

Interfaith Relations Position Paper

Interfaith Relations Common Concern Network

Updated November 2025

The Iona Community



Interfaith Position Paper



About this position paper

The Iona Community is an ecumenical and worldwide Christian community. We believe there is one God - greater than any single faith or tradition - and we work with individuals and groups of all faiths and none in looking for and honouring that which is of God in all. The Interfaith Relations Common Concern Network (CCN) is one of the Community's nine peace and justice groups.

Why is this a justice issue?

In an increasingly divided world, religious and faith traditions are too often used as barriers to protect and bolster our identities. In the UK and beyond, we are particularly and acutely aware of the rise of antisemitism and Islamophobia.

Despite these challenges, we believe we have much more in common with people of other faiths - and those with none - than the differences which some people use to separate us. Interfaith initiatives exemplify this unity. Interfaith Scotland, of which the Iona Community is a member, fosters dialogue and cooperation among diverse religious groups. Interfaith Alignment, with which our CCN collaborates, offers opportunities to bring together those of different traditions in prayer and conversation. However, the closure in February 2025 of the Inter Faith Network for the UK, following the withdrawal of government funding due to concerns over its association with the Muslim Council of Britain, highlights the fragility of such endeavours.

The Faith and Belief Forum UK published a report in 2020 entitled Cohesive Societies: Faith and Belief. The report outlines social cohesion policy in the UK and the practical impact of the faith and belief sector on our communities. It found that the positive contribution of faith and non-religious belief groups to social cohesion deserves greater recognition and should have more influence on cohesion policy in the United Kingdom.

Such research underscores the need for continued support and engagement in interfaith work.

"God's Spirit is constantly working in ways that pass human understanding. We do not take God to others. God accompanies us and also comes towards us... We are not the 'haves' standing over against the 'have nots'. We are all recipients of the same mercy. Therefore, we approach the adherents of other faiths reverently, taking off our shoes as the place we are approaching is holy ground."

South African missiologist David Bosch

How will we learn, pray and act to remain informed, prayerful, active and focused about this concern?

Interfaith relations and engagement is a growing concern of the Iona Community. As such we exist to support Community Members and Iona Abbey staff to welcome and work alongside people of goodwill from all faith traditions.

The Interfaith Relations CCN is committed to providing a space for nurturing openness, respect and confidence as we explore questions and issues concerned with faith and belief.

We will explore ways of engaging and listening to people and groups of different faiths and beliefs, as together we seek justice and peace in our societies.

We will continue to ask questions and learn beyond our own traditions thus building bridges between cultures and faiths at a time of increasing polarisation and tension worldwide.

We will highlight intentionally inclusive moments where people of all faiths and none can share their spiritual identity. These events include Interfaith Week, The Week of Prayer for World Peace and Holocaust Memorial Day.

We will continue to collaborate with Interfaith Alignment an organisation which provides regular input and opportunity for discussion and for engagement in different prayer practices across the globe.



Contact us

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