



# THE DIDIER SEMINAR 2026



*Preacher, Hymnwriter, Composer*

## Rev. John L. Bell

*The Shaping of What We Believe*

**April 18 – 19, 2026**

*Singing is neither a harmless nor a neutral activity. For many people what they sing shapes what they believe about God as much, if not more, than preaching. – John L. Bell*

**John Bell** is an ordained minister of the Church of Scotland and a member of the Iona Community. During his studies in Theology, he became the first (and last) student Rector of the University of Glasgow. After a period in the Netherlands and two posts in church youth work, he became employed, first in youth work and then in the areas of music and worship, founding during that time, with Graham Maule, the Wild Goose Worship Group and the Wild Goose Resource Group.

John has produced many collections of liturgy, scripts, sermons and reflections, original hymns, and songs (some in collaboration with Graham) and three collections of songs of the World Church. These are published by Wild Goose Publications, the Iona Community's publishing arm, in Scotland and by G.I.A. Publications (Chicago) in N. America. He lectures in theological colleges in Britain and U.S., but is primarily concerned with the renewal of congregational worship at grass roots level.

**Register:** <https://bit.ly/Didier2026>

### **Saturday, April 18**

**8:30 a.m. – 12 p.m.**

- 8:30 a.m. Coffee and Treats
- 9 a.m. Session 1: *The Subversive Potentials of Sung Text*
- 10 a.m. Break
- 10:30 a.m. Session 2: *Correcting the Balance*

The song of the church is not a closed canon enshrined in a denominational hymnbook. It has to be constantly renewed as our awareness and understanding of God's will and God's world increases.

- 11:30 a.m. Discussion and Closing Remarks

### **Sunday, April 19**

**Worship | 10 a.m.**

Rev. John Bell will join us in worship and preach.

### **Sunday Enrichment | 11:15 a.m.**

*The Importance of the Imagination in Unlocking Holy Scripture*

To take the Bible seriously, for many people, means to study it. That is often a cerebral pursuit. Perhaps there are other means by which the depths of divine truth may be discovered through music, hymns, and song.



HOUSE OF HOPE  
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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