



Holy Friday
April 3, 2026
12:00 and 7:30 PM

EVANGELICAL REFORMED CHURCH
United Church of Christ

Welcome to Evangelical Reformed United Church of Christ

Thank you for worshiping with us at Evangelical Reformed United Church of Christ (ERUCC) this morning. We extend a special welcome to our guests.

ERUCC is an Open and Affirming Church of the United Church of Christ. We welcome into the full life and ministry persons of all sexual orientations, gender identities, and gender expressions.

We ask that you **please silence your cell phones** during our worship service. We also ask that you refrain from applause after our choirs sing and allow the music to resonate in the quiet of the sanctuary and in your hearts. Our musicians are playing and singing for the glory of God. They know you appreciate their efforts and their gift.

Restrooms, accessible and equipped with changing stations, are located on the 2nd floor, below the sanctuary, and on the 1st floor, outside the Community Room. Single-occupant, all-gender, accessible restrooms are located outside the North and Flora Rooms on the 2nd floor.

There is more information about our church in this bulletin and on our website: www.erucc.org.

Mission Statement of Evangelical Reformed United Church of Christ

We, the members of this congregation, seek to celebrate in word and deed the gospel of Jesus Christ, by nurturing spiritual growth through worship, study and prayer; by caring for one another as God cares for us; and by proclaiming God's love for all people as we work to help our neighbors near and far. We commit ourselves to develop and implement specific programs to fulfill our mission.

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**EVANGELICAL REFORMED
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST**
— An Open and Affirming Congregation —



*The numbered hymns are from The New Century Hymnal
All who are able may stand

HOLY FRIDAY

PRELUDE

Ms. Alison E. Shafer

WELCOME

The Rev. John Shillingburg

THRESHOLD MOMENT

Love & Love & Love Again

— written by The Rev. Sarah A. Speed

If you back a cat into a corner
she'll arch her back,
show her teeth,
hiss in your direction.
If you back a human into a corner,
we'll raise our fists,
raise our voices,
throw words of hate in your direction.
But when we backed Jesus into a corner,
he said, Forgive them, for they know not what they do.
He turned and looked at Peter, love in his eyes.
He offered grace to the criminal hanging beside him.
When we backed Jesus into a corner,
he loved and loved and loved again.
In this war-torn world,
we could do the same.
We could ground the bomber planes,
empty the gun cartridges,
unclench our fists, soften our jaws.
They say it can't be done,
but don't believe them.
In this war-torn world, we could try—
love and love and love again.

LIGHTING OF THE CANDLES

In the beginning, darkness covered the face of the deep. Then God said,
“Let there be light.”

And there was light. And every day since, the light has come and gone.

The sun has risen and set.

The moon has waxed and waned.

The light is still with us.

In the beginning was the Word, which brought all things into being.

What has come into being through him is life,

the light of all people.

The light shined in the darkness,

and the darkness did not overtake it.

When God made the light, when the light of all people came into the world,

God did not send away the dark.

The darkness remains.

God created the night for dreams and clarity,

an exhaling of the light.

Let us enter this holy darkness to bear witness to the light of the world
who was extinguished by violence.

Let us worship our Incarnate God.

*OPENING HYMN

O Sacred Head Now Wounded

#226

**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 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.

**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 for Thee.**

**Be near when I am dying,
O show Thy cross to me!
And, for my succor flying,
come, Lord, to set me free:
these eyes, new faith receiving,
from Thee shall never move;
for he who dies believing
dies safely in Thy love.**

THE FIRST READING

Luke 22:47-53

NT page 87

THE SECOND READING

Luke 23:13-25

NT page 88

***CALL TO TRANSFORMATION AND NEW LIFE**

In his book *What Will You Do with King Jesus?* James Harnish writes, “Is it possible that our world still knows better how to deal with a bandit, a murderer, and insurrectionist than it knows what to do with the Prince of Peace? ... Is it possible that we would rather deal with raw power that rides on a stallion than with this one who comes on a donkey, with the weapons of love, patience, suffering, and peace? Given the choice, isn't it possible that we would take Barabbas, too?”

Friends, the passion narrative invites us to place ourselves in the story, to examine our own complicity in cycles of violence. And the good news is, we don't have to do this alone. The God who made us knows our hearts, knows our flaws, and knows all our best intentions. We don't have to hide. There's

no need to save face. Let us simply turn to God in prayer with our whole hearts.

*** PRAYER OF GRACE**

Holy God, we can easily see ourselves in any number of the people surrounding Jesus in his final days.

We are Judas, betraying what we hold most dear for status, wealth, and security.

We are the soldiers, using our power to maintain the status quo which serves us.

We are the disciples, brandishing our weapons to fight violence with violence, and we are the high priest's servant, victims of a world hell-bent on winning.

Prince of Peace, forgive us.

We are Herod, finding our entertainment at the expense of other people's dignity.

We are Pilate, excusing ourselves from the blame that is rightfully ours.

We are the crowd, screaming with rage and demanding blood, and we are Barabbas, our lives spared while others are crucified.

Prince of Peace, forgive us.

Forgive us, we pray, for the parts we have played.

Set us free from the sin that chokes the world, threatening to extinguish all that is good and beautiful.

Break the cycles of violence, step into the machinery of a world fueled by division and disrupt us.

Forgive us, Prince of Peace. Kyrie eleison. Have mercy on us.

Amen.

***WORDS OF GRACE**

Family of faith, the impossibly good news is that we are forgiven.

No matter what we have or haven't done, our God is always waiting with open arms to receive us.

ANTHEM (7:30 PM service)
Ah, Holy Jesus

Senior Choir
- D. McCullough

THE THIRD READING

Luke 23:33-38

NT page 89

REFLECTION

The Rev. John Shillingburg

THE FOURTH READING

Luke 23:44-46

NT page 89

*CLOSING HYMN

When I Survey the Wondrous Cross

#224

**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 through his blood.**

**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.**

*BLESSING

And as we leave communal worship
to enter deeper into this liminal space between life, death, and life again,
go with the knowledge that the Triune God—
who fashioned you with love,
whose Spirit breathes in and through you,
and who shares in our every sorrow and every joy—
goes with you, even in doubt, even in death,
even to the end of the age.

Go in peace, and in silence,
to wait with those who wait and mourn with those who mourn. Amen.

Please depart the sanctuary in silence.



The story is not yet finished.

As we leave in silence, we keep vigil through the long night of Holy Saturday. In this in-between space, we wait with trembling hearts, trusting that even now, God is not finished.

May we watch and wait and prepare our hearts for resurrection.

We invite you to return on Easter Sunday at 8:30 AM or 10:30 AM as we celebrate the mystery and miracle of resurrection.

EASTER SUNDAY



Sunday, April 5

8:30 AM Worship with Holy Communion in Sanctuary

10:30 AM Worship with Holy Communion in Sanctuary and Livestream

Death cannot stop the good news. It is alive, unbound, and wild in the world. Like the mustard seed, it grows without limit. Like water turned into wine, it surprises us with joy. Like loaves of bread, it expands to feed each hungry soul. And now, even in the face of death, it will not be buried or silenced. Just as the angels in Advent, the angel at the empty tomb delivers good news: “Do not be afraid.” On the way to Galilee, Jesus greets the women with this same message, but adds: “Go and tell my brothers and sisters to go to Galilee; there they will see me.” As we celebrate the good news of Easter, let us also go out seeking Christ in the faces of neighbors and strangers, and in the good works that are alive in this world.

This morning, we will share in the Sacrament of Holy Communion at stations in the front of the Sanctuary. The Senior Choir will sing, and guest brass players will join us in celebration. We will also add to our Prayer Tree, expanding its inclusivity with brightly colored prayer flowers, alongside the fresh flowers we place on the Easter Cross, symbolizing our collective prayers and the beauty of resurrection hope.

The Rev. David Cooney, PhD will preach and lead worship.

ADORN OUR FLORAL EASTER CROSS

Easter Sunday, April 5

As we continue our tradition of filling our Easter cross with flowers on Easter Sunday, we invite you to bring in flowers of your own. These could be early blooms from trees or flowers from your garden or even from a florist. We will celebrate joyfully with signs of new life that help to “Tell us Something Good!” about the resurrection power of Jesus and the joy we have from the deep and inclusive love of God!

When you enter the sanctuary or during our first musical selections, we invite you to come forward and add to the beauty of this cross in the front of the sanctuary. There will be additional flowers for anyone who forgets or doesn't have access to them.

Following the 10:30am service, the now flower-adorned cross will be carried outside to the portico, proclaiming joy and new life to the Frederick community! We invite you to take photos. We especially invite children and youth to join Pastor Kirstin for a group photo at the cross. Join us in this cherished tradition as we share the beauty and hope of Easter!

SERVICE NOTES

Audio/Visual: Jeff Baker, Ethan Kline, and David Howard

Today's liturgy was adapted from liturgy written by Rev. Anna Strickland | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org." Quotation in Call to Transformation is from *What Will You Do with King Jesus? Pictures of the Kingdom of God in Matthew*, by James A. Harnish, (The Upper Room, 1986).

The cover artwork is *Revealed through Nonviolence* by Lauren Wright Pittman | Inspired by Luke 22:47-53, Luke 23:33-38, 44-46 | Gouache and colored pencils on paper | *A Sanctified Art LLC* | sanctifiedart.org.

**Our pastoral and administrative offices will be closed on
Easter Monday, April 6 through Wednesday, April 8.**

MINISTERS AND STAFF

Rev. Kirstin Shrom-Rhoads ~ *Associate Pastor for Faith Formation & Parish Life*

Alison E. Shafer ~ *Director of Music*

Jaci Clayton ~ *Facilities Manager*

Ann Watkins ~ *Administrative Assistant/Receptionist*

Ashley Murphy ~ *Nursery Attendant*

The Rev. Dr. Barbara Kershner Daniel ~ *Pastor Emerita*

The Rev. Fred Wenner ~ *Pastor Emeritus*