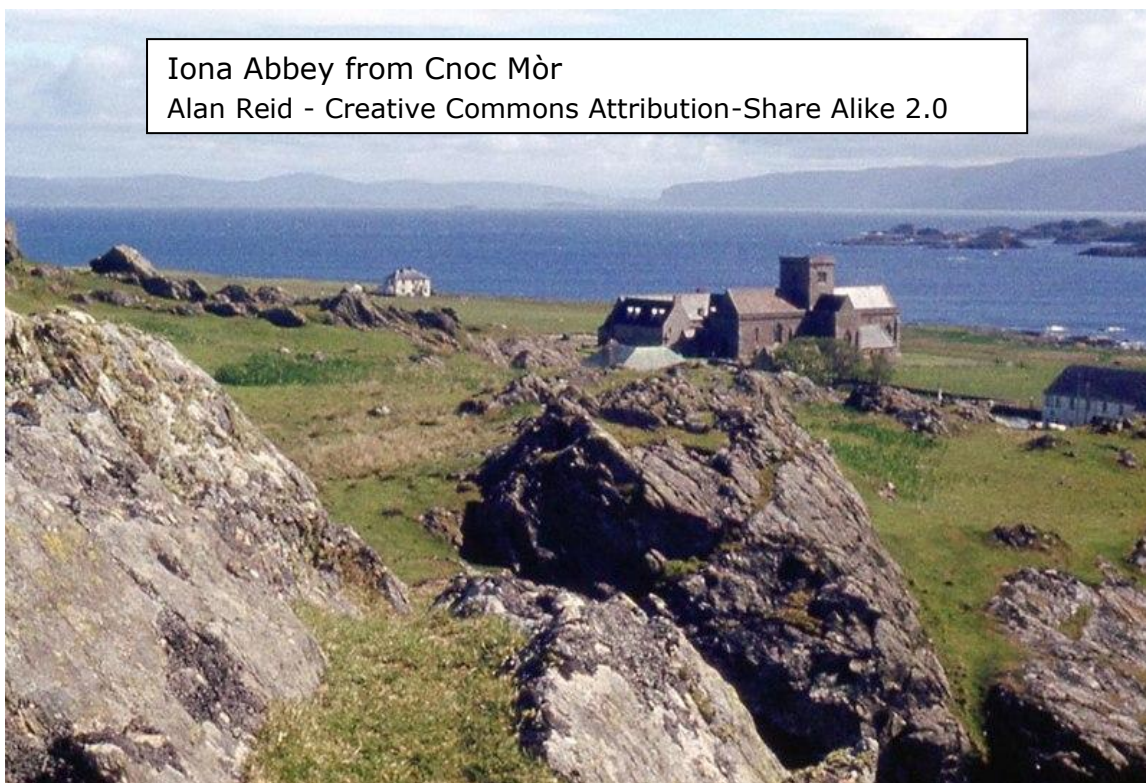
The Iona Community was founded in Glasgow and Iona in 1938 by George MacLeod, minister, visionary and prophetic witness for peace, in the context of the poverty and despair of the Depression. From a dockland parish in Govan, Glasgow, he took unemployed skilled craftsmen and young trainee clergy to Iona to rebuild both the monastic quarters of the mediaeval abbey and the common life by working and living together, sharing skills and effort as well as joys and achievement. That original task became a sign of hopeful rebuilding of community in Scotland and beyond. The experience shaped – and continues to shape – the practice and principles of the Iona Community. See <https://iona.org.uk/> for more information.

Over 1400 years from the founding of the first Christian community by Columba and his 12 monks Christians still meet in community. They welcome people from across the world for prayer, worship and learning. Through Wild Goose resources they share their prayer and worship material and much more.



The community live by a common rule which is affirmed annually. The rule has four main objectives.

- ✚ *Daily prayer, worship with others and regular engagement with the Bible and other material which nourishes us.*
- ✚ *Working for justice and peace, wholeness and reconciliation in our localities, society and the whole creation.*
- ✚ *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.*



Iona Abbey from Cnoc Mòr
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- ✚ *Sharing in the corporate life and organisation of the Community.*

Iona's Christian footprints stems for the 6th century with Columba and his 12 monks, followed by the community leaving Iona in the 9th century, due to successive Viking invasions. There was then a period of restoration in the 13th Century which ended with the Reformation in the 16th century.

In the mid-20th century, George MacLeod had the vision to rebuild a community on Iona, which he did. Where there had been ruins, stones laying abandoned he with others and created a community of living stones, a community that shared faith stories and fellowship.

Look at the photographs from the idyllic setting of the Abbey today, the ruins of the past and perhaps settle with the photograph the interior and the light bursting through the window above the altar or looking across the cloisters.



Reading Tom -Creative Commons Attribution 2.0

Quietly sit ponder Iona's history and thoughtfully pray for the community that worships there and the remember before God your own community, pray for yourself and your community as you seek to be living stones..



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Words from Psalm 27

*God is my light, God my salvation;
Of whom should I be afraid?*

*God is the stronghold of my life;
Why should I live in fear?*

*Should enemies try to take my life,
They shall stumble and fall.*

*Should armies stand against me,
Still, I will keep my confidence*

*One thing I desire, that I ask of God,
That I may live for ever in God's house.*

*There I would seek my Maker,
And contemplate God's beauty.*

*Reveal to me your ways, my God,
And keep me on a level path.*

*Thus, I will see your goodness
At work in the land of the living.
(taken from Daily Worship – Iona Community)*



Words from George MacLeod:

Almighty God, . . .

Show to us in everything we touch and in everyone we meet
the continued assurance of Thy presence round us:
lest ever we should think Thee absent.
In all created things Thou art there.

Awake for us Thy presence in the very storm
till all our joys are seen as Thee
and all our trivial tasks emerge as priestly sacraments
in the universal temple of Thy love.

Of ourselves we cannot see this.
Sure physician give us sight.
Of ourselves we cannot act.
Patient lover give us love:

till every shower of rain speaks of Thy forgiveness:
till every storm assures us that we company with Thee:
and every move of light and shadow speaks of grave and resurrection:
to assure us that we cannot die:
Thou creating, redeeming and sustaining God.
(adapted from George MacLeod, 50 Great Prayer from the Iona Community)

Click the  **YouTube** link to hear:

The Lord is my Light from I Will Not Sing Alone, The Wild Goose Collective & Malapela
<https://youtu.be/BUalbJXIHd8?si=er9ccrr3qc--h9zz>

You may wish to join the Iona Community in their Daily Worship. You can get today's worship by clicking the link below then pick today's date.

Daily Worship from the Iona Community is available through this link  **YouTube**
<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCwDTTUfOQ5YQRfA5bUi8ObQ>

Every blessing
Fr Derek

Acknowledgements.

My guide for this series is Britain's Pilgrim Places (2021 by Nick Mayhew-Smith & Guy Hayward) from the British Pilgrimage Trust. Described as a 'treasure trove for the armchair pilgrim' (Phillip Carr-Comm)

The book contains over 600 pilgrim places and 100 routes for pilgrims.

Celtic cross, Iona - Brian Gratwicke - Creative Commons Attribution 2.0

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(Derek is a retired Anglican Parish Priest and a member of the congregations of All Saints & St James and St Stephen's, Elton Prior to his ordination he was accredited as a Methodist Preacher in 1968 and served within the Methodist Church until returning to the Anglican Church in the mid 1980's)

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Dual Parishes of Kirklees Valley, Bury, (All Saints, Elton & St James, Woolfold) and St Stephens, Elton are in the Diocese of Manchester.

Vicar of the two parishes - Br. Samuel Eccleston O.P. (Anglican Order of Preachers- Dominicans)