

## Why Healing? (Introducing Iona Service of Healing)

### Exodus 6:2-9

<sup>2</sup> God also spoke to Moses and said to him: 'I am the Lord. <sup>3</sup>I appeared to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob as God Almighty, but by my name "The Lord" I did not make myself known to them. <sup>4</sup>I also established my covenant with them, to give them the land of Canaan, the land in which they resided as aliens. <sup>5</sup>I have also heard the groaning of the Israelites, whom the Egyptians are holding as slaves, and I have remembered my covenant. <sup>6</sup>Say therefore to the Israelites, "I am the Lord, and I will free you from the burdens of the Egyptians and deliver you from slavery to them. I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and with mighty acts of judgement. <sup>7</sup>I will take you as my people, and I will be your God. You shall know that I am the Lord your God, who has freed you from the burdens of the Egyptians. <sup>8</sup>I will bring you into the land that I swore to give to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; I will give it to you for a possession. I am the Lord." ' <sup>9</sup>Moses told this to the Israelites; but they would not listen to Moses, because of their broken spirit and their cruel slavery.

### Luke 6:17-26

<sup>17</sup> He came down with them and stood on a level place, with a great crowd of his disciples and a great multitude of people from all Judea, Jerusalem, and the coast of Tyre and Sidon. <sup>18</sup>They had come to hear him and to be healed of their diseases; and those who were troubled with unclean spirits were cured. <sup>19</sup>And all in the crowd were trying to touch him, for power came out from him and healed all of them.

<sup>20</sup> Then he looked up at his disciples and said:

'Blessed are you who are poor,  
for yours is the kingdom of God.

<sup>21</sup> 'Blessed are you who are hungry now,  
for you will be filled.

'Blessed are you who weep now,  
for you will laugh.

<sup>22</sup> 'Blessed are you when people hate you, and when they exclude you, revile you, and defame you on account of the Son of Man. <sup>23</sup>Rejoice on that day and leap for joy, for surely your reward is great in heaven; for that is what their ancestors did to the prophets.

<sup>24</sup> 'But woe to you who are rich,  
for you have received your consolation.

<sup>25</sup> 'Woe to you who are full now,  
for you will be hungry.

'Woe to you who are laughing now,  
for you will mourn and weep.

<sup>26</sup> 'Woe to you when all speak well of you, for that is what their ancestors did to the false prophets.

### Introduction

**Vox Pop:** What comes to mind when I say *salvation*? What is salvation?

- morality
- piety
- mysticism
- metaphysics

- heaven and hell

‘σωζω’ is one of the key Greek words for salvation in the New Testament and in the Hebrew Scriptures translated into Greek.

This word has a few different meanings in Greek

- To save or deliver from danger
- To heal, make whole, or cure from disease
- To preserve or keep from corruption

‘σωζω’ has a broad semantic range in Greek – it expresses many different facets of salvation

- Synonym for what happens to you / everything in the future. Being forgiven and spared from God’s wrath (Eschatology - Pauline)
- Synonym for making you / all things free politically, socially and religious. Being delivered from danger (Liberation – Exodus – Justice – Righteousness)
- Synonym for healing making you / everything as it should. Physical, Social & Psychologically (Healing in the Gospels – The Role of Sabbath / Rest / Wellbeing – Exorcism **in the Gospels**)

Jesus is Good News because all these strands are drawn together. Of course, how you prioritise and which you emphasise distinguishes the different flavours and brands of Christian faith.

### **Research on Health**

#### **New Scientist: *Being Ill* (12 October 2024)**

Professor of Health Humanities Neil Vickers and Professor of Psychotherapy Derek Bolton present their book ‘*Being Ill the Care Paradox*’. On the one hand, care is a species activity of humans however they highlight there is also a deep-seated social aversion to ill health. The document describes how those who find themselves sick can be abandoned by friends, family and those who care for them. For instance, long term illness or disability doubles your risk of domestic violence and divorce. They draw on the lessons from care of children. We know that humane compassionate care in many ways determines children’s outcomes, including health outcomes, in adulthood. They suggest the same is true for adults. Health outcomes are improved by strong relationships. We all have a stake in bridging this estrangement between the healthy and the ill, building more resilient communities to support us.

### **Iona Service of Healing**

Our aim for 2025 is to introduce a service of prayers for healing at MUC in Fellowship@10 starting next Sunday when Sally will be leading a service of prayer and healing.

Why! Such a service reflects our belief that God’s purpose for us all is a life of wholeness, as expressed in the life and teaching of Jesus.

The ministry of healing is an integral part of our Christian witness.

We each stand in need of healing, but in this ministry, we recognise also the social dimension.

The healing of divided communities and nations, and the healing of the earth itself, have their place alongside the healing of broken bodies, hurt minds and wounded hearts, and of the hurts and divisions within ourselves.

Our prayers are complementary to the work of medicine and other forms of healing, which are also channels of God's loving and transforming purpose.

In our service we shall name particular people, places and situations for which prayers have been specifically asked. We do this because each person and situation is known to God, not as a problem to be solved, but as a focus for God's acceptance and love.

We are not seeking to change God but to change the world. We trust God that our prayers will be answered, although we do not know when or how healing will happen.

There will also be an opportunity for those who wish to come forward to receive or share in the ministry of the laying on of hands and/or anointing with oils.

During the Prayers for the People as we prepare ourselves for Communion there will be opportunity for folk to approach a number of prayer stations. If someone is mobility challenged then a hand raised for folk to come to you is part of the process. This can be either for yourself or for another person or situation.

In and through this we affirm that the ministry of healing is not restricted to particular individuals but is a corporate, inclusive process. The work of the whole Christian community in which we all have a part to play.

God's healing purpose, the promise of God's fulfilling and sustaining love, is for every one of us. Whether we choose to come forward or to remain seated in prayer and concern, God can use our presence in this service.