# **Introduction**

The stone that the builders rejected

***has become the chief cornerstone.***

This is the Lord’s doing;

***it is marvellous in our eyes.*** *Psalm 118.22-23*

Blessed is the kingdom of the Father

and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

***Amen.***

## Introduction (continued)

Service Note: The liturgist/leader continues from the above responsive:

We gather to reflect together on a remarkable thing:

that God has taken the broken and rejected body of one of us – Jesus of Nazareth – and now uses it for the healing of the world.

What a God, who does such a thing!

The mystery of God is not that God is invisible, or merely too big for our thoughts,

but that God is able to reach into the brokenness of our lives

and to haul newness and life out of what is dead and decaying.

*[Let us pray…]*

### Prayer of Adoration and Invocation

Is it truly so, gracious God,

that *we* have an interest in the death of Jesus?

Is it truly so that *we*, who caused the pain of the righteous one

are actually healed by what he endured from us?

Is it truly so that Jesus’ death at our hands can become a source of life for us, because he wills it so?

We believe that it is.

And so we gather again to hear the story of divine love.

In our songs, in our prayers, in our thoughts together and the thoughts we keep to ourselves, be present to us.

Help us to see ever more clearly.

Help us to understand ever more thoroughly.

Enable us to discover ourselves gathered up in your loving arms as once again we hear the story of the Christ who died for us.

This we ask in the name of Jesus, our Lord and Saviour. Amen.

**Prayer 1** (The plot against Jesus)

We give you thanks, Great God our Father, for your prodigal love in Jesus.

In him came one with healing hands,

although he would himself

be made to suffer.

In him came the Word which gives life,

although he was met with

a response which brought death.

Forgive us our confused hearing of your word,

our uncertain hearing of the call to life.

Forgive us when our uncertainty

becomes complicity in silencing

what should be shouted from the hilltops.

Lord God, have mercy on us.

Service Note: ‘...have mercy on us’ is the cue for the sung Kyrie/Trisagion

**Prayer 2** (The last supper, Peter’s denial foretold)

We give you thanks, Great God our Father, that in Jesus you have given us yourself, even given up your body for us.

When Christ offered us the bread and the cup as the signs of his body and blood, he gave us also the signs by which our relationship to you was now to stand.

Forgive us Lord when, indifferent to your giving of yourself to us, we hesitate to give ourselves for you.

Forgive us when, hearing you speak our name, we refuse to speak yours in return.

Service Note: ‘...have mercy on us’ is the cue for the sung Kyrie/Trisagion

**Prayer 3** (Gethsemane, Betrayal and Arrest)

We give you thanks, Great God our Father,

that your Son Jesus remained obedient to the

call he heard from you.

Not relishing the thought of death, he nevertheless remained true.

Forgive us, that though we are called simply to watch and wait while Jesus prays, even this can be too much for us sometimes.

Forgive us when you seem to us powerless before other gods and authorities, and we take up swords to defend you, or we flee the powers and abandon you in terror.

Lord God, have mercy on us.

Service Note: ‘...have mercy on us’ is the cue for the sung Kyrie/Trisagion

**Prayer 4** (Sanhedrin, Peter’s denial)

We give you thanks, Great God our Father, for Jesus’ testimony to the truth in the country towns and in the halls of power.

Where our voice would vary and falter with the changing circumstances, his was steady and even, pointing always to your coming kingdom.

Forgive us when, given the chance, we fail in our testimony to you.

Forgive us when it seems that to be known as yours is undesirable, and to seem not to be yours is the way we prefer it.

Lord God, have mercy on us.

Service Note: ‘...have mercy on us’ is the cue for the sung Kyrie/Trisagion

**[OPTIONAL} Prayer 5** (Pilate, mockery by the soldiers)

Service Note: This is an alternative response at the point where Hymn TIS 497 appears in the order of service, if the Eucharist is not being celebrated.

We give you thanks, Great God our Father,

that Jesus stood firm to the very end.

Though mocked as a king, the royal robe and crown of thorns are more kingly than anything by which we might bedeck ourselves.

We were there when they crucified him;

we were there when they nailed him to the tree;

we were there when they pierced him in the side.

Hardly a way to treat a king…

*Service Note: ‘...have mercy on us’ is the cue for the sung Kyrie/Trisagion*