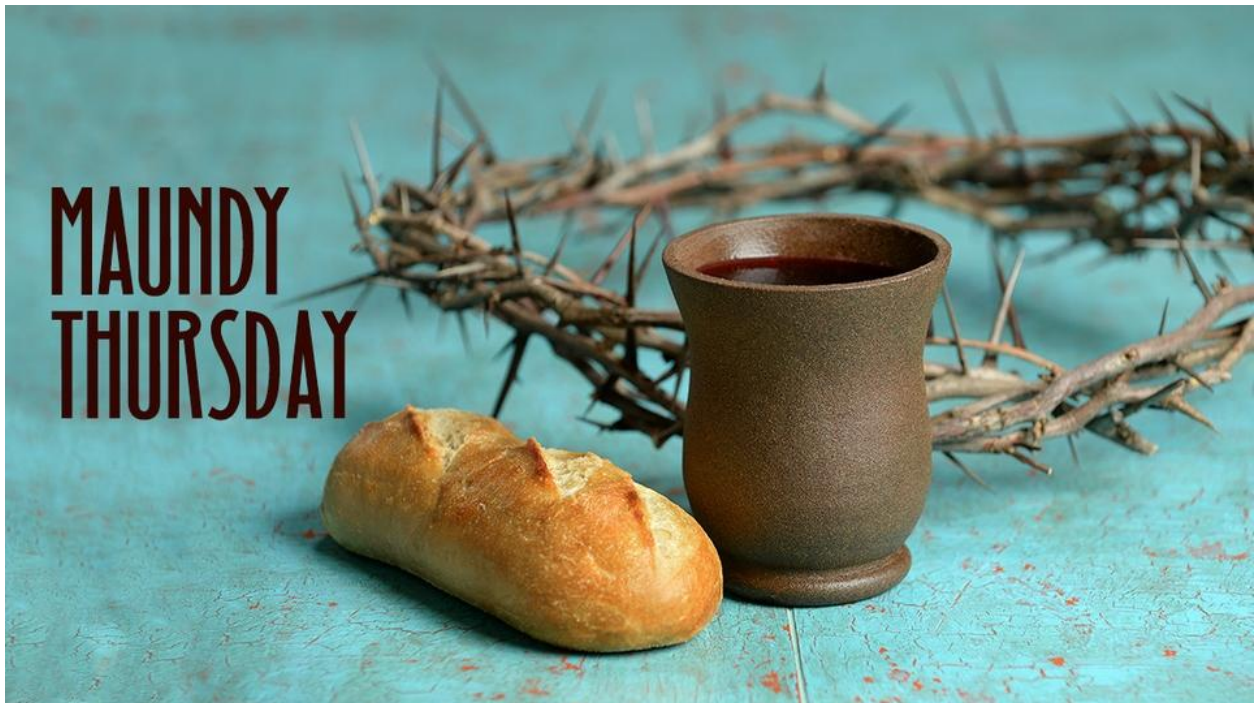


Butler Area Presbyterians

A Joint Worship Service

Worship with us on [YouTube.com/@CovenantTV1813](https://www.youtube.com/@CovenantTV1813)



Maundy Thursday
April 2, 2026, 7:00 PM

Host Pastor: Rev. John C. R. Silbert

Special Guest Musician: Mrs. Kathy Kemerer

Choir Director: Deanna Golden

Covenant TV Director: Rev. Bob Mathias

Covenant TV Producer: Brian F Graff, C.P.

Participants: Rev. Leigh Benish, Rev. Merry Meloy, Carmen Shullo, C.P.

~ Order of Worship ~

** = Please stand, as able

PRELUDE & TIME OF CENTERING *Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence ~ Variations*

A WELCOME TO OUR CAMPUS

CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: The entry into Jerusalem -
People: **a time of great celebration!**
Leader: The entry into the upper room -
People: **a time of great togetherness!**
Leader: The entry into the judgment hall -
People: **a time of great humiliation.**
Leader: The entry onto Golgotha -
People: **a time of great pain... and death.**
Leader: Our Lenten journey has brought us to this place.
People: **To profess our faith.**
Leader: To hear Jesus' Story.
People: **To remember his life and his death.**
Leader: Called by God's sisters and brothers in Christ's love...
People: **we gather and worship God.**

CHORAL INTROIT *Create in Me a Clean Heart* CREATE IN ME (Capers)

*Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.
Cast me not away from your presence, and take not your Holy Spirit from me.
Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and uphold me with your free Spirit.
Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.*

PSALM OF THE DAY 116: 1 -2, 12 – 19 *A Psalm of Thanksgiving* NRSV(UE)

**HYMN 428 *Before I Take the Body of My Lord* LAYING DOWN

INVITATION TO CONFESSION & CORPORATE PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Eternal God, whose covenant with us is never broken, we confess that we fail to fulfill your will. Though you have bound yourself to us, we will not bind ourselves to you. In Jesus Christ you serve us freely, but we refuse your love and withhold ourselves from others. We do not love you fully or love one another as you command. In your mercy, forgive and cleanse us. Lead us once gain to your table and unite us to Christ, who is the bread of life and the vine from which we grow in grace.

A TIME FOR SILENT CONFESSION & ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Leader: The mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting. I declare to you, in the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven.
People: **Thanks be to God.**
Leader: May the God of mercy, who forgives all your sins, strengthen you in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep you in eternal life.
People: **Amen.**

NT LESSON 1 Corinthians 11: 23 – 26 NRSV(UE)

**GOSPEL LESSON John 13: 1 – 17, 31b – 35 NRSV(UE)

**CANTICLE *My Spirit Longs for Thee* FINGAL

***My spirit longs for Thee with in my troubled breast,
Though I unworthy be of so divine a Guest.
Of so divine a Guest unworthy though I be,
Yet has my heart no rest, unless it come from Thee.
Unless it come from Thee, in vain I look around;
In all that I can see no rest is to be found.
No rest is to be found but in Thy blessed love;
O let my wish be crowned, and send it from above! A-men.***

PRESENTATION OF OFFERINGS & GIFTS

OFFERTORY ANTHEM *Make Me a Channel of Your Peace* ~ Barnard

THE INVITATION TO THE TABLE

THE GREAT PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

Celebrant: The Lord be with you.
People: **And also with you.**
Celebrant: Lift up your hearts.
People: **We lift them up to the Lord.**
Celebrant: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
People: **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**
Celebrant: Blessed are you, O Lord our God: You delivered us from captivity and made us your people. You ask us not for burnt offerings, or rivers of precious oil, but to do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with you, our God.
Therefore we praise you, joining the song of the universal church and the heavenly choir:

Congregation: *Holy, Holy, Holy*

SETTING THREE

***Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.***

Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

Hosanna in the highest.

Celebrant: Blessed is Jesus Christ, our Savior: He taught us what it means to be truly blessed—to be merciful and meek, peaceful and pure in heart—to such as these the kingdom of heaven belongs. Remembering your goodness and grace, we offer ourselves to you with gratitude as we share this joyful feast -- Great is the mystery of faith:

All: **Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again.**

Celebrant: Pour out your Holy Spirit upon us and upon this bread and cup; make us one in the body and blood of Jesus Christ our Lord.

Teach us the wisdom of the cross, the message of Christ crucified. Let the weak be lifted up, and the mighty be made humble, so that we may boast in nothing other than the grace of our Lord.

Through the Lord Jesus Christ, in the unity of the Spirit, we bless you, God of glory, now and forever.

People: **Amen.**

Celebrant: And now, let us pray for the coming of the Kingdom as our Lord has taught us:

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, forever. Amen.

THE WORDS OF INSTITUTION

**THE COMMUNION

Come Forward

COMMUNION MUSIC

Kathy Kemerer

**THE RESPONSE AND PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

HYMN 535 *Bless the Lord, O My Soul*

BLESS THE LORD

Celebrant: Bless the Lord, O my soul;

People: **And all that is within me, bless God's holy name!**

Celebrant: Bless the Lord, O my soul;

People: **And forget not all God's benefits.**

Celebrant: Let us pray:

All: **We give you thanks and praise, O God, that you have fed us with your mercy and poured out your Spirit in this place. Continue to nourish and fill us each day, that we may live as your beloved people; in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

What Pilate Said One Midnight



A TIME OF SILENCE & TOLLING OF THE BELL

✠ *A First Person Sermon by Dr. Frederick Bruce Speakman; Orated by Rev. John C. R. Silbert*

A TIME OF REFLECTION & TOLLING OF THE BELL

**THE CHARGE & BENEDICTION

FINAL RESPONSE Abide with Me ~ Lyte/Monk

Abide with me: fast falls the eventide. The darkness deepens: Lord, with me abide!

When other helpers fail and comforts flee, help of the helpless, O abide with me.

~ ~ ~

✠ ABOUT THE REV. DR. FREDERICK B. SPEAKMAN

Frederick Bruce Speakman (1918-1991) was a Minister of the Word and Sacrament in the Presbyterian Church (USA) until his death in 1991. One of his pastorates was at the Third Presbyterian Church of Pittsburgh (Shadyside) which he served in two separate calls. He was noted as a fine preacher and teacher and developed the “first-person narrative” style as an effective art form for the pulpit.

“*What Pilate Said One Midnight*” is Dr. Speakman’s most notable first-person narrative sermon. In it, Pontius Pilate reflects on his service as the Roman governor of Judea years ago. He is alone with a friend, Gaius (who is unseen and unheard), late at night, in his villa on Lake Luzerne, Switzerland. Pilate is in retirement there with his wife, Claudia, because he has “lost his edge” and can no longer govern as he did. Pilate takes this midnight conversation as an opportunity to come clean with his conscience and with this Christ who he feels still has “unfinished business” with him. There is an historical notion which suggests that it was in this place, Luzerne, that Pilate committed suicide.

HOLY WEEK ~ MAUNDY THURSDAY

*What is the meaning of the word "Maundy"? Derived from the Latin word *mandatum*, meaning "commandment," Maundy refers to the commands Jesus gave his disciples at the Last Supper: to love with humility by serving one another and to remember his sacrifice.*

Before the Passover meal, Jesus washed the feet of his disciples. By performing this lowly act of service, the Bible says in John 13:1 that Jesus "showed them the full extent of his love." By his example, Jesus demonstrated how Christians are to love one another through humble service. For this reason, some churches practice foot-washing ceremonies as a part of their Maundy Thursday services.

On his second Holy Thursday Foot Washing, Pope Francis visited the Don Gnocchi Center, a home for the elderly and disabled in Rome, to wash the feet of twelve residents for the Holy Week ritual, including a woman and a Muslim. The ceremony, which is rooted in the story of the Last Supper, made headlines when the pope visited a youth detention center and washed the feet of several young women. The ceremony has been traditionally limited to men because all of Jesus' apostles were male. All popes in living memory have held the service either in St. Peter's or the Basilica of St. John in Lateran. Pope Francis has broken tradition by going "out to the people" instead.

John's gospel never speaks of a "last supper" like the other gospel writers do, so chapter 13 is the closest thing we've got. There is no mention of bread and cup in this passage. There is no admonition to "remember." However, Jesus preaches the same message he has been proclaiming all along: hearing is good, doing is better; knowledge is good, doing is better.

"For I have set you an example, that you also should do as I have done to you. Very truly, I tell you, servants are not greater than their master, nor are messengers greater than the one who sent them. If you know these things, you are blessed if you do them." --John 13:15-17

Even on the last night of his life, Jesus was trying to teach a "new way" of living. This is the challenge we grapple with every single day, isn't it? There is a big, big difference between knowing and doing, between knowing about love and loving.

Jesus always managed to re-define the socially unacceptable thing— from touching a leper to eating with a tax collector to re-interpreting the Sabbath command to honoring the worth of women and children. Life would be so much simpler if he had said something like, "Go and think likewise" or, "Go, and believe likewise." But he did not. No, he did not. Jesus said, "Go, and do likewise."



HOLY WEEK

Additional Butler Area Presbyterian Services

April 3 12:00 PM Good Friday @ St. Andrews

April 5 7:00 AM "Sonrise" Worship @ Moraine State Park
Pleasant Valley Boat Launch – Bring a chair & Dress warm

Prayer for Maundy Thursday (inspired by John 13:1-17)

Merciful Savior,
We have traveled this long, dusty Lenten journey.
Our feet are tired, dirty, aching, and calloused.
You have shown us Your love
by becoming a humble servant.
Humble us when we try to travel without You.
As Christ has washed us,
so let us wash one another.
Humble us when we believe some work is below us.
As Christ has washed us,
so let us wash one another.
Humble us when we are too proud
to accept help, or care, or love.
As Christ has washed us,
so let us wash one another.
Humble us when we do not fully receive
the gift of Your amazing and bountiful grace.
As Christ has washed us,
so let us wash one another. Amen.

