



First Presbyterian

CHURCH OF LAKE FOREST

Nurturing a community of faith working through love.



Good Friday Tenebrae

April 3, 2026

To all who are weary and seek rest,
To all who mourn and long for comfort,
To all who are lonely and desire friendship,
To all who hunger and thirst for grace,
and to all who will come,

First Pres opens wide her doors and offers
welcome in the name of Jesus Christ.

Today's Service

About the Tenebrae Service

The service of Tenebrae, or "shadows," is an ancient tradition in the church.

The Scripture readings urge us to re-live the events that led to Jesus' betrayal, arrest, and crucifixion.

The stripping of the Sanctuary's decorations emphasizes the falling away of Jesus' followers, including ourselves.

The diminishing of light represents the power of darkness and evil.

No offering is received, as a sign that nothing we bring secures our salvation; the forgiveness of our sins, and our life itself, are gifts of God's grace alone.

The Strepitus—the slamming of the door at the end of the service—represents the closing of the tomb.

The service ends in darkness and silence. You may leave whenever you wish after the Strepitus. Please observe the vigil of silence until you are outside of the Sanctuary and Narthex.

The Revised Common Lectionary scriptures assigned for today are Isaiah 50:4–9a; Psalm 31:9–16; Philippians 2:5–11; Matthew 26:14–27:66 or Matthew 27:11–54.

Cover art is *Deposition*, 1600–1604, Caravaggio

Worship Participants

Rev. Jon Wasson
Pastor/Head of Staff

Rev. Anna Langholz
Associate Pastor for
Congregational Life

Dr. Robert McConnell
Director of Worship & Music

Elyse Bagan
Jim Kingsley
Paul McNamara
Gretchen Seymour
Liturgists

Dr. Stephen Alltop
Organist

Sanctuary Choir

Kate Carter
violin

Sam Sharp
violin

Elizabeth Choi
viola

Brian Hoffman
cello

Visiting First Pres?



If you're new to First Pres, please scan this code to get in touch.

Prelude

O Humankind, Bewail Your Great Sin
Johann Sebastian Bach
Adagio for Strings
Samuel Barber

The Welcome

*Call to Worship

Leader: O God, our God, in you our ancestors trusted, to you they cried aloud.

People: Since before our mothers bore us, you have been our God.

Leader: Do not be far from us, for trouble is near.

People: Source of refuge, come quickly to our aid.

Leader: Lest we forget the cost of discipleship,
let us remember faith's hardest story to bear.

All: With humble and open hearts, let us worship our God.

*Hymn No. 223

When I Survey the Wondrous Cross

The Solemn Reproaches

Leader: O my people, O my church,
What have I done to you, or in what have I offended you? Answer me!
I led you forth from the land of Egypt and delivered you by the waters of
baptism, but you have prepared a cross for your Savior.

People: Lord have mercy.

Leader: I led you through the desert for forty years, and fed you with manna:
I brought you through tribulation and penitence, and gave you my body,
the bread of heaven, but you have prepared a cross for your Savior.

People: Lord have mercy.

Leader: What more could I have done for you that I have not done? I planted you,
my chosen and fairest vineyard, I made you the branches of my vine; but
when I was thirsty, you gave me vinegar to drink and pierced with a spear
the side of your Savior, and you have prepared a cross for your Savior.

People: Lord have mercy.

Leader: My peace I gave, which the world cannot give, and washed your feet as a sign of my love, but you draw the sword to strike in my name and seek high places in my kingdom. I offered you my body and blood, but you scatter and deny and abandon me, and you have prepared a cross for your Savior.

People: Lord have mercy.

Leader: I came to you as the least of your brothers and sisters; I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me no drink, I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not clothe me, sick and in prison and you did not visit me, and you have prepared a cross for your Savior.

People: Lord have mercy.

Leader: Almighty God, look with mercy on your family for whom our Lord Jesus Christ was willing to be betrayed and to be given over to the hands of the sinners and to suffer death on the cross; who now lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

People: Amen.

Meditation

Anna Langholz

Service of Tenebrae

First Lesson

John 18:1-11

The Betrayal and Arrest of Jesus

*Hymn No. 221

O Sacred Head, Now Wounded

Second Lesson

John 18:12-18

Jesus before the High Priest and Peter Denies Jesus

Anthem

Stay With Me Lord
Will Todd

Stay with me, Lord, for you are my life, my strength and my faith, my passion and light.
Lord, stay lest I forget you, abandon you, fall in the dark.
O Lord, my soul is poor, but let it be a home for you.
Stay with me, Lord, that I may see your will.
Stay with me, O my Lord, that I may hear your voice.
Stay with me, that I may love you.
Stay with me, Lord, that I may be true.
Stay, Jesus, stay, for the day is late, and night comes quickly.
Judgement and death, eternity come; Lord, strengthen me.
I fear the dark, the Cross, the sorrows, Lord, temptation.
O Jesus, I need you to hold me in this night of exile.
I ask no comfort but your staying, your love, your will, your light, your spirit.
I ask no other consolation. I ask no other gift but love.
Let me perceive you as your disciples in the breaking of bread.
May your Eucharist be the breaking of the day, the joy of my heart.
Lord, end this night of exile, and at my death stay with me, if not in bread, in grace and love.
— Ben Dunwell, based on a prayer by St. Padre Pio of Pietrelcina

Third Lesson

John 18:19-27
The High Priest Questions Jesus and Peter Denies Jesus Again

Stripping of the Chancel

*Hymn No. 215

What Wondrous Love

Fourth Lesson

John 18:28-32
Jesus before Pilate

Anthem

Thy rebuke hath broken His heart;
He is full of heaviness;
He looked for some to have pity on him,
But there was no man,
Neither found He any to comfort Him.

— Psalm 69:20

Behold, and see if there be any sorrow
Like unto his sorrow.

— Lamentations 1:12

Thy Rebuke and Behold and See from *Messiah*

George Frideric Handel

Fifth Lesson

John 18:33-40

Jesus before Pilate and Jesus Sentenced to Death

*Hymn No. 209

My Song is Love Unknown

Sixth Lesson

John 19:1-16

The Flogging of Jesus

Anthem

Surely He Hath Borne Our Grievs and And With His Stripes from *Messiah*

George Frideric Handel

Surely He hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows;
He was wounded for our transgressions,
He was bruised for our iniquities;
The chastisement of our peace was upon Him.

— Isaiah 53:4–5

And with his stripes
We are healed.

— Isaiah 53:3

Seventh Lesson

John 19:17-25a

The Crucifixion of Jesus

*Hymn No. 228 (verses 1-4)

Were You There

Eighth Lesson

John 19:25b-30

The Death of Jesus

Anthem

Good Night Dear Heart

Dan Forrest

Warm summer sun,
Shine kindly here,
Warm southern wind,
Blow softly here.
Green sod above,
Lie light, lie light.
Good night, dear heart,
Good night, good night.

— Mark Twain

A few years ago, my brother and his wife found out that the four month old girl that they were soon to adopt from Ethiopia had fallen ill and passed away. They had been making plans for her, staring endlessly at her picture, and loving her from across the ocean, so the news was devastating. God's plans were not for her to ever see the people who had loved her from halfway around the world, but for her to be taken instead to His loving arms. For me, life circumstances (whether euphoric or tragic) don't usually translate into musical inspiration; the two typically remain separate. The night they received this news, though, I found myself longing to pour out a musical elegy. My search for a suitable text led me to a picture from a cemetery in my hometown (Elmira, NY), where the great American author Mark Twain and his family are buried. My brother and I, from our youth, have known the poem that Twain placed on the tombstone of his beloved daughter Susy, when she died unexpectedly at age 24 and left him heartbroken. I was stunned by the bittersweet irony of this text being from our hometown, and in honor of a beloved daughter who died unexpectedly. I wrote this setting that night; it was quickly added to an upcoming concert and premiered only one week later, as an elegy for Etsegenet and a reminder of the orphans of Ethiopia.

-Dan Forrest

Ninth Lesson

John 19:31-42

Jesus' Side is Pierced and the Burial of Jesus

Solo Response

Were You There?

Were you there when they laid him in the tomb?
Oh, sometimes it causes me to tremble.
Were you there when they laid him in the tomb

Strepitus

Please leave in silence.

Holy Week

Easter Sunrise Service

Sunday, April 5

6:00 AM, Lake Forest Beach North Pavilion

Easter Traditional Services

Sunday, April 5

9:00 and 11:00 AM, Sanctuary

Easter Egg Hunt

Sunday, April 5

10:15 AM, South Lawn

Bring your Easter baskets and
join us in between services for an Egg Hunt.



700 North Sheridan Road, Lake Forest, Illinois 60045
847.234.6250 | www.firstpreslakeforest.org