



THE WAY TO THE CROSS

A Service for the Holy Triduum

READER COPY

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

Rev. David Harvey

1 Main St., P.O. Box 385, Blairstown, NJ 07825

Phone: (908) 362-5254 Fax: (908) 362-8060

e-Mail: fpcb@ptd.net Website: fpcb-nj.org

<https://linktr.ee/fpcbblairstown>

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

CCLI Copyright License #: 2309277,

Streaming License #: 20761595



 GIVE NOW

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 BWV 639, by J. S. Bach* Tim Topolski

CHORAL INTROIT Chancel Choir

WELCOME: Pastor David Harvey

* **CALL TO WORSHIP:** (*adapted from 'The Suffering Servant,' Isaiah 53: 2–5*) **Deb Albrecht**

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

P: Nothing in his appearance that we should desire him.

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

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

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

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

L: With a contemplative spirit, reflect of this saying: "He himself bore our sins" in his body on the cross, that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; by his wounds we have been healed and are 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:

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

P: **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

READING: Matthew 26: 14–19 – Judas indicates the betrayal of Jesus.

Erika Wulster

READING: 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 not a Presbyterian table. This is the Lord's Table, and Jesus is the host. Our Savior invites all who are truly sorry for their sins and would humbly put their trust in him to come to the feast which he has prepared. Listen to the gracious words of our Savior Jesus Christ:

This is indeed the will of my Father, that all who see the Son and believe in him may have eternal life, and I will raise them up on the last day.

John 6: 40

Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if those who hear my voice open the door, I will come in to them and eat with them, and they with me.

Revelation 3: 20

L: Why have we gathered here?

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

L: What story shall we live?

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

L: Where did this story begin?

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

L: Whose story is this?

P: 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 and spaces. It speaks in our hearts and in our lives.

L: Why then should we speak of this story?

P: This story calls our name in Creation and claims our lives through the Cross and the empty tomb, of our redemption. In this space and place, we tell of its time.

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING, OF THE PEOPLE & THE LORD'S PRAYER:

Pastor David

L: With storytellers of all ages and in all places, we offer ourselves to the Lord. Let us pray: Holy, holy, holy Lord, God almighty . . . the prayer Jesus taught, praying:

P: "Our Father, who art . . . forever. Amen."

READING: Matthew 26: 26–29 — Jesus Institutes the Holy Meal.

Pastor David

P: (Join me) 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

Copyright © 2015 by Carolyn Winfrey Gillette

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.

Pastor: The feast of God for the people of God, let us eat and drink.

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

SHARING THE BREAD: During supper Jesus took bread, and having said the blessing he broke it and gave it to his disciples and said: *"I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty."* (Jn. 6:37) Eat this bread in remembrance of Christ. May the spirit that is His be in us also.

DRINKING THE CUP: Then Jesus took a cup and having offered thanks to God he gave it to them with these words: *"I am the vine, you are the branches; apart from Jesus, we can do nothing."* Drink this cup in remembrance of Christ who died. May the spirit in which Jesus died be our Spirit.

COMMUNION BLESSING:

Deborah Albrecht

L: What is our prayer this day?

P: 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.

READING: John 13: 1–17 — Jesus washes his disciples' feet

Pastor David

READING: Matthew 26: 30–46 — The Garden

Pete Peterson

READING: John 13: 34–35 — The New Commandment

Pastor David

HYMN: *(remain seated)* *In This Room, a Towel and Basin* vv. 1 & 3
Tune #720 *Glory to God Hymnal; 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 — "The Passion of Jesus, By His Stripes, We Are Healed" (1 Peter 2: 24)

READING: John 13: 21–30, Matthew 26: 47–50 — The Betrayal

Pete Peterson

READING: Matthew 26: 51–58 — The Arrest

Don Nicholls

READING: John 18: 28–40 — The Trial

Elizabeth Topolski

HYMN: *(remain seated)* *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.* Cont'd.

**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. ~

READING: John 19: 1–18 — The Conviction and The Execution

Elizabeth Topolski

READING: John 3: 16–17 — The Purpose

Betsy Peterson

HYMN: *(remain seated)* 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. ~

READING: John 19: 19–27 — The Crucifixion

Pastor David

READING: Matthew 27: 45–49 — The Abandonment

Betsy Peterson

READING: 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. ~

READING: Luke 23: 44–46 — The Death of Jesus

Teri Harvey

READING: 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?* by Joseph Martin

Chancel Choir

~ The fourth candle is extinguished. ~

READING: John 19: 31–37 — The Piercing

Teri Harvey

HYMN: *(remain seated)* 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.
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. ~

READING: John 19: 38–42 – The Burial

Pastor David

~ [The sixth candle is extinguished. ~

HYMN: *(remain seated)*

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

Were you there when they crucified my Lord?(Were you there?)

Were you there when they crucified my Lord?

Oh! Sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble.

Were you there when they crucified my Lord? (Were you there?)

Were you there when they nailed Him to the tree? (Were you there?)

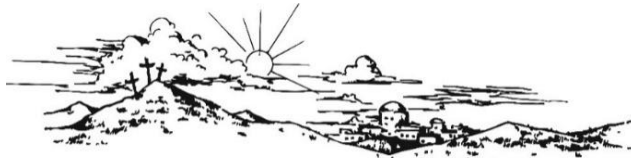
Were you there when they nailed Him to the tree?

Oh! Sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble.

*Were you there when they nailed Him to the tree? (Were you there?)
Were you there when they pierced Him in the side? (Were you there?)
Were you there when they pierced Him in the side?
Oh! Sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble.
Were you there when they pierced Him in the side? (Were you there?)
Were you there when they laid Him in the tomb? (Were you there?)
Were you there when they laid Him in the tomb?
Oh! Sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble.
Were you there when they laid Him in the tomb? (Were you there?)*

BENEDICTION:

Exit in silence.



I t i s f i n i s h e d .

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

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

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