



Good Friday Tenebrae Service
April 3, 2026

Thank you for attending the City Reformed Good Friday Tenebrae Service. We are thankful for the friends from the many churches who are able to join us tonight. Information about our City Reformed Easter services is available online: www.cityreformed.org.

We are particularly thankful for the hospitality of First Baptist Church of Pittsburgh, and that their members are able to join us tonight. Information about First Baptist Church and their Easter services can be found online: www.fbcpg.org.

City Reformed Presbyterian Church

Good Friday Tenebrae Service

April 3, 2026

Welcome! We are thankful for those of you who are able to join us tonight. For nearly 2,000 years, the Christian church has remembered the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus Christ as the central tenet of its faith. Easter and the days that lead up to it are a time to remember the gritty and bloody sacrifice of Jesus. During Easter week, we reflect on both the sorrow and joy of the ministry of Jesus Christ. On Sunday morning, we will gather to celebrate the earthshaking joy of the resurrection. But tonight we are remembering that our redemption came at a cost - a terrible cost. The Son of God was betrayed, humiliated, tortured and killed. He did this as our substitute and in so doing offers us forgiveness for our sin.

Our service this evening is a Tenebrae ("shadows") worship service in which the lights will gradually diminish as the biblical narrative moves towards the death of Christ. We use candles to highlight the service. After each of the seven readings, a candle will be extinguished. The service will end in darkness as we remember the suffering and death of Christ.

At the conclusion of the service, you are welcome to remain seated for quiet contemplation and prayer.

Nursery is available downstairs - please ask the ushers if you need assistance. Parents who have children that are unable to sit quietly are welcome to use the foyer at the rear of the sanctuary.

Prelude: Jacob's Song

(Words & Music: Daniel Snoko 2025)

Welcome and Introduction: Matt Koerber (City Reformed Presbyterian Church)

First Reading: Matthew 26:47-56

Betrayal and Arrest of Jesus - Scott Boyd (*Pastor, First Baptist Church*)

While he was still speaking, Judas came, one of the twelve, and with him a great crowd with swords and clubs, from the chief priests and the elders of the people. ⁴⁸Now the betrayer had given them a sign, saying, "The one I will kiss is the man; seize him." ⁴⁹And he came up to Jesus at once and said, "Greetings, Rabbi!" And he kissed him. ⁵⁰Jesus said to him, "Friend, do what you came to do." Then they came up and laid hands on Jesus and seized him. ⁵¹And behold, one of those who were with Jesus stretched out his hand and drew his sword and struck the servant of the high priest and cut off his ear. ⁵²Then Jesus said to him, "Put your sword back into its place. For all who take the sword will perish by the sword. ⁵³Do you think that I cannot appeal to my Father, and he will at once send me more than twelve legions of angels? ⁵⁴But how then should the Scriptures be fulfilled, that it must be so?" ⁵⁵At that hour Jesus said to the crowds, "Have you come out as against a robber, with swords and clubs to capture me? Day after day I sat in the temple teaching, and you did not seize me. ⁵⁶But all this has taken place that the Scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled." Then all the disciples left him and fled.

All Sufficient Merit

(Words & Music: Bethany Barnard, Bryan Fowler, and Shane Barnard 2023)

All sufficient merit shining like the sun
A fortune I inherit by no work I have done
My righteousness I forfeit at my Savior's cross
Where all sufficient merit did what I could not

In love he condescended eternal now in time
A life without a blemish the Maker made to die
The law could never save us our lawlessness had won
Until the pure and spotless Lamb had finally come

*It is done it is finished
No more debt I owe
Paid in full all sufficient
Merit now my own*

I lay down my garments any empty boast
Good works now all corrupted by the sinful host
I'm dressed in my Lord Jesus a crimson robe made white
No more fear of judgment his righteousness is mine

All sufficient merit firm in life and death
The joy of my salvation shall be my final breath
When I stand accepted before the throne of God
I'll gaze upon my Jesus and thank him for the cross
Yes I'll thank him for the cross

Candle Extinguished

Second Reading: Matthew 26:57-75

Judgment and Betrayal - Chris Richards (*Pastor, Steel City Church*)

Then those who had seized Jesus led him to Caiaphas the high priest, where the scribes and the elders had gathered. ⁵⁸And Peter was following him at a distance, as far as the courtyard of the high priest, and going inside he sat with the guards to see the end. ⁵⁹Now the chief priests and the whole council were seeking false testimony against Jesus that they might put him to death, ⁶⁰but they found none, though many false witnesses came forward. At last two came forward ⁶¹and said, "This man said, 'I am able to destroy the temple of God, and to rebuild it in three days.'" ⁶²And the high priest stood up and said, "Have you no answer to make? What is it that these men testify against you?" ⁶³But Jesus remained silent. And the high priest said to him, "I adjure you by the living God, tell us if you are the Christ, the Son of God." ⁶⁴Jesus said to him, "You have said so. But I tell you, from now on you will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of Power and coming on the clouds of heaven." ⁶⁵Then the high priest tore his robes and said, "He has uttered blasphemy. What further witnesses do we need? You have now heard his blasphemy. ⁶⁶What is your judgment?" They answered, "He deserves death." ⁶⁷Then they spit in his face and struck him. And some slapped him, ⁶⁸saying, "Prophecy to us, you Christ! Who is it that struck you?"

⁶⁹Now Peter was sitting outside in the courtyard. And a servant girl came up to him and said, "You also were with Jesus the Galilean." ⁷⁰But he denied it before them all, saying, "I do not know what you mean." ⁷¹And when he went out to the entrance, another servant girl saw him, and she said to the bystanders, "This man was with Jesus of Nazareth." ⁷²And again he denied it with an oath: "I do not know the man." ⁷³After a little while the bystanders came up and said to Peter, "Certainly you too are one of them, for your accent betrays you." ⁷⁴Then he began to invoke a curse on himself and to swear, "I do not know the man." And immediately the rooster crowed. ⁷⁵And Peter remembered the saying of Jesus, "Before the rooster crows, you will deny me three times." And he went out and wept bitterly..

Kyrie #5

(Taizé)

Kyrie eleison eleison

In Tenderness

(Words & Music: Adoniram Judson Gordon, Nate Garvey, and W. Spencer Walton 2013)

In tenderness he sought me
Weary and sick with sin
And on his shoulders brought me
Back to his fold again
While angels in his presence sang
Until the courts of heaven rang

*Oh the love that sought me
Oh the blood that bought me
Oh the grace that brought me to the fold of God
Grace that brought me to the fold of God*

He died for me while I was sinning
Needy and poor and blind
He whispered to assure me
I've found thee, thou art mine
I'd never heard a sweeter voice
It made my aching heart rejoice

Upon his grace I'll daily ponder
And sing anew his praise
With all adoring wonder
His blessings I retrace
It seems as if eternal days
Are far too short to sing his praise

Candle Extinguished

Third Reading: Matthew 27:1-14

Jesus Delivered to Pilate - Joshua Page (*Pastor, The Church at Mon River*)

When morning came, all the chief priests and the elders of the people took counsel against Jesus to put him to death. ²And they bound him and led him away and delivered him over to Pilate the governor.

³Then when Judas, his betrayer, saw that Jesus was condemned, he changed his mind and brought back the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and the elders, ⁴saying, "I have sinned by betraying innocent blood." They said, "What is that to us? See to it yourself." ⁵And throwing down the pieces of silver into the temple, he departed, and he went and hanged himself. ⁶But the chief priests, taking the pieces of silver, said, "It is not lawful to put them into the treasury, since it is blood money." ⁷So they took counsel and bought with them the potter's field as a burial place for strangers. ⁸Therefore that field has been called the Field of Blood to this day. ⁹Then was fulfilled what had been spoken by the prophet Jeremiah, saying, "And they took the thirty pieces of silver, the price of him on whom a price had been set by some of the sons of Israel, ¹⁰and they gave them for the potter's field, as the Lord directed me."

¹¹Now Jesus stood before the governor, and the governor asked him, "Are you the King of the Jews?" Jesus said, "You have said so." ¹²But when he was accused by the chief priests and elders, he gave no answer. ¹³Then Pilate said to him, "Do you not hear how many things they testify against you?" ¹⁴But he gave him no answer, not even to a single charge, so that the governor was greatly amazed.

Be Unto Your Name

(Words & Music: AGary Sadler and Lynn DeShazo 1998)

We are a moment you are forever
Lord of the ages God before time
We are a vapor you are eternal
Love everlasting reigning on high

*Holy holy Lord God Almighty
Worthy is the Lamb who was slain
Highest praises honor and glory
Be unto your name
Be unto your name*

We are the broken you are the healer
Jesus Redeemer mighty to save
You are the love song we'll sing forever
Bowing before you blessing your name

Candle Extinguished

Fourth Reading: Matthew 27:15-31

Pilate Delivers Jesus to Be Crucified - Eric Baldwin (*Pastor, River City Church*)

Now at the feast the governor was accustomed to release for the crowd any one prisoner whom they wanted. ¹⁶And they had then a notorious prisoner called Barabbas. ¹⁷So when they had gathered, Pilate said to them, "Whom do you want me to release for you: Barabbas, or Jesus who is called Christ?" ¹⁸For he knew that it was out of envy that they had delivered him up. ¹⁹Besides, while he was sitting on the judgment seat, his wife sent word to him, "Have nothing to do with that righteous man, for I have suffered much because of him today in a dream." ²⁰Now the chief priests and the elders persuaded the crowd to ask for Barabbas and destroy Jesus. ²¹The governor again said to them, "Which of the two do you want me to release for you?" And they said, "Barabbas." ²²Pilate said to them, "Then what shall I do with Jesus who is called Christ?" They all said, "Let him be crucified!" ²³And he said, "Why? What evil has he done?" But they shouted all the more, "Let him be crucified!"

²⁴So when Pilate saw that he was gaining nothing, but rather that a riot was beginning, he took water and washed his hands before the crowd, saying, "I am innocent of this man's blood; see to it yourselves." ²⁵And all the people answered, "His blood be on us and on our children!" ²⁶Then he released for them Barabbas, and having scourged Jesus, delivered him to be crucified.

²⁷Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the governor's headquarters, and they gathered the whole battalion before him. ²⁸And they stripped him and put a scarlet robe on him, ²⁹and twisting together a crown of thorns, they put it on his head and put a reed in his right hand. And kneeling before him, they mocked him, saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!" ³⁰And they spit on him and took the reed and struck him on the head. ³¹And when they had mocked him, they stripped him of the robe and put his own clothes on him and led him away to crucify him.

O Sacred Head Now Wounded

*(Words: Bernard of Clairvaux 1100's Translation: J. Alexander 1656 & P. Gerhardt 1830
Music: Hans Hassler 1601 & J.S. Bach 1729)*

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 tho' despised and gory
I joy to call Thee mine

What Thou my Lord hast suffered
Was all for sinners' gain
Mine mine was the transgression
But Thine the deadly pain
Lo here I fall my Savior
'Tis I deserve Thy place
Look on me with Thy favor
Vouchsafe to me Thy grace

My burden in Thy Passion
Lord Thou hast borne for me
For it was my transgression
Which brought this woe on Thee
I cast me down before Thee
Wrath were my rightful lot
Have mercy I implore Thee
Redeemer spurn me not

My Shepherd now receive me
My guardian own me Thine
Great blessings Thou didst give me
O source of gifts divine
Thy lips have often fed me
With words of truth and love
Thy Spirit oft hath led me
To heav'nly joys above

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

Candle Extinguished

Fifth Reading: Matthew 27:32-44

The Crucifixion of Jesus - Chris Moran (*Pastor, Eternal City Church*)

As they went out, they found a man of Cyrene, Simon by name. They compelled this man to carry his cross. ³³And when they came to a place called Golgotha (which means Place of a Skull), ³⁴they offered him wine to drink, mixed with gall, but when he tasted it, he would not drink it. ³⁵And when they had crucified him, they divided his garments among them by casting lots. ³⁶Then they sat down and kept watch over him there. ³⁷And over his head they put the charge against him, which read, "This is Jesus, the King of the Jews." ³⁸Then two robbers were crucified with him, one on the right and one on the left. ³⁹And those who passed by derided him, wagging their heads ⁴⁰and saying, "You who would destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days, save yourself! If you are the Son of God, come down from the cross." ⁴¹So also the chief priests, with the scribes and elders, mocked him, saying, ⁴²"He saved others; he cannot save himself. He is the King of Israel; let him come down now from the cross, and we will believe in him. ⁴³He trusts in God; let God deliver him now, if he desires him. For he said, 'I am the Son of God.'" ⁴⁴And the robbers who were crucified with him also reviled him in the same way.

O Come and Mourn With Me Awhile

(Words: Frederick Faber 1849; Music: John Dykes 1861)

O come and mourn with me awhile,
O come ye to the Savior's side
O come, together let us mourn,
Jesus our Lord is crucified! (2x)

Sev'n times He spoke sev'n words of love;
And all three hours His silence cried
For mercy on the souls of men;
Jesus our Lord is crucified! (2x)

O break, O break, hard heart of mine!
Thy weak self-love and guilty pride
His Pilate and His Judas were:
Jesus our Lord is crucified! (2x)

A broken heart, a fount of tears,
Ask, and they will not be denied;
A broken heart love's cradle is:
Jesus our Lord is crucified! (2x)

O love of God! O sin of man!
In this dread act Your strength is tried;
And victory remains with love;
Jesus our Lord is crucified! (2x)

Candle Extinguished

Sixth Reading: Psalm 22:1-18

The Prayer of Jesus - Matt Koerber (*Pastor, City Reformed Presbyterian Church*)

My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?

Why are you so far from saving me, from the words of my groaning?

²O my God, I cry by day, but you do not answer,
and by night, but I find no rest.

³Yet you are holy,
 enthroned on the praises of Israel.
⁴In you our fathers trusted;
 they trusted, and you delivered them.
⁵To you they cried and were rescued;
 in you they trusted and were not put to shame.
⁶But I am a worm and not a man,
 scorned by mankind and despised by the people.
⁷All who see me mock me;
 they make mouths at me; they wag their heads;
⁸"He trusts in the Lord; let him deliver him;
 let him rescue him, for he delights in him!"
⁹Yet you are he who took me from the womb;
 you made me trust you at my mother's breasts.
¹⁰On you was I cast from my birth,
 and from my mother's womb you have been my God.
¹¹Be not far from me,
 for trouble is near,
 and there is none to help.
¹²Many bulls encompass me;
 strong bulls of Bashan surround me;
¹³they open wide their mouths at me,
 like a ravening and roaring lion.
¹⁴I am poured out like water,
 and all my bones are out of joint;
my heart is like wax;
 it is melted within my breast;
¹⁵my strength is dried up like a potsherd,
 and my tongue sticks to my jaws;
 you lay me in the dust of death.
¹⁶For dogs encompass me;
 a company of evildoers encircles me;
they have pierced my hands and feet—
¹⁷I can count all my bones—
they stare and gloat over me;
¹⁸they divide my garments among them,
 and for my clothing they cast lots.

The Garden

(Words & Music: Mitch Wong, Sandra McCracken, and Sarah Kroger Quaglia)

Though I have borne the fruit of sin
Though I have felt the serpent's sting
Though I deserve the enmity
There in the garden, what do I see?
Christ stands for me, Christ stands for me
There in the garden, he stands for me
Where I have fallen, he intercedes
Hallelujah, He stands for me

With tears of blood, in longest night
He took the cup ought to be mine
Though in the darkness I fell asleep
There in the garden, I wake to see
Christ prays for me, Christ prays for me
There in the garden, he prays for me
Up on the hillside, Gethsemane
Hallelujah, he prays for me

The Lamb of God will make our home
Where pain is passed and tears are gone
Eden remade, as it should be
There in the garden, oh, let me see
Christ waits for me, Christ waits for me
There in the Garden, he waits for me
On golden shores of eternity
Hallelujah, he waits for me

Christ stands for me, Christ stands for me
There in the garden, he stands for me
Where I have fallen, he intercedes
Hallelujah, he stands for me
Hallelujah, He stands for me

Candle Extinguished

Seventh Reading: Matthew 27:45-54

The Death of Jesus - Josh Brown (*Pastor, Bellefield Presbyterian Church*)

Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land until the ninth hour. ⁴⁶And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, "Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?" that is, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" ⁴⁷And some of the bystanders, hearing it, said, "This man is calling Elijah." ⁴⁸And one of them at once ran and took a sponge, filled it with sour wine, and put it on a reed and gave it to him to drink. ⁴⁹But the others said, "Wait, let us see whether Elijah will come to save him." ⁵⁰And Jesus cried out again with a loud voice and yielded up his spirit.

⁵¹And behold, the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. And the earth shook, and the rocks were split. ⁵²The tombs also were opened. And many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised, ⁵³and coming out of the tombs after his resurrection they went into the holy city and appeared to many. ⁵⁴When the centurion and those who were with him, keeping watch over Jesus, saw the earthquake and what took place, they were filled with awe and said, "Truly this was the Son of God!"

Lamb Of God

(*Words & Music: Twila Paris 1985*)

Your only son no sin to hide
But you have sent him from your side
To walk upon this guilty sod
And to become the Lamb of God

Your gift of love they crucified
They laughed and scorned him as he died
The humble King they named a fraud
And sacrificed the Lamb of God

*O Lamb of God sweet Lamb of God
I love the holy Lamb of God
O wash me in his precious blood
My Jesus Christ the Lamb of God*

I was so lost I should have died
But you have brought me to your side
To be led by your staff and rod
And to be called the Lamb of God

Lamb Of God

(Words: Charlotte Elliott 1836 Music: William B. Bradbury 1849)

Just as I am, Thy love unknown
Has broken ev'ry barrier down
Now to be Thine, yes, Thine alone
O Lamb of God I come, I come

Just as I am, though tossed about
With many a conflict many a doubt
Fightings and fears within, without
O Lamb of God I come, I come

Just as I am, without one plea
But that Thy blood was shed for me
And that Thou bidd'st me come to Thee
O Lamb of God I come, I come

Candle Extinguished

Readers

Matt Koerber	<i>Pastor, City Reformed Presbyterian Church</i>
Scott Boyd	<i>Pastor, First Baptist Church</i>
Joshua Page	<i>Pastor, The Church At Mon River</i>
Chris Richards	<i>Pastor, Steel City Church</i>
Chris Moran	<i>Pastoral Elder, Eternal City Church</i>
Eric Baldwin	<i>Pastor, River City Church</i>
Josh Brown	<i>Pastor, Bellefield Presbyterian Church</i>
Gavin Breeden	<i>Campus Pastor, Reformed University Fellowship</i>