



# **THE WAY TO THE CROSS**

## **A Service for the Holy Triduum**



**April 2, 2026 at 7:00 PM  
First Presbyterian Church,  
Blairstown, NJ**

**Rev. David Harvey**

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF BLAIRSTOWN, NJ

*A Maundy Thursday • Good Friday Tenebrae Service*

7:00 PM

**ORDER OF WORSHIP**

Apr. 2, 2026

\* Please stand if you are able; **bold text spoken** and *bold/italic sung* by all.

**GATHERING OF GOD'S PEOPLE**

**ORGAN PRELUDE:** *Ich ruf zu dir, Herr Jesu Christ,* Tim Topolski  
*BWV 639, by J. S. Bach*

**CHORAL INTROIT:** Chancel Choir

**WELCOME:** Pastor David Harvey

\* **CALL TO WORSHIP:** Deborah Albrecht  
*(adapted from 'The Suffering Servant,' Isaiah 53: 2-5)*

He had no form or majesty that we should look at him.

**Nothing in his appearance that we should desire him.**

He was despised and rejected by others; a man of suffering and acquainted with infirmity.

**As one from whom others hide their faces he was despised, and we held him of no account.**

Surely, he has born our infirmities and carried our diseases, yet we accounted him stricken, struck down by God, and afflicted.

**Wounded for our rebellion, crushed because of our guilt, the punishment reconciling us fell on him, yet, by his bruises we are healed.**

With a contemplative spirit . . . made whole. Let us worship God.

\* **HYMN:** No. 85 *What Wondrous Love Is This* vv. 1 & 2

***What wondrous love is this, O my soul, O my soul,  
What wondrous love is this, O my soul! What wondrous love is  
this that caused the Lord of bliss to bear the heavy cross for my  
soul, for my soul, To bear the heavy cross for my soul!***

***To God and to the Lamb, I will sing, I will sing,  
To God and to the Lamb, I will sing;***

***To God and to the Lamb who is the great I Am,  
While millions join the theme, I will sing, I will sing;  
While millions join the theme, I will sing!***

**PRAYER OF CONFESSION:** *(in silence and unison)*

Lord Jesus, like Judas, we have betrayed you; like Peter, we have denied you; like the other disciples, we have deserted you. Nevertheless, you remain faithful to us unto death, even death on the cross. In your mercy, forgive our sin of betrayal and desertion; grant us grace to live life with your humility and hospitality; awaken within us the joy of your precious salvation; in your holy and strong name, we pray. Amen.

**ASSURANCE OF CHRIST'S FORGIVENESS:**

Brothers and sisters in Christ: through the cross of Christ, we are forgiven.

**By Jesus' death on the cross, we are forgiven.**

**Let us forgive one another.**

\* **HYMN OF GRATITUDE:**      *Give Thanks*      No. 647 GTG

*Give thanks with a grateful heart, Give thanks to the holy one,  
give thanks because we're given Jesus Christ, the Son.  
And now, let the weak say "we are strong," let the poor say "we  
are rich because of what the Lord has done for us." Give thanks.*

## The Holy Way to the Cross — Holy Thursday

The Preparation & the Institution of the Holy Meal

**MATTHEW 26: 14–19** — Judas indicates the betrayal of Jesus.      Erika Wulster

**MATTHEW 26: 20–25** — The Preparation of the Passover Meal and the announcement of Jesus' betrayal.      Teri Harvey

**ANTHEM:**      *"Come to the Table"* by Mark Hayes      Chancel Choir

**INVITATION TO THE LORD'S TABLE:**      Elder Deborah Albrecht

This is not a Presbyterian table. This is the Lord's Table, . . . Listen to the gracious words of our Savior Jesus Christ:

*This is indeed. . . raise them up on the last day.*      John 6: 40

*Behold, I stand at the door . . . they with me.*      Revelation 3: 20

Why have we gathered here?

**We come because we have been called to live out a story.**

What story shall we live?

**The story of God's saving love, revealed in Jesus.**

Where did this story begin?

**It was whispered before time began. It was sung in the melody of Creation.**

Whose story is this?

**This story is God's alone to tell. It hums in the rivers and the trees. It whispers in the skies and the seas. It calls to the people of all places. It speaks in our hearts and in our lives.**

Why then should we speak of this story?

**This story calls our name in Creation and claims our lives through the Cross and the empty tomb, of our redemption. We are its telling in this time, this space, and this place.**

#### **PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING, OF THE PEOPLE**

**& THE LORD'S PRAYER:** *(using debts & debtors)* Pastor David

With storytellers of all ages and in all places, we offer ourselves to the Lord. Let us pray: Holy, holy, holy Lord, God almighty . . . prayer Jesus taught, praying: **"Our Father, who art . . . forever. Amen."**

**MATTHEW 26: 26–29 — Jesus Institutes the Holy Meal.** Pastor David

**This is our common story, our deep memory, our true destiny and our identity. Let it be our story. The grace of God for the people of God.**

\* **HYMN:** *On the Night He Was Arrested* Tune 422  
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***On the night he was arrested, Jesus took a loaf of bread.  
He gave thanks to God in heaven, then he shared it and he said,  
"Here's my body; it is broken. Now I give it; taste and see!  
When you share at God's good table, eat the bread! Remember me!"  
When they'd finished eating supper, Jesus gave them something new.  
As he took the cup he told them, "Drink this wine; it is for you.  
It's the promise of salvation. In my blood, God sets you free.  
When you share at God's good table, drink the wine! Remember me!"  
God, we thank you for your blessings—for your gifts of bread and wine.  
By your Spirit, Christ is present in the fruit of grain and vine.  
With these gifts of earth we're given, we proclaim Christ's sacrifice.  
We receive a taste of heaven, as we share his death and life.***

**RECEIVING THE ELEMENTS:** *Approach the Table, take the bread,  
take the cup, and return to your pew.*

## SHARING THE BREAD & DRINKING THE CUP

**COMMUNION BLESSING:** Deborah Albrecht  
What is our prayer this day?

**Ever gracious and life-giving God, on this holy evening when we have remembered the Last Supper of the Lord Jesus, when his body was broken for us and his blood poured out for us, accept us in spite of our unworthiness. Fill us with mutual love for you and for one another that we may live into Jesus' words: to love one another as he first loved us. This we pray in Jesus' name. Amen.**

**JOHN 13: 1–17 — Jesus washes his disciples' feet.** Pastor David

**MATTHEW 26: 30-46 — The Garden** Pete Peterson

**JOHN 13: 34–35 — The New Commandment** Pastor David

**HYMN:** *In This Room, a Towel and Basin* vv. 1 & 3  
*Tune #720 GTG; Copyright © 2018 by Carolyn Winfrey Gillette*

***In this room, a towel and basin Stand as gifts we don't deserve.  
Christ, you humbly knelt to use them; Showing us the way to serve.  
From you, Lord, we hear a teaching: "Now I give a new command.  
Love as I have loved, out-reaching! Then the world will understand!"***

## Good Friday — "By His Stripes We Are Healed"

(1 Peter 2: 24)

**JOHN 13: 21–30, MATT. 26: 47–50 — The Betrayal** Pete Peterson

**MATTHEW 26: 51–58 — The Arrest** Don Nicholls

**JOHN 18: 28–40 — The Trial** Elizabeth Topolski

**HYMN:** *No. 101 When I Survey the Wondrous Cross* vv. 1 & 2  
***When I survey the wondrous cross On which the Prince of glory died,  
My richest gain I count but loss, And pour contempt on all my pride.  
Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast, Save in the death of Christ my God;  
All the vain things that charm me most, I sacrifice them to His blood.***

*~The first candle is extinguished. ~*

JOHN 19: 1–18 — The Conviction & The Execution Elizabeth Topolski

JOHN 3: 16–17— The Purpose Betsy Peterson

HYMN: No. 101 *When I Survey the Wondrous Cross* vv. 3 & 4

***See, from His head, His hands, His feet, Sorrow and love flow  
mingled down; Did e'er such love and sorrow meet,  
Or thorns compose so rich a crown?***

***Were the whole realm of nature mine, That were a present far too  
small; Love so amazing, so divine, Demands my soul, my life, my all***

*~ The second candle is extinguished. ~*

JOHN 19: 19–27 — The Crucifixion Pastor David

MATTHEW 27: 45–49 — The Abandonment Betsy Peterson

JOHN 19: 28–29 — Quenching Jesus' Thirst Deborah Albrecht

\* HYMN: No. 98 *O Sacred Head, Now Wounded* vv. 1 & 3

***O sacred head, now wounded, With grief and shame weighed  
down; Now scornfully surrounded With thorns, Thine only crown;  
O sacred Head, what glory, What bliss till now was Thine!  
Yet, though despised and gory, I joy to call Thee mine.***

***What language shall I borrow To thank Thee, dearest friend,  
For this Thy dying sorrow, Thy pity without end?  
O make me Thine forever; And should I fainting be,  
Lord, let me never, never Outlive my love to Thee.***

*~ The third candle is extinguished. ~*

LUKE 23: 44–46 — The Death of Jesus Teri Harvey

LUKE 23: 47–49 — The Centurion's Declaration  
of Good News Don Nicholls

#### A PRAYER FOR GOOD FRIDAY

ANTHEM: "Must Jesus Bear the Cross Alone?" Chancel Choir  
by Joseph Martin

*~ The fourth candle is extinguished. ~*

JOHN 19: 31–37 — The Piercing Teri Harvey

**HYMN:** No. 84      *In the Cross of Christ I Glory*      vv. 1 & 4

***In the cross of Christ I glory, Towering o'er the wrecks of time;  
All the light of sacred story Gathers round its head sublime. Cont'd.  
Bane and blessing, pain and pleasure, By the cross are sanctified;  
Peace is there that knows no measure,  
Joys that through all time abide.***

*~ The fifth candle is extinguished. ~*

**JOHN 19: 38–42 — The Burial**      Pastor David

*~ The sixth candle is extinguished. ~*

**HYMN:** No. 93      *Ah, Holy Jesus*      vv. 1, 3, 4

***Ah, holy Jesus, how have You offended,  
That mortal judgment has on You descended?  
By foes derided, by Your own rejected, O most afflicted!  
For me, dear Jesus, was Your incarnation,  
Your mortal sorrow, and Your life's oblation,  
Your death of anguish and Your bitter passion, For my salvation.  
Therefore, dear Jesus, since I cannot pay You,  
I do adore You, and will ever praise You,  
Think on Your pity and Your love unswerving, Not my deserving.***

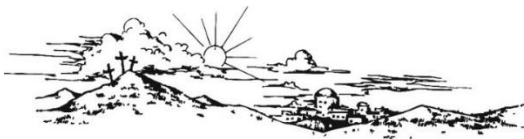
*~ The seventh candle is extinguished. ~*

### **STRIPPING OF THE SANCTUARY**

- The removal of the candles.
- The removal of the paraments.
- The removal of the cross.
- The removal of Holy Scripture.
- The sepulcher is sealed.

**SOLO:**      *Were You There?*      Maggie Morokutti

**BENEDICTION:**      *Exit in silence.*



**It is finished.**



*Our sincere appreciation and gratitude for this evening's participants:*

**Pastor:** Rev. David Harvey  
**Greeter:** Gary Albrecht  
**Usher:** Teri Harvey  
**Worship Leader & Communion Assistant:** Deborah Albrecht  
**Readers:** Deborah Albrecht, Teri Harvey, Don Nicholls, Betsy Peterson, Pete Peterson, Elizabeth Topolski, & Erika Wulster  
**Choir Director:** Maggie Morokutti  
**Organist:** Tim Topolski  
**Introit/Anthems:** The Chancel Choir  
**Communion Preparation:** Erika Wulster



# Celebrate Easter Sunday with us!

7:00 AM Easter Sunrise Service,  
Blair Lake on Blair Academy Campus  
*(in case of inclement weather, the service will be moved to Fellowship Hall)*

10:00 AM Easter Service with Holy Communion,  
Church Sanctuary



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## FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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Office Hours: Tuesday – Friday, 9:30 AM – 1:00 PM  
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