



Discerning Hearts

Newsletter of The Episcopal Community

"We are marked as Christ's own for ever."

Volume: 2026 Issue 07

Walking Iona

A mother and daughter travel to Iona, off the west coast of Scotland.



May 16 - 27th, with no expectations, open hearts, and open minds, we were greeted by the openness of this beautiful island. We were welcomed by beautiful mountains, sheep grazing on the hillsides, the chirping of birds, and the beautiful flowers along the paths of this sacred space.

Our lodging was St. Columba's Hotel, on the island facing the bay. Every morning, we were greeted by bird song.



On our first day, meeting and greeting the other participants, we built our friendships. Each day, we were given a thought for reflection, and our circle group of four would meet to discuss it. We had the option to attend morning worship and/or evening services at the Iona Abbey.

This Abbey was built by St. Columba, with the help of the monks and many locals. St. Columba came to Iona in 563, leaving Ireland after much disagreement with his brothers. St. Columba left Ireland and set sail, thinking that when he came to a shore, if he could not see Ireland from the highest hill, he would settle in that location. His vision was a safe place for all and a place for the locals and visitors to worship.



Our visit to the shores of Columba Bay was challenging with its rugged terrain, yet beautiful. On our way, we were greeted by choirs of sheep whose tones included basses, tenors, and sopranos; it was just lovely to hear. It was a lovely greeting to our visit.

As we made our way to St. Columba's Bay, I had an aha moment, feeling light, unbelievably peaceful, and grateful to be there, in that "thin space." We stopped for a prayer and lunch, finding space to sit while avoiding sheep droppings. As we sat, we watched a lovely lady dancing a sun salutation while waving a large, multicolored flag. It was a wonderful, peaceful time at the bay.



On our walk through The Rookery, we were welcomed by the beautiful chirping of the various birds as we wandered through the various craft shops and book shops, then time for lunch.

Our visits to various historical sites were learning experiences. These walks included the Heritage Museum, and The Nunnery. I think about the work the nuns did, their hardship in taking care of women in need of feeding and sheltering them from the harsh weather. The shoulders we stand on as we modern women try to carry on the work in one way or another in our communities.



I am very grateful to have been on this pilgrimage especially with Lisa, and to see other sites of God's beautiful creation.

Barbara Willis



Event Calendar

Meetings are on Zoom.

2026

All times Central time.

- Saturday - Compline 10 PM
- Sunday - Compline 6:00 PM
- Tuesday - Social Hour 4:00 PM
- Friday - Morning Prayer 9:00 AM
- Thursday, July 9 – Exec. Comm.
- Thursday, July 16 – CoL
- Thursday, October 1- Exec, Comm
- Thursday, October 15 – CoL



July Birthdays

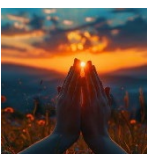
Betty-Jeanne Cousins
Barbara Willis
Meredith Jean Keyser
Christine Floyd
Laura Johnson

Lynn Pizor
Sylvia James
Carol Putnam
Patti Joy Posan



A Prayer for July

O Lord of summer's light,
bless this month with steady grace.
Let each dawn bring hope renewed;
Each dusk, a heart at peace.
Guard our steps in heat and storm,
and teach our days to bloom with love.



Recipe of the Month

Cherry Pie Cookies

By Ree Drummond
YIELDS: 16 cookies

Ingredients

- 1 (15-ounce) can pitted red tart cherries
- 1/3 cup granulated sugar
- Juice of 1 lemon
- 2 Tbsp. cornstarch
- 1 Tbsp. salted butter
- Pinch of ground nutmeg
- 1 (14-ounce) package refrigerated pie crust (2 rounds)
- All-purpose flour, for dusting
- 1 large egg, lightly beaten
- Turbinado sugar, for sprinkling

Directions

Drain the cherries, reserving 1/3 cup of the juice. Coarsely chop the cherries and set aside.

Combine the reserved cherry juice and granulated sugar in a medium saucepan over medium heat and bring to a simmer. Whisk the lemon juice and cornstarch in a small bowl, then pour it into the saucepan, whisking constantly. Cook, stirring, until the liquid thickens and becomes glossy, 2 to 3 minutes. Remove from the heat and stir in the cherries, butter, and nutmeg. Transfer to a medium bowl and refrigerate until completely cooled, 30 to 40 minutes.

Preheat the oven to 400°F. Line 2 baking sheets with parchment paper. Roll out 1 piece of pie dough into a 12-inch round on a lightly floured surface. Using a 3-inch round cutter, cut out 12 small rounds and arrange on the baking sheets. Reroll the scraps and cut out 4 more rounds.

Roll the other piece of dough into a 12-inch round. Cut into 1/2-inch-wide strips. Cut the strips into shorter 3 1/2-inch pieces.

Place 2 teaspoons of the cherry mixture in the center of each dough round (you will have leftover filling).

Lay 2 parallel strips of dough on top, then lay 2 more strips perpendicular to the first. Trim the edges, then press with a fork to seal. Brush with the beaten egg and sprinkle with turbinado sugar.

Bake until golden, 15 to 17 minutes. Transfer to a rack to cool completely.



Do you need a snail mail copy of Discerning Hearts? Contact Barbara Harris at communication@theepiscopalcommunity.org

Vespers/Compline

- | | |
|--------|--------------------------|
| 5-Jul | Becky Taylor |
| 12-Jul | Lorna MacDonald |
| 19-Jul | BB Vaughn & Carol Putnam |
| 26-Jul | PattiJoy Posan |

The office of Compline is the final office of the day. We see this as a time to check in and be together for just a little while. It is a joyful time and we hope you will join us! If you would like to lead compline, please contact Lorna MacDonald at worship@theepiscopalcommunity.org



The Summer Day
Mary Oliver

Who made the world?
Who made the swan, and the black bear?
Who made the grasshopper?
This grasshopper, I mean—
the one who has flung herself out of the grass,
the one who is eating sugar out of my hand,
who is moving her jaws back and forth instead of up and down—
who is gazing around with her enormous and complicated eyes.
Now she lifts her pale forearms and thoroughly washes her face.
Now she snaps her wings open, and floats away.
I don't know exactly what a prayer is.
I do know how to pay attention,
how to fall down into the grass,
how to kneel down in the grass,
how to be idle and blessed, how to stroll through the fields,
which is what I have been doing all day.
Tell me, what else should I have done?
Doesn't everything die at last, and too soon?
Tell me, what is it you plan to do
with your one wild and precious life?



Community News

Does your group or circle have news to share? Please send an email to communications@theepiscopalcommunity.org



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