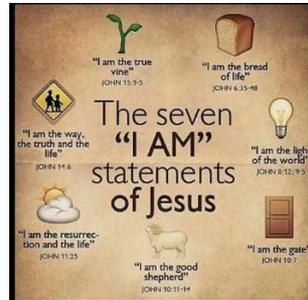


CREATIVE RETREAT DAY 'I AM' SAYINGS OF JESUS IN JOHN'S GOSPEL



Please bring a journal and something to write with, all other resources will be provided. You may wish to bring headphones and your phone/ipad with spotify on if you wish to do the music activity.

TIMETABLE

Coffee is available from **10am** and a small café will run throughout the day (thanks to Tony and Olly).

10.30	Opening prayer and lectio divina of the first 'I am' sayings: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• I am the bread of life (John 6.29-35)• I am the Gate (John 10.7-10)• I am the Good Shepherd (John 10.11-15)• I am the Vine (John 15.1-4)
11-12.30	Individual creative reflection session 1
12.30-1pm	Lunch – <i>please bring a packed lunch</i>
1pm	Prayer and lectio divina of the remaining 'I am' sayings: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• I am the Light of the World (John 8.12-18)• I am the Resurrection (John 11.21-27)• I am the Way the Truth and the Life (John 14.1-7)•
1.30-2.45pm	Individual creative reflection session 2
2.45-3pm	Closing prayer

Throughout the day, the labyrinth will be available along with a prayer station, organised by Tony (with thanks).

10.30am Opening Prayer and Lectio Divina of the first 'I am' Sayings

We light the candle

To God the Father, who created the world;
To God the Son, who redeemed the world;
To God the Holy Spirit, who sustains the world;
Be all praise and glory, now and for ever. **Amen.**

Dispel the darkness of light
Awaken us to your glory.
Destroy our heaviness of heart
Awaken us to your glory.
Cure the blindness of our sight
Awaken us to your glory.
Heal the deafness of our ears
Awaken us to your glory.
Open the mouth that is dumb
Awaken us to your glory.
Restore and gentleness of touch
Awaken us to your glory.
Encourage in us a sense of adventure
Awaken us to your glory.
Bring us to an awareness of you
Awaken us to your glory.

(David Adam, Celtic Daily Prayer)

I am the bread of life (John 6.29-35)

Jesus answered, 'The work of God is this: to believe in the one he has sent.' So they asked him, 'What sign then will you give that we may see it and believe you? What will you do? Our ancestors ate the manna in the wilderness; as it is written: "He gave them bread from heaven to eat."' Jesus said to them, 'Very truly I tell you, it is not Moses who has given you the bread from heaven, but it is my Father who gives you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is the bread that comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.' 'Sir,' they said, 'always give us this bread.' Then Jesus declared, 'I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never go hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty.'

I am the Gate (John 10.7-10)

Therefore Jesus said again, 'Very truly I tell you, I am the gate for the sheep. All who have come before me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep have not

listened to them. I am the gate; whoever enters through me will be saved. They will come in and go out, and find pasture. The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.

I am the Good Shepherd (John 10.11-15)

'I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. The hired hand is not the shepherd and does not own the sheep. So when he sees the wolf coming, he abandons the sheep and runs away. Then the wolf attacks the flock and scatters it. The man runs away because he is a hired hand and cares nothing for the sheep. 'I am the good shepherd; I know my sheep and my sheep know me – just as the Father knows me and I know the Father – and I lay down my life for the sheep.

I am the Vine (John 15.1-4)

'I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful. You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you. Remain in me, as I also remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me.

God be in my head, and in my understanding

God be in my eyes, and in my looking

God be in my mouth and in my speaking

God be in my heart and in my thinking

God be at my end, and at my departing.

Amen.

11am Creative Reflection Session 1

You are invited to explore the I am sayings through one or more of the following creative ways:

- Sketching
- Clay
- Cross stitch
- Music

There is no need to have any previous experience of any of these – you are able to use them as you wish. You may wish to stay with the same creative medium throughout the day, or you may wish to dip in and out.

Whichever medium you choose, aim to be prayerful in your exploration. This is not about producing something at the end, but about allowing the craft to become a meditation and rest with God as you are doing it, allowing God to speak with you in whatever way may come.

If anything occurs to you while you do your creative exploration, you may like to journal about it.

The labyrinth and prayer station are also available whenever you would like.

Sketching *(with thanks to Martin for the inspiration)*

Choose one of the 'I am' sayings and sketch something in response to its literality – a gate for the sheep, a loaf of bread, a vine etc. Explore what its purpose and function is, and start to sketch or write about how that might relate to Jesus. How might that relate to your life?

Allow these ideas to gradually become more abstracted, and begin to sketch in response to what it might mean metaphorically – in relation to Jesus; in relation to you.

Clay

First of all, the clay needs to be conditioned by kneading it well. You can use a little bit of water to soften out any cracks if needed.

Choose one of the 'I am' sayings and make something in response to its literality– a gate for the sheep, a loaf of bread, a vine etc. See some of the sheets of ideas.

Explore what its purpose and function is, and meditate on how that might relate to Jesus. How might that relate to your life?

If you wish, allow these ideas to gradually become more abstracted, and make something else about what it might mean metaphorically – in relation to Jesus; in relation to you.

The clay will dry fully simply in the air in 24 hours.

Cross Stitch

Using the aida, needle and thread, and patterns provided, choose one of the motifs to stitch. Each motif relates to one of the 'I am' sayings. As you stitch, meditate what that item's purpose and function is, and meditate on how that might relate to Jesus. How might that relate to your life?

If you wish, allow these ideas to gradually become more abstracted and metaphorical, in relation to Jesus; in relation to you. If you wish to alter your design in a freestyle way, please do, or stitch something else entirely freehand.

Music

You will need Spotify and some headphones for this activity.

In Spotify, use the code below to access a playlist of music which has all been inspired by the 'I am' sayings of Jesus. Use the time to listen to the playlist and simply rest in God's presence, or meditate on the various I am sayings and how the music brings them to life. If any of the music inspires you in any way, write about it in your journal.



1pm Prayer and Lectio Divina of the remaining 'I am' sayings

We light the candle

In the power of the presence

Lord, may we abide.

In the love of the Lord

Lord, may we abide.

In the strength of the Saviour

Lord, may we abide.

In the compassion of Christ

Lord, may we abide.

In the joy of Jesus

Lord, may we abide.

In the indwelling of our God

Lord, may we abide.

That we may dwell in him and he in us.

Lord, may we abide.

I am the Light of the World (John 8.12-18)

When Jesus spoke again to the people, he said, 'I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.' The Pharisees challenged him, 'Here you are, appearing as your own witness; your testimony is not valid.' Jesus answered, 'Even if I testify on my own behalf, my testimony is valid, for I know where I came from and where I am going. But you have no idea where I come from or where I am going. You judge by human standards; I pass judgment on no one. But if I do judge, my decisions are true, because I am not alone. I stand with the Father, who sent me. In your own Law it is written that the testimony of two witnesses is true. I am one who testifies for myself; my other witness is the Father, who sent me.'

I am the Resurrection (John 11.21-27)

'Lord,' Martha said to Jesus, 'if you had been here, my brother would not have died. But I know that even now God will give you whatever you ask.' Jesus said to her, 'Your brother will rise again.' Martha answered, 'I know he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day.' Jesus said to her, 'I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die; and whoever lives by believing in me will never die. Do you believe this?' 'Yes, Lord,' she replied, 'I believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, who is to come into the world.'

I am the Way the Truth and the Life (John 14.1-7)

'Do not let your hearts be troubled. You believe in God; believe also in me. My Father's house has many rooms; if that were not so, would I have told you that I am going there to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am. You know the way to the place where I am going.' Thomas said to him, 'Lord, we don't know where you are going, so how can we know the way?' Jesus answered, 'I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. If you really know me, you will know my Father as well. From now on, you do know him and have seen him.'

Christ, as a light illumine and guide us.

Christ, as a shield

Overshadow and cover us.

Christ be under us, Christ be over us.

Christ be beside us, on left and on right.

Christ be before us.

Christ be behind us.

Christ be within us.

Christ be without us.

Christ, as a light, illumine and guide us.

Amen.

1.30pm Creative Reflection Session 2

You could use this session to:

- Return to what you were doing earlier and continue with it
- To take it in a more abstracted directed and continue to develop the line of thought you were in earlier
- To choose a different medium
- To choose a different I am saying, either in the same or a different medium
- To journal
- To walk the labyrinth
- To visit the prayer station

2.45pm Closing Prayer

We light the candle

The Spirit of the Lord fills the whole world
The Spirit of the Lord moves over the deep
The Spirit of the Lord warms our hearts
The Spirit of the Lord fills all things.

Come Holy Spirit, come

Come and fill us

Come Lord of life, come

Come and fill us

Come, wind of heaven, come

Come and fill us

Come flame of love, come

Come and fill us

Come, giver of all gifts, come.

Come and fill us

An opportunity to share or to pray about what we have experienced today

O Jesus, you once asked your disciples, "Who do you say that I am?" And even today you ask us again and again that same question, 'Who do you say that I am?' What name shall we give you? What image, what title, what identity? Who are you to me, to us? Shall we call you light of bread from God? Are you God's first flower, or something strong like rock or tree?

Jesus, gentle as a descending dove, or with eye-piercing truth, you shepherd us, you raise us, you find us in our most needy neighbour.

Are you a crowned king, a humble servant, or both? Do you save us as saviour, heal us as physician, free us as liberator? Shall we call you Word of God, Morning Star, or Love Divine?

Again and again we must give you our answer, O Jesus. With wonder, in mystery, from faith mixed with doubt, we answer as we can, we follow one step at a time, we open to larger Truth, we sing answers we cannot yet speak.

We sing...

Love divine, all loves excelling

Joy of heav'n to earth come down

Fix in us thy humble dwelling

All thy faithful mercies crown.

Jesus, thou art all compassion

**Pure, unbounded love thou art
Visit us with thy salvation,
Enter ev'ry trembling heart.**