

Angela and Dion Blundell

Papakura, New Zealand

# Home grown liturgy

September 2017

11 Years of Trial and error



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## Introduction

A small warning as we begin. None of this liturgy is “approved” by anyone for any purpose. People argue within the church over what is suitable liturgy, and what is not (regardless of our denomination affiliation). Some will see this as a useful resource, others will see it as stepping over lines which ought not to be crossed. The reality is that liturgy never comes out of a vacuum. In other words, the institutional church (only ever) approves in retrospect, liturgy that has been used somewhere else. Someone has to lead the way. It’s my assertion that there’s nothing controversial here. If there is, pass this on to someone who is in a different context to yourself and can make use of it.

My context is I am an Anglican Deacon and Priest within the province of Aotearoa New Zealand. I minister amongst the people of South Auckland, in a suburb/town/city called Papakura. I am 41, I am married to Angela who has written a lot of the liturgy you will find in this booklet. We have 4 wonderful kids, Daniel 10, Caitlin 8, Annalia 6, Isaac 4. Life is crazy, wonderful and full on. It is a happy and noisy house. To reset, I run. In my context I also use *A New Zealand Prayer Book : He Karakia Mihinare o Aotearoa*, which I reference as ANZPB through out this text. The two services we use most regularly, are Thanksgiving for Creation and Redemption, on page 456 onwards, and Thanksgiving and Praise, on page 476 onwards. You would do well to have a copy of ANZPB with you as you read this. It is also available online at: <http://anglicanprayerbook.nz> and at <http://www.liturgy.co.nz/resources/newzealandprayerbook.html>

Blown up on my study wall at church is a Calvin and Hobbes cartoon. Calvin is looking in the mirror saying: “Made in God’s own image, yes sir!: To which Hobbes replies: “God must have a goofy sense of humour.” I’ve seen God’s sense of humour at work in my life. God placed me in the Anglican church for one. That has been a stretch for me, and a stretch for the Anglican church. We aren’t always the best fit, but we are the closest fit.

Growing up I never appreciated liturgy, I couldn’t wait “for it to be over.” I didn’t hate it, but I had no real appreciation for what liturgy was, how it can transform you and how it would end up (slowly) transforming my life for the better. I went through discernment to train as an Anglican minister, and training with something of a reluctant acceptance of liturgy; it was what it was and I was stuck with it. I never really experienced everyday creativity in liturgy until I went to Whangarei Parish in 2004. Up until that point, liturgy was some words you were “obliged to use” out of a prayer book. Anglicans tend to be big rule followers and that has never worked for me. I need to at least know why we do something, and ideally be allowed to tinker with and adjust it. I would call this re-working contextualising. But, our leadership doesn’t like change, we’re Anglican, we have the New Zealand Prayer Book; what more could you want? And the well meaning people around me at St John’s College, and within the Diocesan structures didn’t have either the creativity or zest for life that asked: “I wonder what else might be possible? Let’s give it a go!”

Whangarei and Revd Joyce Marcon changed this. I discovered bookshelves of liturgy books and lots of other resources that could be used. I was reluctant though to use anything for two simple reasons. Firstly, I thought liturgy was dull, dry and boring. And secondly, I might get it wrong. Joyce helped me see that there were other options and I just needed to give it a go. I did. I have no idea how my attempts went, probably not very well. But I kept at it, and when I left Whangarei for Papakura, I brought my learnings and practices with me. Here in Papakura over the last 10 years I’ve “written” lots of liturgy. Mostly this has been based on *Seasons of the Spirit*. Sometimes *Seasons* could be used as is, most of the times it could be tweaked to be useful, and sometimes it was (in my view) terrible, so I would use the framework of the idea from the *Seasons* material. If things got difficult and I couldn’t find a theme or idea I liked, then I would go back to the NZ Prayerbook, but mostly at our main service, the liturgy was customised each week.

One Lent I really struggled to draw together a Good Friday service. I had some ideas in mind, and like a good magpie I went around collecting ideas, liturgy, scriptures and pictures. I then tried, and tried and tried to put it together. But it wouldn't work. I could not pull together something coherent. Now you can't stand up in front and say: "Sorry, bad day, couldn't figure out what to do, so we'll all go home now!" Instead, I threw everything away, and started with the scriptures. I read scripture and I wrote my ideas down as they came. One might call it meditating on scripture. I wrote some prayers. And that was my service offering. Not perfect, but acceptable. Not perfect, but coherent. Not perfect, but good enough. Little moments like these have been turning points in my life where I realise I have something myself to offer. As I said, liturgy is not my thing. But I'm actually okay at it. So this is my offering to you. Not perfect, but good enough for you to tweak, to re-work, or re-do using the skeleton of the idea.

Not all of this work is mine, my wife Angela has written a lot as you will see. This is our collective offering. I've tried to note at the beginning of a section who wrote it, where it originated from, and when it was first used.

Have you used this? How about letting us know, it's always a kick to find out your resource has been used. Email us at [liturgy@blundell.net.nz](mailto:liturgy@blundell.net.nz)

And finally thanks. Thanks to the Parish for their support. Thanks to Revd Louise Anderson for her proof reading. And thanks to Angela, for her creative input and support.

One small thing about Copyright, this is not Copyrighted as such. Rather it is distributed under CREATIVE COMMONS, this means you are free to use it in anyway you want. But, you can't pass it off as your own work. And you must allow anyone else to use your version/derivative of this work as well. The idea is it took hard work to get it to this stage, let's let as many people as possible use this. See the copyright on page 132 for more information.

Enjoy.

Dion Blundell, August 2017

# How to read this book

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Hopefully the layout is self-explanatory. To make it easier for you to spot sections, here are some explanations.

-- >-< --

When we want to add the thoughts of a character, or introduce to you our own thoughts, they are laid out like this...

---

When we want to show that there was picture in the service, or something else similar, then there is a black bordered box, with a mono-space font introducing the visual aide.

PICTURE: Hand's throwing dice

-- >-< --

Sometimes we have a heading, with a time to the left. For example the section: "Mother's hands cradling her baby." This section began at 2:15pm. And the bit in square [brackets] to the right, is for you to write in the name of the person who is leading that section

**2:15pm Mother's hands cradling her baby** [\_\_\_\_\_]

-- >-< --

And sometimes there are instructions in the text for the congregation. These are in a small italicised text.

*Pause*

*Stand...*

-- >-< --

Sometimes a little thought needs to be highlighted and given prominence in the service sheet. In which case, it had a light gray background behind the text, and was italicised.

*As a mother you know the potential of your baby. You have hopes, dreams and aspirations for them. Sometimes these are robbed, by evil, by a broken world, or by things not being as they should.*

*Pause*

-- >-< --

A line the liturgy leader says...

**And a line that everyone says together. Amen!**

-- >-< --



# *Liturgy Components*

# Call to worship

## **Advent**

God of waiting

Dion Blundell  
Written 2015

**Help us to wait on your coming**

As we come into this time of worship

**We will wait on the Spirit's prompting and call**

Come Lord Jesus come

## **Lakeshore**

Jesus as you walked along the lake,  
the shore of people's lives you called.

Dion Blundell, 2010

**May we respond.**

Jesus you called others to bring people to your message

**May we likewise bring others to your message.**

Jesus you call us to worship together.

**May we with one heart**

**and one voice worship you.**

## **Seeds/Sower**

Creator God you call us into being,

Dion Blundell, 2010

**And our mouths proclaim your praise.**

Redeemer God you save us and show the way,

**And we follow in your path.**

Enabling God you give us life,

**And we continue to acknowledge your presence and open ourselves to your work.**

Come let us worship God with all our life,

**Together we join in the praise of God**

## **Team**

Person 1 I runga I te Ingoa o te Atua, o te Matua,  
O te Tama me te Wairua Tapu. Amine

Dion Blundell, 2013  
NZPB, p765-7 (adapted)

Person 2 The Lord is here.

**God's Spirit is with us.**

Person 3 Encircle this dwelling place with your protection, O God;  
may your holy angels encompass these walls,  
**and peace be within them.**

Person 4 Indwelling God, you are ever welcome in this house.

**May we hear and share your Word.**

1 Above everything, love one another fervently,  
**for love covers many sins.**

2 May this place be for you a place where  
**relationships mature,**

3 quarrels are made up,  
**failures forgiven**

4 and strength renewed.

# Confession and call to communion

---

*Sometimes we do not have a traditional confession at the beginning of the service, and instead we use this right before communion.*

## **Confession and call to Communion**

God calls us together

**Come Jesus, be present with us.**

You give us life.

**God created us**

**Jesus sets us free**

**The Holy Spirit makes us come alive.**

At times we turn away from you God.

**We have sinned.**

Jesus died to restore us to God and to each other.

**We commit to turn back to God.**

**We now join with Jesus in communion.**

Be restored to God.

**Amen. Thanks be to God.**

Dion Blundell  
Written 2013

# Communion Services

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*NOTE: All of the following communion services need to have some form of invitation to communion.*

## **Christmas Day**

*This service was written by Doedtie Hoekstra, one of our liturgists. It is a blend of biblical story, ANZPB and other liturgy.*

At this Christmas time we celebrate the birth of Jesus.

We also know that He is the risen Lord and is with us now.

That's why as God's people we say:

**Christ is risen, He is risen indeed.**

We give thanks for all that God has done for us through Jesus his Son.

**It is good to say thank you.**

Before Jesus died, He had a meal with his disciples.

This is what the Bible says about that evening.

During the meal Jesus took some bread in his hands.

He blessed the bread and broke it.

Then He gave it to his disciples and said:

Take this and eat it. This is my body.

Jesus picked up a cup of wine and gave thanks to God.

He then gave it to his disciples and said:

Take this and drink it.

This is my blood, and with it God makes his agreement with you.

We know that Jesus gave his life to put us right with God.

Doedtie Hoekstra  
Written 2008

**Jesus gave his life for us and is risen from the dead.**

**He invites us to this table to celebrate  
and remember all that he has done for us.**

As the disciples recognised Jesus amongst them when bread was broken,  
so we now remember Jesus' presence with us.

*Silence is kept (The bread is broken)*

The bread we break is a sharing in the body of Christ.

ANZPB, p471 & 489

**We who are many are one body,  
for we all share the one bread.**

His blood was shed for our forgiveness.

**Christ is risen from the dead.**

#### THE INVITATION

Come you who wander, winding your way through life.

Seasons of the Spirit, 2008. Adapted

Come you who are found, living in the light.

Come all of you, who have heard the rumour of a promise,  
for it is gathered here, broken, shared, poured, offered and waiting.

Every promise leads to this place of promise:  
it is the place of ongoing covenant,  
a place of renewal and there is a space waiting here for you.

*Everyone is welcome to receive Communion..  
If you prefer not to receive the bread and wine,  
come forward and we will offer you a personal blessing.*

Bread and wine;  
the gifts of God for the people of God.  
**May we who share these gifts be found in Christ,  
and Christ in us.**

ANZPB, p472

*Communion is shared*

#### PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Blessed be God who calls us together.

ANZPB, p490

**Praise to God who makes us one people.**

Blessed be God who has forgiven our sin.

**Praise to God who gives hope and freedom.**

Blessed be God whose Word is proclaimed.

**Praise to God who is revealed as love.**

Blessed be God who alone has called us.

**Therefore we offer all that we are  
and all that we shall become.**

Accept, O God, our sacrifice of praise.

**Amen. Accept our thanks for all you have done.**

**Our hands were empty, and you filled them.**

### **Contemporary English Version**

*The communion service is based on the scriptures using the CEV version of the Bible, It has been kept as simple as possible. The consecration prayers are from ANZPB.*

On that night before he died Jesus took a towel and some water  
and washed his disciple's feet.

Dion Blundell, 2005

In those days the roadways were dusty and it was a mark of respect to have a servant wash the guest's feet, so in doing this for his friends, Jesus was acting as a servant.

On that night, Jesus took some bread in his hands and gave thanks for it.

Lk 22:18 CEV (adapted)

*Bless the bread*

He broke the bread and handed it to his disciples.

Then he said, "This is my body, which is given for you. Eat this as a way of remembering me!"

After the meal he took a cup of wine in his hands.

Lk 22:20, Mt 26:28 CEV (adapted)

Then he said, "This is my blood.

It is poured out for you,  
and with it God makes his new agreement,  
so that all people will have their sins forgiven."

*Bless the wine*

Together we pray:

NZPB adapted, p470

**Holy Spirit be with us,  
feed us with your life,  
fire us with your love,  
confront us with your justice,  
and make us one in the body of Christ  
with all who share your gifts of love.**

As the disciples recognised Jesus amongst them when bread was broken, so we now remember Jesus' presence with us.

Dion Blundell, 2006

*Silence is kept*

*The bread is broken*

The bread we break is a sharing in the body of Christ.

ANZPB, p471

**We who are many are one body,  
for we all share the one bread.**

The cup of blessing for which we give thanks  
is a sharing in the blood of Christ.

#### INVITATION

Bread and wine;  
the gifts of God for the people of God.

NZPB, p472

**May we who share these gifts be found in Christ  
and Christ in us.**

### **Family communion with explanation**

*The communion service institution/introduction is based on a Presbyterian Children's service, and was heavily adapted to be used at our Church Family Camp. We think it does a good job at explaining what happens in communion. After the institution, we re-use the CEV service. The consecration prayers are from ANZPB. We use this regularly in our main service and hope it helps those who don't come from an Anglican background understand something of what and why we do things.*

#### INVITATION TO THE LORD'S TABLE

This is called the Lord's Supper.  
It is also called Communion.

Angela Blundell, 2013

In a moment I will offer you a piece of bread,  
you may take that bread and eat it.

We do this because Jesus asked us to remember him,  
As we eat it, we remember that Jesus is with us and that we are not alone.  
We remember God's presence with us through Jesus and the Holy Spirit.  
Then we will give you a sip of a cup of grape juice or wine.  
This grape juice is a reminder that Jesus died to forgive and free us to be with God.

GREAT THANKSGIVING

As we take this bread and this cup,  
we give thanks to God.

Dion Blundell, 2013

**Unite us in faith,  
encourage us with hope,  
inspire us to love,  
that we may serve as your faithful disciples. Amen.**

On that night, Jesus took some bread in his hands  
and gave thanks for it.

Luke 22:17-20 CEV (adapted)

*Bless the bread*

He broke the bread and handed it to his disciples.

Then he said, "This is my body, which is given for you.  
Eat this as a way of remembering me!"

After the meal he took a cup of wine in his hands.  
Then he said, "This is my blood. It is poured out for you,  
and with it God makes his new agreement,  
so that all people will have their sins forgiven.

*Bless the wine*

Together we pray:

**Holy Spirit be with us,  
feed us with your life,  
fire us with your love,  
confront us with your justice,  
and make us one in the body of Christ  
with all who share your gifts of love.**

ANZPB adapted, p470

As the disciples recognised Jesus amongst them when bread was broken,  
so we now remember Jesus' presence with us.

Dion Blundell, 2007

*Silence is kept*

*The bread is broken*

Christ's body was broken for us on the cross.

ANZPB, p489

**Christ is the bread of life.**

His blood was shed for our forgiveness.

**Christ is risen from the dead.**

*Communion is shared*

This bread is the body of Christ given for you.  
This grape juice is Christ's forgiveness poured out for you.

Angela Blundell, 2013

INVITATION

Come, for all things are now ready.

<http://SeasonOfCreation.com>

Come to the table with all your family  
and share with all in need:  
The gift of healing for those in pain,  
the gift of forgiveness for those in sin,  
the gift of assurance for those in doubt,  
and the gift of hope for those in tears.

**May we who share these gifts,  
share Christ with one another and all our family.**

## **The Message**

Done as per *The Message* translation of the Bible.

Dion Blundell, 2007

When Jesus finished teaching, he told his disciples,  
"You know that Passover comes in two days.  
That's when the Son of Man will be betrayed  
and handed over for crucifixion."

Matthew 26:1-5 MSG Adapted

At that very moment,  
the party of high priests and religious leaders  
was meeting in the chambers of the Chief Priest named Caiaphas,  
conspiring to seize Jesus by stealth and kill him.

They agreed that it should not be done during Passover Week.  
"We don't want a riot on our hands," they said.

On the first of the Days of Unleavened Bread,  
the disciples came to Jesus and said,  
"Where do you want us to prepare your Passover meal?"

Matthew 26:17-18 MSG Adapted

He said, "Enter the city. Go up to a certain man and say,  
'The Teacher says, My time is near.

My disciples and I plan to celebrate the Passover meal at your house.'"

They left, found everything just as Jesus had told them,  
and they prepared the Passover meal.

Luke 22:13-17 MSG Adapted

When it was time, he sat down,  
and all the apostles with him, and said,  
"You've no idea how much I have looked forward  
to eating this Passover meal with you  
before I enter my time of suffering.

It's the last one I'll eat  
until we all eat it together in the Kingdom of God."

During the meal, Jesus took and blessed the bread,  
broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:  
Take, eat. This is my body.

Matthew 26:26 MSG Adapted

*Bless the bread*

Eat it in my memory

Luke 22:19b MSG Adapted

He did the same with the cup after supper.

Luke 22:20 MSG Adapted

Taking the cup and thanking God, he gave it to them:  
Drink this, all of you.

Matthew 26:27 MSG Adapted

*Bless the wine*

This is my blood,  
God's new covenant poured out for many people  
for the forgiveness of sins.

Then said, "Take this and pass it among you.

Luke 22:17 MSG Adapted

Together we pray:

**Holy Spirit be with us,  
feed us with your life,  
fire us with your love,  
confront us with your justice,  
and make us one in the body of Christ  
with all who share your gifts of love.**

ANZPB adapted, p470

As the disciples recognised Jesus amongst them when bread was broken,  
so we now remember Jesus' presence with us.

Dion Blundell, 2007

*Silence is kept*

*The bread is broken*

Christ's body was broken for us on the cross.  
**Christ is the bread of life.**

ANZPB, p489

His blood was shed for our forgiveness.  
**Christ is risen from the dead.**

#### INVITATION

Come God's people,  
come to receive Christ's heavenly food.

NZPB, p489

*Everyone is welcome to receive Holy Communion. If you prefer not to receive the bread and wine, you may come forward and leave your hands at your side and we will offer you a personal blessing.*

*Communion is shared*

This bread is the body of Christ given for you.  
This grape juice is Christ's forgiveness poured out for you.

Angela Blundell, 2013

## **Short**

*Very occasionally pressure comes on to remove communion from a service "to keep the service short/brief." My response is to shorten the institution words. The important thing is to make sure the communion table is ready and there is no fuss around preparing the elements.*

Dion Blundell, 2008

On that night, Jesus took some bread in his hands  
and gave thanks for it.

Luke 22:18 CEV (adapted)

*Bless the bread*

He broke the bread and handed it to his disciples.  
Then he said, "This is my body, which is given for you.  
Eat this as a way of remembering me!"

*Break the bread*

Christ's body was broken for us on the cross.  
**Christ is the bread of life.**

After the meal he took a cup of wine in his hands.  
Then he said, "This is my blood.

Lk 22:20, Mt 26:28 CEV (adapted)

*Lift the cup*

It is poured out for you,  
and with it God makes his new agreement,  
so that all people will have their sins forgiven."

Christ's blood was shed for our forgiveness.  
**Christ is risen from the dead.**

#### THE INVITATION

Come God's people,  
come to receive Christ's heavenly food.

NZPB, p489



*Everyone is welcome to receive Holy Communion. If you prefer not to receive the bread and wine, you may come forward and leave your hands at your side and we will offer you a personal blessing.*

*Communion is shared*

# Prayer After Communion

*You will also find 2 prayers after communion in ANZPB, p472-3, p490*

## **Table fellowship**

Lord, we have come to your holy table  
and have eaten the bread and wine  
which reminds us of your love and sacrifice.

Angela Blundell, 2013

Help us to remember your promises  
and share them with the people we love. Amen.

# Blessings

## **Celtic**

May the road rise to meet you,  
May the wind always be at your back  
May the sun shine warmly upon your face  
And the rains fall softly upon your fields  
And until we meet again,  
May God hold you in the hollow of his hand.

Traditional Celtic Blessing,  
adapted 2005,  
Dion Blundell

And the blessing of God our  
Creator, Redeemer and Giver of Life,  
be with you always. Amen.

## **Christmas Day**

May you let God our Creator,  
refresh and re-create you.

Dion Blundell, 2008

May Christ who came at Christmas  
to bring God's hope to us, be your hope.

**May you let the Holy Spirit fill your life with God's goodness. Amen.**

## **Drawing Closer**

May the Holy Spirit draw you closer to knowing Jesus,  
that you may follow him closer,  
and grow in your faith. Amen.

Dion Blundell 2013

## **Adventure**

God of Ruth the adventurer,

Dion Blundell 2012

**Be with us.**

God of Jesus, fearless and faithful one,

**Be with us.**

Holy Spirit, forming and reforming faith community,

**Be with us.**

# *Special Occasion Prayers*

# Special Occasion Prayers

## **Celebrating Ministry with another ethnic congregation**

Dion Blundell, 2012

God of our beginnings and endings,  
we celebrate all that our congregations have shared together,  
we thank you for those with the foresight to set up this congregation,  
and we thank you for the pioneering people who have enabled this,  
we thank you for the Methodist Church, the Otara congregations  
we thank you for the Anglican Church, the Papakura congregations  
and all who have made this possible,  
and we thank you for all who join in together,  
because it is our togetherness that has created this space and place.

We thank you for your continued blessing,  
and that we can celebrate today as a marker on our journey,  
as we celebrate our first anniversary.

May the love that is in our hearts be a bond that unites us forever,  
wherever we may be.

May the power of your presence bless this moment;  
this we ask for the sake of Jesus Christ, our Redeemer. **Amen.**

As we re-commit this congregation to you Gracious God,  
we pray your blessing upon everyone here,  
and everyone yet to come.

As we continue in your service may we know the assurance of your presence,  
the gifts of your grace and the wonder of your love in all Creation.

Be to us a sure guide through our lives and all connected with us. **Amen.**

### **Blessing**

May the sun warm your soul and the moon be gentle above you.  
May the Creator hold your hand,  
May you walk in Christ's footsteps,  
May you dance with the Spirit in play,  
and may Grace always be found in your way. **Amen.**

## **Dedication of an Electric Organ**

*My colleague, Revd Terry Molloy wrote the prayer of dedication used in this service. We blessed the organ after the call to worship, and before the first song.*

### **Blessing of the Organ**

Terry Molloy, 2013

PSALM 150

Whakamoemititia a Ihowa/ Praise God in his holy house of worship,  
**praise him under the open skies;**

Praise him for his acts of power,  
**praise him for his magnificent greatness;**

Praise with a blast on the trumpet,  
**praise by strumming soft strings;**

Praise him with castanets and dance,  
**praise him with banjo and flute;**

Praise him with cymbals and a big bass drum,  
**praise him with fiddles and mandolin.**

Let every living, breathing creature praise GOD!

## Praise God.

### PRAYER OF DEDICATION

God, you commanded Moses that trumpets should sound at the offering of sacrifices in your name.

Your will was that Israel should proclaim the glory of your name with instruments.

Bless this organ and sound system, now dedicated to your worship.

We ask that we your faithful people here on earth will praise you with songs, worthy of your eternal joy in heaven.

We ask this in Jesus' name, who lives with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**



## **Pentecost Sunday**

### **Invocation**

Dion Blundell, 2007  
ANZPB p896 adapted

Creator God, you are our God, and we worship you.

We thank you for your mercy and love.

Holy Spirit,  
we have remembered your first coming in power.

Today in anticipation, like the first disciples waiting for your coming, empowering Spirit, we watch and pray.

*Silence*

Holy Spirit of God, meet us in this moment as you met the apostles of old.

Be with us, Holy Spirit,  
**bring faith and hope, we pray.**

Come Holy Spirit,  
**be present in your power.**

### SONG

**BE STILL AND KNOW**

*Light candle*

New birth for us by water and the Spirit is your gift, a gift that none can take away;  
grant that we may grow into the fullness of the stature of Christ.

Fill us with the joy of your presence.

Increase in us the fruit of your Spirit:

the spirit of wisdom and understanding,  
the spirit of love, patience and gentleness,  
the spirit of wonder and true holiness. **AMEN.**

## **Thanksgiving for ministry**

*I am uncertain who is the original author of this. The Prayer part comes from a Celebration service at St Stephen's Onerahi by John Marcon. John chose Psalm 147, I changed the translation to The Message. The Song of Praise is from ANZPB.*

*Please stand*

John Marcon, 2001

### PSALM OF PRAISE

***Hallelujah!***

Psalm 147. MSG

*It's a good thing to sing praise to our God; praise is beautiful, praise is fitting.*

*God's the one who rebuilds Jerusalem, who re-gathers Israel's scattered exiles.*

*He heals the heartbroken and bandages their wounds.*

*He counts the stars and assigns each a name.*

*Our Lord is great, with limitless strength; we'll never comprehend what he knows and does.*

*God puts the fallen on their feet again and pushes the wicked into the ditch.*

*Sing to God a thanksgiving hymn, play music on your instruments to God,  
who fills the sky with clouds, preparing rain for the earth,  
then turning the mountains green with grass, feeding both cattle and crows.*

PRAYER

God of all time you are our God,  
you created us and our years belong to you, we are yours.

John Marcon, 2001  
adapted 2011, 2012 by Dion Blundell

**Our endings are often your beginnings.**

**Our dreamings are often your realities.**

**You affirm our past and give life to our future.**

God our Creator, we celebrate 150 years of Anglican outreach,  
teaching, nurture, sending forth and worship  
centred around this building built to your Glory.

We thank you for your encouragement and empowerment.

We will continue to seek your ways and renew our commitment to your call. **Amen.**

SONG OF PRAISE

Christ is the living water  
cleansing, refreshing, making all things new.

ANZPB, p477

Christ is the living bread;  
food for the hungry, strength for the pilgrim and the labourer.

**So now we offer our thanks  
for the beauty of these islands;  
for the wild places and the bush,  
for the mountains, the coast and the sea.**

**We offer thanks and praise to God for this good land;  
for its trees and pastures, for its plentiful crops  
and the skills we have learned to grow them.**

**Our thanks for marae and the cities we have built;  
for science and discoveries,  
for our life together,  
for Aotearoa, New Zealand.**

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father in Heaven...

# *Sunday Service Themes*

# Sunday Service Theme

Parable of the sower – Liturgy - Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23

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*This service is based around Bodge Plants a Seed, a re-telling of the parable of the sower. The children when they leave the service, or during the service pull apart sunflower heads and count how many seeds there are in a sunflower. This of course requires planning, you'll have to harvest a sunflower head, and dry it well so it doesn't rot.*

## **Opening Prayer**

Jesus, you turned the soil of our lives, and of the world while you were with us.

Dion Blundell, 2010

You scattered the Words of Life and Truth far and wide.

May we be open to the Holy Spirit's turning of the soil in our own life,

**that we will be warm, moist soil for your truth to grow in us.**

As we do this, may your grace, faith, justice, hope and love take root in our life and flourish.

**Amen.**

## **Confession**

Let us be still in the presence of God.

*Pause (use black font in PPT, so it does not show on screen)*

Imagine Jesus the Word of Creation as a gardener,  
speaking into the soil of your life.

Still yourself....

*Silence*

See the face of Jesus,  
as you allow him to be the Divine Gardener in you life.

*Pause*

Notice the love and joy on his face as he takes care of the soil of your life.

*Pause*

Rest in the peace that comes from knowing that he is the Good Gardener of your life.

*Pause*

The Gardener wants all kinds of sun flowers and fruit to burst forth in your life.

*Pause*

In silence we contemplate what is not so good in the soil of our life.

*Silence*

Together we confess:

**What needs to be removed from the soil of my life O God?**

**Tell me where I am weak, broken or in need of help.**

Speak with God about the weeds that grow up within your life that have the potential to choke new growth.

You have an opportunity to bring forward a prayer card now, it is symbol that we need God's forgiveness, hope, love and tending care in our life.

*Please bring forward your card if you wish to participate*

*Return to seat*

We think of the way you tend our lives O God. We give you thanks for the gifts you offer us.

**We thank you God for your gifts to us. We praise you for your goodness towards us.**

## **FORGIVENESS**

We are rooted in Christ and grafted to his vine.

We have been set free in Christ.

The Holy Spirit lives in our lives.

May you let the Spirit fully do its work.

**Gracious God, we allow the nutrients of your faith, hope and love to flow into our lives.**

May you grow in grace, may you be nourished by God.

Be forgiven.

**Amen. Thanks be to God.**

### **Children's Story**

Bodge Plants a Seed. By *Simon Smith*. Publisher: ZonderKidz (April 1, 2004) ISBN-10: 0310706629 or ISBN-13: 978-0310706625

### **Blessing Seeds**

*At offertory time, prior to communion*

Let us bless these seeds that Junior Church have prepared for us  
as symbols of God's unbounded grace and love.

As they grow, may they be symbols of God's growth in our lives. **Amen.**

### **Blessing Congregation**

God has given you another seed of hope,

may you plant it in good soil,

may you tend it through careful gardening,

may you nurture it,

and when the time is right,

when the flower has bloomed may you pass on part of God's grace to another person.

**We go blessed and redeemed by God our Creator. Amen.**

# Sunday service Theme

*Simplicity Sunday*

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### **Liturgy of Simplicity - Low Sunday**

SCRIPTURE

John 20:21-27

Dion Blundell, 2014

### **Bulletin Notice**

*Drum up some support before you have this Sunday, advertise it throughout Lent.*

**Simplicity Sunday** This is a Sunday when we re-use things, when we gift, when we “re-cycle.” The ultimate goal is to give you a small way to simply your life. This is joint initiative between St Mary's, Crossroads and Christ Church. It is an opportunity to share our gifts with others, and everything collected will be distributed to the Anglican and Catholic Op-Shops. Bring something of yours that you will give away even though it hurts. This is an opportunity to re-use things. You might like to bring an article of clothing, or an appliance or whatever you think is appropriate.

If your re-using gift is too big, write it on a card and we will collect it.

### **HOW IT MIGHT WORK**

Write on a leaf what the gift is, and it could be stuck on a tree.



## **Liturgy Beginning**

### **PRAISE**

We give thanks to God for God's providence,  
for God's gifts to us.

### **CONFESSIONAL**

We confess that:

**at times we make life too complicated  
and that we miss-use God's gifts to us.**

### **PETITION**

We ask for the Holy Spirit's help,

**we ask for the Spirit to prompt and challenge us in our lives,  
that we may be encouraged to simplify,  
and to focus on God's call on our life,  
rather than our own desires.**

### **ACT**

*Bring forward the gifts and pin the leaves on the tree*

### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

We acknowledge before God that we have a tendency to slip backwards,  
we ask God for help,  
that this may be a new way forward for us,  
a new way to live a simple life.

*Silence*

### **DEDICATION**

We dedicate these gifts to the use of others,  
and we ask for God's blessing on us as we let go of the control over our lives.

**We commit in the light of Easter and the Resurrection,  
to be people of the resurrection and live fully into God's call on our lives. AMEN.**

# *Memorial Services*

# Disaster Remembrance Service

*This service was used for a Christchurch Earthquake Memorial on the 1st March 2011*

## **Introduction, naming and purpose**

Dion Blundell, 2011

Welcome to this place of peace. My name is Reverend Dion Blundell,  
I am the Vicar of Papakura Anglican Parish.

At the end of this short service, I would ask that you leave in silence, there is no hurry to leave, and you may leave when it feels right.

We are here today for a variety of reasons, but mainly we are here because of the earthquake in Christchurch which has touched us in some way. We realise that in these moments when we struggle to make sense of things, that it is better to be together than alone.

At moments like these we take as our strength the words of Jesus, and we remember Jesus' final moments with the disciples before he withdrew, he said:

*Matthew 28:28 "And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age."*

As we face the uncertainty of life, as we realise that life is fragile, precious and to be valued, we ask why does this happen? Is there another way? And of course we come up with no good answers. We instead turn to scripture and of remember Jesus' time in the garden of Gethsamene before he died, where Luke remembers this of Jesus:

*Luke 22:39-44 Jesus went out to the Mount of Olives, as he often did, and his disciples went with him. When they got there, he told them, "Pray that you won't be tested." Jesus walked on a little way before he knelt down and prayed, "Father, if you will, please don't make me suffer by having me drink from this cup. But do what you want, and not what I want." Then an angel from heaven came to help him. Jesus was in great pain and prayed so sincerely that his sweat fell to the ground like drops of blood.*

As we struggle in life, we know that God was prepared to die in love for all of us, that Jesus did this willingly, and that God in Jesus has experienced all of the highs and lows in life. We know we are not alone as God has experienced what we are experiencing. We know that the love and grace of God are sufficient to carry us.

We now reach out to God, to ask for help to carry us onwards. As a way of doing this, we will sing together a song.

**HYMN:** Be still and know that I am God

Be still and know that I am God. (x3)  
I am the God that healeth thee. (x3)  
In thee, O God, I put my trust. (x3)

## **Prayer**

ANZPB, p827-8, adapted

Hear the words of Jesus Christ our Saviour:  
I am the resurrection and the life;  
even in death, anyone who believes in me, will live.  
-so-  
Set your troubled hearts at rest.  
Trust in God always; trust also in me.

- Jn 11:25

- Jn 14:1

Let us pray:

God our Comforter,  
you are a refuge and a strength for us,  
a helper close at hand in times of distress.

Help us so to hear the words of our faith that our fear is dispelled,  
our loneliness eased and our hope reawakened.

May your Holy Spirit lift us above our natural sorrow,  
to the peace and light of your constant love;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

### **Psalm 121**

I lift up my eyes to the hills— from where will my help come? My help comes from the Lord, who made heaven and earth. He will not let your foot be moved; he who keeps you will not slumber. He who keeps Israel will neither slumber nor sleep. The Lord is your keeper;	the Lord is your shade at your right hand. The sun shall not strike you by day, nor the moon by night. The Lord will keep you from all evil; he will keep your life. The Lord will keep your going out and your coming in from this time on and for evermore
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### **Candle lighting**

There is an opportunity to light a tea light now in remembrance of those who died in Christchurch, and those who have yet to be found.

*Use the Lord's Prayer as a way of drawing the time to a close...*

### **The Lord's prayer**

**Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil.**

**For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and for ever. Amen.**

### **Prayers**

At times like these we look for a strength and a power beyond ourselves, and Psalm 121 has much to say to us about this desire. We come to a time now where we will pray to God to support us in our grief for those who have died. And we pray for strength for those working to rescue and recover people.

There will be a short silence between each prayer for reflection.

### **So let us pray...**

God of love, draw near to all who mourn today,  
especially to those who have lost friends and family in Christchurch,  
may they know the comfort of your love.

We pray that you will use us as bearers of your love,  
and where possible to help and support each other in our grief.

We also remember before you all who mourn and all who suffer.

*Silence*

Lord, hear our prayer

**And let our cry come unto you.**

Give us patience and faith in this time of our loss,  
so that we may come to understand the wonder of your mercy,  
and the mystery of your love.

*Silence*

Lord, hear our prayer

**And let our cry come unto you.**

We pray for the Search and Rescue Teams,  
we pray that they will be kept safe,  
we pray for the strength and resolve that it takes to look for survivors,  
and we pray for strength and courage as bodies are recovered.

*Silence*

ANZPB, p833 adapted  
Dion Blundell, 2011

Lord, hear our prayer

**And let our cry come unto you.**

We pray for the people who are now trying to rebuild their lives again,  
we pray for resolve, strength and sensible boundaries,  
and we pray that your love and compassion will flow through people  
as they work together;  
may the community be strengthened.

*Silence*

Lord, hear our prayer

**And let our cry come unto you.**

Give us such a vision of your purpose,  
and such an assurance of your love and power,  
that we may ever hold fast the hope which is in Jesus Christ, our Lord.

*Silence.*

Lord, hear our prayer

**And let our cry come unto you.**

We pray in silence for our own needs,  
and others needs known to us.

*Silence.*

Lord, hear our prayer

**And let our cry come unto you.**

Let us pray:

ANZPB, p464

**God of peace, let us your people know, that at the heart of turbulence there is an inner calm that comes from faith in you.**

**Keep us from being content with things as they are, that from this central peace there may come a creative compassion, a thirst for justice, and a willingness to give of ourselves in the spirit of Christ.**

**Amen.**

**Silence**

*2 minutes silence is observed*

**The Blessing of Peace**

Go forth into the world in peace, be strong and of good courage,  
hold fast to that which is good.

ANZPB, p838

Love and serve the Lord with singleness of heart,  
rejoicing in the power of the Spirit;  
and the peace of the Lord be always with you. **Amen.**

# *Celebration Services*

# Blessing of a ministry moment (Anniversary/Opening)

*This service has been used for a 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of our Homestead for aged people, and the opening of a new entrance, and the opening of the Homestead's "Men's shed".*

Dion Blundell, 2010

## **Gathering prayer**

I runga o te Matua, te Tama, me te Wairua Tapu. **Amine.**

(In the name of the Father, The Son and the Holy Spirit, **Amen**)

To the service of God and to each other,

## **We dedicate ourselves**

To the love of our nation and to the welfare of humanity,

## **We dedicate ourselves.**

Our help is in the Name of the Lord,

## **The Creator of Heaven and Earth.**

The Lord be with you and with all who are precious to you.

May Christ who overcame the storm keep you safe and all who journey with you. **Amen.**

## **A prayer on the way**

God of our beginnings and endings,  
we celebrate all we have shared together at the Homestead,  
we thank you for those with the foresight to set up the Homestead,  
we thank you for the pioneering parishioners who have enabled this,  
we thank you for the Selwyn Foundation who have made this possible,  
we thank you for the staff and volunteers  
who make this a great place to be,  
and we thank you for all who join in together,  
because it is our togetherness that has created this space and place.

## **MEN'S SHED**

We thank you for your continued blessing,  
and that we can celebrate today

- the opening of the Men's Shed,
- or the 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of this ministry
- or the opening of the new entrance
- or the 15<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of this ministry

as yet another marker on our Selwyn Homestead journey.

May the love that is in our hearts be a bond that unites us forever,  
wherever we may be.

May the power of your presence bless this moment;  
this we ask for the sake of Jesus Christ, our Redeemer. **Amen.**

**NOTE:** Only choose one of the next 3 sets of readings

## **Bible Readings - Men's Shed**

A reading from Philippians chapter 1: I thank my God, every time I remember you, constantly praying with joy for all of you, because of your sharing in the gospel. And this is my prayer, that love may overflow more and more with knowledge and full insight to help to determine what is best, so that in the day of Christ we may be pure and blameless, having produced the harvest of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ for the glory and praise of God.

A reading from John chapter 16: When a woman is in labour, she has pain, because her hour has come. But when her child is born, she no longer remembers the anguish because of the joy of having brought a human being into the world. So you have pain now; but I will see you again, and your hearts will rejoice, and no one will take your joy from you. On that day you will ask nothing of me. Very truly, I tell you, if you ask anything of the Father in my name, he will give it to you. Until now you have not asked for anything in my name. Ask and you will receive, so that your joy may be complete.

### **Bible Readings – Entrance Opening**

A reading from Luke chapter 10:

Whatever house you enter, first say, Peace be to this household!

Luke 10:5

Be sure to welcome strangers into your home. By doing this, some people have welcomed angels as guests, without even knowing it.

Hebrews 13:2

### **Bible Readings – Anniversary**

A reading from Exodus chapter 13, beginning at verse 21: The Lord went in front of them in a pillar of cloud by day, to lead them along the way, and in a pillar of fire by night, to give them light, so that they might travel by day and by night. Neither the pillar of cloud by day nor the pillar of fire by night left its place in front of the people.

A reading from Philippians chapter 1: I thank my God, every time I remember you, constantly praying with joy for all of you, because of your sharing in the gospel. And this is my prayer, that love may overflow more and more with knowledge and full insight to help to determine what is best, so that in the day of Christ we may be pure and blameless, having produced the harvest of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ for the glory and praise of God.

A reading from 2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians chapter 4: But we have this treasure in clay jars, so that it may be made clear that this extraordinary power belongs to God and does not come from us. We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not driven to despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed.

Let us pray:

Almighty and everlasting God who creates and sustains all life and who empowers us all to be your people, honour our prayers, the prayers of your servants, give us the wisdom and skill we need for every circumstance before us.

**NOTE:** The Men's Shed prayer and Entrance Opening prayer were only included in those two services. They were excluded for the anniversary services

### **MEN'S SHED**

As we commit this Men's Shed to you we pray your blessing upon everyone here, and everyone yet to come.

### **ENTRANCE OPENING**

As we commit this entrance we give thanks for the engineers, architects, The Lions, Rotary, the builders and everyone else involved in its construction.

As we continue in your service may we know the assurance of your presence, the gifts of your grace and the wonder of your love in all Creation.

Be to us a sure guide through our lives and all connected with the Homestead. **Amen.**

### **Remembrance of God's presence:**

Loving God, we reaffirm you are with us through your Creation,  
and through the presence of Jesus and the Holy Spirit,  
we continue to commit the Homestead to your love and care,  
and we reaffirm it as a place of the Light of Christ.

We commit to seeking your presence together amongst us. **Amen.**



### **Men's Shed Blessing**

There are many of us who rely upon our hands  
and are skilful in their own creativity and work.

Enliven, O God, the work of our hands.

**May you be in our handiwork, our conversations and sharing.**

We set aside this shed for our ministry to the community.

We call upon God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit to set aside and bless this dwelling and endeavour.

O God, your blessed son worked with his hands in the carpenter's shop at Nazareth: be present  
we pray with those who work in this place.



**Give them work till their life ends, and life till their work is done,  
that labouring together with you they may share the joy of your creation.**

### **PRAYER OF DEDICATION:**

May God's blessing be upon the Men's Shed. We dedicate it to you O God. May all who use it be kept safe.

May God's blessing be on the staff, volunteers and guests. Enable us to be skilful in leadership and service, generous in hospitality and care, through Jesus Christ who calmed the storm and brought security to the fearful. **Amen.**

### **Entrance Opening**

May God's blessing be upon this entrance. We dedicate it to you O God. May all who use it and enter here be kept safe.

May God's blessing be on the staff, volunteers and guests. Enable us to be skilful in leadership and service, generous in hospitality and care, through Jesus Christ who calmed the storm and brought security to the fearful. **Amen.**

### **Blessing**

May the sun warm your soul and the moon be gentle above you.

May the Creator hold your hand,

May you walk in Christ's footsteps,

May you dance with the Spirit in play,

and may Grace always be found in your way. **Amen.**

### **Farewell:**

Go forth into the world in peace:

Be of good courage; Hold fast that which is good;

Render no evil for evil; Strengthen the faint-hearted;

Support the weak; Help the afflicted;

Honour all people; Love and serve the Lord;

Rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit.

**Amen. We go in the name of Christ.**

# Commissioning of a person in ministry

*This service is used when we commission a new staff member. The symbols of ministry change to appropriate symbols for the role, some are included below.*

### **Welcome**

Dion Blundell, 2015

Name, today we welcome you into our midst.

We thank you for accepting the call to be here to minister to, with and amongst us.

We thank God for your prayerful consideration of us,  
and we thank God for sending you our way,  
we are privileged to have you amongst us,  
and we look forward to your ministry here.

### **Presentation of the Keys**

*Name*, receive these keys. We entrust you the care of these buildings and the people within them.  
**Be assured of our love and support. And may you find in us, Christ's love and understanding.**

### **Presentation of the Bible**

*Name*, receive this Bible, read from it, study it,  
**May you challenge, encourage and teach us,**

*Name* responds: With God's help I will.

**May God's grace continue to work in your life.**

### **Presentation of the ball**

*Name*, we have called you as our Youth Pastor  
**May you work well with the youth of Papakura,**

*Name* responds: With God's help I will.

**May the youth find in you Christ's love and understanding.**

### **Presentation of the stole**

*Name*, you have come here as part of our clergy team  
**May you work well with your colleagues**

and may we discover more of God through your guidance

*Name* responds: With God's help I will.

**May we all find in you Christ's love and understanding.**

### **Laying on of Hands**

Holy Spirit of God, meet us in this moment as you met the apostles of old. Be with us, Holy Spirit,  
**bring faith and hope, we pray.**

Come Holy Spirit,  
**be present in your power.**

*Silence*

Through Jesus' resurrection and ascension, and through the gift of the Holy Spirit, you have given life and order to your Church, that we may carry out the ministry of love. We thank you for calling *Name* to share your ministry here.

Gracious God, through your Holy Spirit empower your servant *Name* with the gifts of grace to minister here.

*Others may wish to pray.*

### **License**

*Name is presented with their License*

*Name* receive this License to the position of *Role* in *Ministry Unit*. The joy and responsibilities are now yours.

### **The Peace**

*All standing*

Blessed be Christ the Prince of Peace  
**who breaks down the walls that divide.**

The peace of God be always with you.  
**Praise to Christ who unites us in peace.**

*People share the peace with the person and welcome them.*

# Prayer Room Opening/Dedication

*This service is used when we open a 24 hour prayer weekend. It is adapted from ANZPB p762-775, 873, 875.*

Dion Blundell, 2006

## **Outside the entrance**

E te whanau  
we enter in the name of God  
creating, redeeming, sanctifying.

The Lord is here.

**God's Spirit is with us.**

Enter the gates with thanksgiving in your heart.  
Come into God's presence with praise.

## **In the entrance**

The earth is God's, and all that is in it, the world and all those who dwell there.

The Lord your God cares for the land.

**God watches over it season by season.**

## **Blessing**

O God of earth and sky, you visit the land and bless it, you greatly enrich it, you water it abundantly and bless its growth with your goodness.

You formed us from the dust of the ground.

**You breathed into us the breath of life.**

## **In the transition room**

Unless we build on the Lord's foundation, we labour in vain.

Encircle this dwelling place with your protection, O God;  
may your holy angels encompass these walls,  
**and peace be within them.**

Protect us O God, as we pray for ourselves and others.

## **Blessing**

Open the windows and doors of this house that the light and love of your Holy Spirit may shine within,  
**a light in the world for warmth and welcome.**

## **The light is lit**

### **At the door to the prayer room**

In the name of God, peace to this place.

**God make it a haven for all who live here.**

'Behold I stand at the door and knock,' says the Lord

*The door is knocked on*

'If you hear my voice and open the door, I will come in and eat with you and you with me.'

Revelation 3:20

*Leader:*

Welcome to this prayer room.

Blessed be God who dwells in love.

Blessed be God who gives peace and shelter. **Amen.**

## **Blessing**

God of hearth and home, maker of love and laughter, make this a place for reflection and restoration, rest and renewal, a place where the life of Papakura may find its strength.

*Leader/Priest*

The Lord watch over your going out and your coming in

**from this time forward for evermore.**

### **Inside the prayer room**

*The candle is brought forward and candles in the room are lit*

Indwelling God, you are ever welcome in this house.

**May we hear and share your Word.**

*Someone reads the following*

*Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful. "Do not judge, and you will not be judged; do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven; give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap; for the measure you give will be the measure you get back."*

*- Luke 6:36-38*

O how good and pleasant it is, when God's people live together in unity.

Above everything, love one another fervently,

**for love covers many sins.**

### **Blessing**

God in Trinity, you have made us to need each other  
and to grow as companions;

bless those who shall sit, talk or pray together here.

**May they share your care and understanding.**

Will you, the family of Papakura Anglican Church give all who meet here your support?

**Yes we will. May God be with you.**

May you grow on and grow old in the love of God.

May this place be for you a place where

relationships mature,

quarrels are made up,

failures forgiven and strength renewed.

### **The Peace**

Blessed be Christ the prince of peace

**who breaks down the walls that divide.**

The peace of God be always with you.

**Praise to Christ who unites us in peace.**

*The peace is shared and everyone is welcomed*

### **Blessing the room**

*We thank you that through the waters of baptism you cleanse us, renew us by your Spirit and raise us to new life.*

Almighty and everliving God, in baptism you give water a holy use to wash away sin: sanctify this water as a sign of cleansing from all the powers of evil; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who triumphed over evil on the cross, and now lives and reigns with you for ever. **Amen.**

*The water is blessed at this stage*

Teach us, O God, where wisdom is to be found, and show us the place of understanding.

Seek your God and you will be found.

**Search for God with all your heart and with all your mind.**

*Silence is kept*

*Water is then sprinkled whilst the following is said.*

We sprinkle this place with holy water to wash away the effects of all evil, whether of people, or of spiritual powers, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

O God, the source of all wisdom, may this be a place of prayer, reflection and awareness, of knowledge and understanding.

**Show yourself for us, lest we go about in ignorance;**

**reveal yourself to us, for in you we know the incarnate word.**

### **Concluding blessing**

God bless you and keep you secure in this place.

May those that visit find in you Christ's love and understanding.

Hear God's word of benediction: the fruit of righteousness will be peace and the result of righteousness, tranquillity and trust for ever, my people will abide in secure dwellings and in quiet resting places.

And now the eternal Spirit, enfold this prayer room with love; indwell it with joy; and build it in peace for evermore and evermore. **Amen**

## Re-Affirmation of Baptismal Vows

*Sometimes for pastoral reasons a person who was baptised as an infant, might feel they are being called by God to re-affirm their baptismal vows made by their guardians on their behalf, this time in full immersion and outside of a confirmation service. The words of re-affirmation most easily fit within a baptism service where others are being baptised. The re-affirmation part of this service was originally used in a Presbyterian context, before being used by other Anglican churches and later adapted and used within Papakura Parish. Selected parts from the ANZPB Baptism service are included to give you an idea of how this might be used.*

### **God's Call.**

Dion Blundell, 2016

E te whanau a te Karaiti / Dear friends in Christ,

...

**In faith I turn to Christ, my way, my truth, my life**

**All: May God keep you in the way you have chosen.**

### **Re-Affirmation Introduction**

This service also marks a desire by (candidate(s) for re-affirmation) to witness to a renewed awareness of her/his calling to be a Christian disciple.

It is not possible to undergo another Baptism or to re-enact our Confirmation. Yet for some at this time, the Holy Spirit of God is again working in their lives in such a way that they feel led to make a visible and outward acknowledgement of their experience.

The call to Christian discipleship in worship, service and fellowship comes to us all. For some members it has been renewed in a deep and satisfying way. The Church, in response to the needs and experiences of its members provides in this service an opportunity for renewal and rededication, which will, it is hoped, revive and increase the grace of their Baptism (and Confirmation).

Every act of worship and witness provides the congregation with an occasion for personal and corporate renewal of vows of Baptism and discipleship. May the Holy Spirit, Christ's gift to his people, be with us in this service.

*So now my friends, the sacrifice of Jesus makes us free to enter boldly into the sanctuary by the new and living way which He has opened for us.. so let us make our approach with a sincere heart and a sure faith, with hearts made clean and bodies washed with pure water. Let us be firm and unswerving in the confession of our hope, for the giver of the promise may be trusted. (Hebrews 10).*

### **Re-Affirmation Vows**

(Candidate(s) for re-affirmation) do you confess your faith in God as your heavenly Father, and in Jesus Christ as your Saviour and Lord, and in the Holy Spirit as your sanctifier, helper and guide?

**I do, with all my heart.**

Do you sincerely repent of your sin?

Do you confess your need of Christ?

I do repent.

I submit to God's mercy in Jesus Christ; I give myself to Him for His Spirit to fashion according to the Spirit's will.

Do you promise, depending on God's grace,  
to follow and serve the Lord always?

I give myself to Jesus, to follow and serve Him as Lord.

Do you promise to continue faithfully in the life, worship, witness and work of Christ's church,  
using the gifts of grace which God by His Spirit gives you  
for God's useful purpose?

I shall try so to live and work with all God's people for his praise and glory.

Do you submit to this act of immersion  
to show that you have put off the old self  
and been buried with Christ in His death;  
and to show that you are now alive with Christ  
in the power of His resurrection,  
as He clothes you with His life and His Spirit?

With the Apostle Paul and all Christians, I confess that the life I now live is not my life, but the life  
which Christ gives me - who loved me and gave Himself for me.

### **The Baptism**

Praise God who made heaven and earth.

**Whose promise endures forever.**

...

*When all are baptised, the people respond*

**Amen. God receives you by baptism into the church.**

**Child of God, blessed in the Spirit, welcome to the family of Christ.**

### **Re-Affirmation**

*The officiating minister immerses each candidate with appropriate words - e.g:*

(Candidate(s) for re-affirmation) you were baptised in the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, so now I re-affirm to you the cleansing, forgiveness, new life and promised gift of God's Spirit which are in His covenant.

### **The Blessing**

*The priest makes the sign of the cross on each of the baptised, saying:*

We sign you with the cross, the sign of Christ.

### **The Affirmation of Faith**

Praise to God who has given us life.

...

and food for the journey.

### **The People's Support and Dedication:**

*Songs of praise or blessing may be sung.*

*Others may pray for the candidate.*

### **Lord's Prayer**

Joining our prayers together, as Christ teaches us, we pray:

**Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,...**

### **Final Blessing**

# *Closure Services*

# Closure of a worshipping community

## Final service

*This was a service of Thanksgiving for the past and hope for the future. It was used at the closure of Papakura Parish's Liturgical Ministry at St John's Church, Drury. It was part of the process of Tikanga Pakeha gifting the custodianship for St John's Drury to Tikanga Maori.*

*It was held at St John's Church, Drury, Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> March 2015. The three clergy who regularly officiated at St John's jointly celebrated in the final service.*

*A framed photo of St John's, representing their past, and bone koru, representing hope for future growth, were gifted to each parishioner who wished to receive one.*

*The basic form of the service came from ANZPB, page 404 onwards. This was the service the congregation was most familiar with.*

### **Informal Welcome**

Dion Blundell & Terry Molloy, 2015  
Parts from ANZPB, p404ff (adapted)

### **The Servant Song**

### **Call to worship**

ANZPB, p404

### **Introduction**

We have gathered together today, to give thanks for 152 years of worship and fellowship through St John's Church, Drury. Remembering many happy times spent sharing, giving, caring and learning.

For your continuing presence O God

**we pray to you giving joyful thanks for what has gone, and in sadness for what will no-longer be.**

**Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hidden; cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, so that we may truly love you and worthily praise your holy name; through our Saviour, Jesus Christ. Amen**

*The congregation sits or kneels for further prayers*

Hear the teaching of Christ: a new commandment I give to you, that you love one another as I have loved you.

**Spirit of God, search our hearts.**

### **Confession**

ANZPB, p406-8 (selected parts)

### **Sentence**

Neither death, nor life.....nor things present, nor things to come.....nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Romans 8:38,39)

### **Collect**

**Everlasting God in whom we live and move and have our being, you have made us for yourself, and our hearts are restless until they find their rest in you; give us purity of heart and strength of purpose, that no selfish passion may hinder us from knowing your will, through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God now and for ever. Amen**

### **Scripture readings**

Psalm 133 – 134

1 Peter 2:4,5,9

### **HYMN Be Still, for the presence of the Lord**

### **GOSPEL**

Matthew 10:26-32

### **Homily**



*Followed by a Time of Remembrance. During this time members may wish to share treasured memories of the connection with this church. Some may ask someone else to speak for them or read out what they have written previously.*

### **Prayer of thanks**

Together we pray:

**Loving God,**

**We offer you our memories of this faith community, so dear to our hearts.**

**We offer you the memories we have heard.**

**We offer you the memories that we keep deep within ourselves.**

**We thank you as you have blessed us in the listening and the telling.**

**We pray that you will continue to bless us as we bring them to mind and share them as time goes by.**

**We pray for all who will continue to worship here in the years to come.**

**Our prayers are in the name of Christ, who encouraged and inspired his disciples to continue in the ministry that was theirs once he returned to his Father. Amen**

*Congregation stands*

### **The Affirmation**

Praise to God who has given us life.

**Blessed be God for the gift of love.**

Praise to God who forgives our sin.

**Blessed be God who sets us free.**

Praise to God who kindles our faith.

**Blessed be God, our strength, our hope.**

Let us, the baptised, affirm that we renounce evil and commit our lives to Christ.

Therefore I ask you these questions:

Do you believe in God the Father, who made the world?

**I believe and trust in him.**

Do you believe in his Son, Jesus Christ, who redeemed mankind?

**I believe and trust in him.**

Do you believe and trust in his Holy Spirit, who gives life to the people of God?

**I believe and trust in him.**

**This is our faith. We believe and trust in one God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.**

**God of love, we thank you for our calling to be disciples of Christ. Amen.**

*Congregation sits or kneels for further prayer*

### **Intercessions**

As we gather together in the presence of God, let us pray.

Loving Father, we pray for all who are persecuted for their faith, and for whom following you brings danger.

We pray for those who are new to faith and those who no longer walk with you.

We thank you for the example of those who have gone before us here and the example of faith they showed for us to follow.

*Silence*

We are all your children,

**help us grow in love.**

*This service was on 'Mothering Sunday.' We couldn't follow the 'Mothering Sunday' readings, as our task was to have our final service. Readings and hymns were chosen by the people. If you were in a similar situation with an unacknowledged theme of the day, you could include a prayer similar to the following to tie the intercessions into that theme.*

Loving Father, on this Mothering Sunday we pray for all the mothering that goes on in this community and for those who crave tenderness and are weary of the struggle to be strong.

*Silence*

We are all your children,  
**help us grow in love.**

Loving Father, there are those here whose families are now in your closer presence; as we remember them with great affection, we rejoice in the lives we shared while they were with us and commend them to your protection for ever.

*Silence*

We are all your children,  
**help us grow in love.**

**Merciful Father, accept these prayers for the sake of your Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.**

*Congregation stands*

### **The Peace**

Brothers and sisters, we are the body of Christ.

**By one Spirit we were baptised into one body**

Keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

**Amen. We are bound by the love of Christ.**

The peace of Christ be always with you.

**And also with you.**

*We exchange a sign of peace.*

*The holy table is prepared. The offerings of the people are presented during this hymn.*

### **HYMN: We Pray Thee Heavenly Father**

*The presiding priest says:*

Blessed are you, God of all creation; through your goodness we have these gifts to share. Accept and use our offerings for your glory and for the service of your kingdom.

**Blessed be God for ever.**

### **The Great Thanksgiving**

#### **Prayer After Communion**

#### **Prayers of Letting Go and Words of Assurance**

God of peace, let us your people know, that at the heart of turbulence there is an inner calm that comes from faith in you.

**We rest in that peace.**

Jesus, you showed us how to love our neighbour, and called us to do likewise.

**We have done our best to faithfully follow this call.**

Thank you for your inspiration that brought to birth St John's church and the 152 years of ministry here, guided by your Spirit's presence.

So we now relinquish any anger, regrets, and "old possibilities" we have in the attempt to cling to familiar ways of serving you here.

**Give us peace in our time of loss and help us to let our patterns go, so as to be ready to serve you in new ways.**

### **The Closure**

Lord, this chapter of our worship is closed and God remains with us.

**God, you have shaped our dreams.**

**We have put our trust in you; may your hopes and desires be ours.**

Although we now let go of this cherished place,

**You remain with us.**

And though we have to make changes in our worshipping lives,

## **You remain with us.**

So we ask that you will give us a new, creative compassion;  
a thirst for justice, and a willingness to give of ourselves in the Spirit of Christ.

**Praise to you, abundant God, for when we ask, you give; when we seek, you show the way. When we knock, you answer. Praise to you for your unfailing grace. Make us now your faithful people so we continue to put our trust in you the living God, risking disappointment, risking failure, working and waiting expectantly. Amen.**

As we look beyond ourselves, we pray for your call to Anglican Ministry here, through the Manukau Pastorate, that our brothers and sisters in Christ will continue to be faithful to your ways as they exercise their ministry from this place. May they receive the riches of your blessings through Jesus Christ. Amen.

## **Candle lighting**

As we take our leave, there is an opportunity to light a candle. A symbol for a prayer of thanks for this church and grounds, or a prayer of sadness for the closure, or a prayer for someone else, or a personal prayer for new vision. Whatever your intention, know that as you light the candle God has heard your prayer so may you leave in peace.

## **Closing Prayer**

God of Ruth the adventurer,

**Be with us.**

God of Jesus, fearless and faithful one,

**Be with us.**

Holy Spirit, forming and reforming faith community,

**Be with us.**

## **Blessing**

You are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people, in order that you may proclaim the mighty acts of him who called you out of darkness into his marvellous light.

So may Almighty God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you and those whom you love, now and for ever. Amen.

## **Hymn: Now thank we all our God**

## **Dismissal**

# Closure of a worshipping community

Handing over the custodianship of a ministry unit

*Having closed Papakura Parishes liturgical ministry, the next week we held a formal service to gift the custodianship of St John's Drury to the Manukau Pastorate. The vast majority of this service was put together by Revd John Payne. Our contribution to the service were the hand-over prayers, where we gifted symbols of ministry to the new congregation, so that there would be a sense of continuation between our liturgical ministry and theirs. The most significant gift being the chalice and patten.*

## **WELCOME**

Dion Blundell & John Payne, 2015

*Informal welcome from parishioners*

Bishop Jim:

Grace and peace to you from God

**All:**

**God fill you with truth and joy.**

Pihopa Te Kitohi:

Ko te ra tenei i hanga e Ihowa.

**Te Katoa:**

**Kia hari, kia koa tatou**

## **Hymn: O for a thousand tongues to sing**

### **HE TAONGA TUKU IHO NO TE HONONGA TIKANGA RUA**

*Representatives of the Papakura Parish now give gifts to representatives of the Manukau Pastorate.*

ROSS HOGG, PAPAURA PARISH WARDEN

On behalf of the Parish of Papakura and the congregation here at Drury, we give you the keys of this church and hall showing that we pass on to the Manukau Pastorate the stewardship and responsibility for this church, hall, and land.

REVEREND JOHN PAYNE, PIRIHI WHAKAHAERE O TE TAKIWA O MANUKAU

On behalf of Te Takiwa o Manukau I receive the keys of this church and hall and will keep this church and facilities open to all.

KATHARINE HOSKYN, PATRICIA WILLIAMS, RON GARNETT (ST JOHN'S)

We give you these bibles and this Prayer Book that they may be used for the preaching of God's Word and as guides for worship in this House of God.

MOANA KNIGHT, TE TAKIWA O MANUKAU WARDEN

We receive this Bible and Prayer Book and will use them as tools for worship here.

MARGARET GARNETT, CAROL EYRE (ST JOHN'S)

We give you this chalice and paten to be used in this church to celebrate the Holy Communion of the Body and Blood of Christ.

REVEREND TIPENE ANARU

I receive this chalice and paten acknowledging they are also a gift from past generations for the future use in the celebration of our Lord's command: "Do this to remember me."

ALL PAPAURA PARISH MEMBERS

**Our church and these gifts are part of our taonga which we now give to you with our Aroha, and our prayers are for God's blessings to be showered on all who worship, visit and make life together here. A time for sadness and a time for rejoicing; a time for our letting go and a time of hope for our future.**

ALL THE PEOPLE OF TE TAKIWA O MANUKAU

**We thank you from our hearts for your taonga and the kindness and aroha which you have shown to us. The Lord will surely bless us all as we minister together in his vineyard.**

*The Venerable Canon Lloyd Popata, Archdeacon of Tamaki Makaurau, will lead the following prayer:*

Ever-living God, watchful and caring, You are our beginning and our end;  
All that we are and all that we have are yours; Bless us as we as we gather in your name.  
**Fill our hearts with gratitude for those who have gone before us and gathered in this place;  
those who have praised your Holy Name, asked for your forgiveness,  
sought eternal life in Baptism, heard your Word,  
and have been nourished by the Body and Blood of Christ your only Son here.**

**Let your love and generosity surround us all now and especially the people of Tai Tokerau.**

**We ask, in the name of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Saviour, our friend and brother. Amen.**

### **Speeches**

*Then all standing, speeches conclude with*

### **E Aroha Ana Ahau / I Love This Family of God**

E aroha ana ahau  
Ki tenei whanau a te atua  
He whanau kotahi tenei  
Taku koa ko au tetahi  
O tenei whanau

I love this family of God  
So closely knitted into one  
They've taken me into their hearts  
And I'm so glad to be a part  
Of this great family

### **Collect**

**Almighty God, to whose glory we celebrate this house of prayer: We give you thanks for the fellowship of those who have worshipped in this place, and we pray that all who seek you here may find you, and be filled with your joy and peace; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.**

### **READINGS**

LESSON: Jeremiah 31:31-34

### **Hymn: Majesty**

### **GOSPEL**

John 12:20-

### **Homily – The Right Reverend Jim White**

Following the sermon, a fairly standard communion service continued. ANZPB, p485ff

## **Closure of a ministry/outreach**

*For 30 years, we operated the Loaves & Fishes Coffee Shop. It originally started with parishioners catering for weddings and twenty first birthday parties. It then morphed for many years to serve a wider purpose of providing a cheap lunch for people, and as a social place for some people who found socialisation difficult. In 2007, the coffee shop started to falter. Days had already been reduced from 5 to 3, it was now to be reduced to 2. A meeting to close it was held. Instead out of that meeting, the Coffee Shop was “reinvented” in 2007 as the Time Out Cafe. It was a place where parents and caregivers, and the wider community could come for food and talk. At that stage we were the only place you could get a coffee and have your child safely play. McDonalds opened up literally next door with a shiny new children’s playground. The cafe patronage “dried up” within a matter of 3 months. Parishioners now started to attend to “keep it open.” It became clear that the purpose for which the cafe had existed, no longer existed. And at the end of 2011 conversations were held about what would happen in 2012. There was no energy to re-open it after the 2011 summer break. So rather than simply not opening, a Closing Liturgy and afternoon tea was held in the Selwyn Chapel on Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> February 2012 at 2:30pm.*

*Most of the liturgy comes from adaptations from ANZPB, pages 456-7, 466, 464-5. The idea from the closure prayers came from Liturgy for the Closing of a Church out of The United Church of Canada.*

*As a footnote. After the closure of this ministry, the call to hospitality did not diminish, and instead a community dinner was setup providing a hot dinner once a week to 60 – 120 people.*

Dion Blundell 2012

### **Call to worship**

In the name of God, Creator, Redeemer and giver of Life.

ANZPB, p456

**Amen.**

Grace to you and peace from God our Creator, the love at our beginning and without end, in our midst and with us.

**God is with us, here we find new life.**

### **Introduction**

Dion Blundell 2012

We have gathered together today, to give thanks for many years of food, coffee, tea and hospitality through the Loaves and Fishes Coffee Shop, the Time Out Cafe and the catering done. For many happy times, for sharing, for giving, for caring and learning.

For your inspiration O God

**we give you thanks**

We have gathered together to close this ministry

**In joy for what has gone,**

**and in sadness for what will no-longer be,**

**we pray to you God.**

## **The Peace**

The peace of God be with you all.

ANZPB, p466

**In God's justice is our peace.**

E te whanau /Brothers and sisters, Christ calls us to live in unity.

**We seek to live in the Spirit of Christ.**

*We exchange a sign of peace.*

Let us give thanks for the coming of God's reign of justice and love.

ANZPB, p457

**Jesus Christ is good news for the poor,  
release for the captives, recovery of sight for the blind  
and liberty for those who are oppressed.**

## **The Servant Song**

### **Scripture readings**

GENESIS 12:1-9

[NRSV]

Now the Lord said to Abram, 'Go from your country and your kindred...

MATTHEW 10 (SELECTED VERSES)

[NRSV]

Then Jesus summoned his twelve disciples and gave them authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to cure every disease and every sickness. ... <sup>5</sup> These twelve Jesus sent out with the following instructions: 'Go nowhere among the Gentiles, and enter no town of the Samaritans, <sup>6</sup>but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. <sup>7</sup>As you go, proclaim the good news, "The kingdom of heaven has come near." <sup>8</sup>Cure the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers, cast out demons. You received without payment; give without payment. ... <sup>11</sup>Whatever town or village you enter, find out who in it is worthy, and stay there until you leave. <sup>12</sup>As you enter the house, greet it. <sup>13</sup>If the house is worthy, let your peace come upon it; but if it is not worthy, let your peace return to you. <sup>14</sup>If anyone will not welcome you or listen to your words, shake off the dust from your feet as you leave that house or town. ... <sup>38</sup> whoever does not take up the cross and follow me is not worthy of me. <sup>39</sup>Those who find their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will find it. <sup>40</sup> 'Whoever welcomes you welcomes me, and whoever welcomes me welcomes the one who sent me. <sup>42</sup>and whoever gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones in the name of a disciple—truly I tell you, none of these will lose their reward.'

### **Stories**

*We share some stories about our connection with the Loaves and Fishes Coffee Shop & Time Out Cafe*

### **Homily**

### **Be Still for the Presence of the Lord.**

### **Closing of ministry prayer**

Dion Blundell 2012

Inspired by ANZPB, p464

GOD'S PEACE

God of peace, let us your people know, that at the heart of turbulence there is an inner calm that comes from faith in you.

**We rest in that peace**

*Silence*

THE CALL TO A CAFE

Jesus you showed us how to love our neighbour, and called us to do like wise.

Dion Blundell 2012

**We have done our best to faithfully follow this call.**

**Thank you for your inspiration that brought to birth the Loaves and Fishes Coffee Shop,  
and the Time Out Cafe.**

**Thank you for your Spirit's presence bringing life to the cafe.**

We relinquish now the call to have a cafe.

**Give us peace in our time of loss.**

*Silence*

As our energy has waned,  
**we ask for rest.**

#### THE CLOSURE

Lord, this chapter of our ministry in Papakura is closed.

Dion Blundell 2012

Even though the cafe is closed, God remains with us,  
**we now let go of this faith filled ministry**

God remains with us,  
**and we now seek new ways of outreach.**

God remains with us,  
**and we will serve in different ways.**

God's love remains with us,  
**God's justice will continue to inspire us and call us to action.**

God is for and with us.  
**Amen. Thanks be to God!**

#### SEEKING A NEW CALL

God, you have shaped our dreams.  
We have put our trust in you  
may your hopes and desires be ours.  
**We hold on to the call to hospitality.**

Dion Blundell 2012  
Inspired by ANZPB, 464-5

Blessed are you, God of growth and discovery;  
yours is the inspiration that has altered and changed our lives;  
yours is the power that has brought us to new dangers and opportunities.

As we look beyond ourselves, help us to discover areas where you are at work.  
**Help us to discover people of peace, who are ready to receive us.**

Keep us from being content with things as they are, may you give us a new creative compassion, a thirst for justice, and a willingness to give of ourselves in the spirit of Christ.

**Praise to you, abundant God, for when we ask, you give; when we seek, you show the way. When we knock, you answer. Praise to you for your unfailing grace. Make us now your faithful people. Amen.**

May we continue to put our trust in you the living God, risking disappointment, risking failure, working and waiting expectantly.  
**Amen.**

#### **Candle lighting**

*We are about to sing our last song for today. At the end of the song, there will be afternoon tea in the Welcome Centre.*

As we take our leave, there is an opportunity to light a candle. Maybe this candle might be a prayer of thanks for the cafe, or a prayer of sadness for the closure, or a prayer for someone else, or maybe even a prayer for new vision. Whatever your prayer is, know that as you light it God has heard your prayer. And may you leave in peace.

#### **The Kingdom of God**

##### **Blessing**

God of Ruth the adventurer,  
**Be with us.**

God of Jesus, fearless and faithful one,  
**Be with us.**

Holy Spirit, forming and reforming faith community,  
**Be with us.**

## Dismissal

Go now to love and serve the Lord. Go in peace.

**Amen. We go in the name of Christ.**

*Afternoon tea is now served in the Welcome Centre, please join us.*

# Farewell Liturgy

*As a church, we do well at good-byes in funerals. But what about when someone leaves us? I like to create a sense of praying our goodbyes in other situations too. This liturgy happens after the confession at 8:00 and 9:30am service on a Sunday. We have used it for parishioners retiring to other areas, those who shift out of the area and staff leaving. We have offered it to disgruntled parishioners leaving, but the offer has not yet been accepted. I also used a form of it when Whangarei Parish decided to split itself up further, into three districts. The idea is that it brings a sense of closure, and allows us to name the insecurities around change.*

## Beginning of farewell (this is not on the screen)

Dion Blundell, 2004

God of our beginnings and endings, we celebrate all we have shared with (person/people leaving named) and ask your blessing as she/he/they continue(s) on her/his/their journey. May the love that is in our hearts be a bond that unites us forever, wherever we may be. May the power of your presence bless this moment of our leave-taking; this we ask for the sake of Jesus Christ, our Redeemer. **Amen.**

### PSALM 121/139 (ADAPTED)

1 You, O God, will guard us from all evil:  
you will protect our lives.

2 **You will protect our going out and our coming in:  
both now and for ever.**

3 Where can I flee from your Spirit:  
or where can I flee from your presence?

4 **If I climb to heaven, you are there:  
if I lie in the grave, you are there also.**

5 If I take the wings of the morning:  
and dwell in the depths of the sea,

6 **Even there, your hand shall lead me:  
your hand shall hold me fast.**

**Glory to the Father and to the Son: and to the Holy Spirit; as it was in the beginning is now: and shall be forever. Amen.**

### Farewell readings to be read by different people, they are not on the screen

#### PHILIPPIANS 1. 3, 4, 9

I thank my God, every time I remember you, constantly praying with joy for all of you, because of your sharing in the gospel. And this is my prayer, that love may overflow more and more with knowledge and full insight to help to determine what is best, so that in the day of Christ we may be pure and blameless, having produced the harvest of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ for the glory and praise of God.

#### EXODUS 13: 21-22

The Lord went in front of them in a pillar of cloud by day, to lead them along the way, and in a pillar of fire by night, to give them light, so that they might travel by day and by night. Neither the pillar of cloud by day nor the pillar of fire by night left its place in front of the people.

#### JOHN 3: 5-8

Jesus answered, "Very truly, I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit. What is born of the flesh is flesh, and what is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not be astonished that I said to you, 'You must be born from above.' The wind blows where it chooses, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit."



JOHN 16: 21-24

When a woman is in labor, she has pain, because her hour has come. But when her child is born, she no longer remembers the anguish because of the joy of having brought a human being into the world. So you have pain now; but I will see you again, and your hearts will rejoice, and no one will take your joy from you. On that day you will ask nothing of me. Very truly, I tell you, if you ask anything of the Father in my name, he will give it to you. Until now you have not asked for anything in my name. Ask and you will receive, so that your joy may be complete.

2 CORINTHIANS 4: 7-9

But we have this treasure in clay jars, so that it may be made clear that this extraordinary power belongs to God and does not come from us. We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not driven to despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed.

**Farewell Prayers**

These are on the screen, (*person/people leaving named*) come(s) forward...

- Everyone**      **As you journey onward,  
we ask forgiveness where we have failed you;  
we give thanks for all you have given us;  
we assure you of our love and prayers.**
- Leaver(s)      As I/we leave, I/we ask forgiveness where we have  
failed you; I/we give thanks for all that you have  
given to us; we assure you of our love and prayers.
- Everyone**      **As you experience the pain of change,  
and the insecurity of moving on,  
we pray that you may also experience  
the blessing of inner growth.**
- Leaver(s)      I know that God goes with me/us.
- Everyone**      **As you meet the poor, the pained,  
and the stranger on The Way,  
we pray that you may see in each one  
the face of Christ.**
- Leaver(s)      I know that God goes with me/us.
- Everyone**      **As you walk through the good times and the bad,  
we pray that you may never lose sight  
of the shelter of God's loving arms.**
- Leaver(s)      I know that God goes with me/us.
- Everyone**      **As you ponder your decisions  
and wonder over the fruits of your choice,  
we pray that the peace of Christ  
may reign in your heart.**
- Leaver(s)      I know that God goes with me/us.
- Everyone**      **We give thanks to God for the gifts and talents  
that God has given you, and that you were willing  
to exercise these gifts here. God has blessed us  
through you**
- Leaver(s)      I give thanks to God for the ministry here.

LAYING ON OF HANDS

We now invite forward those who would like to come and lay hands on those leaving, to pray for them.

#### THE PEACE

We praise and thank you, God of the journey, for our brother(s) and sister(s) who is/are soon to leave us. We entrust her/him/them into your loving care, knowing that you are always the faithful traveller and companion on The Way.

Shelter and protect her/him/them from all harm and anxiety. Grant her/him/them the courage to meet the future, and grace to let go into new life; through Jesus Christ our Saviour. **Amen.**

Then each person present may make the sign of the cross on the forehead of those leaving, saying,  
**Go in peace, for our God goes with you.**

*'The Sign of Peace' is exchanged.*

*The service now continues on with our normal service*

We use this alternate dismissal...

#### **Dismissal**

Go into this moment in faith and may the Holy God prepare a holy ground for you, Christ Jesus take your hand on the way and the Spirit surround you with grace.

**Amen.**

*Advent*

# All Church Christmas Play / Pageant

*Written by Angela Blundell with bible verses from Matthew 1 and Luke 1 using the Contemporary English Version. First used 2014.*

*The goal of this play was to do something in place of the traditional children's Christmas play that involved minimal word learning for the children, low stress for the teachers and included much of the congregation in recreating the Christmas story. It would work particularly well if a church had a lot of preschoolers and younger primary children who may not be able to learn large parts.*

## **Characters**

Angela Blundell 2014

Adult 1 and Adult 2 - preferably well recognised teachers.

Four children/young people to read the story

Other children dressed as Mary, Joseph, Angels, Shepherds, Sheep.

Music person to play Christmas Carols on piano/organ/keyboards

A couple of adults/parents to help guide children.

## **Equipment**

Cards with Angel, Wise Person, Shepherd written on them, suggest minimum of 5 Angels, 5 Shepherds, 3 Wise People but you can do as many as you want or have costumes for.

Child sized costumes for Mary, Joseph, Shepherds, Sheep and Angels

Adult sized costumes for Angels, Wise Person, Shepherds, (use old choir surplices for Angels if available, poncho shaped material with a waist tie for Shepherds, royal coloured capes and crowns for Wise People).

Powerpoint with Christmas Carols written on and/or handout with carols on them.

Two chairs for Mary and Joseph to sit in with a small cradle in front.

Microphone set up for children to speak into or if a lectern is available, use a stool to ensure child is the right height.

Set up the scene to allow those up the front to see music words on a screen or provide them with words already.

Notes: Prior to the service, a number of pieces of paper are handed out to members of the congregation as they come in. These have written "Angel" "Wise Person" and "Shepherds". These adults will be called up the front during the service to form a tableau of the Nativity with the children.

## **The Play**

*One adult standing in front of church looking somewhat worried, another adult comes rushing in. Children are positioned at the side ready to come in when summoned.*

Adult 1     Hey \_\_\_\_\_, sorry I'm late, we had dramas at home involving nerf guns, lost shoes and barbie doll dispute

Adult 2     \_\_\_\_\_ Where have you been? Apparently we're doing the pageant this week!

Adult 1     What do you mean? It's next week (finds her diary), see look...it's... oh no! How on earth did I miss that?

Adult 2     So what are we going to do? We're just not ready for this?

Adult 1     OK, let's think, we've a few minutes to think.... it's such a pity I'm still suffering from nappy brain..

Adult 2     well the kids can help... and we'd best get Music person on board too, she could do some music for us.

Adult 1 Great idea...Music person, are you around? Sorry to spring this on you, Could you help us with some music?

Music Person Um, okay, let me see what I can do.

*Music Person gets up and goes to organ. Shuffles music around.*

Adult 1 KIDS... CAN YOU COME HERE.

*Kids come up to front and wait*

Adult 2 Okay kids, can you put on these? - hands out King, Shepherd, Angel, Mary and Joseph costumes and we might sing OH COME ALL YE FAITHFUL to get us in the mood.

Sing **OH COME ALL YE FAITHFUL**

*While they are doing this the kids put on their costumes and take places, assisted by the two adults. The four readers come up to microphone with an adult standing by to help out if needed. Children will stand on a stool to reach the microphone.*

Adult 1 Well I'm feeling a little more sane now, (turn to audience) Some people would have been given a piece of paper with a word on it? Okay, now as you listen to our story we're going to need you to join in and help us out. So check out who you are going to be and stay awake!

Reader 1 It happened like this. Everyone had to go to their own hometown to be listed. So Joseph had to leave Nazareth in Galilee and go to Bethlehem in Judea. Long ago Bethlehem had been King David's hometown, and Joseph went there because he was from David's family.

Mary was engaged to Joseph and traveled with him to Bethlehem. She was soon going to have a baby, and while they were there, she gave birth to her first-born son. She dressed him in baby clothes and laid him on a bed of hay, because there was no room for them in the inn.

Adult 2 Lets all sing **SILENT NIGHT**

*(children are helped to take their places if needed)*

Reader 2 That night in the fields near Bethlehem some shepherds were guarding their sheep. All at once an angel came down to them from the Lord, and the brightness of the Lord's glory flashed around them. The shepherds were frightened. But the angel said, "Don't be afraid! I have good news for you, which will make everyone happy. This very day in King David's hometown a Saviour was born for you. He is Christ the Lord. You will know who he is, because you will find him dressed in baby clothes and lying on a bed of hay."

Suddenly many other angels came down from heaven and joined in praising God.

Adult 1 Could all the angels come forward while we sing **HARK THE HERALD ANGELS SING.**

*All adult angels come forward and are assisted to put on angel costumes by the children.*

Reader 3 After the angels had left and gone back to heaven, the shepherds said to each other, "Let's go to Bethlehem and see what the Lord has told us about." They hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and they saw the baby lying on a bed of hay.

When the shepherds saw Jesus, they told his parents what the angel had said about him. Everyone listened and was surprised. But Mary kept thinking about all this and wondering what it meant.

As the shepherds returned to their sheep, they were praising God and saying wonderful things about him. Everything they had seen and heard was just as the angel had said.

Adult2 Could all the Shepherds please come up while we sing **WHILE SHEPHERDS WATCHED.**

*All adult shepherds come up and are assisted to dress up by the children.*

Reader 4 The star the Wise Men had seen in the east went on ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was. They were thrilled and excited to see the star.

When the men went into the house and saw the child with Mary, his mother, they knelt down and worshiped him.

Adult 1 Could the Kings please come forward while we sing **WE THREE KINGS**

- Reader 4 They took out their gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh and gave them to him. Later they were warned in a dream not to return to Herod, and they went back home by another road.
- Adult 2 Oh wow, it looks like we've done it. Look at everyone, don't they look wonderful. It's gone pretty well really.
- Adult 1 I know, it's been pretty crazy but you know now I am feeling much better. I think it's really important take some time to remember the real reason behind Christmas, that God sent Jesus to us to save us from our sin.
- Adult 2 Let's join in together as a church family and sing **AWAY IN A MANGER**

# Aotearoa/New Zealand Candle Lighting

*Ideas that work with our seasons, especially around Advent and Christmas are difficult. Here is a gift to you, built around some of God's Creation. First published in 2005. This edition, 2012.*

## **Advent Candle**

Angela Blundell 2005

The idea is that each week you build on the display. Either completely re-doing it in the colour suggested, or some other way. We have used coloured candles floating in a bowl, wrapped in the suggested colour and foliage. We have also used nice square serving plates, each week the serving plate has the theme, so by the end, there are 4 themes together. We have also had a really big tray that changed each week, so in week 2, while the colour is blue, the green candle would be in amongst the blue. But, the predominant theme was blue and water, and the green and koru was gone (other than the green candle). We have made separate displays, we have also used the altar/communion table front edge for the display. As a warning, many Anglican's would view using the altar for an advent display as to be a miss-use of it. Different traditions/understandings will require a different arrangement.

## **Advent1 – Hope – Koru – Green**

Theme: Hope

Symbol: Koru

Colour: Green

Resources: Picture of koru and/or fern, fern foliage, green candle, green cloth.

*In the very middle of the fern, in its damp, moist belly a koru emerges offering a sign of rejuvenation and birth.*

*Even when a fern appears dead and lifeless, tiny koru can be found, offering the promise of hope and life.*

### COLLECT

*This is the liturgical start*

The koru, the slow unfurling of a baby fern frond offers us hope of new life. As we light the green candle nestled amongst the fern we anticipate the hope of new life in the birth of Jesus Christ.

*Prayer – the people join in this, it should be in bold.*

## **God of hope**

**As the koru unfurls within the centre of the fern**

**Give us the hope of new life found within an innocent child**

**Help us to carry this hope in this advent season**

**Knowing that amongst our sin and weakness**

**There is hope and renewal to be found in your Son**

**Jesus Christ, Amen.**

## **Advent2 – Peace – Water – Blue**

Theme: Peace

Symbol: Water

Colour: Blue

Resources: Picture of water (waterfall, stream, sea, lake), bowl of water with stones, blue candle, blue cloth

*Water is a symbol of creation, refreshment and renewal.*

*Peace can be found in the loudness of a waterfall and the softness of a gentle stream.*

Peace can come to us on a beach at sunset or even in a storm.

We need peace.

We need peace to surround us and to envelop the world.

COLLECT

We light this candle in water to symbolise peace and remembering the promise of peace that the Messiah was to bring into the world.

**God of peace**

**As water sustains and nurtures us**

**Calm our inner turmoil in this busy time**

**Remind us of your promise of peace**

**Found in Jesus, your Son**

**Whose birth we long for**

**Amen.**

### **Advent3 – Joy – Pohutukawa - Red**

Theme: Joy

Symbol: Pohutukawa

Colour: Red

Resources: Picture of pohutukawa, pohutukawa branches, red candle, red cloth.

The Pohutukawa often clings to the most precipitous of places. It stands strong against rock, sand and water and offers shade for those at play on a beach. In spite of its precarious existence and constant fight against predators, every Christmas it erupts in a blaze of red, a sign of joy, of rejuvenation and of new life.

COLLECT

The Pohutukawa flowers at the beginning of summer and reminds us of the promise of joy, of light, warmth and restoration that would be brought by the Messiah. At this time of advent we light this red candle surrounded by the foliage of the Pohutukawa tree to remind us of our joy in the promise of the Messiah, the light of the world.

**God of joy**

**As the Pohutukawa stands strong in all weathers**

**And its flowers are a bright blaze of colour**

**Give us the joy in the promise of the Messiah**

**Help us to believe in times of darkness**

**That your Son came into the world**

**To bring us redemption and new life**

**In Jesus name, Amen**

### **Advent4 – Love – Paua - Purple**

Theme: Love

Symbol: Paua

Colour: Purple

Resources: Paua shells and pieces, purple cloth, purple candle

Paua is a symbol of strength and beauty that provides sustenance to the body just as love is the greatest of things and provides sustenance to the spirit. Paua can withstand the tide, holding fast to the rock and as we eat of its body we see the beauty hidden within its shell. During this time of Advent we remember that Jesus was born to bring love into the world, even unto death.

COLLECT

We light this candle surrounded by paua to symbolise the greatest love in the world, welcoming the extravagant love of God found in the birth of Jesus.

**God of love**

**In this time of stress and busyness**

**Remind us of your powerful love**

**As we come together as family, as community to your table**

**Give us the strength and grace to love those we come across in our daily lives**

**In your Son's name we pray, Amen.**

### **Alternative Idea – Faith – Pohutukawa - Red**

Theme: Faith

Symbol: Pōhutukawa

Colour: Red

Resources: Picture of pōhutukawa, pōhutukawa branches, red candle, red cloth.

The Pohutukawa often clings to the most precipitous of places. It stands strong against rock, sand and water and offers shade for those at play on a beach. In an environment that changes, it remains constant and strong.

#### COLLECT

The Pohutukawa flowers at the beginning of summer reminding us of the promise of light, warmth and restoration. At this time of advent we light this red candle surrounded by the foliage of the Pohutukawa tree to remind us of our faith in the promise of the Messiah, the light of the world.

#### **God of faith**

**As the Pōhutukawa stands strong in all weathers**

**Give us the faith to believe in your promised Messiah**

**Help us to believe in times of darkness**

**That your Son came into the world**

**To bring us redemption and new life**

**In Jesus name, Amen.**

### **Christmas Day – Birth of Christ – Christ Candle - White**

Theme: Birth of Christ

Symbol: Christ Candle

Colour: White

Resources: Lighting the Christ Candle

#### COLLECT

Lord God, just as you promised you came to earth  
An unexpected package – a precious baby boy.

**Help us this day to find joy in your promises,**

**Hope in new life,**

**Peace in our hearts,**

**And love in our thoughts and actions.**

**And remind us always that your promises may be fulfilled in the most mysterious,  
curious and joyous ways.**

**In your Son's name we pray, Amen**

### **Christmas Day Meal Prayer**

#### **Family Prayer**

We remember those who are special who have gone before us

We remember those in the world who have little

We remember those who are not here and hold them in our hearts

We thank you for your gift of creation and our part in this earth.

We ask for your forgiveness for our carelessness and greed.

Help us to nurture and care for your world.

We celebrate moments of sadness and frustration that we have experienced this year,  
thanking you for being with us on our journey.

We ask for your healing to help us move on.

We celebrate moments of happiness and joy that have come to us,  
thankyou for giving us these precious gifts in our lives.

We ask that we never forget these special moments.

#### COLLECT/PRAYER

Together we pray:



**God our Creator**

**Thank you for the gift of life.**

**God our Sustainer**

**Thank you for giving us the strength to live our life to the fullest.**

**God our Redeemer**

**Thank you for the grace, hope and joy in our lives. Amen**

# Advent, Christmas and Epiphany

## Reflection series with candle lighting

*In 2015 we painted different scenes of the advent and Christmas story on pieces of wood. Each week another scene/piece of wood was added. At the beginning of the service a thought was given, the faith community reflected on it with each other, the time was drawn to a close as the advent candle was lit on top of each scene. There was also a significant reflection given from the person in each scene.*

Angela Blundell 2015

### **Advent 1 – Hope - Angels**

#### **Candle lighting – thoughts, engagement and prayer**

We wait in hope. Waiting is sometimes hard. Waiting on a promise is even harder. When? What? How will it happen? Hope is about believing in something new, something that will change how things have been. Hope can be a new beginning.

Advent is about waiting in Hope. Two thousand years ago people were waiting, waiting for a Saviour. In the world today, there is lots of suffering and pain and we can't always see a way out of the misery.

Let us think of what we hope for. What do we really want in our lives? Spend some time reflecting on this or talking about it with your neighbour.

#### **PRAYER**

**Lord, sometimes it is hard to see hope in the middle of hardship, sometimes we forget to look to you. Give us hope. Hope in our daily lives. Hope for our future, Hope for our family. Hope for our world. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.**

#### **Angel Reflection**

We all knew something was happening. There was a lot of activity, lots of private meetings and discussion and literally hoards of angel's practicing their Hallelujah's and then I got the call. The LORD wanted to see me for a special role.

It's hard to explain. We're angels we live and walk in the Lord's presence all the time, but when you get called into his throne room, let's just say you don't bow because you have to, you bow because the awesome, loving, grace-filled power of God is so incredible that there is no other way to be.

It was then that I realised that this was nothing compared to what we'd done so far. The LORD has always tried to connect with humanity... we're talking dreams and visions, burning bushes, pillars of fire, voices and occasionally angels. There have been rules and laws, prophets and promises, floods and famines; constant reminders of the LORD'S power and nothing has worked. But this idea took the cake.

This is important, the LORD told me. I don't want a team, I just want you. You need to be present, she needs to see you and you need to stay with her. This is too important to leave to chance. It must unfold as it does, but you must be there too, to ensure that nothing goes wrong.

"Are you sure about this LORD?" I asked, feeling more than a little worried. "It seems a terrible risk to take".

The LORD looked at me, eyes both loving and yet almost sad. "I AM willing to take this risk. This is what must happen. These events were set in motion before the beginning, when the Word spoke. Have you seen the star?"

I nodded, we had all seen it, we knew what it was heralding. The LORD nodded and smiled, the power almost knocking me off my feet.

"Go my Child. You go with my Blessing".

I found her easily enough, Mary. A nice young girl, recently engaged to a local carpenter. She was known as a respectful and honourable young woman. She was sleeping and I woke her. She was startled, well who wouldn't be, it's not often you find an angel sitting on the chair in your bedroom. And so I told her, that she was going to bear the LORD's son and that he was going to be the Messiah.

If I am honest, I was actually dreading this, telling someone they are going to have a baby before they've got married and that the father is the LORD is really "out there". She was pretty surprised and asked how it would happen, which was a good question and way outside of my understanding so I just reassured her that the LORD would make it happen and she should call her baby Jesus.

I withdrew and watched her. I wondered what was so special about her. She was one of many young, devout and respectful girls I had seen in her village. She was not overly beautiful, she was not highly intelligent nor particularly vivacious. There was nothing that marked her as extraordinary. I wondered about this as I watched her, waiting for her to rest. I wasn't sure that she should be the person to carry this new way.

She would have thought I was gone, but I was just not visible to her eyes. She had been sitting on her bed, quietly, thinking maybe? Then suddenly she is on her knees on the ground whispering and I caught the first sentence. "My Soul magnifies the Lord". Tears came to my eyes as I realised that the LORD had chosen well. Many young women would have cried, panicked, or doubted or at the very least taken some time to come to terms with what had happened yet she almost immediately praised the Lord. This is what the LORD had seen in her. There was a humility but also a willingness, a sacrificial love and devotion to God that I had not seen. She was so far above the other young girls, her very ordinariness hid her extraordinary faith. She no longer seemed plain to me, her gentle face was glowing with sacrifice and tears, her head bowed in humility, her whole body in an attitude of service and love. It was then I had HOPE. Hope that this wild and crazy plan of the LORD would come to pass, because of this young woman. She was beautiful and she was blessed by the LORD.

## **Advent 2 – Joy – Mary**

### **Candle lighting – thoughts, engagement and prayer**

We wait in Joy. Waiting is sometimes hard. Waiting with Joy is often really hard. How much joy is there in the unknown? Joy is laughter, it is excitement, it is happiness. It is in the first cry of a new baby, the first laughter, it is in running breathless down the beach and holding hands with a loved one.

Advent is about waiting in Joy, in the excitement and anticipation of our Saviour. Sometimes it's easier to understand Joy because we have all experienced excitement and anticipation. But finding the Joy in long drawn out waiting is difficult.

Let us think about what gives us Joy? How do we find it? Spend some time reflecting on this or talking about it with your neighbour.

#### PRAYER

**Lord, sometimes it is hard to be Joyful. Sometimes the mundane and ordinary can distract us from finding joy and happiness and the good in our lives. Give us Joy. Give us Joy in the small things, to sustain us in the hard times and the Joy knowing that your love and your sacrifice has given us new life. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen**

## **Mary's Reflection**

There are some things that are meant to happen. It was very clear from when I was very young that there was a process to follow. You learn what you need to know to run a home and then you get married. I learned to do my chores quickly and effectively, I gardened, I worked the loom, I cared for my younger siblings and those of my aunts and uncles. I helped my mother at the market, I bartered for the things we needed. I attended temple and eventually caught the eye of Joseph, the carpenter.

Many girls and their families had their eye on him. He was good with wood, and he had taken the family trade over when his father was sick. He was reliable and resourceful. He would be able to provide for a family and he was a godly man. And somehow, he noticed me.

My father did not give me up easily, he haggled for some time with Joseph's and his father, over my dowry, over what I was worth and what he was losing should I marry. He was proud that I was considered so desirable yet didn't want them to think that he would just give me away nor did my dowry to be the only thing that mattered. I never found out what the outcome was except that we were betrothed and soon we would join together in his father's house. I was nervous and excited. We prepared food, clothing, gifts and the animals that I would bring. Everything was working out as it should have.

I've heard of angels, and I've heard the Torah read. The LORD speaks to us in dreams and visions, it is clear from our holy books. But when I woke to the presence of the angel I was truly surprised. And when he told me I was with child I was shocked. My first thought was about Joseph; how could I tell him? And then I thought, how on earth did that happen? The idea of having the LORD's son?!!

The angel went away eventually and I sat quietly, not so much praying as resting. In spite of what I had been told and what I knew would be the battle ahead, I felt nothing but peace and... joy. I slipped to my knees, and prayed, tears of Joy and sacrifice falling to the ground. I remembered my cousin Elizabeth and her miraculous pregnancy. And I realised that we had both been truly blessed by the LORD. That Joy stayed with me through the night.

I met with Joseph the next day. My family were visiting my aunt and uncle in the next town, they needed some help. I suggested I stay behind to continue my wedding preparations, and they agreed. I walked through the fields to Joseph's home.

I felt my first flash of doubt when I saw the look on his face as I told him. I am with child I said. The Lord has blessed me and I will bear his Son and he will be the Messiah. He took a step back and opened his mouth but did not speak. His body was tense, his face was like stone. His eyes flashed with anger and he opened his mouth again but again, nothing came out. I kept my head down, it was not the done thing to look directly at a man anyway, but I watched him in the corner of my eye. I could feel the emotion building in my heart.

I pushed the tears away, willing my voice to stay steady. I prayed for strength and I felt my shoulders straighten and my head lifted to look in to his eyes. "I realise this must be hard to accept. I will give you some time to think and pray over this". I turned and walked away, not daring to look back. When I finally did he was still standing there, I don't think he had moved.

## **Advent 3 – Peace - Joseph**

### **Candle lighting – thoughts, engagement and prayer**

We wait in peace. Waiting is sometimes hard. Waiting for peace is even harder. We constantly seek peace in our lives, in our world. Peace is rest, contentment, safety. Peace is found in forgiveness, in restoration, in contemplation.

Advent is about waiting for peace. Sometimes our hearts and minds are in turmoil, our lives uncomfortable, anger and frustration taking the upper hand, feeling stressed and pulled many ways. Finding peace in our world filled with hatred and violence feels almost impossible.

Let us think about peace. How do we find it? Spend some time reflecting on this or talking about it with your neighbour.

## PRAYER

**Lord, sometimes peace is hard to come by. Sometimes we are burdened by the difficulties of our lives, and see so many problems in the world to believe that peace is possible. Give us peace, the promise of peace that passes all understanding, given to us through Jesus. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen**

### **Joseph's Reflection**

I am a carpenter. I work with wood. There is beauty in the gentle shaping and smoothing of the wood beneath my hands, of creating either practical or beautiful things. There are many skills that I have which mean my work is in high demand. My father taught me my craft and I will teach my sons.

It took me some time to choose a wife. I would see the girls at temple, their heads covered, sitting with their mother's and younger siblings, keeping an eye on babies and toddlers. I would see them at market, selling, bargaining, working. Mary caught my eye because she was not one of the ones who pushed herself forward. She did her work, she was clearly trusted by her parents, she was devout and her family were well respected. I had found the woman I would marry, she would help my mother as she aged and give me children. Her father did not give her easily either and my father, in spite of his health, had to negotiate in goods and trade for some time before an arrangement was made. As we sealed our agreement with an embrace, Mary walked in herself, carrying a tray of food and drink. She did not look up as she carefully placed it on the low table but I couldn't help but look at her. And suddenly she glanced at me, her cheeks blushed faintly and I smiled at her. She ducked her head down and left hastily but I thought I caught a glimpse of a happy smile back. I relaxed back into the cushions as my father and hers laughed and poured some wine together.

A few days later I had just come out of my workshop when I saw her walking through the fields. I was surprised to say the least, normally we did not spend much time alone though we were betrothed. I offered her a drink but she declined. She asked to speak in private and so we walked a bit away from the house and there she told me she was with child.

I am not a man of violent emotion but I felt hurt. Anger rose within me and I opened my mouth but as the ugly words were about to come I felt as if an invisible hand had covered my mouth. I stopped and looked at her, all humble and quiet looking, her eyes on the ground. How could she do this to me? The appearance of morality and purity yet... I tried again but still the words would not come.

Then she looked at me, her head and shoulders straight. I think it was the first time she had looked at me directly. Her gaze was unwavering, she told me she was giving me time to think and pray and walked away. I couldn't move, I saw her walk away and I felt tears falling down my face. I saw her glance back before disappearing and I wiped my eyes impatiently. I couldn't believe what was happening.

That night sleep did not come easily. I tossed and turned and eventually decided that I would cancel the wedding but do it quietly, no one needed to know the reasons right away, they'd find out soon enough. It would be more than enough for her to deal with that then than putting her through too much now.. Feeling relieved I dozed off. Then I woke, and saw the angel.

The angel told me to not be afraid (in all seriousness, not be afraid? Who was he kidding? There was an angel in my ROOM!). He said I should take Mary as my wife, that the LORD had blessed her and that we should call him Jesus. So much for sleeping, I lay awake all night wondering what was going to happen next.

I went to her home the next day. Her mother greeted me like a son and fussed around giving me food and drink. Mary quietly asked her to leave and she did, shooting curious looks in my direction. Mary looked at me directly again, her brown eyes, clear and unapologetic.

"I wish to marry you" I said. "The Lord has told me that what you said is true, that you will have his Son and his name is to be Jesus."

The look she gave me made my heart leap. She reached out and took my hand in hers. My hands were large and calloused. Her hands were small and gentle. She smiled at me. For the first time since her news, I felt peace settle upon my heart.

"It will not be easy" she said. That was an under statement! I knew what she meant though. Even though I knew in my heart that I was making the right decision, in spite of my newly found peace, I knew also that we would be talked and gossiped about, that we would lose friends and even put our marriage agreement at risk. "I know" I said quietly "but God is with us".

#### **Advent 4 – Love – Jerusalem (Joseph & Mary's Journey)**

##### **Candle lighting – thoughts, engagement and prayer**

We wait in Love. Waiting is sometimes hard. Waiting for love is even harder. We want love, true love, to run through our lives. Love is laughter, love is giving, love is sacrifice. Love is found in both the ordinary and the extraordinary.

Let us think about Love. Where is love? What is love. Spend some time reflecting on this or talking about it with your neighbour.

##### PRAYER

**Lord, Sometimes love is hard. Hard to find. Hard to do. Hard to be. Sometimes we can spend our whole lives seeking perfect love. Give us love. Give us love for those who we care for. Help us to choose love every day. Give us love during the hard times. Help us to receive the love that you have for us, the love that you showed us in Jesus. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen**

##### **A Reflection on Bethlehem**

##### JOSEPH

I don't know if Mary really understands. We have to register at my family's home town in Bethlehem and as my future wife, she needs to be with me. And she doesn't know what it's been like the last few months. While she was visiting her cousin Elizabeth, I've been hearing all the innuendo and gossip about her pregnancy. I've had people cross the road rather than speak with me, several people have withdrawn their orders for furniture and one of the families who had been courting Mary's sister suddenly withdrew their offer. I've even had probing questions from one of the Pharisees at the temple about everything that has happened. I hardly knew what to say.

##### MARY

I don't know if Joseph really understands. I know he needs to register for the census but travelling all the way to Bethlehem in my condition, so close to my time is risky. I wanted to be with my mother and aunts when I delivered. Ever since I became a woman I have been part of the stories. Giving birth is at best difficult and at worst results in the loss of mother and child. There are so many things that could happen and I want the women who love and care for me with me at that moment. I don't know if I could bear the loss of this precious child, I don't want to fail at this.

I know that it's been hard, my sister is barely talking to me since her suitor stopped coming. My mother is angry at Joseph for wanting me to go with her and his family are angry at me for trapping him into marriage.

##### JOSEPH

Our trip is long. Mary can only travel so far in a day so the trip is much longer than I expected. I would have made it easily in three days, but we are now on our 5th. She has even taken to riding the donkey I hired to carry our possessions. She barely speaks, I don't know if it is because she has no energy or if she is still angry with me.

##### MARY

I don't think I can go much longer but at last we get to the outskirts of Bethlehem. Joseph is relieved and he takes us to his cousin's home, where he has arranged to stay. We knock and wait and the door is opened but the conversation is short. Joseph comes down the steps looking angry and disappointed. He does not have room, he said that he had forgotten we were coming and he has no more space.

I look at him properly for the first time. His shoulders are tense and he is looking annoyed.

There must be somewhere else I said. He nods, yes, I have a number of cousins and family here. We will find something.

#### JOSEPH

After the 6th refusal I realise that if we don't find somewhere soon, we are in trouble. Mary is looking more and more exhausted. I watch her for a minute as she sits in a square, her hand clenches tightly around the cup of water I have given her and her face grimaces.

We go to our final stop, my cousins' wife's brother's home. To my surprise we are invited in. They are apologetic when we explain our request but a hasty discussion reveals that while their upper rooms are full, one of the stalls in the lower part of the house is clean and while there are animals nearby, we could stay there.

#### MARY

The pains started at the 2nd house. Just light at first, not long or strong but by the 6th house a few hours later I realise that I am truly in labour. We are shown our space. It is clean, freshly swept with some bales of hay in the corner. They find us some bedding to add to our own and the women apologise that it is all they have. I am grateful for their kindness, the first we have received all day and I realise some of what Joseph had tried to tell me about what he has been facing the last few months. I look at him, he is standing in the middle of the room, his whole body slumped and miserable as he looks around the sparse room which smells of hay and animals.

Joseph I say. He turns around, surprised at the sound of my voice. I am surprised too, it feels like years since I have spoken. I think my time is coming soon. I gesture to my belly and his eyes widen with shock.

Are you sure? He asked coming closer

I half laugh and half cry, no, not really, I don't really know what is happening. But the pains are coming regularly and that is a sign. He nods and reaches hesitantly for my hand. The look in his eyes is different, and I realise how hard it must be for him to be so strong against so much rejection and judgement.

#### JOSEPH

Holding Mary's hand, I look into her eyes. Then she bends over, groaning slightly, breathing in and out for a minute or so, squeezing my hand so tightly I can feel my fingers tingle when she loosens her grip. Then she straightens and looks at me again. I can see tears, fear and that steely resolve that has impressed me from the beginning as well as challenging me. I remember suddenly the baby my mother lost when I was young. How my uncle's wife died in childbirth. I have no idea how to midwife a woman, I have never been present at any birth, and now she must do this in the house of virtual strangers. I realise the cost of this trip, being away from her family, from the women who have gone down this path before her, with all their knowledge and experience.

I will go and tell the women here I say, releasing her hand. They will help us. They can be with you when our son comes. I move towards the door but she stops me and steps forward. In her eyes is something different. She embraces me for the first time, I can feel the child within her moving against my stomach. I place a gentle kiss on her head, realising that in spite of the difficulties of these months, there is a love there. That love is starting to grow between us as it should.

### **Christmas – Birth of Jesus – The Shepherds and Mary**

#### **Candle lighting – thoughts, engagement and prayer**

This Advent season we have journeyed with an angel, Mary and Joseph. They have journeyed to Bethlehem. Today Shepherd's give testimony to the birth of Christ. The birth of a baby with Angels, and Mary's Joy gave Peace to Joseph and Love to the Holy Family as they took on their new journey of growth and change.

It is easy, in a place such as this, of peace and beauty, familiar faces, surrounded by friends, to be touched by these things, but how much harder it is to embody these things in the world outside.

Reflecting on the last four weeks, which part was easy? Which was hard? Did we find some hope in our lives amid the sadness and destruction? Did we find Joy in the ordinary and the mundane? Maybe we found a place of Peace in a time of upheaval, maybe we were reminded what Love really means? Spend a few moments talking with your neighbour about something that has really struck you over the past four weeks.

#### PRAYER

**Lord, our waiting has ended.**

**Your Son has been born.**

**Hope, joy, peace and love have won over fear, sadness, hatred and indifference.**

**Help us to keep these things in our hearts. Help them to overflow into our lives and the lives of the people around us. Help us be your messengers of the hope, joy, peace and love that we find in your Son. Amen.**

#### A reflection on the Birth and the Shepherds

##### MARY

I don't think I will forget the moment I saw my first born. He was placed on my chest and let out a cry far louder than I expected. Relief and joy flooded my heart. The women worked quietly, cleaning, bringing me water, clean cloths to rub down the baby. He nestled around and found what he needed, and they covered me with a warm soft blanket. Peace settled on me as I held my baby and I look for Joseph. He comes into the room, slowly, as if afraid and I smile at him. He crouches down and touches a tentative finger to our babies cheek. He is beautiful he says.

We sit for some time, as the women busy themselves with sorting things out, they are talking quietly about the birth, the baby, his vigour and strength and about a huge star that has been seen in the sky and wondering how something like that could happen so suddenly.

The baby has fallen asleep at my breast. I gently wrap some cloths around him and ease him into a manger that has been laid with fresh straw and some soft cloths. He is here. My miracle baby. I am a mother, his mother, for all time.

##### SHEPHERDS

I am a Shepherd. I take my responsibility seriously. Looking after animals might not be a particularly popular or glamorous job but it is a serious one. These animals are people's livelihood, they provide milk and meat and status, they are not to be harmed or lost. There are many wild animals in the fields around our town and they take advantage of young lambs who lag behind or older animals past their prime.

But it is long and lonely work and tiring also. I gather the flock near some trees and some fellow shepherds join me from nearby.

We light a fire, for comfort and to keep the wild animals at bay. We talk quietly, discussing our families, our work, the health of our animals but mostly about the new star that has appeared. There is speculation, maybe it is a comet? Someone has heard from someone that it is the sign of a King and we scoff at the idea. What King would have the power to control the stars?

Suddenly the whole sky is filled with the brightest light I have ever seen. It is more than sunlight, it is blinding. We fall to the ground, shielding our eyes. And a voice tells us to not be afraid that a Saviour has been born in Bethlehem and that we will find a baby in a manger. Then we hear singing.

Have you ever heard angels sing? Think of the most pure and beautiful sound you have ever heard. Then imagine it even more so. It brought tears to my eyes and my heart filled with a sense of awe and wonder. They sung glory to God, peace and goodwill to everyone on earth and just as suddenly they left. Our eyes and ears were dulled by what we had just seen. We could feel the cool breeze, the ground beneath our knees, we could hear the soft noises of the animals nearby.

"We must go," I said, my voice loud in the quietness. "We must go and see this Saviour." I get up and they follow, we leave everything as we walk down the hills, we see the star, we seem to be getting closer, we start to jog and then to run, making our way through the empty streets, tripping over rocks but not stopping and finally we find the place.

##### MARY

There are some men here to see the baby. It is the older woman of the house, the one who delivered my baby. She has a quizzical and concerned look on her face. They say that they must see their Saviour.

A thrill of terror and fear runs through my body. I struggle up from my bed and check on the baby, he is quiet and sleeping. I pick him up and nod my agreement. Joseph rouses and looks at me in confusion.

A ragtag bunch of men come in, Shepherds by the look and the smell. They kneel down before us and bow.

#### SHEPHERDS

It was as the angel said. A baby, in his mother's arms, in a stable. He is only hours old, but I know that he is the right one. The One. The Saviour. I explain to his mother what happened, what we saw. Her eyes grow bigger and bigger and she holds the baby even closer. Her husband puts his arm around her and they look at us with disbelief.

He is the Saviour of the world I tell them, joy and excitement making my words tumble out. The young woman nods, "Yes," she says quietly. "He is." She smiles at me and we gather closer to look at this baby who will change the world.

After a time we leave, racing to get back to our animals, we run through the streets again shouting and praising the Lord.

#### MARY

I lie back down, my baby in my arms now. He will need feeding soon and then I will rest again. I think about what just happened, complete strangers visiting me, knowing what my baby will be. This is far far bigger than I had realised.

### **Christmas 1 - Angels**

#### **Candle lighting – thoughts, engagement and prayer**

Jesus, when you came, the Angels worshipped your advent amongst us. They gave testimony of your coming to the shepherds.

**Help us to also give testimony to your work in and amongst us, and in the world around us.  
Amen.**

#### **Host of Angels**

It was an important job. Sure everyone was talking about Gabriel's job, being a personal messenger, keeping Mary and Joseph safe, but I was tasked with being a messenger to the people too. The Lord had commanded me to create a host of angels to proclaim his Son's birth. It is a challenge. I have to hold auditions, and I can tell you that angels are not good at being rejected. I can't have thousands. A host is only around a 100 and I want a 100 of the best singers, not just any old croaker. It might say make a joyful noise unto the Lord in the religious texts but that is definitely not what we want here.

And the dramas! They won't practice when asked, they instead point-out that they "sing to the Lord all the time." Glorifying God is what they do they say; it is not a challenge to sing to mere mortals. I try to share the importance of what we are doing. This is the first time in human history that we will be presenting ourselves like this to people on earth, in our full heavenly glory. This will be a divine event in the human world, but do they take me seriously? Sometimes I don't know if they realise how important this is, how unusual, how special it will be.

When I get my final instructions from the LORD though, I am disappointed. Shepherds. I mean, Shepherds?! I thought at least we would be proclaiming this news to Kings and those of great authority but no, shepherds. The LORD reminds me to reassure them, that seeing a host of angels would be surprising for any person. I nod hastily and bow and leave, inwardly seething at my job. Shepherds?

The waiting is long. I am on alert the whole time, trying to keep in contact with Gabriel to get an idea of when things might be happening but he is too busy to pay much attention and brushes me off. Finally the baby is born and suddenly all of heaven exploded in light and song... the LORD had managed to survive the perilous journey to life and now it was my time to shine.

I found the Shepherds, huddled by a fire, quietly and sleepily talking. We broke through from heaven, all of us shining with the light and glory of God. We were a sight to behold. The shepherds flung themselves on the ground as I told them to not be afraid and where they could find the baby. Then we filled the sky with song, glorifying God and talking about peace and goodwill. We were glorious.

As soon as we withdrew, the earth was dark, sombre, ordinary. But I saw the men scamper away towards the star and I knew our job had been done.



## **Christmas 2 - Wise men**

### **Candle lighting – thoughts, engagement and prayer**

Jesus, when you came, men came from afar to testify to your birth and to give you gifts.

**Help us to also give testimony to your work in and amongst us,  
and may we give back to you  
and to others that which you gift us with. Amen.**

### **Wisemen**

I have studied my whole life. We track stars, research and read holy texts and Scriptures, histories, we examine the skies and note down changes. There are many signs that we read, signs of feast or famine, of changes in fortune of Kings. And it was one night where I saw it... in one of the most powerful star groups... an unfamiliar star, something I have never seen before. I race to our archives, to search for more ideas, for more clues. My colleagues invite me to join them for a meal but I decline, so I can search my records. I carefully record all the positions, and sure enough, it was something new, something different, and something very powerful.

I consulted with my colleagues the next day, they are doubtful at first but as they read my notes, as they take a fix on the stars and planets, and check my calculations and refer to the texts, they then get excited too at how big this is. We talk through the night, re-examining everything to make sure we are right. A King is coming. A great King. Possibly the greatest King ever and it will be in our lifetime. It will be now.

We must go. I am more than excited than ever now, there is an urgency in my heart, a desire to see this King. We must follow this star and find the King.

We set off straight away, and I careful pack my best clothes. We are often called on by King and Emperors, by the wealthy and powerful and they give us gifts in thanks. I have my best cloak with gold trim, it is a rich deep red, the colour of royalty. It is worthy clothing to visit a King.

It is a long journey, we carefully map our trip, keeping the constellation in focus, keeping track of the star. We stop at a busy market in one city, and buy some gifts, royal gifts, precious metals and spices, rare and expensive.

We are going to have to go through Judah. My colleague's voice is weary and disappointed but our calculations are correct. We will have to go through King Herod.

Maybe he is having a son? Our other colleague looked around and we thought about it for a minute. It would make sense in a way, ... yet King Herod is not a godly man, he is a cruel and manipulative leader. But we believe that this king will be different. We have read the holy texts and they herald and prophesy a great King, a King of peace and love. I cannot imagine any child of King Herod being that person. We decide to visit and consult but I keep my cloak in my travel bag. I don't believe King Herod is the one.

King Herod confirms our thoughts, his own astrologers have seen the same thing we have. But they searched and found nothing. He admits it is not from his house but I think he is pleased that we have assumed it is. He sits back in his seat, satisfied and confident and gives us permission to see this King and if we find him, to let him know so he can also pay homage. From his demeanour we know that he does not think that he has anything to be concerned about.

And finally we are there, in a small town called Bethlehem, a few days from Jerusalem. The former town of the great Jewish King David. And there, in a house, a young child with his parents. Hastily I pull on my robe as we are invited to enter. In spite of our unexpectedness we get the sense that this is not the only surprise visit this couple have seen. We kneel, and offer our gifts, gold, frankincense, myrrh. And we stay there, watching this lovely child with big brown eyes and a delightful smile. He is sturdy. He will be strong. He looks like many children I have seen, like my own nephews. But this child is to be the King. We look around us, it is a normal house, a simple family. Peace settles on my heart as we talk quietly explaining what has lead us to this place. My journey has been completed, we have found our King.

# Blue Christmas – A Collection of stations and ideas

*What follows is a collection of ideas and stations that can be molded into a blue Christmas service.*

Dion Blundell

## Introduction

This service is intended for those for whom Christmas is a difficult time, which can happen for many reasons, including a recent personal loss; depression; an association with painful Christmases past; separation from loved ones; or a feeling of intense disconnection from the prevailing secularism of Christmas. Providing a Blue Christmas service gives space and time away from the hype of Christmas and an opportunity to experience a sacred presence amidst our lives, which are sometimes awkward, uncomfortable, and messy.

## Songs

Make Me A Channel of Your Peace

Be still and know that I am God

Be still for the presence of the Lord is here

He is Lord

Jesus remember me

## Stations

### REMEMBRANCE CANDLES

This is an opportunity to light a candle as an act of remembrance, or prayer. Think about what it is you would like to pray, and as you say that prayer silently in your head, light the candle to symbolise your prayer going to God. You may wish to leave and move on to the next station, or to stay and watch your candle for a while.

You may light as many candles as you wish.

You may wish to come back and light another candle later after going to another prayer station.

You will need: Sand tray, votive candles, something to hold the new candles, a lit candle to go in the middle of the sand tray, matches to light the middle candle

### REFLECTION ART

You will need: “Starry Night over the Rhone.” And put it on display, a large printout, or a projected image both work well.

This art piece is called “Starry Night over the Rhone.”

- How do you understand the different quality of light in the stars compared with the house lights?
- How do you experience, or what do you feel about, each kind of light?

We don't know who the two figures are, but we can imagine what it might be like to be them, out in the night when everyone else is home inside.

Can you identify with the figures, and know their feelings, their aches and pains, their worries and fears? Where might they have come from and where might they be going?

Is there a particular part of the painting that reveals or reflects the Divine? Stay with it for a while.

## PRAYER STARS

Note: If you have used “Starry Night over the Rhone” above and the reflection art, you can also use this. You will need lots of the glow-in-the-dark stars for people to take home (you get from the value shops), lots of stars cut out of yellow paper and a big piece of dark-blue/navy fabric to hang up for people to place their stars on. Give people pins to pin their paper star to the fabric, the type with the colour bobble on the end in the round disk are easy to manage.

The symbolic action of placing stars on the deep blue fabric reminds us that we are not alone, we see the prayers of others beside us and know that even though we might not always be able to see Jesus, we see the body of Christ, those who are around us and journey with us.

You may wish to write, or draw on one of the paper stars (or to put it up with nothing on it). As you place it on the fabric, say a prayer for someone or a situation that you are concerned about. You may wish to say something as you pin it, like the person's name, or you may wish to place it in silence.

You may place more than one star

## SALT

Our tears are salty. This low table is covered in salt. Draw or write something in the salt. When you have finished, taste the salt left on your finger, and make your prayer to God.

You will need: Big trestle table, 6kg of salt, black polythene, a wood surround, scissors to cut the plastic. We used a trestle table. We brought a 5.4m length of 100x50mm wood and cut that into a rectangle. With two nails at each corner you have a nice rectangle. Fold (neatly) some black polythene over the frame. You can then sprinkle about 6k of salt in the polythene tub. People can then write in it. You can't use the salt later, as people have put their fingers in it. 6Kg of salt is about right, 8kg made the salt too deep for people to see the black words come through the salt as they wrote in it.

## SAND PAPER

Sometimes life is not clean, and doing new things hurts. Make something, an object, or a word out of this sandpaper. Let the working of the sand paper be your prayer to God.

You will need: some cheap junky sandpaper from a value type shop (The Warehouse in NZ has a pack of 24 pieces for about \$7), a table for people to stand at and work from.

## SCRIPTURE – ISAIAH 35

You will need: to print out Isaiah 35 on large pieces of paper and bluetak/pin it up, or use a projector. I found it easiest to print Isaiah 35 onto 2 sheets of A4, then “blow-up” manually on the copier to A3. I then used a large notice board to pin it to it. I have also effectively “blue-tacked” it to a wall. You probably need to put a little explanation below the scripture? Something like below will work.

*Isaiah 35 refers to a group of people seeking wholeness and a way home to the centre of their faith.*

## SCRIPTURE - LUKE 1:68–79

We used this scripture within a service booklet for reflection. We simply put it in, and gave people space/time to reflect on it.

## GUIDED MEDITATION

*For the next five minutes or so we are going to keep silence together. You may use the silence as you wish, but one way is to meditate by focusing on your breathing.*

*Take a deep breath in, followed by a long breath out. Do this 3 or 4 times, then relax to normal breathing.*

*As you continue to breathe, bring to mind someone you know who is hurting. Maybe it's yourself or a friend or family member. As you breathe in focus on the pain, as you breathe out let compassion come.. Breathing in the hurt and out your desire for compassion. You might think about one person for a while, then think of someone else. Keep breathing in this way, for as long as it feels right.*

This time will close with the song... **Be still and know that I am God.**

You will need: a singing bowl or bell. Alternately an iPod with 5 minutes of silence, then a ding at the end of 5 minutes (to end the silence)

### **Communion**

We would often have communion at our Blue Christmas service. We created an intimate space, where in an informal way we would retell the Last Supper story and then pass communion around the circle. The service normally used was the CEV communion service in this book.

### **CD Music**

Before the service you could have some quiet contemplative music playing?

Maybe have something “airy” playing during the stations? “Vespers” by Parachute Band works well.

Meditation, 5 minutes of silence, then singing bowl, after the contemplative time. There is an app called: “Centering Prayer” by Contemplative Outreach that will do this on your Android phone.

### **Refreshments**

It's nice to offer refreshments. We offer it in a different venue to the service. Some people will wish to depart straight away, some will want to stay and chat about the service or what is happening for them.

You may wish to join us for a tea or coffee now in the *Welcome Centre*, or you may choose to depart. There is no rush to leave, stay as long as you wish. Please leave in silence for the sake of those who wish to remain in silence, at the end of the last song, we leave in silence, in our own time.

### **“Take Homes”**

It's nice to offer something to “take home” as a reminder/marker of the service and this moment in peoples' lives..

### **BLUE RIBBON**

We have had an “un-decorated” Christmas tree that people tied blue ribbon to. Some white or blue lights around it look effective.

As you leave, take an opportunity to tie on a blue ribbon to the tree, and please take a ribbon home with you, to use on your tree or in another way to remember this moment.

### **PRAYER STARS**

If you have used “Starry Night over the Rhone” above and the reflection art, you can also use this. Have a little basket of the glo-in-the-dark stars for people to take home.

As you leave, you may wish to take a star as a reminder of this day, on your journey to Christmas this year.

### **Setup List**

You will need to buy some things, create a list:

Blue ribbon, bluetak, salt, tissues, sand paper, glo-in-the-dark-stars...

*Lent*

# Pancakes and Ashes

We have a community dinner on Tuesday nights and having *Shrove Tuesday* has not been possible recently. So, we have blended together Shrove Tuesday and Ash Wednesday. We have a formal Ash Wednesday service that is combined with the Methodist's and Catholic's. This short service is aimed at families which the formal service is not.

*Long ago, chickens were older breeds and would not have laid eggs in the winter. On Shrove Tuesday, people would have been eating up the last of the preserved eggs, which were probably coming to the end of their preservation period. By Easter Day, the chickens would be starting to lay eggs again. Shrove Tuesday, the day before lent was a good excuse for pancakes, to be extravagant before lent began. In lent, people weren't able to be extravagant. We are having pancakes on Wednesday, because Tuesday doesn't work for us. We will blend together Pancakes and the beginning of lent with Ashes.*

## **Call to Worship**

From dust we came, to dust we will return

Adapted from: Dust We Came (c) Ruth Burgess

## **WE BELONG TO GOD**

We gather asking God for forgiveness, we gather in confidence that

## **WE BELONG TO GOD**

Let us pray:

DJB, 2017

Loving God, as we enter this Season of Lent, we offer ourselves to You. Your love never fails. We rely on you. Please continue to be with us. Please help us draw closer to you. **Amen.**

## **Isaiah 58:1-12**

DJB, 2017

God sent a person to us, many thousands of years ago,  
this person's name was Isaiah.

Isaiah's job was to tell the people what they had been doing wrong,  
and what God wanted them to do.

The people called him a prophet,  
because he spoke for God.

God said through Isaiah:

You say you love me  
but you don't.

You aren't kind to each other.

You appear to give up things for me,  
but I don't need your gifts.

Instead of giving to me,  
give to those that don't have enough.

Be nice to each other.

When someone lies about someone else,  
don't let them get away with the lie,  
tell a leader so they can help the person who is feeling trapped.

When you live like this,  
when you are kind and good to each other,  
then you are living as I the Lord your God ask.

Then everyone will see you are my people.

I love you.

**Talk**

Isaiah told the people what they needed to do, and still they got it wrong.

We still get things wrong all the time.

Every week we need to ask God for forgiveness for what we get wrong.

We celebrate the beginning of the six weeks before Easter with a time called Lent.

In the time of Isaiah, people put ash on themselves to show God they had got something wrong.

Today we do something similar;  
we put ash on the front of our heads,  
just a tiny bit,  
to say:

God I have got things wrong;  
I haven't lived your love.

Please forgive me.

Please give me a new start.

On Palm Sunday we give out Palm Crosses.

They make good book marks,  
it is something to remind us of Jesus and his teachings.

But today, we burn them up, to make ashes.

And if you want,  
you can come forward and I will put a tiny bit on your head,  
it is a way of asking God for forgiveness  
for the times you have done wrong things.

At the same time though,  
we mix olive oil and perfume in with the ashes.

Olive oil is a symbol that God makes us well and forgives us.

So... at the same time you ask for forgiveness,  
God forgives you and gives you another go to get things right.

**Prayer**

Let us pray:

DJB, 2017

**Jesus as we try to follow you into lent,  
May your Spirit tell us  
when we are following something else and not you.**

**May you give us friends and family to help us follow you.**

**May your Spirit always guide us.**

**Amen.**

**Blessing and giving of ashes**

DJB, 2017

These ashes have been blessed and set aside as a reminder that we need to always ask for Jesus' help to follow him. Holy Spirit, remind us when we get it wrong, and encourage us to give it another go. May your love, forgiveness and grace be seen in our life. **AMEN.**

*Impose the ashes, using the words*

**“God forgives you. Jesus asks you to follow him”**

## **Absolution**

*In response to the imposition of ashes, we receive the absolution*

God forgives us; be at peace.

## **THE LORD'S PRAYER:**

Ever loving God, we pray, united in Christ and secure in the promise that you will hear and answer us. With boldness we pray as Christ teaches us:

**Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and for ever. Amen.**

## **Be Still and Know**

**Be still and know that I am God.     x3**

**I am the God that healeth thee.     x3**

**In thee, O God, I put my trust.     X3**

## **Blessing**

ANZPB (adapted.)

Christ give you grace to grow in holiness, to deny yourself, and to take up your cross and follow him. With his strength may you bear your own and one another's burdens and the blessing of God, Creator, Redeemer and Life Giver be with you and remain with you for ever. **Amen.**

## **DISMISSAL**

Go now to love and serve the Lord. Go in Peace.

**Amen. We do in the name of Christ**



# *Holy Week*

# Maundy Thursday – Foot Washing

*We do this service in the dark, with black-light (UV Lights) and we wash feet with tonic water (the quinine makes it glow)*

*We use white writing on a black background in the service sheet so that it glows. It takes 3 of the 2400watt UV lights, or 3 of the newer stage LED UV Lights to light up an area of about 5 x 7m.*

Angela and Dion Blundell, 2013

## WELCOME

Dion Blundell, 2013

Welcome everyone to this special service. Today we are going to be worshipping God through music, by washing each others feet and through remembering Jesus' last meal with his disciples through the sharing of bread and grape juice. We call this communion, and Jesus did it after sharing a meal with his disciples, as we have just done.

## **Song – I Have decided to follow Jesus**

### FOOT WASHING

On that night before he died Jesus took a towel and some water and washed his disciple's feet.

Dion Blundell, 2005

In those days the roadways were dusty and it was a mark of respect to have a servant wash the guest's feet, so in doing this for his friends, Jesus was acting as a servant.

In remembrance of that, we now wash each others feet.

Dion Blundell, 2013

## **Confession and Absolution**

In the Lord's Supper, Christ is with us. The bread will remind us of the body of Christ. The cups will remind us of the blood of Christ. As we prepare to receive this great gift, let us pray and admit to God that we have not always done what He wanted us to do.

### PRAYER OF CONFESSION

**God of love,  
we confess that we have sinned against you.**

Angela Blundell, 2013

**We have not always loved others as you wanted us to.**

**We have not always obeyed your Ten Commandments.**

**There have been times when we have been selfish.**

**There have been times when we have thought mean and angry things.**

**Forgive us, dear Lord.**

**Forgive us and help us to live the lives you want us to live.**

**In your name we pray, Amen.**

### DECLARATION OF FORGIVENESS

The Bible reminds us that God so loved the world that He gave His only Son so that who ever believes in Him would have eternal life.

This is the Good News of the Gospel – God loves us and forgives us.

### INTERCESSIONS

*Families to lead us in informal prayer...*

*After our prayers..*

Together we pray as Jesus taught us:

**Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and for ever. Amen.**

## **COMMUNION**

### INVITATION TO THE LORD'S TABLE

This is called the Lord's Supper.  
It is also called Communion.

Angela Blundell, 2013

In a moment I will offer you a piece of bread,  
you may take that bread and eat it.

We do this because Jesus asked us to remember him,  
As we eat it, we remember that Jesus is with us and that we are not alone.

We remember God's presence with us through Jesus and the Holy Spirit.

Then I will give you a sip of a cup of grape juice.

Jesus first gave his friends wine because they did not have grape juice then.

This grape juice is a reminder that Jesus died to forgive and free us to be with God.

### **Taize Chant**

**Jesus, remember me, when you come into your Kingdom.**

### **Great Thanksgiving**

Holy God, with thanksgiving we take this bread and this cup.

Dion Blundell, 2013

Pour out your Holy Spirit upon us that this Bread and Cup,  
that reminds us of your presence and love,  
may draw us together here as your body today.

Unite us in faith,  
encourage us with hope,  
inspire us to love,  
that we may serve as your faithful disciples. **Amen.**

On that night, Jesus took some bread in his hands  
and gave thanks for it.

Lk 22:17-20 CEV  
adapted

*Bless the bread*

He broke the bread and handed it to his disciples.

Then he said, "This is my body, which is given for you.  
Eat this as a way of remembering me!"

After the meal he took a cup of wine in his hands.

Then he said, "This is my blood. It is poured out for you,  
and with it God makes his new agreement,  
so that all people will have their sins forgiven.

*Bless the grape juice*

Here and now, with this bread and grape juice,  
we celebrate your great acts to free us,  
ever present and living in Jesus Christ,  
crucified and risen,  
who was and is and is to come.

Dion Blundell, 2013  
ANZPB, p469 adapted

**Amen! Come Lord Jesus.**

Therefore with this bread and grape juice we recall your great goodness to us.

ANZPB, p487, adapted

**Send your Holy Spirit, that we who receive Christ's body may indeed be the body of Christ,  
and we who share his cup draw strength from the one true vine.**

**Confront us with your justice, and make us one in the body of Christ  
with all who share your gifts of love.**

ANZPB, p470, adapted

Through Christ,  
in the power of the Holy Spirit,  
with all who stand before you in earth and heaven,  
we worship you,  
Creator God. **Amen.**

As the disciples recognised Jesus amongst them when bread was broken,  
so we now remember Jesus' presence with us.

Dion Blundell

*Silence is kept*

*The bread is broken*

Christ's body was broken for us on the cross.  
**Christ is the bread of life.**

ANZPB, p489

His blood was shed for our forgiveness.  
**Christ is risen from the dead.**

*We will now give the bread and grape juice to each other as we pass them around the circle.*

This bread is the body of Christ given for you.  
This grape juice is Christ's forgiveness poured out for you.

Dion Blundell, 2013

### **Prayer After Communion**

Angela Blundell, 2013

Lord, we have come to your holy table and have eaten the bread and wine which reminds us of your love and sacrifice.

**Help us to remember your promises and share them with the people we love. Amen.**

### **This little light of mine**

#### **Blessing**

Dion Blundell, 2012

May the Holy Spirit draw you closer to knowing Jesus, that you may follow him closer, and grow in your faith. **Amen.**

#### **Dismissal**

Go in peace to be disciples of Jesus.

Dion Blundell, 2013

**Amen. We go in the name of Christ.**

## Passover Meal

*This was used for our **Messy Church** congregation. I do not know where it originated from, but it is highly adapted and modernised from the original.*

*Some people would say that if you are not Jewish, and not going to "do it right" you should not do a passover meal. We saw this as a teaching opportunity, to learn about our Jewish brothers and sisters, and to learn about part of our heritage.*

*We chose different family pairings to read parts. Mum and Sons, Mums and daughters, Dads and sons, Dads and Daughters. We used the grape juice "squirter" to re-fill the little communion grape juice glasses.*

We used an introduction, so people knew what we were doing and why. The majority of people had never experienced anything close to a passover meal.

### **INTRODUCTION**

Dion Blundell, 2016

Many years ago the Egyptians took the Jewish people from their home country  
into captivity in Egypt, so they could be their slaves.

God promised to free them.

When the time was right, Moses led them out of Egypt and into the promised land.

The festival or celebration of passover

reminds us of their last meal in Egypt before they escaped  
into God's promise of a new life.

As their final meal in Egypt,  
they drunk wine, and ate lamb and flat bread without yeast.

Today we remember that final meal,  
it is the celebration day,  
when we remember passover.

### **Welcome**

Welcome, as we come into Holy week we remember the passover like Jesus' disciples did.

Many years ago the Egyptians took the Jewish people from their home country into captivity in Egypt, so they could be their slaves.

God promised to free them.

When the time was right, Moses led them out of Egypt and into the promised land.

The festival or celebration of passover reminds us of their last meal in Egypt before they escaped into Gods promise of a new life.

As their final meal in Egypt, they drunk wine, and ate lamb and flat bread without yeast.

Today we remember that final meal,  
it is the celebration day, when we remember passover.

### **Mark 14:12-16**

*It was the first day of the Festival of Thin Bread, and the Passover lambs were being killed. Jesus' disciples asked him, "Where do you want us to prepare the Passover meal?"*

*Jesus said to two of the disciples, "Go into the city, where you will meet a man carrying a jar of water. Follow him, and when he goes into a house, say to the owner, 'Our teacher wants to know if you have a room where he can eat the Passover meal with his disciples.' The owner will take you upstairs and show you a large room furnished and ready for you to use. Prepare the meal there."*

*The two disciples went into the city and found everything just as Jesus had told them. So they prepared the Passover meal.*

*Following the custom of the Jewish people at their Celebration Meal, the women will light the celebration candles.*

### **Opening prayer**

Blessed are you, O Lord our God, Ruler of the Universe,  
who has made us right with you through your words,  
and who has instructed us to light the lights of celebration.

Blessed are you, O Lord our God, Ruler of the Universe,  
who has kept us alive and sustained us, and brought us here today,  
may our gathering be set aside for your work in our lives O God,  
by your light and favour shining upon us,  
bless us and bring us peace. **Amen.**

### **Traditional Passover Prayers**

In the first act of the Jewish Passover, we take a cup of wine as the head of the household prays the traditional blessing (benediction). It's called the Kiddush:

*Blessed are you, O Lord our God, King of the Universe,  
Creator of the fruit of the vine,  
Blessed are you O Lord our God, King of the Universe  
who has chosen us among all your peoples and made us right,  
with you, through your words.*

*In love you have given us, O Lord our God, days of joy,  
and celebration days of gladness.*

*On this day of the feast of flat bread,  
we gather together as your people,  
to remember the departure from Egypt.*

*You have chosen us for your service and share with us your blessing and celebration on this day.*

*Blessed are you O Lord our God, who has preserved us,  
sustained us and brought us to this celebration day.*

*Hand around the grape juice trays, each person takes a sip.*

In the next act of the Jewish passover we eat greens, a symbol that nature comes to life in spring.

Following Jewish tradition, we dip the greens into salt water and pray.

**Blessed are you, O Lord our God, King of the Universe,  
Creator of the fruit of Earth.**

*We all dip the parsley in salt water and eat it.*

Another action of the Jewish passover is the breaking of the flat bread,  
the Jewish people called this Matzah.

*The leader lifts the bread saying:*

*Look this is the bread of affection which our ancestors ate in the land of Egypt.*

*Let all who are hungry come and eat.*

*Let all who are in need come and celebrate the passover with us.*

*May it be God's will to save us from all trouble,  
and from being slaves.*

*Next year at this time may all the Jewish people be free.*

*Place the bread on its plate*

## **Questions**

AN ADULT

At the ancient passover meal, the son asked the Father four traditional questions about the passover. In time, in order to carry on a discussion about the symbolic foods other questions were asked about their meanings, the father replied in such a way that the son could understand, so if he was young, the answer was simple, as he grew, the answers became more detailed.

A YOUNG PERSON

Why is this night more different to all the others?

AN ADULT

The Israelites, who we now know as the Jewish people, had been in Egypt as slaves for 430 years, at the end of 430 years, on this night, all the tribes of the Lord came out of Egypt.

This was a night of waiting (vigil) as the Lord waited to bring them out of Egypt.

It is God's night.

All Israelites keep this vigil and wait, on this night,  
generation after generation.

This is recorded in Exodus 12, verses 40 to 42.

*The Lord's people left Egypt exactly four hundred thirty years after they had arrived. On that night the Lord kept watch for them, and on this same night each year Israel will always keep watch in honour of the Lord.*

A YOUNG PERSON

On all other nights we eat bread either with yeast, or without yeast.

Why on this night do we eat only thin bread without yeast?

AN ADULT

*Hold up the bread showing it to everyone*

It is because the Israelites left Egypt in such a hurry that there was no time for the bread to rise.

As the book of Exodus tells us: “*The dough which they brought from Egypt was used to make loaves of flat bread. The dough had no yeast because they had been driven out of Egypt, and did not have time to prepare food for themselves for the entire journey.*” (Ex 12:39)

Let us then share in the custom of the Israelites.

They did this “way back then” and still do this today,  
together let us eat this flat bread.

*Everyone eats bread*

#### A YOUNG PERSON

On all other nights we eat any kind of herbs,  
on this night why do we eat only bitter herbs.

#### AN ADULT

*Hold up the pesto mixture in a glass bowl*

They are eaten to remember how horrible the lives were of the Israelites while they were in captivity in Egypt.

As it says in the book of Exodus:

*The Egyptians put tough slave bosses in charge of the people of Israel and tried to wear them down with hard work. ... The Israelites were mistreated, their families grew larger, and they took over more land. Because (they grew in number), the Egyptians hated them even more than before and made them work so hard that their lives were miserable. The Egyptians were cruel to the people of Israel and forced them to make bricks and to mix mortar and to work in the fields.*

Let us now eat the sour and bitter herbs, remembering the terrible life the Israelites had in Egypt.

*Everyone dips the bread into the bitter herbs (pesto, with lots of lemon in it)*

#### A YOUNG PERSON ASKS

Why on this night when we remember sadness do we drink nice sweet grape juice?

#### ANOTHER ADULT

*Lift up the tray of grape juice*

The Bible speaks of wine and grape juice that makes the hearts of people thankful,  
and we are filled with joy, as we remember God's loving kindness to us,  
the good life he gives us,  
the land full with richness,  
our good food, our good drink, and good friends.

Let us join in the joy of the Israelites  
who celebrate their rescue by God from the Egyptians,  
by drinking with them the ancient Hebrew toast.

A toast is when we all raise our glasses together.

The word L`Haiyim means “To Life!”

We raise our cups to make the ancient Hebrew toast together,  
and we say:

**L Haiyim! - To life!**

# Reflections for Lent, Good Friday and Easter

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*These were written by Angela Blundell in a similar style to the advent reflections*

## **Mary Magdalene**

The atmosphere was electric. Every year is the same, always excitement and celebrations, families drawn together to remember how the Lord spared us from death and delivered us from the oppression of Egyptian rule, but this time there was something else. It wasn't so much excitement, but hysteria, there was an undertone to the urgency in the market, in the square, the temple, the streets, everywhere there was something different. It had been building all week we realised, something was going to happen.

By the time we got back we realised that everyone had gone and only the 12 would be left. We breathed a sigh of relief as we finished our preparations, and readied the room for the meal. The men would eat together and we would join them for part of it but with serving and cleaning up we rarely got a chance to properly sit although our Teacher always encouraged it. We would stay for the food, everyone eating together, then we would leave our brothers to talk.

It started differently. As the men arrived we sent our servant with water and towels but our Teacher gently removed them from his hands and knelt down to wash their feet himself. Tears pricked the back of my eyes. We were always being surprised by Him. There was always something unexpected, and now, here he was, our Teacher, our Lord and he was washing the feet of others. They protested of course, embarrassed maybe? Certainly not happy with him doing it, but he insisted. And then we sat.

We shared the meal. We finished eating and got up, serving more food, pouring more wine, removing finished platters. The disciples barely noticed us, men didn't really notice, but our Teacher met each of our eyes and nodded in thanks. Even though we knew our place as women, it always seemed that in his eyes we were in fact, just as important. I don't even know how he did it, but somehow we knew that he noticed our contribution and valued it as much as the men who gathered around him. He encouraged our questions and our comments in spite of some of the surprised looks from other people.

Then it happened... he stood and raised some bread and broke it "eat this in remembrance of me". The words echoed in my head as the loaf was passed around and each took a piece. Then he raised a carafe of wine and poured some into his cup... this was passed too and they all poured some into their own cups and took a sip. "Do this to remember me." I shuddered. The warmth had gone from the room even though the fire burned and the extra candles and lamps we had put in lit it well. I missed what he said after that but the men were looking at each other uneasily around the table...

## **Beloved Disciple**

It was time to leave for prayer. Every night, after sundown, our Teacher and Lord would go out to pray. We would go to the garden at the base of the mountain, filled with olive and fig trees, and plants whose flowers scented the air. We walked, just some of us tonight, and for some reason Judas decided to come tonight and puffed along behind us. We were quiet. Normally we'd walk to the garden and talk, questioning, listening to explanations but tonight He was quiet. I couldn't think of anything to say. So much was going on in my head I could hardly work things out. There was a sadness about our Lord tonight, the way he looked at us, the way he walked. Everything about him radiated sorrow. He moved slowly, heavily, as if the weight of the world were on his shoulders.

I thought of the argument we had had at the table about who would be at his right hand. Our discussions over the last few days had been laden with suggestion and meaning. He had said that he would be leaving us, that he would even die. That one of us would betray him. That one of us would deny him. How could he think those things of us? His friends, his followers, his disciples. I had asked him privately what was going on and he shook his head and patted my shoulder, turning away and doing something else. He couldn't even confide in me now.

We arrived, the perfumed garden was quiet and peaceful. There was no one about, most would have been indoors with their families remembering the passover. Our Teacher walked ahead and motioned for us to stay, "to pray that we would not fall into temptation". Temptation for what? We sat on the ground, still warm from the days sun, I fitted myself against the trunk of an olive tree, and rested for a bit, trying to find words to describe my feelings so I could pray. I was so tired...



Can you not stay awake for a moment! My Lord's voice broke through my tiredness and I sat up to see his face looking at me, grieved and sad. We all looked at each other ashamed and then he went off, we settled back into our positions, telling each other we would stay awake now but soon I could feel myself drifting again... then I heard a noise. Someone was crying, sobbing, pleading. I glanced at the others but they were fully asleep so I crept closer towards the sound, hoping that my Lord was okay, maybe someone was hurting him. Peering through the trees I saw him, he was kneeling on the ground, his face almost in the dirt, "let this cup pass from me" he said, and raised his face. There were tears rolling down his face. The sweat was beaded on his forehead. I had never seen a man so urgent and desperate in his prayer. "yet not my will but yours" he said.

I felt a chill run through me. Whose will? What was so hard? What did it mean? My teacher's face was more peaceful now so I crawled back to my friends and waited, drifting off again "not my will but yours..."

### **Judas**

It would be so easy they said. You don't need to worry about anything, just get him to the garden and once he is there let us know and we will do the rest. Something sat heavy in my stomach. I could hardly eat the meal, although there was a lot of food and everyone seemed to be looking around at each other and at me. I reached for my cup and drank deeply, hoping the wine would quell this uneasiness but all that happened was that Teacher singled me out. I pretended I knew nothing. I knew he wouldn't know what I'd done, how could he? I would go and get our supplies and no one would question that I had some extra money. That money we could give to the poor or needy or keep it for something we needed.

We left the house after a while. Teacher was in a strange mood, quiet, thoughtful, almost sad. The women saw us out, it made me uneasy as they watched us. He laid his hand briefly on their heads as we went out the door. That was strange, he rarely touched the women, of course those following us would, in the hope of healing or forgiveness or whatever. Sometimes we had to hold them back but he never refused their attention, but he never gave it either. I shook myself. I was becoming just as strange as Peter and James and John, having arguments about who sat where at the table and being told one was going to deny him. How could you deny Him? Everyone knew we were his followers, it was no secret, we wouldn't have a hope of pretending otherwise.

We went to Gethsemane. I was glad of the lamp and torches we had thought to bring as the sun had set. Teacher set himself aside from us and asked the others to keep watch. Knowing that they wouldn't notice, I slipped away.

"How will we know it's him?" The leader of the guards demanded. I rolled my eyes, like he wouldn't recognise him? "He's the one I'll greet with a kiss," I said, and they nodded, checking their swords and adjusting their armour as they walked along. We got to the garden and I saw them looking sleepy and Jesus chastising them. I almost snorted as I saw the men. They thought themselves so clever and close to him, yet they now looked sheepish and chastened. I walked up and kissed him as a brother and he looked at me. There was something in his face... disappointment? resignation? and deep down something else... it wasn't quite anger, it could have been pity. I stepped back quickly and the soldiers moved to take him. Peter, the moron, sliced one of their ears off, but even though he was being arrested, like always Jesus did not know when enough was enough and he stuck that ear back on and he healed it. It was like it had never happened, and he did it in front of the soldiers who were going to arrest him and probably get him killed. I mean, who would do that? who would do something so blatant and obvious that he was different? I felt almost justified for a second, he was asking for it, performing miracles, treating women and sinners like they were special and important... the leader of the soldiers thrust a small bag in my hand as they turned to go. It felt heavy. I tied it to my belt, feeling its weight at my side. Combined with the weight in my stomach, and something rising up in my chest I started to feel uneasy. As they took him away, the others running away like fools I stood there in the dark, the heaviness rising in me...

## **Roman Soldier**

Growing up I was the strongest boy my age. Tall and broad. Once I was a man and muscular I had a good wife and we had three fine sons and two daughters who would make good wives. I'd just been promoted when this Jesus man came into Jerusalem, on a donkey of all things, and the people went balmy shouting Hosanna or some suchlike. We had heard of this man, but who hadn't? But when I was summoned to the temple and told what we had to do, I was surprised. Usually the Rabbis left us alone but now they seemed to think that they were in danger from this guy. Yeah, the one who rode the donkey... and it wasn't even a big donkey either, it was barely big enough for him to sit on. Anyway, it was easy enough to set up. One of my men had met with one of his followers, a weak man who was easily bought with 30 pieces of silver. I'd been given instruction to pay as much as necessary, the Rabbis and Chief priests had fired up the powerful leaders and everyone was scared of this man. A donkey riding oddball, who spoke at the temple and healed people with some sort of magical power.

I had my sword and a group of men, all armed with strong clubs or swords when the follower, Judas came. He looked small and insignificant but he told us what to do and we went to some garden. The man Jesus looked up. He wasn't surprised at all, you get to know peoples responses in my kind of work and this man knew we were coming. We grabbed him and one of his people cut off the ear of one of mine... it could have turned nasty then! But then that man picked the ear off the ground and put it back on, and I am not kidding, it stayed there. There was no blood, it was like it'd never happened... and then he told off his man... those who live by the sword would die by the sword or something. Part of me wondered if he was quite, you know, with it.. but another part of me thought WOW, that was something else. I mean I'd heard about the miracles and things but I figured it was just a set up or a bit of fake, but it wasn't fake, my guy had his ear cut off right in front of me and you couldn't even tell. Then I came to grips with myself, I had a job to do. I tied him up and led him away, thrusting the bag of money into Judas' hand as we went.

As we walked along, there was no struggle. He didn't say anything either. Usually you do jobs like this, criminals, escaped servants or wives, and they will yell or shout or weep or protest, but he just walked. I bet he would have come even if I hadn't tied him up good and tight.

There was no doubt about it. There was something about that man.

## **Peter**

I've spent my whole life being just a bit clumsy and stupid. I'm not the best with words, or ideas. I could catch fish and sail a boat and that was about it. But somehow Jesus made me feel like I was going to be something bigger and better than just a fisherman, struggling to make a living. He would trust me with things. He'd talk about the future, about trusting him, about getting to God. Some of it I couldn't get but other things I understood. He called me his Rock. He gave me a new name. I knew that I was going to be destined for something great. Finally.

Then my world turned upside down. My Teacher, taken away by thugs with large clubs and swords. I tried to defend him, to stop them and I even managed to take an ear off. But then teacher pulled me back, stopping me. Then he did it again. Somehow he always managed to surprise me. He put the ear back onto the man and looked at me, almost reproving... then they took him and then I saw it, a bag of something thrust into Judas' hands... I followed at a distance, hoping to find out what was happening.

My legs were trembling when I made it to the High Priest's house. I snuck into the courtyard and slipped as quietly as I could to a fire. It was warm and I held my hands out, to try and stop them shaking and look as casual as possible. A girl stopped and looked, a servant girl carrying a water jug. She asked me if I knew my Master and before I knew it, I was denying him. I shook myself and tried to listen to the voices inside the house but it was impossible amid the noise outside. The girl passed back with a full water jug and stopped again and asked the same question. I tried to deny it quietly, to not draw attention to myself but this time someone else noticed and looked even closer, exclaiming that I was with him. I denied it again, my heart thumping, my words stumbling over themselves to make me heard... then I heard a rooster crowing...

### **Simon of Cyrene**

I didn't mean to be there. I had come with my family to the city for the Passover and they had heard about the Jew who had been arrested. I admit I was curious, even I'd heard of the teacher who claimed to be the Messiah and now they were parading him out for all to see. When the crowd began chanting I tried to leave, but there were too many people, crowding together demanding the annual pardoning of a criminal.

He stood there, thorns around his head causing beads of blood to drip down his face. He had bruises too, on his arms and stomach, lashings from a whip, the blood dark and dried. He looked into the distance, I doubt he even heard the crowd, he didn't even seem to realise where he was... but he wasn't out to it, he was just not responding. In the end they tired of the heckling and made him pick up the wood they would use to hang him up. I was a little away by then, and I saw him come up the street. He was stumbling, almost blinded by blood, sweat, tears. The soldiers and the people were screaming, cursing the ugliest things I'd ever heard. It made me shudder, a chill running down my back. Surely this couldn't be real.

Then he fell again and couldn't get up. The soldier screamed at him, kicking him, but there was no response. I hoped he'd maybe died, it would stop if he died but even I could see that he was alive, breathing hard, unable to move. Then someone grabbed me, the soldier who had been screaming moments earlier was in front of me... "You!" he rasped, like someone who had been shouting for a long time "take up his cross". I looked at him, he was a big man. but so was I and I looked him in the eye. For a moment we stood there and I almost walked away when I caught sight of the teacher. I shook the soldier's arm off and strode over, lifting the wood off the man's bloodied back and helping him up. We gazed at each other and I saw strength and love and pain all mingled together in his face. He stumbled a bit and I held him tighter, he looked at me in exhaustion and gratitude.

"NO", I was pushed away from the man "Pick up the cross". I managed to lift it up with the soldiers help and settled it on my shoulder, my knees sagged and it took all my strength not to let them bend. How the Messiah had carried that cross all that way all beaten and bruised is beyond me. I walked, tripping over small stones and holes in the ground, hearing the yells and jeers of the crowd, hearing the whip occasionally on the man who followed. It felt like I carried that cross for years, one step after another, heavy, plodding but I held the look of Jesus in my vision, the dark eyes showing more depth than I'd ever seen in any man.

### **Mary, mother of Jesus**

At last I understood. All the comments, all the prophecies, all the hints from the learned and wise, and now it was time. I didn't want to be there. But I knew I needed to be. I'd spent most of his life feeling frustrated, unable to really understand this child I was to raise, yet loving him so much. And then when he'd started his ministry, refusing to continue to work and provide for his family, leaving his brothers to do the work, I admit I felt some shame. In spite of my efforts he had rarely visited, and when he did it would end in recriminations. My family, Joseph's family, calling him crazy and wanting him to come home. And all I could remember was the look on his face when he was 12, even then he had a certainty of his call and his work. And now look.

I remember his birth like it was yesterday. The pain. The confusion. Wishing that I had not taken this long journey with Joseph and had stayed at home. The smell of hay and animals, musty and dark. Women from the house had come and they had held my hand and encouraged me through that long night. He came quickly in the end, small but strong, bellowing briefly before finding my breast. After, the woman had cleaned me up she brought some swaddling cloth and showed me how to wrap him securely and easily so he could be changed and washed when needed.

And now. No shepherds and angels. No surreal magic or strange visitors but hatred and bitterness. My precious baby, born of my body, nourished by my breast, the child of my heart was dying. As he hung on the wood in the ground, the agony was clear on his face and he looked at me. We connected for a moment and then he looked at his beloved disciple John. "This is your mother," he said to him and he looked at me and said, "this is your son." Even in so much pain, he remembered me. I felt an ache of grief and the guilt that I'd felt over some of our conversations ebbed away as I realised that he was doing what he could to make sure I would be well and safe. I heard his words of forgiveness to one of the other men and I knew that those words were for me as well.

That cry, it carried on the breeze and then darkness came, the earth shaking and groaning. I fell to my knees and looked up. His body was still. All around me there were screams, not of hatred now, but of fear, most were running away but I stayed there. Rocks dug into my legs but I stayed, I watched my son in his death as I had watched him take his first breath

It was done.

### **Mary Magdalene**

There was so much to do. We rose early, making sure fires were lit and animals were fed so we could go to the tomb before anyone else was around. The men were shut away, miserable and afraid, they wouldn't even look out the window and refused to let us get the door when people knocked.

I ground spices together, we found the oils and perfumes that were needed to tend the body. We talked quietly about how we could move the rock, it had taken many men to move it we'd heard, but they had posted guards so maybe they could help. Even though Teacher had been a hated man, they would surely let us complete our burial rituals in peace. Surely.

The sun had just started to rise as we walked along. All around us we could see rubble and broken things, from the earthquake of a few days ago. There was no one about, some thin stray dogs nudging at rubbish searching for food. We hurried, keeping our voices low, towards the place where the tomb was.

We were thankful for it. We would not have had enough money to buy one had not the man from Arimathea stepped in. At least Teacher would have a decent place to rest, unlike other criminals whose bodies were just thrown into the pit at the far gate of the city.

There were a number of tombs, usually belonging to families, rocks and boulders and the odd wooden door protecting them from vandalism. Not that people would stay there anyway, they would have been too afraid of what might happen. There were plants and trees as well. It was a peaceful place...

Then we stopped. Gasping. The boulder had gone. The men who were guarding it were asleep. Asleep?! We couldn't actually believe our eyes, there is no way a Roman guard would fall asleep on duty. It was considered treason. Yet there they were. We hurried into the dim tomb, fumbling with our lamp but there was nothing there. Some grave clothes. We could barely breathe, and backed away, out of the tomb. The sun had risen further and was touching the rocks, lighting them with a strange glow, in the distance we saw a man, and went towards him, surely he must know where our teacher was? Tears and sobs poured out of us, the sadness of the last few days brimming over in our fear.

Where is he? Our teacher? His body is gone. The man looked at me, unfamiliar yet

Then one word, Mary... I looked at him, we looked at each other, my sisters they drew closer, and I saw. I fell to my feet and kissed the hem of his robes. His robes? He was dressed. He told us to go and tell the others. He placed a hand on each of us, like he did the night before he died. A benediction. We turned and hurried away, we starting running as the warmth of the sun finally penetrated our bones. We hurried home. Our teacher! Our Lord! Alive!

### **Peter**

I didn't believe them. The women woke us with their shouting and tears, their joy and laughter almost inappropriate given what we'd been through. He is alive, he is alive. He has returned! I looked at my brothers. There was hope in their eyes just as I felt it in my heart but in my head knew that it was for nothing. The scent of the perfumes and spices must have gone to their heads.

Go, go go... the women pushed me out the door, I had barely enough time to grab my coat and slip on my sandals. We walked quickly, heads down to avoid anyone, hurrying to the grave yard. Once there we realised something was wrong, the guards had gone and the boulder moved. We hesitantly moved in, it was never our role to tend the dead, we didn't really know what to look for but there, sitting there as clear as day was a man, an... an angel. He had an otherworldly glow, dressed simply, no wings or anything but clearly not a man.

"He is not here," the figure said, "He has risen."

We backed out, hope flamed in my heart again but my head stopped it. It could not be true. It could not.

*Good Friday*

# Hands of God – 1 Hour Ecumenical Service

*This was first used as a combined service between Crossroads Methodist and Papakura Anglican. We started at Crossroads, and processed to our church. Stations were read along the way at appropriate places. No pictures were in the booklet, as it was packed with participation and real life action.*

*This was written by Dion Blundell.*

How to make it work: The congregation were used for most parts of this service. Anywhere you see headings that say [Congregation], there was actually a gap/space there, rather than the word Congregation. The idea being that you write in the name of the person who is reading that section. All in all, there are 20 additional roles. So you print 20 extra copies off, highlight each section, and give it to someone to read. Incidentally, for this service everyone had a copy of the booklet. You write that person's name on your copy, then you know who is doing the section, and can invite them to read if they have become distracted. I've found it works both handing out just before the service when all are gathered and handing out days before so people can prepare. Both ways have strengths and weaknesses.

You will need:

A large cross, or small crosses for the procession. Our tradition has been to have a small 1 metre cross at the front and back of the procession.

A life sized body of Jesus made out of chicken wire.

Lots of rosemary or thyme.

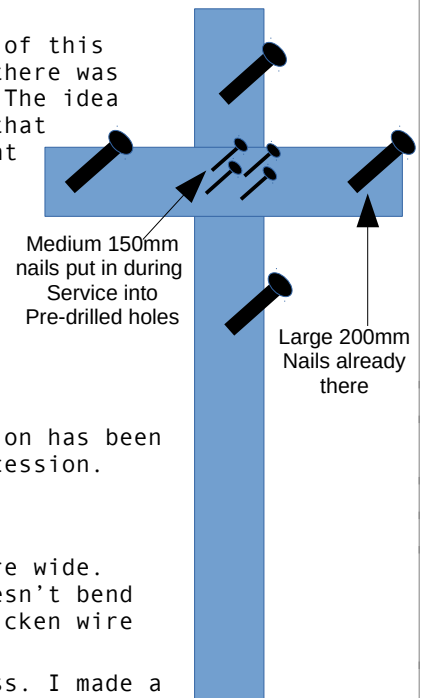
A cross upright about 2.5 metres tall, a cross bar about 1 metre wide. Pre-drill the holes, so the person bashing the big nails in doesn't bend them. Place some really big nails on the cross, so that the chicken wire Jesus will easily hook onto them.

A bucket with a wooden sleeve in it, in which to place the cross. I made a rectangular sleeve out of plywood, and put it in a bucket held in place with lots of led (gravel or sand might work too).

Pascal Candle lit in the sanctuary, with enough room around it that the entire congregation can come forward and walk around it.

A white bed sheet to wrap Jesus in.

A station wagon to place Jesus in.



## At Crossroads Methodist

[Methodist Minister]

Welcome

## Hands, burdened with our sin (Carrying the cross)

[Congregation]

A reading from John Chapter 19

Pilate ... brought Jesus out. Then he sat down on the judge's bench at the place known as "The Stone Pavement." ... It was about noon on the day before Passover, and Pilate said to the crowd, "Look at your king!"

Kill him! Kill him!" they yelled. "Nail him to a cross!"

"So you want me to nail your king to a cross?" Pilate asked.

The chief priests replied, "The Emperor is our king!" Then Pilate handed Jesus over to be nailed to a cross. Jesus was taken away, and he carried his cross to a place known as "The Skull." In Aramaic this place is called "Golgotha."

*We process to Anglican Church*

1. *Walk to traffic lights at intersection of Gt Sth Rd and Broadway, cross over*
2. *Pause at other side for next reading*

## **The hands of another helping (Simon of Cyrene)**

**[Congregation ]**

A reading from Luke Chapter 16

As Jesus was being led away, some soldiers grabbed hold of a man from Cyrene named Simon. He was coming in from the fields, but they put the cross on him and made him carry it behind Jesus.

*Instructions: Walk on to just past the zebra crossing and pause*

## **Praying hands, grieving for the Holy Land**

**[Congregation ]**

A reading from Luke chapter 16

A large crowd was following Jesus, and in the crowd a lot of women were crying and weeping for him. Jesus turned to the women and said: Women of Jerusalem, don't cry for me! Cry for yourselves and for your children. Someday people will say, "Women who never had children are really fortunate!" At that time everyone will say to the mountains, "Fall on us!" They will say to the hills, "Hide us!" If this can happen when the wood is green, what do you think will happen when it is dry?

*Instruction – continue and cross road at Red Cross shop lights*

## **Enter into Papakura Anglican**

*While we come in At the Cross will be played. We join in the song together.*

*A chicken wire representation of Jesus waits for us in the sanctuary.*

**NOTE:** We had the sanctuary screened off with red fabric, 8m wide, by 8m tall. Jesus was "standing" leaning against the red fabric

## **Introduction and Welcome**

**[Anglican Minister]**

Welcome to our service today, and thank you to those who could join us for the processional witness.

Our theme today is The Hands of God.

I would invite you to take the booklet away with you at the end and make use of it in a devotional way.

We have a 3 hour service today, from noon till 3pm if you wish to join us for that.

As we continue, some thoughts, as a way of introducing **Good Friday** to us.

*We remember today as a black day, a dark day in history.*

*We re-live it, we remember it, not to glory in the darkness, but to remember.*

*We remember that humanity can live in the darkness of evil.*

*And we remember that God loves us unconditionally,  
and that God can free us from this  
if we will hold Jesus' hand and journey towards the light with him.*

*So we don't enter into hope-less despair,  
but rather we faithfully take a journey,  
to remind us that when we get it wrong God will be there with us,  
not encouraging us to stay in the dark,  
but rather drawing us out, into the light and constant love of God.*

*Our opening page is BLACK, but our closing page is WHITE*

## **HYMN – Were you there**

## **Remembering Jesus**

**[Anglican Minister]**

*One of our primary roles as a Christian, is to remember Jesus and re-tell his story.*

## **Hands eating a basic meal**

**[Congregation ]**

**PROJECTOR:** We had a picture of some hands eating a very basic meal on the screen during this section.

When the time came for Jesus and the apostles to eat, he said to them, “I have very much wanted to eat this Passover meal with you before I suffer I tell you that I will not eat another Passover meal until it is finally eaten in God’s kingdom.” ... Jesus took some bread in his hands and gave thanks for it. He broke the bread and handed it to his apostles. Then he said, “This is my body, which is given for you. Eat this as a way of remembering me!” After the meal he took another cup of wine in his hands. Then he said, “This is my blood. It is poured out for you, and with it God makes his new agreement.

*Pause for reflection*

## **Hands of prayer**

**[Congregation ]**

PROJECTOR: We had a picture of some hands praying on the screen during this section.

Jesus went out to the Mount of Olives, as he often did, and his disciples went with him. When they got there, he told them, “Pray that you won’t be tested.” Jesus walked on a little way before he knelt down and prayed, “Father, if you will, please don’t make me suffer by having me drink from this cup. But do what you want, and not what I want.” Then an angel from heaven came to help him. Jesus was in great pain and prayed so sincerely that his sweat fell to the ground like drops of blood. Jesus got up from praying and went over to his disciples. They were asleep and worn out from being so sad. He said to them, “Why are you asleep? Wake up and pray that you won’t be tested.”

*Pause for reflection*

## **Hands asking for forgiveness**

**[Congregation ]**

PROJECTOR: We had a picture of two hands holding another persons hands during this section.

*Rosemary is the herb of remembrance. You may now come forward, and thread some rosemary within the body of Jesus, as a way of remembering. In doing this we are honouring him and his sacrifice.*

*The representation of Jesus is gently laid down, so we may make our remembrance.  
You may wish to come forward and thread some rosemary into Jesus.*

## **Taize Chant – Jesus Remember me**

**[Taize Group]**

Jesus, remember me when you come into your Kingdom.

*After a while this fades out, and organ music is played  
When everyone who wishes has paid their respects and remembered Jesus, we continue.*

## **Hands of nails, hammers and death**

**[Congregation ]**

PROJECTOR: We had a picture of some “Jesus” hands with nail scars and a bit of wood with a big nail sticking out of it during this section.

Two criminals were led out to be put to death with Jesus. When the soldiers came to the place called “The Skull,” they nailed Jesus to a cross. They also nailed the two criminals to crosses, one on each side of Jesus.

*The cross is nailed together.*

*Jesus is placed on the cross and it is lifted into place*

NOTE: The cross being nailed together is quite emotional. Make sure the holes are *pre-drilled* in the wood, so the nails don’t bend. I use about a 5mm diameter galvanised nail, and a hole of 4.5mm in diameter.

## **HYMN – When I survey**



PROJECTOR: We had a picture of people standing around a camp fire on the screen during this section.

*It all happened so fast. One moment Jesus was with us, the next he was hanging on that cross. You wonder, you wonder if there was anything we should have done. And you think back to how you responded in the moment, it was horrible, horrible.*

*We were there in Jerusalem for the passover festival, when we remember the amazing and miraculous work that God did to bring us out of Egypt. United again, this time for the one purpose of worship and remembrance.*

*Anyway, long after the resurrection we started to re-tell the story of those horrible days. We think it is important to remember it, even though he is risen from the dead, we think it is important to remember what Jesus went through to save us.*

*Looking back, in hindsight, you could see both the hands of God, and the hands of others. These others weren't evil, but they did evil. You could see the compassion in Jesus' eyes. The compassion he had for those slowly draining him of his life.*

**Praising hands****[Congregation ]**

PROJECTOR: We had a picture of some hands raised (praising hands) on the screen during this section.

Jesus ... went on toward Jerusalem. ... as he rode along, the people spread clothes on the road in front of him. When Jesus was starting down the Mount of Olives, his large crowd of disciples were happy and praised God because of all the miracles they had seen. They shouted,

“Blessed is the King who comes  
in the name of the Lord!

Peace in heaven  
and glory to God.”

*Often we are quick to praise God.  
But our praise, isn't always met with loyalty,  
our loyalty can wane.*

*Pause for reflection*

**Hands wanting....****[Congregation ]**

PROJECTOR: We had a picture of someone with lots of shopping mall type bags on the screen during this section. With the responsive prayer below it: Gracious God, help us to believe your prayer, your way of life. GIVE US TODAY OUR DAILY BREAD.

Pilate went back out and said, “I don’t find this man guilty of anything! And since I usually set a prisoner free for you at Passover, would you like for me to set free the king of the Jews?” They shouted, “No, not him! We want Barabbas.” Now Barabbas was a terrorist.

*At times we want, we want, we want. Our shopping centres, our way of life, can be highly driven, desiring things, wanting...*

Gracious God, help us to believe your prayer, your way of life

**Give us today our daily bread**

**SONG - How deep the father's love**

## Hands trusting us with ministry

[Congregation ]

**PROJECTOR:** We had a picture of a grandfather catching his grandchild jumping off of a wall during this section. With the responsive prayer below: Father forgive us. FATHER FORGIVE US.

Jesus said, "Simon, listen to me! Satan has demanded the right to test each one of you, as a farmer does when he separates wheat from the husks. But Simon, I have prayed that your faith will be strong. And when you have come back to me, help the others." Peter said, "Lord, I am ready to go with you to jail and even to die with you." Jesus replied, "Peter, I tell you that before a rooster crows tomorrow morning, you will say three times that you don't know me."

*The disciples were fully trained, yet got it wrong! We get it wrong! But God continues to call us, and entrust the mission of God into our hands, in partnership. We work together with God. God sees the potential in Peter, in you and in me.*

*Pause for reflection*

Father forgive us

**Father forgive us**

## Hands of violence or healing

[Congregation ]

**PROJECTOR:** Picture of someone holding a red love heart, with a plaster on it. With the responsive prayer below: Father, where we don't bring your healing, wholeness and peace. FATHER FORGIVE US.

When Jesus' disciples saw (Jesus was about to be arrested), they asked, "Lord, should we attack them with a sword?" One of the disciples even struck at the high priest's servant with his sword and cut off the servant's right ear. "Enough of that!" Jesus said. Then he touched the servant's ear and healed it.

*These people had been with Jesus for 3 year! 3 Years! Yet they still have to ask: "What way should we go? The way of violence, or the way of peace."*

Father, where we don't bring your healing, wholeness and peace

**Forgive us**

## Tying God's hands?

[Congregation ]

**PROJECTOR:** Classic love heart cloud picture with a blue background, superimposed on top of this blue sky was a clipart of someone's tied hands. With the responsive prayer below: Father, forgive our indifference. IMPLANT YOUR HEART IN US TODAY, THROUGH YOUR HOLY SPIRIT.

The Roman officer and his men, together with the temple police, arrested Jesus and tied him up. They took him first to Annas, who was the father-in-law of Caiaphas, the high priest that year. This was the same Caiaphas who had told the Jewish leaders, "It is better if one person dies for the people."

*It's not that God's hand's are tied, it's simply that we limit the options of God working in our lives, through closing our eyes to new possibilities. Our indifference leads to evil. Sometimes when we are indifferent, when we say: "This doesn't matter" then evil rules*

Father forgive our indifference

**Implant your heart in us today, through your Holy Spirit**

**SONG – Be Still for the presence of the Lord**

**PROJECTOR:** Hands cupping a candle for warmth. With the responsive prayer: When our loyalty wanes. FATHER FORGIVE US, AND DRAW US TO YOU.

Simon Peter and another disciple followed Jesus. That disciple knew the high priest, and he followed Jesus into the courtyard of the high priest's house. Peter stayed outside near the gate. But the other disciple came back out and spoke to the girl at the gate. She let Peter go in, but asked him, "Aren't you one of that man's followers?" "No, I am not!" Peter answered. It was cold, and the servants and temple police had made a charcoal fire. They were warming themselves around it, when Peter went over and stood near the fire to warm himself.

*Go and cup the Christ candle, feel the warmth.*

When our loyalty wanes

**Father, forgive us, and draw us to you**

**Hands throwing a dice, looking for a way out**

**[Congregation ]**

After the soldiers had nailed Jesus to the cross, they divided up his clothes into four parts, one for each of them. But his outer garment was made from a single piece of cloth, and it did not have any seams. The soldiers said to each other, "Let's not rip it apart. We will gamble to see who gets it." This happened so that the Scriptures would come true, which say,

"They divided up my clothes  
and gambled for my garments."

*In Lotto we look for a way out of life, for a way out of debt, or for an alternate way after unfulfilled hope. We remember Jesus' words: "Not my will, but your will be done."*

Gracious God

**Show yourself for us**

so we do not go about in ignorance;

**reveal yourself to us**

for in you we know your presence, your call, your will.

**Mother's hands cradling her baby**

**[Congregation ]**

**PROJECTOR:** Picture of mum cuddling her newborn baby. With the responsive prayer: For those who have yet to reach their full potential. MAY WE BE ACTIVE IN HELPING NURTURE ALL CHILDREN, MAY WE BE CARING, MAY WE BE LOVING.

Jesus' mother stood beside his cross with her sister and Mary the wife of Clopas. Mary Magdalene was standing there too.

*As a mother you know the potential of your baby. You have hopes, dreams and aspirations for them. Sometimes these are robbed, by evil, by a broken world, or by things not being as they should.*

For those who have yet to reach their full potential

**May we be active in helping to nurture all children, may we be caring, may we be loving.**

**Final will and testament**

**[Congregation ]**

**PROJECTOR:** Stock photo of a fountain pen on top of a paper saying: "final will and testament". With the responsive prayer: For an area in our family that needs restoration and hope. GRANT US THE GRACE TO EAT TOGETHER, TO RESTORE RELATIONSHIPS AND LIVE WHOLE LIVES.

When Jesus saw his mother and his favourite disciple with her, he said to his mother, "This man is now your son." Then he said to the disciple, "She is now your mother." From then on, that disciple took her into his own home.

*Even in dying, Jesus was caring. His family had estranged themselves from Jesus. Yet, at the final moment there is restoration, there is care, there is love. There is always hope.*

*Pause for reflection*

For an area in our family that needs restoration and hope

**Grant us the grace to eat together, to restore relationships and live whole lives**

**Temple is split**

**[Anglican Minister]**

PROJECTOR: Picture of large Greco-Roman rubble stones

*The temple is split, both literally, and spiritually. The leaders did a horrible thing. They fought, amongst themselves and with God. And they lost on two counts.*

*Firstly spiritually they split themselves off from God. They lost God, they killed God in their midst. And this split the people too. They were meant to lead, but they showed themselves to be unable to lead.*

*Secondly, when you split a group of people, those people become weaker. The temple curtain tore. It tore, not only spiritually to show we now have access to God the Father, but also to show us the establishment is torn, and broken when we live by ourselves. If we wish to live then we need to make sure we are following God's ways. We thank God everyday, for the Holy Spirit, and the way God guides us. It is so easy to make big mistakes, but if we pay attention to the Holy Spirit, we make less mistakes. Because we have to be quiet, and compassionate like Jesus was. It seems to be only in the quiet that we really hear the Spirit's guidance. We say the Spirit is the Spirit of Jesus, and it is.*

*But anyway, we were talking about the temple physically splitting. And it did. We didn't heal the factions we had, and the temple fell. If only we had listened to Jesus' ways earlier. But it's too late now.*

*And anyway, we know now that it's not about buildings, but about the people. Jesus showed us that, and the Holy Spirit continues to convict us of that.*

*John Mark always reminds us that we can find God on the way, right where we are. We thank him for his conviction of this, and reminding us that it's all about the people.*

**Intercessions**

**[Intercessor ]**

PROJECTOR: Picture of the world from space.

**Lord's prayer**

**[ALL ]**

**Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and for ever. Amen.**

**SONG – I will offer up my life**

**Turning off the light switch**

**[Congregation ]**

PROJECTOR: Old-school light switch labeled OFF

Jesus knew that he had now finished his work. And in order to make the Scriptures come true, he said, "I am thirsty!" A jar of cheap wine was there. Someone then soaked a sponge with the wine and held it up to Jesus' mouth on the stem of a hyssop plant. After Jesus drank the wine, he said, "Everything is done!" He bowed his head and died.

*There comes a time, when we realise we have done what we can do. Together, let us ask for God's peace.*

Let us pray: Lord, it is the night.

The night is for stillness. Let us be still in the presence of God.

It is night after a long day. What has been done has been done; what has not been done has not been done; let it be.

The night is dark. Let our fears of the darkness of the world and of our own lives rest in you.

The night is quiet. Let the quietness of your peace enfold us, all dear to us, and all who have no peace.

The night heralds the dawn. Let us look expectantly to a new day, new joys, new possibilities.

In your name we pray. **Amen.**<sup>1</sup>

## **Gentle Hands**

**[Congregation ]**

PROJECTOR: Adult hands cupping young hands, holding a butterfly

There was a man named Joseph, who was from Arimathea in Judea. Joseph was a good and honest man, and he was eager for God's kingdom to come. He was also a member of the council, but he did not agree with what they had decided. Joseph went to Pilate and asked for Jesus' body. He took the body down from the cross and wrapped it in fine cloth. Then he put it in a tomb that had been cut out of solid rock and had never been used. It was Friday, and the Sabbath was about to begin.

*The cross is taken down*

*Jesus is gently removed, his arms folded from out-stretched to by his sides.*

*He is wrapped in white grave clothes*

## **FINAL PRAYERS**

### **Hands, looking through binoculars at a distance**

**[Anglican Minister]**

PROJECTOR: Binoculars. With the responsive prayer beside them: Lord, when we disengage.  
MAY YOUR HOLY SPIRIT RE-KINDLE YOUR WAYS IN US.

All of Jesus' close friends and the women who had come with him from Galilee stood at a distance and watched.

Lord, when we disengage

**May your Holy Spirit re-kindle your ways in us**

We pray: Gracious God, help us to engage, to not fret over what might have been, but rather to fully live into your tomorrow and your resurrection. May we be a healthy, whole witness to your body at work, in Creation, in Papakura, in New Zealand. **Amen.**

### **Blessing**

**[Meth&Ang Minister ]**

PROJECTOR: Picture of a Freedom sign

Ang Min: May Christ the crucified convince you that God loves you and has forgiven you.

Meth Min: May the cross carry you through whatever pain and suffering assails you. May you go forward with courage in the faith of Christ

Meth&Ang Min: and may God, Creator, Redeemer and Giver of Life, bless you today and always. **AMEN.**

### **Calloused hands**

**[Congregation ]**

PROJECTOR: Picture of some rough hands firmly rested on a rail. Or maybe some working hands?

Joseph ... put the body in a tomb that had been cut into solid rock. Then he rolled a big stone against the entrance to the tomb. Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Joseph were watching and saw where the body was placed.

*Some rough calloused hands, do the final gentle work to care for Jesus*

*Pause for reflection*

### **Jesus is buried**

**NOTE:** It was very much like a funeral procession as the shrouded body was carried out. We used our gardener's car, there was something nice and symbolic and playful about using the gardeners car.

*Jesus is carried to the car.*

*You may follow, stay in silence, or move to the hall for Hot Cross buns.*

Thank you for joining us, and for your faithfulness.

### **Final thought**

*We leave with the hope of Easter on the horizon.*

*May the light of Christ always guide you.*

*May faith*

*May hope*

*May love*

*be alive in you*

*today*

*and always.*

*Peace be with you. Dion.*

# Hands of God – 3 Hour Devotional Service

#### Resources needed

1. Bread
2. Wine/Grape-juice
3. Rosemary
4. Nails
5. Olives (pitted or stuffed)
6. Christ Candle
7. Shroud for candle
8. Basket for confession at the foot of Christ Candle
9. Palm Branch
10. Palm Crosses

*This was first used as a combined service between Crossroads Methodist and Papakura Anglican. That service comes before this in this book. This service was tweaked and expanded to be a 3 hour service that used the senses and gets people involved in both action and reading. We had pictures in the booklet, and there is an example booklet on the website. I include picture placeholders below for you to find your own pictures. You'll notice that it is divided into sections, with the right hand side containing a [ ] for you to write in the name of the person who is going to do each section. You can distribute the booklets ahead of time to people, or you can have someone at the back handing them out, and getting involvement during the service. We have used both methods effectively. If using the hand-out-as-you-go method, the person leading needs to be ready to dive into the mix if there is no one for a section. We tend to have between 12 and 30 people come to this service. When we have 12, the leader is involved, when we have 30 there is no need.*

## **HYMN – Were you there**

### **Introduction and Welcome**

Were You There is a great hymn to start with because it asks the question, were we there? And the answer of course is no. But in our minds, using our imagination, we can enter into the story, and relive something of what the disciples went through.

Our theme today is The Hands of God.

I would invite you to take the booklet away with you at the end and make use of it in a devotional way.

As we continue, some thoughts, as a way of introducing **Good Friday** to us.

*We remember today as a black day, a dark day in history.*

*We re-live it, we remember it, not to glory in the darkness, but to remember.*

*We remember that humanity can live in the darkness of evil.*

*And we remember that God loves us unconditionally, and that God can free us from this if we will hold Jesus' hand and journey towards the light with him.*

*So we don't enter into hope-less despair, but rather we faithfully take a journey, to remind us that when we get it wrong God will be there with us, not encouraging us to stay in the dark, but rather drawing us out, into the light and constant love of God.*

*Our opening page is BLACK, but our closing page is WHITE*

### **A reflection of Peter**

*It all happened so fast. One moment Jesus was with us, the next he was hanging on that cross. You wonder. You wonder if there was anything we should have done. And you think back to how you responded in the moment, it was horrible, horrible.*

*We were there in Jerusalem for the Passover Festival, when we remember the amazing and miraculous work that God did to bring us out of Egypt. United again, this time for the one purpose of worship and remembrance.*

*Anyway, long after the resurrection we started to re-tell the story of those horrible days. We think it is important to remember it, even though he is risen from the dead, we think it is important to remember what Jesus went through to save us.*

*Looking back, in hindsight, you could see both the hands of God, and the hands of others. These others weren't evil, but they did evil. You could see the compassion in Jesus' eyes. The compassion he had for those slowly draining him of his life.*

PICTURE: People standing around a bonfire on the beach

*Silence until 12:15*

### **12:15pm Praising hands**

Jesus ... went on toward Jerusalem. ... as he rode along, the people spread clothes on the road in front of him. When Jesus was starting down the Mount of Olives, his large crowd of disciples were happy and praised God because of all the miracles they had seen. They shouted,

“Blessed is the King who comes  
in the name of the Lord!  
Peace in heaven  
and glory to God.”

*Pause*

*Often we are quick to praise God.  
But our praise, isn't always met with loyalty,  
our loyalty can wane.*

*Pause*

Lift up the Palm Branch of praise  
Lift up the Palm Cross  
The one symbol,  
of our praise  
of our sin  
redeemed through the blessing  
of the palm  
to remind us to be faithful.

*Please distribute the Palm crosses to those present*

*Silent Reflection on your Palm Cross and the way(s) we praise God*

PICTURE: People with hands raised in worship

## 12:20pm **Remembering Jesus**

[ \_\_\_\_\_ ]

*One of our primary roles as Christians, is to remember Jesus and re-tell his story.*

### **Hands eating a basic meal**

When the time came for Jesus and the apostles to eat, he said to them, “I have very much wanted to eat this Passover meal with you before I suffer I tell you that I will not eat another Passover meal until it is finally eaten in God’s kingdom.” ... Jesus took some bread in his hands and gave thanks for it. He broke the bread and handed it to his apostles. Then he said, “This is my body, which is given for you. Eat this as a way of remembering me!” After the meal he took another cup of wine in his hands. Then he said, “This is my blood. It is poured out for you, and with it God makes his new agreement.”

PICTURE: Person eating a basic meal

*Pause*

At the front there is some bread and wine. These are not consecrated, it is not communion. But you may wish to come and take some bread back to your seat as a reminder of the basic meal that Jesus shared with his disciples. We eat the bread to draw us and our senses into the story.

*In silence we imagine what that last meal must have been like*

## 12:25 **Hands trusting us with ministry**

[ \_\_\_\_\_ ]

Jesus said, “Simon, listen to me! Satan has demanded the right to test each one of you, as a farmer does when he separates wheat from the husks. But Simon, I have prayed that your faith will be strong. And when you have come back to me, help the others.” Peter said, “Lord, I am ready to go with you to jail and even to die with you.” Jesus replied, “Peter, I tell you that before a rooster crows tomorrow morning, you will say three times that you don’t know me.”

*Pause*



*The disciples were fully trained, yet got it wrong! We get it wrong! But God continues to call us, and entrust the mission of God into our hands, in partnership. We work together with God. God sees the potential in Peter, in you and in me.*

Pause

Father forgive us.

**Father forgive us.**

PICTURE: Grandfather catching boy jumping off of a wall

*We reflect on God's call on our lives,  
the way it has stayed the same, and the ways it changes.*

### 12:30pm **Hands of prayer**

[\_\_\_\_\_]

Jesus went out to the Mount of Olives, as he often did, and his disciples went with him. When they got there, he told them, "Pray that you won't be tested." Jesus walked on a little way before he knelt down and prayed, "Father, if you will, please don't make me suffer by having me drink from this cup. But do what you want, and not what I want." Then an angel from heaven came to help him. Jesus was in great pain and prayed so sincerely that his sweat fell to the ground like drops of blood. Jesus got up from praying and went over to his disciples. They were asleep and worn out from being so sad. He said to them, "Why are you asleep? Wake up and pray that you won't be tested."

Pause

Come and eat an olive. Olives are bitter. There was the bitterness of tears and blood flowing down Jesus' face as he prayed.

Taste and be reminded of the cost.

PICTURE: Person with hands together prayer

*In silence we wait with Jesus,  
and we bring before God the strong petition of our heart.*

### 12:35pm **Hands of violence or healing**

[\_\_\_\_\_]

When Jesus' disciples saw (Jesus was about to be arrested), they asked, "Lord, should we attack them with a sword?" One of the disciples even struck at the high priest's servant with his sword and cut off the servant's right ear. "Enough of that!" Jesus said. Then he touched the servant's ear and healed it.

Pause

*These people had been with Jesus for 3 year! 3 Years! Yet they still have to ask: "What way should we go? The way of violence, or the way of peace."*

Pause

Father, where we don't bring your healing, wholeness and peace

**Forgive us**

PICTURE: Person holding a love heart with a plaster on the heart

### **HYMN – O Sacred Head**

*Silence – what role do peace and violence play in your life? What way of violence is the Holy Spirit prompting you to lay at the cross? Do you need to forgive someone for their violence towards you? What is the Holy Spirit prompting you to take to God in prayer?*

12:40pm **Tying God's hands?**

[\_\_\_\_\_]

The Roman officer and his men, together with the temple police, arrested Jesus and tied him up. They took him first to Annas, who was the father-in-law of Caiaphas, the high priest that year. This was the same Caiaphas who had told the Jewish leaders, "It is better if one person dies for the people."

Pause

*It's not that God's hand's are tied, it's simply that we limit the options of God working in our lives, through closing our eyes to new possibilities. Our indifference leads to evil. Sometimes when we are indifferent, when we say: "This doesn't matter" then evil rules*

Father forgive our indifference

**Implant your heart in us today, through your Holy Spirit**

Pause

PICTURE: A classic love heart cloud picture with a blue background. Superimposed on top of this blue sky, a clipart of someone's tied hands.

Some words for prayer and reflection:

limits;	limitless.
Tying, binding;	freeing.
Limited;	potential.
Indifference;	justice.
Closed;	Open.
Evil;	Goodness

12:45pm **Hands wanting....**

[\_\_\_\_\_]

Pilate went back out and said, "I don't find this man guilty of anything! And since I usually set a prisoner free for you at Passover, would you like for me to set free the king of the Jews?" They shouted, "No, not him! We want Barabbas." Now Barabbas was a terrorist.

Pause

*At times we want, we want, we want. Our shopping centres, our way of life, can be highly driven, desiring things, wanting...*

Pause

Gracious God, help us to believe your prayer, your way of life.

**Give us today our daily bread.**

PICTURE: Person holding many shopping bags.

**Lord's prayer**

**Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and for ever. Amen.**

*We are reminded that the prayer of Jesus says:  
Give us today our daily bread.*

*Not tomorrow's bread, but just today's.*

*If we all settled for having enough, then God's Creation would be in better shape. We would not have mined and plundered the Earth's resources so mercilessly. We would have learnt compassion.*

*Ponder what you will do about consumerism in your life.  
How will you care for God's Creation better?*

**12:55pm HYMN – My Song is Love Unknown**

**13:00pm Hands turning away**

Pilate asked them, "What am I to do with Jesus, who is called the Messiah?" They all yelled, "Nail him to a cross!" Pilate answered, "But what crime has he done?" "Nail him to a cross!" they yelled even louder.

*Pause*

*We were reminded on Palm Sunday that Jesus consciously took the journey to Jerusalem, knowing that this would mean certain death for himself on the cross.*

*We are thankful to God for the lengths that God goes to, to rescue us.*

*We are also reminded of the peril of leadership, and how quickly the story moves from: "all spoke well of him" and "Hosanna to the King" through to "crucify him."*

*In the space of 7 days, those that supported Jesus were calling for his death. As we remember this, may we faithfully re-tell the story and the extent to which God goes to save us.*

*May we find ways of supporting our leadership.*

*Pause*

As we hold silence together,  
we remember the words

**The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,  
and the love of God,  
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit,  
be with you today and always. Amen.**

*We reflect on God's Grace at work, in our life, in the Church, in the wider world.*

**13:05pm Warming hands by the fire**

Simon Peter and another disciple followed Jesus. That disciple knew the high priest, and he followed Jesus into the courtyard of the high priest's house. Peter stayed outside near the gate. But the other disciple came back out and spoke to the girl at the gate. She let Peter go in, but asked him, "Aren't you one of that man's followers?" "No, I am not!" Peter answered. It was cold, and the servants and temple police had made a charcoal fire. They were warming themselves around it, when Peter went over and stood near the fire to warm himself.

*Go and cup the Christ candle, feel the warmth.*

When our loyalty wanes

**Father, forgive us, and draw us to you.**

PICTURE: Hands cupping a candle.

**13:15pm Hands, burdened with our sin (Carrying the cross)**

A reading from John Chapter 19

Pilate ... brought Jesus out. Then he sat down on the judge's bench at the place known as "The Stone Pavement." ... It was about noon on the day before Passover, and Pilate said to the crowd, "Look at your king!"

Kill him! Kill him!" they yelled. "Nail him to a cross!"

"So you want me to nail your king to a cross?" Pilate asked.

The chief priests replied, "The Emperor is our king!" Then Pilate handed Jesus over to be nailed to a cross. Jesus was taken away, and he carried his cross to a place known as "The Skull." In Aramaic this place is called "Golgotha."

Silence

### 13:20pm **HYMN – There is a Green Hill**

Silence

### 13:25pm **The hands of another helping (Simon of Cyrene)[\_\_\_\_\_]**

As Jesus was being led away, some soldiers grabbed hold of a man from Cyrene named Simon. He was coming in from the fields, but they put the cross on him and made him carry it behind Jesus.

Silence

*It is not enough to re-tell, we must re-live the Gospel, and that means living its teaching. Simon of Cyrene helped another he did not know. Will you also help others?*

### 13:30pm **Praying hands, grieving for the Holy Land [\_\_\_\_\_]**

A large crowd was following Jesus, and in the crowd a lot of women were crying and weeping for him. Jesus turned to the women and said: Women of Jerusalem, don't cry for me! Cry for yourselves and for your children. Someday people will say, "Women who never had children are really fortunate!" At that time everyone will say to the mountains, "Fall on us!" They will say to the hills, "Hide us!" If this can happen when the wood is green, what do you think will happen when it is dry?

Silence

### 13:35pm **Hands of nails, hammers and death [\_\_\_\_\_]**

Two criminals were led out to be put to death with Jesus. When the soldiers came to the place called "The Skull," they nailed Jesus to a cross. They also nailed the two criminals to crosses, one on each side of Jesus.

PICTURE: A picture of Jesus' hands with nail holes in them

### **HYMN – When I survey**

*Run your nail through your hands,  
notice it is cold and hard.*

*Pray for something in your life that is cold and hard,  
and ask for forgiveness,  
when you are ready, you may bring it forward and put it in the basket at the foot of the Christ candle.*

### 13:45pm **Silence - until 2:00pm**

### 14:00pm **Grace [\_\_\_\_\_]**

One of the criminals hanging there also insulted Jesus by saying, "Aren't you the Messiah? Save yourself and save us!" But the other criminal told the first one off, "Don't you fear God? Aren't you getting the same punishment as this man? We got what was coming to us, but he didn't do anything wrong." Then he said to Jesus, "Remember me when you come into power!" Jesus replied, "I promise that today you will be with me in paradise."

### **Taize Chant – Jesus Remember me**

Jesus, remember me when you come into your Kingdom.

Silence

### **Grace Reflection**

#### **Grace makes beauty out of ugly things**

*It's easy to leave Good Friday to history, to 2000 years ago, to a moment, in a series of moments that had huge historical and spiritual significance but is still far enough away to be safe.*

*But what it shows is a world, a people capable of injustice, bigotry, hatred, abuse, torture, denial, mockery. A world much like today. A world that has the mass extermination of millions of Jews, the Killing Fields, Execution, terrorism, dictatorship, racism, sexism, two world wars, hundreds of other wars, the Cold War, 9/11, the annihilation of a number of indigenous cultures, the ongoing destruction of acres of wilderness, a world divided by religion, by economics, by ethnicity, by history, by hatred.*

*Friday is a stark realisation that this is who we are.*

*We are the mocking voice, we are the haters. We cause injustice. We tolerate abuse. We condone torture.*

*It is an incredibly ugly world.*

*It is a world that desperately, desperately needs God.*

*It is a world that needs grace.*

*Grace makes beauty out of ugly things (U2)*

*There is beauty hidden amongst the horror of Friday. Tiny particles of grace shining through the shadows. Willing sacrifice. Forgiveness. Jesus spent his last moments not thinking about himself, the pain he must have been suffering but thinking of others - his mother, another dying man, forgiving everyone present at his execution. In amongst the hatred and brutality there is still the recognition of who he was, the Son of God.*

*Grace makes beauty out of ugly things.*

*It is grace that makes Friday Good.*

*Good Friday is about the transformative nature of grace.*

*We need to be at the foot of the cross and acknowledge who we really are without God. Then we need to receive the grace offered to us so we can journey through to Sunday. This is what Good Friday is. This is where we are now and now grace will take us on.*

*It is grace that holds us in the waiting. In the hours after Jesus died when all hope is lost. In the waiting of Saturday, sitting in fear and deep grief.*

*Sunday will come. We will be restored to God, to creation and to ourselves. We will stand transformed from mocking haters into the people God wants us to be.*

*Grace makes beauty out of ugly things.*

*- Angela Blundell, 2014*

## **2:10pm Hands throwing a dice, looking for a way out**

**[ ]**

After the soldiers had nailed Jesus to the cross, they divided up his clothes into four parts, one for each of them. But his outer garment was made from a single piece of cloth, and it did not have any seams. The soldiers said to each other, "Let's not rip it apart. We will gamble to see who gets it." This happened so that the Scriptures would come true, which say,

"They divided up my clothes  
and gambled for my garments."

*Pause*

*In Lotto we look for a way out of life, for a way out of debt, or for an alternate way after unfulfilled hope. We remember Jesus' words: "Not my will, but your will be done."*

*Pause*

Gracious God

**Show yourself for us**

so we do not go about in ignorance;

**reveal yourself to us**

for in you we know your presence, your call, your will.

*Silence – what is it that you are avoiding in your life, and want to try and escape?*

PICTURE: Hand's throwing dice

## 2:15pm **Mother's hands cradling her baby**

[\_\_\_\_\_]

Jesus' mother stood beside his cross with her sister and Mary the wife of Clopas. Mary Magdalene was standing there too.

*Pause*

*As a mother you know the potential of your baby. You have hopes, dreams and aspirations for them. Sometimes these are robbed, by evil, by a broken world, or by things not being as they should.*

*Pause*

For those who have yet  
to reach their full potential  
**May we be active in helping  
to nurture all children,  
may we be caring,  
may we be loving.**

PICTURE: Mother holding a new born, gazing into its eyes.

## 2:20pm **Final will and testament**

[\_\_\_\_\_]

When Jesus saw his mother and his favourite disciple with her, he said to his mother, "This man is now your son." Then he said to the disciple, "She is now your mother." From then on, that disciple took her into his own home.

*Pause*

*Even in dying, Jesus was caring. His family had estranged themselves from Jesus. Yet, at the final moment there is restoration, there is care, there is love. There is always hope.*

*Pause*

For an area in our family that needs restoration and hope  
**Grant us the grace to eat together,  
to restore relationships and live whole lives.**

PICTURE: Fountain Pen, with paper behind it, saying "Final Will and Testament"

*Silence – Jesus very publicly faced his mortality. What example does this give us?*

## 2:25pm **Hands asking for forgiveness**

[Dion\_\_\_\_\_]

Rosemary is the herb of remembrance.

Hopefully you picked up a piece of rosemary as you came in.

You may now wish to rub it between your fingers and smell it.

Let the smell draw you into the story,  
Jesus praying with his friends in the garden,  
a thief asking for forgiveness,  
forgiveness being given,  
a new future being given,  
for a thief, for a mother, for a brother,  
for you and I.

Pause and thank God for what you have been given.

*Pause and ask for forgiveness for  
what you have not done  
and what you have done.*

*Once you have done this you may wish to come forward and put the rosemary in the basket at the foot of the Christ Candle,  
or you may wish to keep it with you.*

## **2:30pm HYMN How Deep the Father's Love**

### **2:40pm Turning off the light switch**

[\_\_\_\_\_]

Jesus knew that he had now finished his work. And in order to make the Scriptures come true, he said, "I am thirsty!" A jar of cheap wine was there. Someone then soaked a sponge with the wine and held it up to Jesus' mouth on the stem of a hyssop plant. After Jesus drank the wine, he said, "Everything is done!" He bowed his head and died.

PICTURE: Old fashioned light switch with OFF written on it

*Pause*

*There comes a time, when we realise we have done what we can do. Together, let us ask for God's peace.*

*Extinguish the Christ Candle*

### **Let us pray:**

Lord, it is the night.

The night is for stillness. Let us be still in the presence of God.

It is night after a long day. What has been done has been done; what has not been done has not been done; let it be.

The night is dark. Let our fears of the darkness of the world and of our own lives rest in you.

The night is quiet. Let the quietness of your peace enfold us, all dear to us, and all who have no peace.

The night heralds the dawn. Let us look expectantly to a new day, new joys, new possibilities.

In your name we pray. **Amen.**<sup>2</sup>

## **SONG – Be Still for the presence of the Lord**

### **2:45pm Temple is split**

[\_\_\_\_\_]

*The temple is split, both literally, and spiritually. The leaders did a horrible thing. They fought, amongst themselves and with God. And they lost on two counts.*

*Firstly spiritually they split themselves off from God. They lost God, they killed God in their midst. And this split the people too. They were meant to lead, but they showed themselves to be unable to lead.*

*Secondly, when you split a group of people, those people become weaker. The temple curtain tore. It tore, not only spiritually to show we now have access to God the Father, but also to show us the establishment is torn, and broken when we live by ourselves. If we wish to live then we need to make sure we are following God's ways. We thank God everyday, for the Holy Spirit, and the way God guides us. It is so easy to make big mistakes, but if we pay attention to the Holy Spirit, we make less mistakes. Because we have to be quiet, and compassionate like Jesus was. It seems to be only in the quiet that we really hear the Spirit's guidance. We say the Spirit is the Spirit of Jesus, and it is.*

PICTURE: Classic Greek/Roman rubble (ie big square boulders, or pillars, or similar)

*But anyway, we were talking about the temple physically splitting. And it did. We didn't heal the factions we had, and the temple fell. If only we had listened to Jesus' ways earlier. But it's too late now.*

*And anyway, we know now that it's not about buildings, but about the people. Jesus showed us that, and the Holy Spirit continues to convict us of that.*

*Mark always reminds us that we can find God on the way, right where we are. We thank him for his conviction of this, and reminding us that it's all about the people.*

## 2:49pm **Intercessions**

[\_\_\_\_\_]

PICTURE: A picture of the earth from space

## 2:53pm **Gentle Hands**

[\_\_\_\_\_]

There was a man named Joseph, who was from Arimathea in Judea. Joseph was a good and honest man, and he was eager for God's kingdom to come. He was also a member of the council, but he did not agree with what they had decided. Joseph went to Pilate and asked for Jesus' body. He took the body down from the cross and wrapped it in fine cloth. Then he put it in a tomb that had been cut out of solid rock and had never been used. It was Friday, and the Sabbath was about to begin. - Lk 23:50-54

*The candle is gently wrapped with the cloth.*

PICTURE: Big hands, holding little hands, holding a butterfly

*Silence*

## 2:55pm **Hands, looking through binoculars at a distance**

[\_\_\_\_\_]

All of Jesus' close friends and the women who had come with him from Galilee stood at a distance and watched.

*Pause*

Lord, when we disengage.

**May your Holy Spirit re-kindle your ways in us**

We pray: Gracious God, help us to engage, to not fret over what might have been, but rather to fully live into your tomorrow and your resurrection. May we be a healthy, whole witness to your body at work, in Creation, in Papakura, in New Zealand. **Amen.**

PICTURE: Binoculars

## 2:58pm **Calloused hands**

[\_\_\_\_\_]

Joseph ... put the body in a tomb that had been cut into solid rock. Then he rolled a big stone against the entrance to the tomb. Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Joseph were watching and saw where the body was placed.

*Some rough calloused hands, do the final gentle work to care for Jesus*

*Pause*

PICTURE: Rough hands holding a rusted fence rail, or hard working dirty hands from gardening.



## **HYMN – Glory be to Jesus**

### **Final thought**

*We leave with the hope of Easter on the horizon.  
As the back page, moves from dark, into light.  
May the light of Christ always guide you.*

May faith, May hope, May love  
be alive in you

today

and always.

Peace be with you.

### **Blessing**

**[Dion ]**

May Christ the crucified convince you that God loves you  
and has forgiven you.

May the cross carry you through whatever pain and suffering assails you. May you go forward with  
courage in the faith of Christ

And may God, Creator, Redeemer and Giver of Life,  
bless you today and always. **AMEN.**

- ANZPB, p535 (adapted)

PICTURE: A picture of a person looking at a freedom sign

# Looking at Lent through the Passion readings - 3hr – Service



*During Lent, Revd Louise Anderson devised a Lenten series, that followed the colours of the rainbow. Each colour had a theme associated with it, and bible readings were chosen from Luke's Gospel to match the colour. Each theme and colour was painted onto a large canvas and these were hung in the sanctuary to remind us of our Lenten Journey. To draw a continuation between Lent and the Passion, these boards were strung together into a cross and hung up for the Good Friday backdrop for our three hour devotional service. Passion readings were matched to the themes. This framed the basis of our 3 Hour Service. The character reflections were written by Angela Blundell*



WELCOME

Were You There is a great hymn to start with because it asks the question, were we there? And the answer of course is no. But in our minds, using our imagination, we can enter into the story, and relive something of what the disciples went through on the Thursday and Friday when Jesus was betrayed and brutally killed..

Over Lent we have looked at 6 themes. Passion, Devotion, Loyalty, Gratitude, Grace, Love. Today we use these themes to explore the Passion story.

I would invite you to take the booklet away with you at the end and make use of it in a devotional way.



As a way of introducing **Good Friday** to us, some thoughts.

*We remember today as a black day, a dark day in history.*

*We re-live it, we remember it, not to glory in the darkness, but to remember.*

*We remember that humanity can live in the darkness of evil.*

*And we remember that God loves us unconditionally, and that God can free us from this if we will hold Jesus' hand and journey towards the light with him.*

*So we don't enter into hope-less despair, but rather we faithfully take a journey, to remind us that when we get it wrong God will be there with us, not encouraging us to stay in the dark, but rather drawing us out, into the light and constant love of God.*

SCRIPTURE      LUKE 22:1-2, 7-27 [NRSV]

Now the festival of Unleavened Bread, which is called the Passover, was near. The chief priests and the scribes were looking for a way to put Jesus to death, for they were afraid of the people.

Then came the day of Unleavened Bread, on which the Passover lamb had to be sacrificed. So Jesus sent Peter and John, saying, 'Go and prepare the Passover meal for us that we may eat it.' They asked him, 'Where do you want us to make preparations for it?' 'Listen,' he said to them, 'when you have entered the city, a man carrying a jar of water will meet you; follow him into the house he enters and say to the owner of the house, "The teacher asks you, 'Where is the guest room, where I may eat the Passover with my disciples?' " He will show you a large room upstairs, already furnished. Make preparations for us there.' So they went and found everything as he had told them; and they prepared the Passover meal.

When the hour came, he took his place at the table, and the apostles with him. He said to them, 'I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer; for I tell you, I will not eat it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God.' Then he took a cup, and after giving thanks he said, 'Take this and divide it among yourselves; for I tell you that from now on I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes.' Then he took a loaf of bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to them, saying, 'This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.' And he did the same with the cup after supper, saying, 'This cup that is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood. But see, the one who betrays me is with me, and his hand is on the table. For the Son of Man is going as it has been determined, but woe to that one by whom he is betrayed!' Then they began to ask one another which one of them it could be who would do this.

A dispute also arose among them as to which one of them was to be regarded as the greatest. But he said to them, 'The kings of the Gentiles lord it over them; and those in authority over them are called benefactors. But not so with you; rather the greatest among you must become like the youngest, and the leader like one who serves.

For who is greater, the one who is at the table or the one who serves? Is it not the one at the table? But I am among you as one who serves.

**HYMN** WERE YOU THERE

*We now light 8 candles, during the first hymn*

**REFLECTION** MARY MAGDALENE

The atmosphere was electric. Every year is the same, always excitement and celebrations, families drawn together to remember how the Lord spared us from death and delivered us from the oppression of Egyptian rule, but this time there was something else. It wasn't so much excitement, but hysteria, there was an undertone to the urgency in the market, in the square, the temple, the streets, everywhere there was something different. It had been building all week we realised, something was going to happen.

By the time we got back we realised that everyone had gone and only the 12 would be left. We breathed a sigh of relief as we finished our preparations, and readied the room for the meal. The men would eat together and we would join them for part of it but with serving and cleaning up we rarely got a chance to properly sit although our Teacher always encouraged it. We would stay for the food, everyone eating together, then we would leave our brothers to talk.

It started differently. As the men arrived we sent our servant with water and towels but our Teacher gently removed them from his hands and knelt down to wash their feet himself. Tears pricked the back of my eyes. We were always being surprised by Him. There was always something unexpected, and now, here he was, our Teacher, our Lord and he was washing the feet of others. They protested of course, embarrassed maybe? Certainly not happy with him doing it, but he insisted. And then we sat.

We shared the meal. We finished eating and got up, serving more food, pouring more wine, removing finished platters. The disciples barely noticed us, men didn't really notice, but our Teacher met each of our eyes and nodded in thanks. Even though we knew our place as women, it always seemed that in his eyes we were in fact, just as important. I don't even know how he did it, but somehow we knew that he noticed our contribution and valued it as much as the men who gathered around him. He encouraged our questions and our comments in spite of some of the surprised looks from other people.

Then it happened... he stood and raised some bread and broke it "eat this in remembrance of me". The words echoed in my head as the loaf was passed around and each took a piece. Then he raised a carafe of wine and poured some into his cup... this was passed too and they all poured some into their own cups and took a sip. "Do this to remember me." I shuddered. The warmth had gone from the room even though the fire burned and the extra candles and lamps we had put in lit it well. I missed what he said after that but the men were looking at each other uneasily around the table...

**SONG** BE STILL FOR THE PRESENCE OF THE LORD

**MUSIC:** VOLUNTARY

**Remembering the last meal**

At the front there is some bread and wine. These are not consecrated, it is not communion. But you may wish to come and take some bread back to your seat as a reminder of the basic meal that Jesus shared with his disciples. We eat the bread to draw us and our senses into the story.

*In silence we imagine what that last meal must have been like*

*Silence until 12:25. At the 'gong', extinguish a tea-light*



## SCRIPTURE MARK 14:32-42 [NRSV]

They went to a place called Gethsemane; and he said to his disciples, 'Sit here while I pray.' He took with him Peter and James and John, and began to be distressed and agitated. And he said to them, 'I am deeply grieved, even to death; remain here, and keep awake.' And going a little farther, he threw himself on the ground and prayed that, if it were possible, the hour might pass from him. He said, 'Abba, Father, for you all things are possible; remove this cup from me; yet, not what I want, but what you want.' He came and found them sleeping; and he said to Peter, 'Simon, are you asleep? Could you not keep awake one hour? Keep awake and pray that you may not come into the time of trial; the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.' And again he went away and prayed, saying the same words. And once more he

came and found them sleeping, for their eyes were very heavy; and they did not know what to say to him. He came a third time and said to them, 'Are you still sleeping and taking your rest? Enough! The hour has come; the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. Get up, let us be going. See, my betrayer is at hand.'

## CHANT STAY WITH ME

Stay with me, remain here with me;  
watch and pray, watch and pray.

## REFLECTION BELOVED DISCIPLE

It was time to leave for prayer. Every night, after sundown, our Teacher and Lord would go out to pray. We would go to the garden at the base of the mountain, filled with olive and fig trees, and plants whose flowers scented the air. We walked, just some of us tonight, and for some reason Judas decided to come tonight and puffed along behind us. We were quiet. Normally we'd walk to the garden and talk, questioning, listening to explanations but tonight He was quiet. I couldn't think of anything to say. So much was going on in my head I could hardly work things out. There was a sadness about our Lord tonight, the way he looked at us, the way he walked. Everything about him radiated sorrow. He moved slowly, heavily, as if the weight of the world were on his shoulders.

I thought of the argument we had had at the table about who would be at his right hand. Our discussions over the last few days had been laden with suggestion and meaning. He had said that he would be leaving us, that he would even die. That one of us would betray him. That one of us would deny him. How could he think those things of us? His friends, his followers, his disciples. I had asked him privately what was going on and he shook his head and patted my shoulder, turning away and doing something else. He couldn't even confide in me now.

We arrived, the perfumed garden was quiet and peaceful. There was no one about, most would have been indoors with their families remembering the passover. Our Teacher walked ahead and motioned for us to stay, "to pray that we would not fall into temptation". Temptation for what? We sat on the ground, still warm from the days sun, I fitted myself against the trunk of an olive tree, and rested for a bit, trying to find words to describe my feelings so I could pray. I was so tired...

Can you not stay awake for a moment! My Lord's voice broke through my tiredness and I sat up to see his face looking at me, grieved and sad. We all looked at each other ashamed and then he went off, we settled back into our positions, telling each other we would stay awake now but soon I could feel myself drifting again... then I heard a noise. Someone was crying, sobbing, pleading. I glanced at the others but they were fully asleep so I crept closer towards the sound, hoping that my Lord was okay, maybe someone was hurting him. Peering through the trees I saw him, he was kneeling on the ground, his face almost in the dirt, "let this cup pass from me" he said, and raised his face. There were tears rolling down his face. The sweat was beaded on his forehead. I had never seen a man so urgent and desperate in his prayer. "yet not my will but yours" he said.

I felt a chill run through me. Whose will? What was so hard? What did it mean? My teacher's face was more peaceful now so I crawled back to my friends and waited, drifting off again "not my will but yours..."

## HYMN THERE IS A GREEN HILL



During this section of music, there is an invitation to come and eat an olive.  
Olives are bitter.  
There was the bitterness of tears and blood flowing down Jesus' face as he prayed.  
Taste and be reminded of the cost.

MUSIC: VOLUNTARY

*Eat an olive. And in silence we wait with Jesus, and we bring before God the strong petition of our heart.*  
*Silence until 12:50. At the 'gong' extinguish a tea light.*

THOUGHT ON DEVOTION AND LOYALTY

Devotion and Loyalty go together.

For me Jesus showed this clearly in Gethsemane.

Devotion to pray, even when he knew what was going to happen.

And Loyalty to God, to pray to God with the words:

*"Not my will, but your will be done."*

[12:50] Loyalty - Judas

SCRIPTURE MARK 14:35-36 [NRSV]

And going a little farther, he threw himself on the ground and prayed that, if it were possible, the hour might pass from him. He said, 'Abba, Father, for you all things are possible; remove this cup from me; yet, not what I want, but what you want.'

INTRODUCTION LOYALTY

LOYALTY, has all to do with doing God's will and not ours...

To be loyal we must have DEVOTION.

Often we are quick to praise God.  
But our praise, isn't always met with loyalty,  
our loyalty can wane.

Pause

Lift up the Palm Branch of praise  
Lift up the Palm Cross  
The one symbol,  
of our praise  
and of our sin  
redeemed through the blessing  
of the palm  
to remind us to be faithful.

*Distribute palm crosses*

SCRIPTURE MATTHEW 26:1-5, 14-16, 20-25, 36, 46-56, 27:3-10 [NRSV]

When Jesus had finished saying all these things, he said to his disciples, 'You know that after two days the Passover is coming, and the Son of Man will be handed over to be crucified.'

Then the chief priests and the elders of the people gathered in the palace of the high priest, who was called Caiaphas, and they conspired to arrest Jesus by stealth and kill him. But they said, 'Not during the festival, or there may be a riot among the people.'

Then one of the twelve, who was called Judas Iscariot, went to the chief priests and said, 'What will you give me if I betray him to you?' They paid him thirty pieces of silver. And from that moment he began to look for an opportunity to betray him.

When it was evening, he took his place with the twelve; and while they were eating, he said, 'Truly I tell you, one of you will betray me.' And they became greatly distressed and began to say to him one after another, 'Surely not I, Lord?' He answered, 'The one who has dipped his hand into the bowl with me will betray me. The Son of Man goes as it is written of him, but woe to that one by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It would have been better for that one not to have been born.' Judas, who betrayed him, said, 'Surely not I, Rabbi?' He replied, 'You have said so.'



Then Jesus went with them to a place called Gethsemane; and he said to his disciples, 'Sit here while I go over there and pray.' Get up, let us be going. See, my betrayer is at hand.'

While he was still speaking, Judas, one of the twelve, arrived; with him was a large crowd with swords and clubs, from the chief priests and the elders of the people. Now the betrayer had given them a sign, saying, 'The one I will kiss is the man; arrest him.' At once he came up to Jesus and said, 'Greetings, Rabbi!' and kissed him. Jesus said to him, 'Friend, do what you are here to do.' Then they came and laid hands on Jesus and arrested him. Suddenly, one of those with Jesus put his hand on his sword, drew it, and struck the slave of the high priest, cutting off his ear. Then Jesus said to him, 'Put your sword back into its place; for all who take the sword will perish by the sword. Do you think that I cannot appeal to my Father, and he will at once send me more than twelve legions of angels? But how then would the scriptures be fulfilled, which say it must happen in this way?' At that hour Jesus said to the crowds, 'Have you come out with swords and clubs to arrest me as though I were a bandit? Day after day I sat in the temple teaching, and you did not arrest me. But all this has taken place, so that the scriptures of the prophets may be fulfilled.' Then all the disciples deserted him and fled.

When Judas, his betrayer, saw that Jesus was condemned, he repented and brought back the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and the elders. He said, 'I have sinned by betraying innocent blood.' But they said, 'What is that to us? See to it yourself.' Throwing down the pieces of silver in the temple, he departed; and he went and hanged himself. But the chief priests, taking the pieces of silver, said, 'It is not lawful to put them into the treasury, since they are blood money.' After conferring together, they used them to buy the potter's field as a place to bury foreigners. For this reason that field has been called the Field of Blood to this day. Then was fulfilled what had been spoken through the prophet Jeremiah, 'And they took the thirty pieces of silver, the price of the one on whom a price had been set, on whom some of the people of Israel had set a price, and they gave them for the potter's field, as the Lord commanded me.'

#### THOUGHT BETRAYAL - BARABAS VS JESUS

The sad reality is we all betray our faith at times, none of us are immune.

Our praise, "Hosanna in the highest" can turn to betrayal.

As we think of the ways we praise God,  
we think of the moments when our faith has slipped,  
maybe we haven't joined a mob shouting crucify him,  
but there are moments when we have shouted at someone we love,  
there are moments when we haven't followed through on the Spirit's prompting,  
there are moments when we haven't rested in the presence of Jesus,  
there are moments when we have sided with someone powerful over someone less powerful,  
there are moments when, simply put,  
we have not been true to God's call to be faithful disciples.

We recall these moments now,  
not to glorify them,  
and not to feel guilty,  
but rather to realise true release from this only comes  
as we are willing to confess to God those moments,

and to put them at the foot of the cross,  
and say: "Father please forgive me."

Christ have mercy.

**Lord have mercy.**

Christ have mercy.

#### HYMN MY SONG IS LOVE UNKNOWN

#### REFLECTION JUDAS

It would be so easy they said. You don't need to worry about anything, just get him to the garden and once he is there let us know and we will do the rest. Something sat heavy in my stomach. I could hardly eat the meal, although there was a lot of food and everyone seemed to be looking around at each other and at me. I reached for my cup and drank deeply, hoping the wine would quell this uneasiness but all that happened was that Teacher singled me out. I pretended I knew nothing. I knew he wouldn't know what I'd done, how could he? I would go and get our supplies and no one would question that I had some extra money. That money we could give to the poor or needy or keep it for something we needed.

We left the house after a while. Teacher was in a strange mood, quiet, thoughtful, almost sad. The women saw us out, it made me uneasy as they

watched us. He laid his hand briefly on their heads as we went out the door. That was strange, he rarely touched the women, of course those following us would, in the hope of healing or forgiveness or whatever. Sometimes we had to hold them back but he never refused their attention, but he never gave it either. I shook myself. I was becoming just as strange as Peter and James and John, having arguments about who sat where at the table and being told one was going to deny him. How could you deny Him? Everyone knew we were his followers, it was no secret, we wouldn't have a hope of pretending otherwise.

We went to Gethsemane. I was glad of the lamp and torches we had thought to bring as the sun had set. Teacher set himself aside from us and asked the others to keep watch. Knowing that they wouldn't notice, I slipped away.

"How will we know it's him?" The leader of the guards demanded. I rolled my eyes, like he wouldn't recognise him? "He's the one I'll greet with a kiss," I said, and they nodded, checking their swords and adjusting their armour as they walked along. We got to the garden and I saw them looking sleepy and Jesus chastising them. I almost snorted as I saw the men. They thought themselves so clever and close to him, yet they now looked sheepish and chastened. I walked up and kissed him as a brother and he looked at me. There was something in his face... disappointment? resignation? and deep down something else... it wasn't quite anger, it could have been pity. I stepped back quickly and the soldiers moved to take him. Peter, the moron, sliced one of their ears off, but even though he was being arrested, like always Jesus did not know when enough was enough and he stuck that ear back on and he healed it. It was like it had never happened, and he did it in front of the soldiers who were going to arrest and him and probably get him killed. I mean, who would do that? who would do something so blatant and obvious that he was different? I felt almost justified for a second, he was asking for it, performing miracles, treating women and sinners like they were special and important... the leader of the soldiers thrust a small bag in my hand as they turned to go. It felt heavy. I tied it to my belt, feeling it's weight at my side. Combined with the weight in my stomach, and something rising up in my chest I started to feel uneasy. As they took him away, the others running away like fools I stood there in the dark, the heaviness rising in me...

#### MUSIC: VOLUNTARY

*Bring your Palm Cross forward and place it in the basket/bowl at the foot of the Cross/Christ Candle.*

*Silence until 13:15. At the 'gong' extinguish a tea light.*

#### **[13:15] Loyalty – Roman Soldier**

##### SCRIPTURE MATTHEW 27:27-31 [NRSV]

Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the governor's headquarters, and they gathered the whole cohort around him. They stripped him and put a scarlet robe on him, and after twisting some thorns into a crown, they put it on his head. They put a reed in his right hand and knelt before him and mocked him, saying, 'Hail, King of the Jews!' They spat on him, and took the reed and struck him on the head. After mocking him, they stripped him of the robe and put his own clothes on him. Then they led him away to crucify him.

##### LUKE 23:35-38 [NRSV]

And the people stood by, watching; but the leaders scoffed at him, saying, 'He saved others; let him save himself if he is the Messiah of God, his chosen one!' The soldiers also mocked him, coming up and offering him sour wine, and saying, 'If you are the King of the Jews, save yourself!' There was also an inscription over him, 'This is the King of the Jews.'

##### HYMN O SACRED HEAD

##### REFLECTION ROMAN SOLDIER

Growing up I was the strongest boy my age. Tall and broad. Once I was a man and muscular I had a good wife and we had three fine sons and two daughters who would make good wives. I'd just been promoted when this Jesus man came into Jerusalem, on a donkey of all things, and the people went balmy shouting Hosanna or some suchlike. We had heard of this man, but who hadn't? But when I was summoned to the temple and told what we had to do, I was surprised. Usually the Rabbis left us alone but now they seemed to think that they were in danger from this guy. Yeah, the one who rode the donkey... and it wasn't even a big donkey either, it was barely big enough for him to sit on. Anyway, it was easy enough to set up. One of my men had met with one of his followers, a weak man who was easily bought with 30 pieces of silver. I'd been given instruction to pay as much as necessary, the Rabbis and Chief priests had fired up the powerful leaders and everyone was scared of this man. A donkey riding oddball, who spoke at the temple and healed people with some sort of magical power.

I had my sword and a group of men, all armed with strong clubs or swords when the follower, Judas came. He looked small and insignificant but he told us what to do and we went to some garden. The man Jesus looked up. He wasn't surprised at all, you get to know peoples responses in my kind of work and this man knew we were coming. We grabbed him and one of his people cut off the ear of one of mine... it could have turned nasty then! But then that man picked the ear off the ground and put it back on, and I am not kidding, it stayed there. There was no blood, it was like it'd never happened... and then he told off his man... those who live by the sword would die by the sword or something. Part of me wondered if he was quite, you know, with it.. but another part of me thought WOW, that was something else. I mean I'd heard about the miracles and things but I figured



it was just a set up or a bit of fake, but it wasn't fake, my guy had his ear cut off right in front of me and you couldn't even tell. Then I came to grips with myself, I had a job to do. I tied him up and led him away, thrusting the bag of money into Judas' hand as we went.

As we walked along, there was no struggle. He didn't say anything either. Usually you do jobs like this, criminals, escaped servants or wives, and they will yell or shout or weep or protest, but he just walked. I bet he would have come even if I hadn't tied him up good and tight.

There was no doubt about it. There was something about that man.

#### MUSIC: VOLUNTARY

*Reflect on violence in our lives, and society*

*Silence until 13:35. At the 'gong' extinguish a tea light.*

[13:35] - Loyalty - Peter

SCRIPTURE MARK 14:26-31, 53-54, 66-72 [NRSV]

When they had sung the hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives. And Jesus said to them, 'You will all become deserters; for it is written,

"I will strike the shepherd,  
and the sheep will be scattered."

But after I am raised up, I will go before you to Galilee.' Peter said to him, 'Even though all become deserters, I will not.' Jesus said to him, 'Truly I tell you, this day, this very night, before the cock crows twice, you will deny me three times.' But he said vehemently, 'Even though I must die with you, I will not deny you.' And all of them said the same.

They took Jesus to the high priest; and all the chief priests, the elders, and the scribes were assembled. Peter had followed him at a distance, right into the courtyard of the high priest; and he was sitting with the guards, warming himself at the fire.

While Peter was below in the courtyard, one of the servant-girls of the high priest came by. When she saw Peter warming himself, she stared at him and said, 'You also were with Jesus, the man from Nazareth.' But he denied it, saying, 'I do not know or understand what you are talking about.' And he went out into the forecourt. Then the cock crowed. And the servant-girl, on seeing him, began again to say to the bystanders, 'This man is one of them.' But again he denied it. Then after a little while the bystanders again said to Peter, 'Certainly you are one of them; for you are a Galilean.' But he began to curse, and he swore an oath, 'I do not know this man you are talking about.' At that moment the cock crowed for the second time. Then Peter remembered that Jesus had said to him, 'Before the cock crows twice, you will deny me three times.' And he broke down and wept.

#### HYMN PRAISE TO THE HOLIEST IN THE HEIGHT

#### REFLECTION PETER

I've spent my whole life being just a bit clumsy and stupid. I'm not the best with words, or ideas. I could catch fish and sail a boat and that was about it. But somehow Jesus made me feel like I was going to be something bigger and better than just a fisherman, struggling to make a living. He would trust me with things. He'd talk about the future, about trusting him, about getting to God. Some of it I couldn't get but other things I understood. He called me his Rock. He gave me a new name. I knew that I was going to be destined for something great. Finally.

Then my world turned upside down. My Teacher, taken away by thugs with large clubs and swords. I tried to defend him, to stop them and I even managed to take an ear off. But then teacher pulled me back, stopping me. Then he did it again. Somehow he always managed to surprise me. He put the ear back onto the man and looked at me, almost reproving... then they took him and then I saw it, a bag of something thrust into Judas' hands... I followed at a distance, hoping to find out what was happening.

My legs were trembling when I made it to the High Priest's house. I snuck into the courtyard and slipped as quietly as I could to a fire. It was warm and I held my hands out, to try and stop them shaking and look as casual as possible. A girl stopped and looked, a servant girl carrying a water jug. She asked me if I knew my Master and before I knew it, I was denying him. I shook myself and tried to listen to the voices inside the house but it was impossible amid the noise outside. The girl passed back with a full water jug and stopped again and asked the same question. I tried to deny it quietly, to not draw attention to myself but this time someone else noticed and looked even closer, exclaiming that I was with him. I denied it again, my heart thumping, my words stumbling over themselves to make me heard... then I heard a rooster crowing...

#### MUSIC: VOLUNTARY

*Service leader shifts the Christ candle down to the flat,  
so all may come to it regardless of mobility.*

*Reflect on the change of God's call on your life. Please come forward and cup the candle, feel the warmth and Presence of God that Peter was trying to feel, but that he denied, take that experience back to your seat and sit with it.*

*Silence until 13:50. At the 'gong' read this*

CLOSING SCRIPTURE      FOCUS SCRIPTURE FOR LOYALTY - MARK 14:35-36 [NRSV]

And going a little farther, he threw himself on the ground and prayed that, if it were possible, the hour might pass from him. He said, 'Abba, Father, for you all things are possible; remove this cup from me; yet, not what I want, but what you want.'

*Pause*

LOYALTY, has all to do with doing God's will and not ours...

To be loyal we must have DEVOTION.

*Extinguish a tea-light candle.*

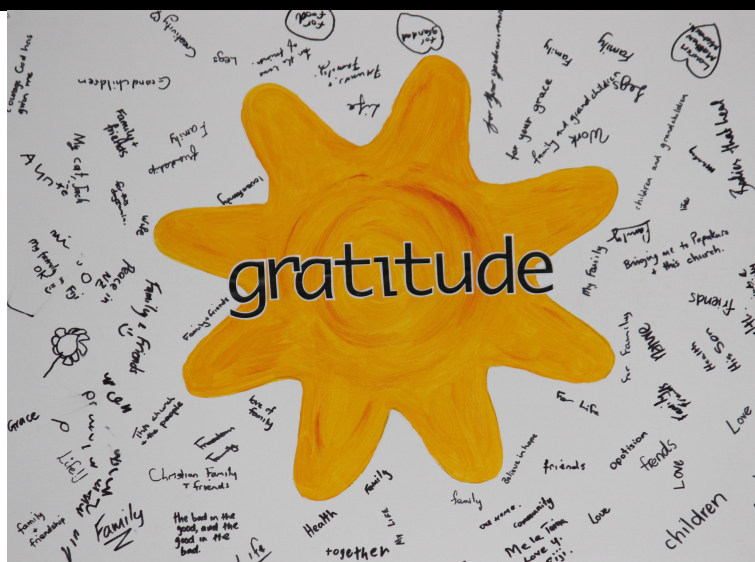
*Service leader places the Christ candle back up on the elevated sanctuary step.*

[13:50] Gratitude

SCRIPTURE LUKE 23:24-32 [NRSV]

So Pilate gave his verdict that their demand should be granted. He released the man they asked for, the one who had been put in prison for insurrection and murder, and he handed Jesus over as they wished.

As they led him away, they seized a man, Simon of Cyrene, who was coming from the country, and they laid the cross on him, and made him carry it behind Jesus. A great number of the people followed him, and among them were women who were beating their breasts and wailing for him. But Jesus turned to them and said, 'Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children. For the days are surely coming when they will say, "Blessed are the barren, and the wombs that never bore, and the breasts that never nursed." Then they will begin to say to the mountains, "Fall on us"; and to the hills, "Cover us." For if they do this when the wood is green, what will happen when it is dry?'



Two others also, who were criminals, were led away to be put to death with him.

## SONG      HOW DEEP THE FATHER'S LOVE

## REFLECTION      SIMON OF CYRENE

I didn't mean to be there. I had come with my family to the city for the Passover and they had heard about the Jew who had been arrested. I admit I was curious, even I'd heard of the teacher who claimed to be the Messiah and now they were parading him out for all to see. When the crowd began chanting I tried to leave, but there were too many people, crowding together demanding the annual pardoning of a criminal.

He stood there, thorns around his head causing beads of blood to drip down his face. He had bruises too, on his arms and stomach, lashings from a whip, the blood dark and dried. He looked into the distance, I doubt he even heard the crowd, he didn't even seem to realise where he was... but he wasn't out to it, he was just not responding. In the end they tired of the heckling and made him pick up the wood they would use to hang him up. I was a little away by then, and I saw him come up the street. He was stumbling, almost blinded by blood, sweat, tears. The soldiers and the people were screaming, cursing the ugliest things I'd ever heard. It made me shudder, a chill running down my back. Surely this couldn't be real.

Then he fell again and couldn't get up. The soldier screamed at him, kicking him, but there was no response. I hoped he'd maybe died, it would stop if he died but even I could see that he was alive, breathing hard, unable to move. Then someone grabbed me, the soldier who had been screaming moments earlier was in front of me... "You!" he rasped, like someone who had been shouting for a long time "take up his cross". I looked at him, he was a big man. but so was I and I looked him in the eye. For a moment we stood there and I almost walked away when I caught sight of the teacher. I shook the soldier's arm off and strode over, lifting the wood off the man's bloodied back and helping him up. We gazed at each other and I saw strength and love and pain all mingled together in his face. He stumbled a bit and I held him tighter, he looked at me in exhaustion and gratitude.

"NO", I was pushed away from the man "Pick up the cross". I managed to lift it up with the soldiers help and settled it on my shoulder, my knees sagged and it took all my strength not to let them bend. How the Messiah had carried that cross all that way all beaten and bruised is beyond me. I walked, tripping over small stones and holes in the ground, hearing the yells and jeers of the crowd, hearing the whip occasionally on the man who followed. It felt like I carried that cross for years, one step after another, heavy, plodding but I held the look of Jesus in my vision, the dark eyes

showing more depth than I'd ever seen in any man.

#### MUSIC: VOLUNTARY

*Come forward and write on the note paper something you can do to help another person, float that in the bowl of refreshment as your prayer*

*Silence until 14:15. At the 'gong' extinguish a tea-light.*

[14:15]

Grace

SCRIPTURE LUKE 23:32-43 [NRSV]

Two others also, who were criminals, were led away to be put to death with him. When they came to the place that is called The Skull, they crucified Jesus there with the criminals, one on his right and one on his left. [[ Then Jesus said, 'Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing.']] And they cast lots to divide his clothing. And the people stood by, watching; but the leaders scoffed at him, saying, 'He saved others; let him save himself if he is the Messiah of God, his chosen one!' The soldiers also mocked him, coming up and offering him sour wine, and saying, 'If you are the King of the Jews, save yourself!' There was also an inscription over him, 'This is the King of the Jews.'

One of the criminals who were hanged there kept deriding him and saying, 'Are you not the Messiah? Save yourself and us!' But the other rebuked him, saying, 'Do you not fear God, since you are under the same sentence of condemnation? And we indeed have been condemned justly, for we are getting what we deserve for our deeds, but this man has done nothing wrong.' Then he said, 'Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.' He replied, 'Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in Paradise.'



#### CHANT JESUS REMEMBER ME

Jesus remember me, when you come into your Kingdom  
Jesus remember me, when you come into your Kingdom

#### REFLECTION GRACE

Grace makes beauty out of ugly things.

It's easy to leave Good Friday to history, to 2000 years ago,  
to a moment, in a series of moments that had huge historical and spiritual significance but is still far enough away to be safe.

But what it shows is a world, a people capable of injustice, bigotry, hatred, abuse, torture, denial, mockery.

A world much like today.

A world that has the mass extermination of millions of Jews, the Killing Fields, Execution, terrorism, dictatorship, racism, sexism,  
two world wars, hundreds of other wars, the Cold War, 9/11,  
the annihilation of a number of indigenous cultures,  
the ongoing destruction of acres of wilderness,  
a world divided by religion, by economics, by ethnicity, by history, by hatred.

Friday is a stark realisation that this is who we are.

We are the mocking voice, we are the haters.

We cause injustice. We tolerate abuse.

We condone torture.

It is an incredibly ugly world.

It is a world that desperately, desperately needs God.

It is a world that needs grace.

Grace makes beauty out of ugly things (U2)

There is beauty hidden amongst the horror of Friday.

Tiny particles of grace shining through the shadows. Willing sacrifice. Forgiveness.

Jesus spent his last moments not thinking about himself, the pain he must have been suffering but thinking of others  
- his mother, another dying man, forgiving everyone present at his execution.

In amongst the hatred and brutality there is still the recognition of who he was, the Son of God.

Grace makes beauty out of ugly things.

It is grace that makes Friday "Good."

Good Friday is about the transformative nature of grace.

We need to be at the foot of the cross and acknowledge who we really are without God.

Then we need to receive the grace offered to us so we can journey through to Sunday.

This is what Good Friday is.

This is where we are now and now grace will take us on.

It is grace that holds us in the waiting.

In the hours after Jesus died when all hope is lost.

In the waiting of Saturday, sitting in fear and deep grief.

Sunday will come.

We will be restored to God, to creation and to ourselves.

We will stand transformed from mocking haters into the people God wants us to be.

Grace makes beauty out of ugly things.

#### HYMN                      WHEN I SURVEY

#### CONFESSION

*Pause*

We were reminded on Palm Sunday that Jesus consciously took the journey to Jerusalem,  
knowing that this would mean certain death for himself on the cross.

We are thankful to God for the lengths that God goes to, to rescue us.

We are also reminded of the peril of leadership, and how quickly the story moves from:  
"all spoke well of him" and "Hosanna to the King" through to "crucify him."

In the space of 7 days, those that supported Jesus were calling for his death. As we remember this, may we faithfully re-tell the story and the extent to which God goes to save us.

*Pause*

**May we find ways of supporting our leadership.**

*Pause*

**As we hold silence together,  
we remember the word's.**

**The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God,  
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with you today and always. Amen.**

*We reflect on God's Grace at work, in our life, in the Church, in the wider world.*

#### MUSIC: VOLUNTARY

*Who are you remembering before God today?  
Come and write it on the 3 crosses.*

*Silence until 14:35. At the 'gong' extinguish a tea-light.*



## SCRIPTURE JOHN 19:18-42 [NRSV]

There they crucified him, and with him two others, one on either side, with Jesus between them. Pilate also had an inscription written and put on the cross. It read, 'Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews.' Many of the Jews read this inscription, because the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city; and it was written in Hebrew, in Latin, and in Greek. Then the chief priests of the Jews said to Pilate, 'Do not write, "The King of the Jews"', but, "This man said, I am King of the Jews." ' Pilate answered, 'What I have written I have written.' When the soldiers had crucified Jesus, they took his clothes and divided them into four parts, one for each soldier. They also took his tunic; now the tunic was seamless, woven in one piece from the top. So they said to one another, 'Let us not tear it, but cast lots for it to see who will get it.' This was to fulfil what the scripture says,

'They divided my clothes among themselves, and for my clothing they cast lots.'

And that is what the soldiers did.

Meanwhile, standing near the cross of Jesus were his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing beside her, he said to his mother, 'Woman, here is your son.' Then he said to the disciple, 'Here is your mother.' And from that hour the disciple took her into his own home.

After this, when Jesus knew that all was now finished, he said (in order to fulfil the scripture), 'I am thirsty.' A jar full of sour wine was standing there. So they put a sponge full of the wine on a branch of hyssop and held it to his mouth. When Jesus had received the wine, he said, 'It is finished.' Then he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

Since it was the day of Preparation, the Jews did not want the bodies left on the cross during the sabbath, especially because that sabbath was a day of great solemnity. So they asked Pilate to have the legs of the crucified men broken and the bodies removed. Then the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first and of the other who had been crucified with him. But when they came to Jesus and saw that he was already dead, they did not break his legs. Instead, one of the soldiers pierced his side with a spear, and at once blood and water came out. (He who saw this has testified so that you also may believe. His testimony is true, and he knows that he tells the truth.) These things occurred so that the scripture might be fulfilled, 'None of his bones shall be broken.' And again another passage of scripture says, 'They will look on the one whom they have pierced.'

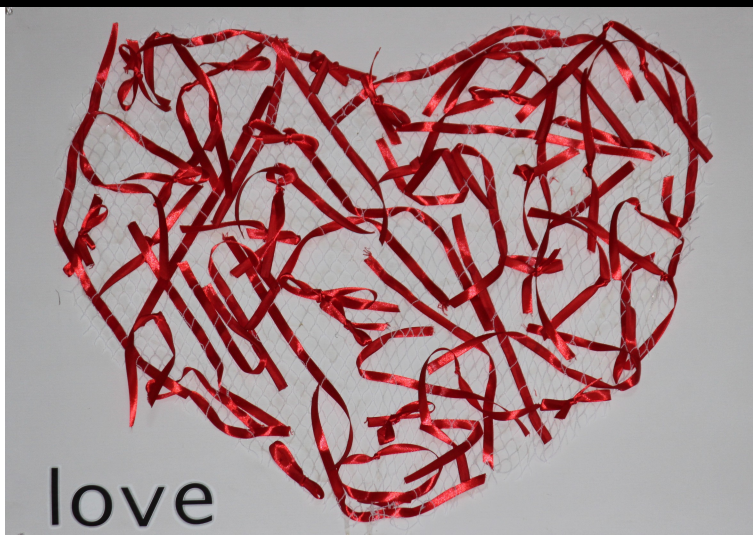
After these things, Joseph of Arimathea, who was a disciple of Jesus, though a secret one because of his fear of the Jews, asked Pilate to let him take away the body of Jesus. Pilate gave him permission; so he came and removed his body. Nicodemus, who had at first come to Jesus by night, also came, bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, weighing about a hundred pounds. They took the body of Jesus and wrapped it with the spices in linen cloths, according to the burial custom of the Jews. Now there was a garden in the place where he was crucified, and in the garden there was a new tomb in which no one had ever been laid. And so, because it was the Jewish day of Preparation, and the tomb was nearby, they laid Jesus there.

## HYMN GLORY BE TO JESUS

## REFLECTION MARY MOTHER OF JESUS

At last I understood. All the comments, all the prophecies, all the hints from the learned and wise, and now it was time. I didn't want to be there. But I knew I needed to be. I'd spent most of his life feeling frustrated, unable to really understand this child I was to raise, yet loving him so much. And then when he'd started his ministry, refusing to continue to work and provide for his family, leaving his brothers to do the work, I admit I felt some shame. In spite of my efforts he had rarely visited, and when he did it would end in recriminations. My family, Joseph's family, calling him crazy and wanting him to come home. And all I could remember was the look on his face when he was 12, even then he had a certainty of his call and his work. And now look.

I remember his birth like it was yesterday. The pain. The confusion. Wishing that I had not taken this long journey with Joseph and had stayed at home. The smell of hay and animals, musty and dark. Women from the house had come and they had held my hand and encouraged me through that long night. He came quickly in the end, small but strong, bellowing briefly before finding my breast. After, the woman had cleaned me up she brought some swaddling cloth and showed me how to wrap him securely and easily so he could be changed and washed when needed.



And now. No shepherds and angels. No surreal magic or strange visitors but hatred and bitterness. My precious baby, born of my body, nourished by my breast, the child of my heart was dying. As he hung on the wood in the ground, the agony was clear on his face and he looked at me. We connected for a moment and then he looked at his beloved disciple John. "This is your mother," he said to him and he looked at me and said, "this is your son." Even in so much pain, he remembered me. I felt an ache of grief and the guilt that I'd felt over some of our conversations ebbed away as I realised that he was doing what he could to make sure I would be well and safe. I heard his words of forgiveness to one of the other men and I knew that those words were for me as well.

That cry, it carried on the breeze and then darkness came, the earth shaking and groaning. I fell to my knees and looked up. His body was still. All around me there were screams, not of hatred now, but of fear, most were running away but I stayed there. Rocks dug into my legs but I stayed, I watched my son in his death as I had watched him take his first breath

It was done.

*Silence for reflection – then after a while, extinguish candle and wrap in a shroud*

#### INTERCESSIONS

Jesus' mother stood beside his cross with her sister and Mary the wife of Clopas. Mary Magdalene was standing there too.

*Pause*

As a mother you know the potential of your baby. You have hopes, dreams and aspirations for them. Sometimes these are robbed, by evil, by a broken world, or by things not being as they should.

*Pause*

For those who have yet  
to reach their full potential  
**May we be active in helping  
to nurture all children,  
may we be caring,  
may we be loving.**

*Pause*

Even in dying, Jesus was caring. His family had estranged themselves from Jesus. Yet, at the final moment there is restoration, there is care, there is love. There is always hope.

*Pause*

For an area in our family that needs restoration and hope  
**Grant us the grace to eat together,  
to restore relationships and live whole lives.**

*Silence – Jesus very publicly faced his mortality. What example does this give us?*

#### LORD'S PRAYER

**Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and for ever. Amen.**

#### MUSIC: VOLUNTARY

*Silence until 12:55*

**Closing...****CHANT JESUS REMEMBER ME**

Jesus remember me, when you come into your Kingdom  
 Jesus remember me, when you come into your Kingdom

**Final thought**

We leave with the hope of Easter on the horizon.

As night, moves from dark, into light.

May the light of Christ always guide you.

May faith, May hope, May love

be alive in you

today

and always.

Peace be with you.

**AFFIRMATION OF FAITH**

**Thank you, Father, that You love me**

**Thank you, Jesus, that you came**

**By your blood You have redeemed me...**

**And by Your stripes I am healed.**

**I accept that You love me.**

**I accept your perfect forgiveness and cleansing from all past sin.**

**Because You love me and accept me just as I am I can accept myself... and love myself.**

**I am whole and perfect in Your love.**

**Thank you , Father, for Your Holy Spirit**

**Who continues to minister to my deepest needs...**

**Healing all past hurts, renewing me and releasing me into the perfect freedom of the Children of God.**

**I thank you, Lord, for Your Guidance, Protection and Provision....and for Your Strength TODAY.**

**"I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me."**

**PRAISE THE NAME OF JESUS****Blessing**

May Christ the crucified convince you that God loves you and has forgiven you.

May the cross carry you through whatever pain and suffering assails you.

May you go forward with courage in the faith of Christ

And may God, Creator, Redeemer and Giver of Life,

bless you today and always. **AMEN.**

*Extinguish last candle*

**Leave in silence**

**Resources needed**

1. Bread, Wine/Grape-juice
2. Olives (pitted or stuffed) and a dish to put them in/on
3. Christ Candle, and a shroud to wrap candle at the end
4. Palm Branch and Palm Crosses, along with a bowl/basket to put crosses in at the foot of the candle/cross
5. Bowl of water to float prayers on. Note paper and pens
6. 8x tea lights and a candle snuffer
7. Green background with 3 simple white crosses
8. Singing bowl/Gong, bell (or similar)

**Setup thoughts**

We have many people with mobility issues. Our building/worship-space is not all on one level. We placed things like the bread, wine/grape-juice, olives etc... on round tables. To make room for people to move around, these tables were placed/stored when not in use in the raised sanctuary area. We then lifted these tables down at an appropriate time to the flat/accessible space, so that all would have access to things regardless of mobility. At the right time, a person distributed the prayer note-papers to people. Likewise the water bowl was taken to people too, if they wanted. Try and think about access for all, and how all can participate regardless of their mobility.



# Looking at Lent through the Passion readings – 3hr timing handout

*I have found that handing out a little slip of paper with instructions on, can help people know what and when to do, to participate in a service. Sometimes I might just highlight their section, and sometimes I might highlight, and give a slip of paper. What follows will give you an idea of what you could do.*

## **Passion 12:00**

Your section begins at the time above.

*You'll know when it's time because the singing bowl will 'gong'*

Please come forward to read your parts.

Pages 2 to 5

The gong will sound at 12:25, come forward to extinguish your candle.

The next person will then start with their section.

## **Devotion 12:25**

Your section begins at the time above.

*You'll know when it's time because the singing bowl will 'gong'*

Please come forward to read your parts.

Pages 6 to 8

Lead the way and eat an olive, then return to your seat.

The gong will sound at 12:50, come forward to extinguish your candle.

The next person will then start with their section.

## **Loyalty – Judas section 12:50**

Your section begins at the time above.

*You'll know when it's time because the singing bowl will 'gong'*

Please come forward to read your parts.

Pages 9 to 13

You will be distributing palm crosses part way through.

At the end of your readings, please lead the way and place your palm cross at the foot of the candle/cross.

The gong will sound at 13:10/1:10pm, come forward to extinguish your candle.

The next person will then start with their section.

## **Loyalty – Roman Soldier 13:10 / 1:10pm**

Your section begins at the time above.

*You'll know when it's time because the singing bowl will 'gong'*

Please come forward to read your parts.

Pages 14 to 15

The gong will sound at 13:30/1:30pm, come forward to extinguish your candle.

The next person will then start with their section.

## **Loyalty – Peter 13:30 / 1:30pm**

Your section begins at the time above.

*You'll know when it's time because the singing bowl will 'gong'*

Please come forward to read your parts.

Pages 16 to 18

Please lead the way by coming forward and cupping the candle to feel its warmth.

The gong will sound at 13:50 / 1:50pm, please come forward, read the last little bit, then extinguish your candle.

The next person will then start with their section.

## **Gratitude 13:50 / 1:50pm**

Your section begins at the time above.

*You'll know when it's time because the singing bowl will 'gong'*

Please come forward to read your parts.

Pages 19 to top of page 21

The gong will sound at 14:15 / 2:15pm, come forward to extinguish your candle.

The next person will then start with their section.

## **Grace 14:15 / 2:15pm**

Your section begins at the time above.

*You'll know when it's time because the singing bowl will 'gong'*

Please come forward to read your parts.

Pages 21 to top of 24

The gong will sound at 14:35 / 2:35pm, come forward to extinguish your candle.

The next person will then start with their section.

## **Love 14:35 / 2:35pm**

Your section begins at the time above.

*You'll know when it's time because the singing bowl will 'gong'*

Please come forward to read your parts.

Pages 24 to 28

The gong will sound at 14:55 / 2:55pm, come forward to extinguish your candle.

The next person will then start with their section.

# Looking at Lent through the Passion readings - 3hr - Outline

*I always spend a bit of time creating a service outline for our Good Friday Services, especially the 3 hour service. It gives those involved a quick overview of where things are going, so you don't, so to speak, miss the trees for the forest.*

## [12:00] Passion

SCRIPTURE LUKE 22:1-2, 7-27 [NRSV]

THOUGHT

HYMN WERE YOU THERE

*We now light 14 candles, during the first hymn*

REFLECTION MARY MAGDALENE

SONG BE STILL FOR THE PRESENCE OF THE LORD

MUSIC: VOLUNTARY

*Invitation to communion elements*

*Silence until 12:25*

## [12:25] Devotion

SCRIPTURE MARK 14:32-42 [NRSV]

THOUGHT

CHANT STAY WITH ME

REFLECTION BELOVED DISCIPLE

HYMN THERE IS A GREEN HILL

MUSIC: VOLUNTARY

*Eat an olive*

*Silence until 12:50*

## [12:50] Loyalty

INTRODUCTION LOYALTY

LOYALTY, has all to do with doing God's will and not ours... To be loyal we must have DEVOTION.

*Distribute palm crosses*

SCRIPTURE BOOK-END MARK 14:35-36 [NRSV]

SCRIPTURE MATTHEW 26:1-5, 14-16, 20-25, 36, 46-56, 27:3-10 [NRSV]

THOUGHT BETRAYAL - BARABAS VS JESUS

HYMN MY SONG IS LOVE UNKNOWN

REFLECTION JUDAS

MUSIC: VOLUNTARY

*Bring Palm Crosses forward*

*Silence until 13:15*

SCRIPTURE MATTHEW 27:27-31, LUKE 23:35-38 [NRSV]

THOUGHT

HYMN O SACRED HEAD

REFLECTION SOLDIER

MUSIC: VOLUNTARY

*Reflect on violence in our lives, and society*

*Silence until 13:35*

SCRIPTURE MARK 14:26-31, 53-54, 66-72 [NRSV]

THOUGHT LOYALTY REQUIRES FORGIVENESS

HYMN PRAISE TO THE HOLIEST IN THE HEIGHT

REFLECTION PETER

MUSIC: VOLUNTARY

*Lower the candle down to the flat.*

*Reflect on the change of God's call on your life. Go and cup the candle, feel the warmth and Presence of God that Peter was trying to feel, but that he denied, take that experience back to your seat and sit with it.*

*Silence until 13:50*

### **[13:50] Gratitude**

*Place the candle back up on the elevated sanctuary step*

SCRIPTURE LUKE 23:24-32 [NRSV]

THOUGHT JOHN 17 – JESUS' FAREWELL

SONG HOW DEEP THE FATHER'S LOVE

REFLECTION SIMON OF CYRENE

MUSIC: VOLUNTARY

*Come forward and write on the note paper something you can do to help another person, float that in the bowl of refreshment as your prayer*

*Silence until 14:15*

### **[14:15] Grace**

SCRIPTURE LUKE 23:32-43 [NRSV]

CHANT JESUS REMEMBER ME

SERMON FORGIVENESS

HYMN WHEN I SURVEY

CONFESSION

MUSIC: VOLUNTARY

*Who are you remembering before God today? Come and write it on the 3 cross. (Green background with 3 simple white crosses)*

*Silence until 14:35*

### **[14:35] Love**

SCRIPTURE JOHN 19:18-42 [NRSV]

REFLECTION

HYMN GLORY BE TO JESUS

REFLECTION MARY MOTHER OF JESUS

*Silence for reflection*

*Extinguish candle and wrap in a shroud*

INTERCESSIONS BABY'S AND FINAL WILL AND TESTAMENT

LORD'S PRAYER

MUSIC: VOLUNTARY

*Silence until 12:55*

### **[14:55] Dismissal**

**Closing...**

CHANT JESUS REMEMBER ME

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

BLESSING

*Extinguish last candle*

*Leave in silence*

# Creative Stations of the Cross - 1hr – Service

*In this service we met in the hall below first. We then created these “Stations of the Cross.” Each station was cut into a big black piece of cardboard ahead of time. The black then served as the stained glass window outline. People then used the media given to them at each table to make a background to go behind each window. These were then literally put up against our worship space windows, so that they were lit from behind. It took about 15 minutes to decorate/create the backgrounds. All the preparation and trial and error was done ahead of time, so that the leaders could guide the people in how to efficiently create a background. They were given their scripture, and instructions on how to use their media. Once complete, they took it upstairs, and used BlueTack to stick it to the window. When everyone was gathered, the service continued. First off a group member read the scripture. Another then explained what they had used, and any meaning behind their artistic impression. Make sure the group doing window one are the most creative people available, so that they can mentor good explanation of their artwork to the congregation.*

*The artwork concept came from the Stations of the Cross by John Drawbridge at the Sisters of Compassion. Nick and Steph Brook adapted, expanded and modified the original concept. We moved from the original Roman Catholic version, so that we could do a more protestant version, without Veronica, and without Jesus falling. The PDF artwork is the work of Nick Brook.*

*Once prepared, the stations were decorated at the 9:30 service. They were given colour and texture:*

- glitter on duraseal
- feathers on duraseal
- water based paint on butcher paper (dried with a heat gun)
- grated crayon, melted with an iron
- coffee filters, coloured with died water and food colouring (and dried with a hair dryer)
- pastels
- doilees
- fine felt tips to make a pattern on paper
- water colours
- pressed flower petals
- vivids on tinfoil
- tissue paper on duraseal

*Duraseal was used to over the back of most, to keep things clean and neat. Each art piece covered a window. The windows and doors not used were blacked out with black curtains, so it looked like one great big “light box.”*

## **Welcome and Opening prayer**

### **Song**

**Stay with me, remain here with me. Watch and pray, watch and pray.**

(Repeat x3)

### **[01] JESUS PRAYS ALONE**

**MATT 26: 36-46 JESUS PRAYS**

*Jesus went with his disciples to a place called Gethsemane. When they got there, he told them, “Sit here while I go over there and pray.”*

*Jesus took along Peter and the two brothers, James and John. He was very sad and troubled, and he said to them, “I am so sad that I feel as if I am dying. Stay here and keep awake with me.”*

*Jesus walked on a little way. Then he knelt with his face to the ground and prayed, “My Father, if it is possible, don’t make me suffer by making me drink from this cup. But do what you want, and not what I want.”*



*Grated crayon, ironed on baking paper*

*He came back and found his disciples sleeping. So he said to Peter, "Can't any of you stay awake with me for just one hour? Stay awake and pray that you won't be tested. You want to do what is right, but you are weak."*

*Again Jesus went to pray and said, "My Father, if there is no other way, and I must suffer, I will still do what you want."*

*Jesus came back and found them sleeping again. They simply could not keep their eyes open. He left them and prayed the same prayer once more.*

*Finally, Jesus returned to his disciples and said, "Are you still sleeping and resting? The time has come for the Son of Man to be handed over to sinners. Get up! Let's go. The one who will betray me is already here."*

#### THOUGHT

*Jesus said: "I no longer call you servants but friends."*

*Being a friend can be hard work at times, our friends can expect a lot of us, sometimes more than we want to give; especially when we are tired.*

*When have you been a friend to someone when you were really tired? When have you gone the extra mile? When have you been a friend to someone, when others were being horrible to them?*

#### PRAYER

Lord Jesus, you needed friends, and we need friends. Help us to be kind and gentle to each other. Help us to value long term friendship; and give us the grace to help those friendships grow.

Lord hear us

E te Ariki

Lord hear our prayer

Whakarongo mai rā ki a mātou

## **[02] JESUS IS BETRAYED AND ARRESTED**

### MATT 26: 47-56 JESUS IS ARRESTED

*Jesus was still speaking when Judas the betrayer came up. He was one of the twelve disciples, and a large mob armed with swords and clubs was with him. They had been sent by the chief priests and the nation's leaders. Judas had told them beforehand, "Arrest the man I greet with a kiss." Judas walked right up to Jesus and said, "Hello, teachers." Then Judas kissed him. Jesus replied, "My friend, why are you here?" The men grabbed Jesus and arrested him. One of Jesus' followers pulled out a sword. He struck the servant of the high priest and cut off his ear.*

*But Jesus told him, "Put your sword away. Anyone who lives by fighting will die by fighting. Don't you know that I could ask my Father, and straight away he would send me more than twelve armies of angels? But then, how could the words of the Scriptures come true, which say that this must happen?"*

*Jesus said to the mob, "Why do you come with swords and clubs to arrest me like a criminal? Day after day I sat and taught in the temple, and you didn't arrest me. But all this happened, so that what the prophets wrote would come true." All Jesus' disciples left him and ran away.*



*Feathers on duraseal*

#### THOUGHT

*Some people know what is it to not be accepted by their community – the disabled, the unwanted, the poor. Those who others have washed their hands of. Jesus' life was one of service to them.*

*Who have I been unkind to, or not included? Those who don't learn as quickly as me, who are unpopular, who want to play other games, who are different to me? Can I see Christ in them? Wouldn't Jesus have embraced them?*

PRAYER:

Lord we ask you to give us the gift of kindness; never to condemn anyone around us, seeing God in everyone.

Lord hear us

E te Ariki

Lord hear our prayer

Whakarongo mai rā ki a mātou

**[03] PETER'S DENIAL/SANHEDRIN CONDEMN JESUS TO DIE**

JOHN 18:15-27

*Simon Peter and another disciple followed Jesus. That disciple knew the high priest and he followed Jesus into the courtyard of the high priest's house. Peter stayed outside near the gate. But the other disciple came back out and spoke to the girl at the gate. She let Peter go in, but asked him, "Aren't you one of that man's followers?"*

*"No, I am not!" Peter answered. It was cold, and the servants and temple police had made a charcoal fire. They were warming themselves around it, when Peter went over and stood near the fire to warm himself.*

*The high priest questioned Jesus about his followers and his teaching. But Jesus told him, "I have spoken freely in front of everyone. And I have always taught in our meeting places in the temple, where all our people come together. I have not said anything in secret. Why are you questioning me? Why don't you ask the people who heard me? They know what I have said."*

*As soon as Jesus said this, one of the temple police hit him and said, "That's no way to talk to the high priest!"*

*Jesus answered, "If I have done something wrong, say so. But if not, why did you hit me?" Jesus was still tied up, and Annas sent him to Caiaphas the high priest.*

*While Simon Peter was standing there warming himself, someone asked him, "Aren't you one of Jesus' followers?" Again Peter denied it and said, "No, I am not!"*

*One of the high priest's servants was there. He was a relative of the servant whose ear Peter had cut off, and he asked, "Didn't I see you in the garden with that man?" Once more Peter denied it, and at once a cock crowed.*



Poster paint on butchers paper

THOUGHT

*Jesus' best friend left him. He pretended not to be his friend when Jesus needed one.  
Have you ignored a friend? Have you gone and been friends with someone else instead of them?  
Or has someone done this to you? Friendships are hard.*

PRAYER

Lord Jesus, you needed friends, and we need friends. Help us to be kind and gentle to each other. Help us to value long term friendship; and give us the grace to help those friendships grow.

Lord hear us

E te Ariki

Lord hear our prayer

Whakarongo mai rā ki a mātou

**[04] PILATE CONDEMNS JESUS TO DIE**

MATT 27: 15-26 THE DEATH SENTENCE

*During Passover the governor always freed a prisoner chosen by the people. At that time a well-known terrorist named Jesus Barabbas was in jail. So when the crowd came together, Pilate asked them, "Which prisoner do you want me to set free? Do you want Jesus Barabbas or Jesus who is called the Messiah?"*



Grated crayon, ironed on butchers paper

*Pilate knew that the leaders had brought Jesus to him because they were jealous.*

*While Pilate was judging the case, his wife sent him a message. It said, "Don't have anything to do with that innocent man. I have had nightmares because of him."*

*But the chief priests and the leaders convinced the crowds to ask for Barabbas to be set free and for Jesus to be killed. Pilate asked the crowd again, "Which of these two men do you want me to set free?"*

*"Barabbas!" they replied.*

*Pilate asked them, "What am I to do with Jesus, who is called the Messiah?" They all yelled, "Nail him to a cross!" Pilate answered, "But what crime has he done?" "Nail him to a cross!" they yelled even louder.*

*Pilate saw that there was nothing he could do and that the people were starting to riot. So he took some water and washed his hands in front of them and said, "I won't have anything to do with killing this man. You are the ones doing it!"*

*Everyone answered, "We and our own families will take the blame for his death!"*

*Pilate set Barabbas free. Then he ordered his soldiers to beat Jesus with a whip and nail him to a cross.*

#### THOUGHT

*Jesus had many things said about him which weren't true. He had to endure these false accusations for years.*

*When have I lied about someone or something? Have I sought forgiveness from them and God?*

*When has someone said something false about me? Have I offered them forgiveness?*

*When have I seen something happen that is not right, and stood aside and not said anything?*

#### PRAYER:

Lord, we ask you to give us strength to be truth-bearers, give us courage, grace, determination and gentleness in being people of truth in the world.

Lord hear us

E te Ariki

Lord hear our prayer

Whakarongo mai rā ki a mātou

### **[05] JESUS SCOURGED, BEATEN, CROWN OF THORNS**

MATT 27:27-30 SOLDIERS MAKE FUN OF JESUS

*The governor's soldiers led Jesus into the fortress and brought together the rest of the troops. They stripped off Jesus' clothes and put a scarlet robe on him. They made a crown out of thorn branches and placed it on his head, and they put a stick in his right hand. The soldiers knelt down and pretended to worship him. They made fun of him and shouted, "Hey, you king of the Jews!" Then they spat on him. They took the stick from him and beat him on the head with it.*



*Glitter on duraseal*

#### THOUGHT

*Jesus was stripped of his clothes and was naked. He was stripped of his dignity. Yet Jesus saw beauty and worth in everyone, including those nailed to the crosses beside himself.*

*Do I recognise everyone's dignity as a child of God? Do I judge people in different ways? Do I like to surround myself with those who seem more popular or "cool"? Do I remember that Christ was despised and humiliated for me?*

#### PRAYER:

Lord, help us to remember your teaching about caring for everyone. When we give help, support, and love to the least in our communities, we are serving you.

Lord hear us

E te Ariki

Lord hear our prayer

Whakarongo mai rā ki a mātou



## [06] JESUS CARRIES HIS CROSS

MATT 27:31 JESUS IS NAILED TO A CROSS

*When the soldiers had finished making fun of Jesus, they took off the robe. They put his own clothes back on him led him off to be nailed to a cross.*

### THOUGHT

*Jesus had many crosses to bear – the disapproval of his mother and family; the disapproval of the religious and secular leaders; the betrayal of friends, and more. But he devoted himself to lightening the crosses that others had to bear.*

*Do I struggle under the weight of my own crosses, the things that I find hard? Where do I draw strength to carry on?*



Coffee filters and food colouring on durasea

### PRAYER:

Lord, we ask you to give us strength to carry on when life is hard. May we use your example to encourage us to be strong.

Lord hear us                      E te Ariki  
Lord hear our prayer        Whakarongo mai rā ki a mātou

## [07] SIMON HELPS TO CARRY THE CROSS

MATT 27:32-34

*On the way they met a man from Cyrene named Simon, and they forced him to carry Jesus' cross. There they gave Jesus some wine mixed with a drug to ease the pain. But when Jesus tasted what it was, he refused to drink it.*

### THOUGHT

*Can I use my experience and my gifts to help others and lighten their loads? Do I look for opportunities to help those who are struggling? When I die and people come to my funeral, will they say I helped people? Likewise, will I allow myself to be helped? Will I ask for help?*



Oil pastels on butcher paper

### PRAYER:

Lord we thank you for the gifts you have given us. We ask you to help us see those who are suffering in our playground and in our community. May we be more like the Good Samaritan and less like the Levite who turned away.

Lord hear us                      E te Ariki  
Lord hear our prayer        Whakarongo mai rā ki a mātou

## [08] JESUS SPEAKS TO THE WOMEN OF JERUSALEM

LUKE 23:27-31

*A large crowd was following Jesus, and in the crowd a lot of women were crying and weeping for him. Jesus turned to the women and said: Women of Jerusalem, don't cry for me! Cry for yourselves and for your children. Some day people will say, "Women who never had children are really fortunate!" At that time everyone will say to the mountains, "Fall on us!" They will say to the hills, "Hide us!" If this can happen when the wood is green, what do you think will happen when it is dry?*



Doilies on duraseal



#### THOUGHT

*The women were faithful. They did not run away and hide. They were there at the foot of the Cross, in the hardest of times. They conquered their fear and stayed with Jesus. Would I have stayed with Jesus? Will I give up my life to devote myself to the poor and needy?*

#### PRAYER:

We pray for the gift of faith, of steadfastness, of loyalty. May the women at the foot of the Cross remind us that resurrection always follows death.

Lord hear us

E te Ariki

**Lord hear our prayer**

**Whakarongo mai rā ki a mātou**

### [9] JESUS IS NAILED TO THE CROSS

MATT 27:35-37

*The soldiers nailed Jesus to a cross and gambled to see who would get his clothes. Then they sat down to guard him. Above his head they put a sign that told why he was nailed there. It read, "This is Jesus, the King of the Jews."*

#### THOUGHT

*This is the most violent and shocking of the 'Stations'. Are you scared or daunted by shocking situations? Who do you know who is excluded from their family or community that needs to be embraced and shown love?*

*Do I look away when someone is hurt or needs help? Can I open my heart and mind to those with the most suffering and not turn away?*



Grated crayons on baking paper

#### PRAYER:

Lord, help us to see the suffering around us and in the world. May we find many small ways that we can help and bring comfort, according to our gifts.

Lord hear us

E te Ariki

**Lord hear our prayer**

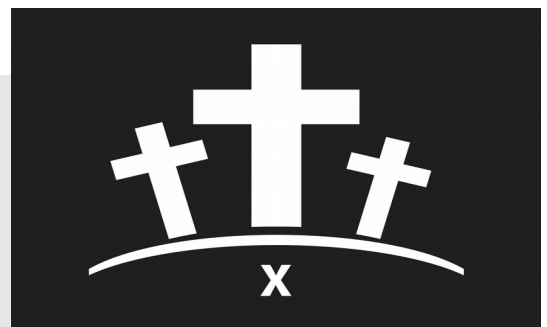
**Whakarongo mai rā ki a mātou**

### [10] CRIMINALS

MATT 27:38, LUKE 23:39-43

*The soldiers also nailed two criminals on crosses, one to the right of Jesus and the other to his left.*

*One of the criminals hanging there also insulted Jesus by saying, "Aren't you the Messiah? Save yourself and save us!" But the other criminal told the first one off, "Don't you fear God? Aren't you getting the same punishment as this man? We got what was coming to us, but he didn't do anything wrong." Then he said to Jesus, "Remember me when you come into power!" Jesus replied, "I promise that today you will be with me in paradise."*



Watercolour on white paper

#### THOUGHT

*Are there people who are beyond my forgiveness? Should I be forgiving them?*

*Jesus forgave the thief beside him, he also forgave those who crucified him.*

#### PRAYER:

Lord, help us to see the suffering around us and in the world. May we find many small ways that we can help and bring comfort, according to our gifts.

Lord hear us

E te Ariki

**Lord hear our prayer**

**Whakarongo mai rā ki a mātou**

## **Song**

**Jesus remember me when you come into your kingdom**  
**Jesus remember me when you come into your kingdom**

(x3)

## **[11] JESUS CARES FOR HIS MOTHER**

JOHN 19:25-27

*Jesus' mother stood beside his cross with her sister and Mary the wife of Clopas. Mary Magdalene was standing there too. When Jesus saw his mother and his favourite disciple with her, he said to his mother, "This man is now your son." Then he said to the disciple, "She is now your mother," From then on, that disciple took her into his own home.*

### THOUGHT

*Mary gladly said "yes" to the call of God. She showed caring and faithfulness, and also strength, determination and loyalty. Mary's life cannot have been easy. Do I turn to the example of Mary, knowing that she has experienced great sorrow? Do I let her accompany me and comfort me?*



*Flowers and duraseal*

### PRAYER:

Lord Jesus may you give us strength to follow in your ways like your mother Mary. May you send the Holy Spirit to minister to us, to alleviate our sadness, regrets and disappointments.

Lord hear us

E te Ariki

**Lord hear our prayer**

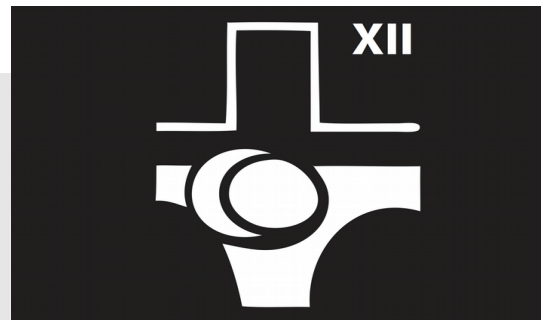
**Whakarongo mai rā ki a mātou**

## **[12] JESUS DIES ON THE CROSS**

MATT 27:45-50 THE DEATH OF JESUS

*At midday the sky turned dark and stayed that way until three o'clock. Then about that time Jesus shouted, "Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?" which means 'My God, my God, why have you deserted me?'*

*Some of the people standing there heard Jesus and said, "He's calling for Elijah." One of them at once ran and grabbed a sponge. He soaked it in wine, then put it on a stick and held it up to Jesus. Others said, "Wait! Let's see if Elijah will come and save him." Once again Jesus shouted, and then he died.*



*Lines on white paper*

### THOUGHT

*Jesus showed us how much God loves us by dying for us. While we aren't all called to die for our faith like the martyrs, will we give our life for God and God's people?*

*What am I prepared to do for God and our faith? Do I give up when it is too hard? Do I try to follow the example of those who have dedicated their lives to God?*

### PRAYER:

Lord, help us to dedicate our lives to you in everyday ways. Strengthen us when we feel criticised or left out because we choose to follow you. Help us to remember you love us always.

Lord hear us

E te Ariki

**Lord hear our prayer**

**Whakarongo mai rā ki a mātou**

### [13] JESUS IS TAKEN DOWN FROM THE CROSS

LUKE 23:51-54

*There was a man named Joseph, who was from Arimathea in Judea. Joseph was a good and honest man, and he was eager for God's kingdom to come. He was also a member of the Jewish council, but he did not agree with what they had decided. Joseph went to Pilate and asked for Jesus' body. He took the body down from the cross and wrapped it in fine cloth. Then he put it in a tomb that has been cut out of solid rock and had never been used. It was Friday, and the Sabbath was about to begin.*



Foil and bright vivids

#### THOUGHT

*How this was done? Was it done roughly, by the soldiers, glad that their work was finished, or was it done with gentleness, respecting the body of Christ? Hospice nurses know all about tenderness, nursing the dying and the incurable. Do I show gentleness and tenderness? Do I try to understand when others are sad? Do I treat others well every day?*

#### PRAYER:

We ask you for the gift of gentleness and tenderness, knowing that this is your way. Banish unkindness and judgement of others from our lives. Help other people to know you through our good example.

Lord hear us

E te Ariki

Lord hear our prayer

Whakarongo mai rā ki a mātou

### [14] JESUS IS LAID IN THE TOMB

MATT 27:60-61

*Then Joseph put the body in his own tomb that had been cut into solid rock and had never been used. He rolled a big stone against the entrance to the tomb and went away. All this time Mary Magdalene and the other Mary were sitting across from the tomb.*



Tissue paper and duraseal

#### THOUGHT

*Now the time of surrender, of being at rest begins for Jesus. On the seventh day God rested from the work of creation. And you, the Son of God, rest and await the dawn of the eighth day when all will be made new—and we wait with you.*

*Joseph of Arimathea was brave enough to ask for the body of Christ. He had been a secret disciple, but now he was ready to declare his faith and loyalty.*

*Are we courageous; not afraid to be open about our love of God? Will we allow God's love to turn us to action, to care for God's people especially the most vulnerable and needy. How brave am I about showing my faith? Do I show God's love to others, by what I do and how I treat others?*

#### PRAYER:

Lord, we ask you for the gift of courage. May our love for you shine forth in our lives, drawing people to you by our joy.

Lord hear us

E te Ariki

Lord hear our prayer

Whakarongo mai rā ki a mātou

**Song - How deep the Father's love for us**

#### Blessing

Let us go now into today remembering that God died for us in Jesus. Let us remember the cost of the blessing that God gives to us unconditionally. And the blessing of: God the creator, God the redeemer and God the life giving Spirit be with you and all who you love today and always. Amen.

# Acknowledgements

## List of original sources

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Whilst the bulk of this is our original work, there are some sources which are not. Those sources are listed below.

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### **Re-affirmation of baptismal vows**

The original service came from a Presbyterian Background. Church of the Saviour, Blockhouse Bay then adapted it for their use. This service was then adapted and folded into a full immersion baptism liturgy in Papakura Parish. It was first used by Papakura Parish at Maraetai Beach on Easter Day, 27<sup>th</sup> March 2016, where four children were baptised and one re-affirmed their baptismal vows.

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