

Order of Service
October 29, 2023

Welcome & introduction to the service

Opening hymn: Leaning on the everlasting arms

1.
What a fellowship, what a joy divine,
Leaning on the everlasting arms;
What a blessedness, what a peace is mine,
Leaning on the everlasting arms.

Refrain:
Leaning, leaning,
safe and secure from all alarms;
Leaning, leaning,
leaning on the everlasting arms.

2.
O how sweet to walk in this pilgrim way,
Leaning on the everlasting arms;
O how bright the path grows from day to day,
Leaning on the everlasting arms.

3.
What have I to dread, what have I to fear,
Leaning on the everlasting arms;
I have blessed peace with my Lord so near,
Leaning on the everlasting arms.

Opening responses

Unless God builds the house,
those who build it labour in vain.

Unless God protects the city,
those who guard it watch in vain.

Peace of the Maker, peace of the Son,
God's stumbling block and corner stone.

Opening prayer

A shade are you in the heat, protecting God;

a shelter are you in the cold.

Eyes are you to the blind, restoring God;

a staff are you to the weak.

An island are you at sea, providing God;

a rock are you on land.

Our soul's healer,

keep us at evening, keep us at morning,

keep us at noon.

We are tired, astray and stumbling, shield us from sin.

Our souls' healer, shield us from sin.

Amen and Amen

Hymn: What A friend we have in Jesus

VU 664

1

What a friend we have in Jesus,

all our sins and griefs to bear!

What a privilege to carry

everything to God in prayer!

O what peace we often forfeit,

O what needless pain we bear,

all because we do not carry

everything to God in prayer.

2

Have we trials and temptations?

Is there trouble anywhere?

We should never be discouraged;

take it to the Lord in prayer.

Can we find a friend so faithful,

who will all our sorrows share?

Jesus knows our every weakness;

take it to the Lord in prayer.

3

Are we weak and heavy laden,

cumbered with a load of care?

Christ the Saviour is our refuge;

take it to the Lord in prayer.
Do our friends despise, forsake us?
Are we tempted to despair?
Jesus' strength will shield our weakness,
and we'll find new courage there.

Scripture reading: I Peter 2: 4-10

*Read by Right Excellent Companion Lorne MacDonald,
Grand Superintendent of District 12
of the Grand Chapter of Royal Arch Masons of Canada in the Province of Ontario.*

Come to him, a living stone, though rejected by mortals yet chosen and precious in God's sight, and like living stones, let yourselves be built into a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. For it stands in scripture:

*"See, I am laying in Zion a stone,
a cornerstone chosen and precious;
and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame."*

To you then who believe, he is precious;
but for those who do not believe,
*"The stone that the builders rejected
has become the very head of the corner;"*

and

*"A stone that makes them stumble,
and a rock that makes them fall."*

They stumble because they disobey the word,
as they were destined to do.
But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood,
a holy nation, God's own people,
in order that you may proclaim the mighty acts of him
who called you out of darkness
into his marvelous light.

*Once you were not a people,
but now you are God's people;
once you had not received mercy,
but now you have received mercy.*

May God Bless to our understanding this reading of Holy Scripture

Amen

Hymn: In the garden

1.

I Come to the garden alone,
While the dew is still on the roses;
And the voice I hear, falling on my ear,
The Son of God discloses.

Refrain:

*And He walks with me,
and He talks with me.
And He tells me I am his own;
And the joy we share as we tarry there
None other has ever known.*

2.

He speaks and the sound of his voice
Is so sweet the birds hush their singing;
And the melody that He gave to me
Within my heart is ringing.

3.

I'd stay in the garden with Him
Though the night around me be falling;
But he bids me go – through the voice of woe,
His voice to me is calling.

Three stone meditations

The Stone God Made

What I hold in my hand
is as old as me, and older;
as old as my name,
my language, my culture, and older;
as old as my race,
as old as the human race, and older;
as old as the soil
as old as the sea, and older;

*You ... and you ... and you ...are God's own people,
chosen to proclaim the acts of God
who created you out of darkness into God's marvellous light.
Once you were no people.
Now you are God's people.*

We come as living stones to build the house of God.
We welcome God within to bless us and our guests.

Prayers of intercession

Christ of the road of the wounded
Christ of the tears of the broken,

In us and with us the needs of the world.
Grant us our prayers of loving and hoping.
Grant us our prayers of yearning and healing.

*Rev Blair will now lead us in prayer
When he is done, we will all repeat together
the "Prayer for our own reshaping"*

Prayer for our own reshaping

**Christ, the Master Carpenter,
who, at the last through wood and nails
purchased 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.
We ask in your own name's sake. AMEN.**

Come as living Stones

<p><i>Please turn to your neighbour on the LEFT and exchange stones with them</i></p>
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'Come as living stones. You are the chosen race.'
But, Lord, you know our trouble – the pace.
We are fools who work full time.

**We are do-ers who are overdone.
We are a tired race, a fallen race, a busy race.**

'Come as living stones. You are the chosen race.'
**We come as living stones to build the house of God.
We welcome God within to bless us and our guests.**

'Come as living stones. You are the King's priests.'
**But, Lord, you know our trouble –
we are not royal or religious.
We are commoners who enjoy insignificance.
We are the faithless, the faltering, the least.**

'Come as living stones. You are the King's priests.'
**We come as living stones to build the house of God.
We welcome God within to bless us and our guests.**
'Come as living stones. You are the holy nation.'
**But, Lord, you know our trouble –
we are not guiltless.
We are the people who pray for peace,
yet arm for war.
We are the people who bemoan pollution,
yet poison the earth.
We are the people who disparage poverty,
yet bleed the poor.
We are a selfish nation, an indulgent nation,
a proud nation.**

'Come as living stones. You are the holy nation.'
**We come as living stones to build the house of God.
We welcome God within to bless us and our guests.**

as old as the earth,
as old as the sun, moon and stars ...
but younger than God.
For I made this stone,
made and meant it's colour, its contours,
its journey from below to above.
And had earth never revealed it,
and had you never admired it,
it would still bear witness to my deep intention
to make the world, mean the world,
want the world, wean the world;
and one day, walk the world

and hold in my hand what you now hold in yours.

Silence

Hymn: When he cometh

1.

When He cometh, when He cometh
to make up his jewels,
all his jewels, precious jewels,
his loved and his own

Refrain:

*Like the stars of the morning,
His bright crown adorning,
They shall shine in their beauty,
Bright gems for his crown.*

2.

He will gather, He will gather
the gems for His kingdom,
All the pure ones, all the bright ones,
His loved and his own.

3.

Little children, little children
who love their Redeemer,
Are the jewels, precious jewels,
His loved and His own.

A Reflection on Pumpkins and Christians

The stone the builders rejected

***please turn to your neighbour on the RIGHT
and exchange stones with them***

This is the stone that the builders rejected:

He walked through the wilderness,
through the dry place.
He was thirsty and hungry and all alone.
As he picked up a stone, a voice said,
'Turn it to bread,' and he could have
but he let the stone be a stone.

**Unsure, when what was bright turns dark
And life, it seems, has lost it's way,
We question what we once believed
And fear that doubt has come to stay.
We sense the worm that gnaws within
Has withered willpower, weakened bones,
And wonder whether all that's left
Is stumbling blocks or stepping stones.**

pause

This is the stone that the builders rejected:
He came to his own, but they would not receive him.
They heard him speak, heard him open the scriptures,
but would not listen.
'Enough, enough!' They shouted and took him,
stones in hand, to a hill.

**Where minds and bodies reel with pain
Which nervous smiles can never mask,
And hope is forced the face despair
And all the things it dared not ask.
Aware of weakness, guilt or shame,
The will gives out, the spirit groans,
And clutching at each straw we find
More stumbling blocks than stepping stones.**

pause

This is the stone that the builders rejected:
He called those who had no calling.
He named those who had no name:
'What you didn't manage with fish
you'll do with people - catch them,' he said.
'They call you simple Simon,

I name you Peter, the rock...
and on the likes of you...
on the likes of you, I'll build my church.'

**Where family life has lost its bliss
And silences endorse mistrust,
Or anger boils and tempers flare
As love comes under threat from lust;
Where people cannot take the strain
Of worklessness and endless loans,
What pattern will the future weave -
Just stumbling blocks, no stepping stones?**

pause

This is the stone that the builders rejected:

He bent down to touch the ground, to cradle children,
to kneel with the one whom all despised.

'Throw your stones,' he said, 'Throw them at her,
and let the flawless fling theirs first.'

They went away, stones in hand,
for another day and for him.

**Where hearts that once held love are bare
And faith, in shreds, compounds the mess;
Where [thoughts] and prayers no longer speak
And former friends no longer bless;
And when the church, where some belonged
No more their loyalty enthrones,
The plea is made, 'If you are there,
Turn stumbling blocks, to stepping stones!'**

pause

This is the stone that the builders rejected:

He was edged out of the world,
onto a cross, into a tomb.
And a stone was stationed
to keep the dead away from the living,
but the stone was rolled away
for death was rejected.

Death died and the stone was rolled away.

**Ah God, you, with the Maker's eye,
Can tell if all that's feared is real,
And see if life is more than what**

**We suffer, dread, despise and feel.
If some by faith no longer stand
Nor hear the truth your voice intones,
Stretch out your hand to help your folk
From stumbling blocks to stepping stones.**

Silence

Hymn: The wonder of it all

There's the wonder of sunset at evening,
The wonder as sunrise I see;
But the wonder of wonders that thrills my soul
Is the wonder that God loves me.

*O, the wonder of it all!
The wonder of it all!
Just to think that God loves me.
O, the wonder of it all!
The wonder of it all!
Just to think that God loves me.*

There's the wonder of springtime and harvest
The sky, the stars, the sun;
But the wonder of wonders that thrills my soul
Is a wonder that's only begun.

Closing Reflections

Benediction

<i>Bless to us God</i>	the earth beneath our feet.
<i>Bless to us God</i>	the path on which we go.
<i>Bless to us God</i>	the people whom we meet.
<i>God of all gods</i>	bles to us our lives.

Go Now in Peace

**Go now in peace,
never be afraid.
God will go with you,
each hour of every day.**

**Go now in faith: steadfast, strong and true.
Know He will guide you in all you do.
Go now in love, and show you believe.
Reach out to others,
so all the world can see –
God will be there, watching from above.
Go now in peace, in faith, and in love.
A—men. A – men. A - - - men,**

This Liturgy was adapted from the “Three Stone Meditation” which was created by John L. Bell, the former Worship Leader of the Iona Community and Kirk of Scotland Minister. It is taken from his book: “He Was In the World”

The Iona Community is an ecumenical community of men and women, seeking new ways of living the Gospel in today’s world. The Community is made up of approximately 250 members, 1000 associates, and 2000 friends. The members are men and women, lay and ordained, working in many different jobs, and coming from many countries. Since 1952 the Community has come under the auspices of the Church of Scotland. Its membership however has always been open to members of other Christian denominations, and it has always welcomed to its centres on Iona and Mull people of all traditions and faiths, or of none.

