

**Winter Quiet Week,
24th November – 1st December
Stephen Wright**

*“Is this place really nearer to God?
Is the wall thin between our whispers
And his listening? I only know
The world grows less and less –“
(“Iona” – Kenneth C Steven)*

Iona is a wonderful island with a deep and rich spiritual history. Thousands pilgrimage here every year in search of spiritual renewal. It is said that Iona is a “thin” place – the veil between realities, between ourselves and God, is least intrusive. The island and the Abbey with its community will provide us with that safe sacred space where we can step off the hustle and bustle of everyday life for while and “come home” to that inner place of peace and quiet; time to “let God be God” and to listen deeply to that “still small voice” within. This will be a time primarily of contemplation and reflection within the fellowship of our group and supported by guided teachings and meditations each day, drawn from the Christian contemplative tradition (no previous experience is necessary, guidance will be given). We will be together for a week, sharing our spiritual lives as well as sharing the experience of living in community with the added benefit of having a room to oneself. There will be ample opportunity to explore the elemental beauty of Iona together as well as a guided pilgrimage around the island midweek. This inclusive and open week will offer inspiration, direction, renewal and encouragement for all.

Stephen has been visiting Iona for over 20 years, he loves the island and has run many retreats here. He is on the new member programme of the Iona Community. He works as a spiritual director for the Sacred Space Foundation (see www.sacredspace.org.uk) helping those in spiritual crisis and guiding spiritual seekers. Before this he had a long and distinguished history in academia and in the British National Health Service, gathering lots of glittering prizes along the way. He has co-authored two books exploring the nature of healing relationships - “Therapeutic Touch” and “Sacred Space – right relationship and spirituality in health care” (both co-written with Jean Sayre-Adams). “Reflections on spirituality and health” published in 2005, by Wiley, received outstanding reviews. “Coming Home” was published in 2009, a personal and scholarly



account of spiritual awakening rooted in the experience of his work as a spiritual director, for which he received significant training in the presence of several renowned teachers and at the Interfaith Seminary (www.theinterfaithfoundation.com). “Contemplation – words for the Way Home” was published in 2010. He is an active trustee of several charities and an Honorary Fellow of the University of Cumbria. He works with organisations developing the practice of healing, spiritual care, conflict resolution and staff support. He is an ordained interfaith minister and spiritual director and brings a rich experience of spiritual practice from many faiths to his work. His published work includes songs, chants, dances (“Song and Dance for the way Home”), poetry (“Beloved”) and prose influenced by his primary spiritual practice of the Contemplative Way. He lives in the English Lake District, deepening service and spiritual practice, participating in his local church community, taking care of his organic garden and enjoying grandfatherhood.