



HAMBURG CLERGY ALLIANCE of Western New York

Good Friday Service

April 3, 2026 • 7:00 PM



Worship leaders:

Rev. Dr. David Nicol • Pastor, Hamburg United Methodist Church

Rev. Paul Werner • Pastor, St. James United Church of Christ

Ciaran Krueger • Music Director, St. James United Church of Christ

Jonathan Rizzo • Accompanist, St. James United Church of Christ

Welcome to



SAINT JAMES

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey, you're welcome here.



HAMBURG CLERGY ALLIANCE of Western New York

MISSION STATEMENT

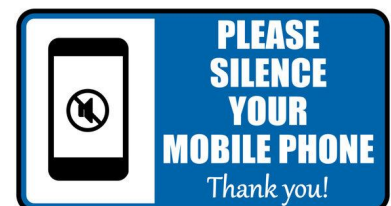
The Hamburg Clergy Alliance of Western New York seeks to praise God through worship, concern, and support for one another and all of God's people. We will carry this out through facilitating dialogue, advocating for social justice, promoting inclusivity, and encouraging fellowship and friendship among the community of faith.

Spiritual leaders of the following churches are members of the Hamburg Clergy Alliance of Western New York:

- All Saints Lutheran Church, Hamburg
- Hamburg Presbyterian Church
- Hamburg United Methodist Church
- Orchard Park Community Church
- Orchard Park United Methodist Church
- St. James United Church of Christ, Hamburg
- St. Matthew's United Church of Christ, Hamburg

Tonight's readers:

- Deb Fenn
- Susan Hulbert
- Marie Nolan



Congregation: Bold print
***Please rise in body or in spirit.**

Many portions of tonight's service are adapted from UCC Worship Ways. It is shaped by the Good Friday tradition of remembering the Seven Last Words of Christ, but instead of using the typical quotations and scripture readings that combine the crucifixion stories from the four Gospels, this service uses quotations and sayings of Jesus and others from the passion story in the Gospel of John.

PRELUDE

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Rev. Paul Werner

LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Rev. Paul Werner

We acknowledge that the land upon which St. James UCC stands was originally the ancestral and unceded territory of the Haudenosaunee and Erie people. We celebrate and honor the contributions that Native Americans have made in the past and continue to make today in the Western New York area and the Americas. We embrace the Haudenosaunee philosophy that the decisions we make today should result in a sustainable world seven generations into the future. Additionally, we commit to supporting initiatives that empower the local, national, and international Indigenous communities and to listening, learning, and taking actions to address injustices past and present that have impacted these communities and all God's creation.

***CALL TO WORSHIP**

Marie Nolan

One: This is the day when our story asks us to place ourselves in the middle of the struggle between kingdom and kin-dom.

Many: **Holy the ground. Holy the disturbance.**

One: This is the day when our tradition invites us to bear witness to the ways radical love brings out our best and our worst.

Many: **Holy the beholding. Holy the lament.**

One: This is the day when our lineage wants us to reckon with the unrelenting violence of the death machine.

Many: **Holy the truth. Holy the anger.**

One: This is the day when our worship calls us to weep and wail for each breath that is stolen when Love threatens to unseat the king.

Many: **Holy the grief. Holy the struggle.**

One: So let this be the day when we watch and listen, vigil and pray.

Many: **Holy the living. Holy the dying.**

***PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING**

Marie Nolan

Spirit of Christ, we come to you with our hands outstretched and our hearts heavy with dread. We hold up to you the grief in our hearts—the personal failings, the endemic injustices, the catastrophic disasters—and the weight of it all brings us to our knees.

We need to be reminded that you see us through a lens of love and compassion. With every breath, we invite your forgiveness and encouragement.

We stumble, and you catch us.

We yearn, and you listen.

We hunger, and you fill us up.

TAIZÉ

286

Stay with Me

ONE LICENSE A-723905

OPENING SCRIPTURE READING

Susan Hulbert

John 13:1-17¹ (NRSV Updated Edition)

Now before the festival of the Passover, Jesus knew that his hour had come to depart from this world and go to the Creator. Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them

(continued on the next page)→

¹ Scripture texts are taken from the NRSV Updated Edition and adapted for inclusive language where possible.

to the end. The devil had already decided that Judas, son of Simon Iscariot, would betray Jesus. And during supper Jesus, knowing that the Creator had given all things into his hands and that he had come from God and was going to God, got up from supper, took off his outer robe, and tied a towel around himself. Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel that was tied around him. He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, "Lord, are you going to wash my feet?" Jesus answered, "You do not know now what I am doing, but later you will understand." Peter said to him, "You will never wash my feet." Jesus answered, "Unless I wash you, you have no share with me." Simon Peter said to him, "Lord, not my feet only but also my hands and my head!" Jesus said to him, "One who has bathed does not need to wash, except for the feet, but is entirely clean. And you are clean, though not all of you." For he knew who was to betray him; for this reason he said, "Not all of you are clean."

After he had washed their feet, had put on his robe, and had reclined again, he said to them, "Do you know what I have done to you? You call me Teacher and Lord, and you are right, for that is what I am. So if I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have set you an example, that you also should do as I have done to you. Very truly, I tell you, slaves 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."

"HIS WERE THE HANDS" (by Rev. Duncan Wilson)

Rev. Paul Werner

***HYMN**

"Won't You Let Me Be Your Servant?"

NCH 539

THE SHADOW OF THE CROSS

Rev. Dr. David Nicol

It is now during our time this evening that we rest in the shadow of the cross. We may be seeking forgiveness. We may be in need of a renewed relationship with God. We may feel abandoned, even distressed, by the silence when we beseech God to appear. Perhaps we seek reunion with the Spirit of Christ, or with ourselves.

What we know is that we rarely arrive here clothed in glory. There are no horns to sound or drums to bang. There are no triumphant parades. There is only a crown of thorns, mockery, and a grief that has lasted generations.

We share in the sorrow of death and the unknown. We mourn with parents and friends. We mourn in community and alone. Whether we are on the outskirts looking in or feel surrounded by a great Love, we will pass this way together.

THE FIRST WORD: “Whom are you looking for?”
John 18:1-11

Rev. Paul Werner

After Jesus had spoken these words, he went out with his disciples across the Kidron Valley to a place where there was a garden, which he and his disciples entered. Now Judas, who betrayed him, also knew the place because Jesus often met there with his disciples. So Judas brought a detachment of soldiers together with police from the chief priests and the Pharisees, and they came there with lanterns and torches and weapons. Then Jesus, knowing all that was to happen to him, came forward and asked them, “Whom are you looking for?” They answered, “Jesus of Nazareth.” Jesus replied, “I am he.” Judas, who betrayed him, was standing with them. When Jesus said to them, “I am he,” they stepped back and fell to the ground. Again he asked them, “Whom are you looking for?” And they said, “Jesus of Nazareth.” Jesus answered, “I told you that I am he. So if you are looking for me, let these people go.” This was to fulfill the word that he had spoken, “I did not lose a single one of those whom you gave me.” Then Simon Peter, who had a sword, drew it, struck the high priest’s slave, and cut off his right ear. The slave’s name was Malchus. Jesus said to Peter, “Put your sword back into its sheath. Am I not to drink the cup that the Creator has given me?”

PRAYER OF INVOCATION

Rev. Paul Werner

Let this prayer lead us
into the night
into the lanterns and torches and weapons
into the tanks and guns and explosions
into the cages and cells and shackles
into the unmarked cars and undisclosed locations

Let this prayer accompany us
into the valley
into the garden
into the place known as love and holy and ground
into the confrontations, the betrayals, the violence
into the handing over and standing by

Let this prayer open us
into the wound
into the world
into the breaking
into the breathing
into the rubble
into the pain

THE SECOND WORD: “I am not.”
John 18:15-18, 25-27

Rev. Dr. David Nicol

Simon Peter and another disciple followed Jesus. Since that disciple was known to the high priest, he went with Jesus into the courtyard of the high priest, but Peter was standing outside at the gate. So the other disciple, who was known to the high priest, went out, spoke to the woman who guarded the gate, and brought Peter in. The woman said to Peter, “You are not also one of this man’s disciples, are you?” He said, “I am not.” Now the slaves and the police had made a charcoal fire because it was cold, and they were standing around it and warming themselves. Peter also was standing with them and warming himself.

Now Simon Peter was standing and warming himself. They asked him, “You are not also one of his disciples, are you?” He denied it and said, “I am not.” One of the slaves of the high priest, a relative of the man whose ear Peter had cut off, asked, “Did I not see you in the garden with him?” Again Peter denied it, and at that moment the cock crowed.

PRAYER FOR TRANSFORMATION

Rev. Dr. David Nicol

One: For the times when we have stayed in protective silence, abandoned the deepest loves of our hearts, and let others bear the hurt and harm,

Many: **Mercy. God, have mercy.**

One: For the days when defensiveness is our refuge from taking accountability when we can’t or won’t risk solidarity,

Many: **Mercy. Christ, have mercy.**

One: For ways we avoid, escape, and ignore our own complicity in the violence that cuts us off from friend and enemy alike,

Many: **Mercy. Spirit, have mercy.**

THE THIRD WORD: “My realm is not from here.”
John 18:28-38

Deb Fenn

Then they took Jesus from Caiaphas to Pilate’s headquarters. It was early in the morning. They themselves did not enter the headquarters, so as to avoid ritual defilement and to be able to eat the Passover. So Pilate went out to them and said, “What accusation do you bring against this man?” They answered, “If this man were not a criminal, we would not have handed him over to you.” Pilate said to them, “Take him yourselves and judge him according to your law.” The Jews replied, “We are not permitted to put anyone to death.” (This was to fulfill what Jesus had said when he indicated the kind of death he was to die.)

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Then Pilate entered the headquarters again, summoned Jesus, and asked him, "Are you the King of the Jews?" Jesus answered, "Do you ask this on your own, or did others tell you about me?" Pilate replied, "I am not a Jew, am I? Your own nation and the chief priests have handed you over to me. What have you done?" Jesus answered, "My realm does not belong to this world. If my realm belonged to this world, my followers would be fighting to keep me from being handed over to the Jews. But as it is, my realm is not from here." Pilate asked him, "So you are a king?" Jesus answered, "You say that I am a king. For this I was born, and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone who belongs to the truth listens to my voice." Pilate asked him, "What is truth?"

After he had said this, he went out to the Jews again and told them, "I find no case against him."

CHORAL RESPONSE

"Abide with Me"

arr. Molly Ijames

THE FOURTH WORD: "He ought to die."

Marie Nolan

John 19:1-7

Then Pilate took Jesus and had him flogged. And the soldiers wove a crown of thorns and put it on his head, and they dressed him in a purple robe. They kept coming up to him, saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!" and striking him on the face. Pilate went out again and said to them, "Look, I am bringing him out to you to let you know that I find no case against him." So Jesus came out wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. Pilate said to them, "Behold the man!" When the chief priests and the police saw him, they shouted, "Crucify him! Crucify him!" Pilate said to them, "Take him yourselves and crucify him; I find no case against him." The Jews answered him, "We have a law, and according to that law he ought to die because he has claimed to be the Son of God."

PRAYER FOR HUMAN DIGNITY

Marie Nolan

One: When we call you a criminal, like Jesus, and beat the humanity from your tender flesh,

Many: May these prayers reach behind the bars and whisper to you your true name: beloved, beloved, beloved.

One: When we call you a terrorist, like Jesus, to justify the annihilation of your land and lineages,

Many: May these prayers crawl into the rubble and show you your own enduring beauty: image of the divine.

One: When we call you illegal, like Jesus, and try to drain the dignity from your veins,

(continued on the next page)→

Many: **May these prayers walk into the detention center and declare your inherent worth and value: sacred, sacred, sacred.**

One: When we call it a justified use of force, and we mock, and beat, and torture you, like Jesus,

Many: **May these prayers pour balm over your wounds and offer you a soft place to stay near your own brilliance: holy, holy, holy. Amen.**

**THE FIFTH WORD: “We have no king but Caesar.”
John 19:8-16a**

Rev. Paul Werner

Now when Pilate heard this, he was more afraid than ever. He entered his headquarters again and asked Jesus, “Where are you from?” But Jesus gave him no answer. Pilate therefore said to him, “Do you refuse to speak to me? Do you not know that I have power to release you and power to crucify you?” Jesus answered him, “You would have no power over me unless it had been given you from above; therefore the one who handed me over to you is guilty of a greater sin.” From then on Pilate tried to release him, but the Jews cried out, “If you release this man, you are no friend of Caesar. Everyone who claims to be a king sets himself against Caesar.”

When Pilate heard these words, he brought Jesus outside and sat on the judge’s bench at a place called The Stone Pavement, or in Hebrew Gabbatha. Now it was the day of Preparation for the Passover, and it was about noon. He said to the Jews, “Here is your King!” They cried out, “Away with him! Away with him! Crucify him!” Pilate asked them, “Shall I crucify your King?” The chief priests answered, “We have no king but Caesar.” Then he handed him over to them to be crucified.

PRAYER FOR OUR HEARTS

Rev. Paul Werner

One: You are invited to put your hand on your heart and breathe deeply.

One: The story of this night calls us to take stock and tell the truth about who and what holds our allegiances. What “Caesars” have you given your loyalty to, mistaking them for the way to safety, freedom, and flourishing? You are invited to reflect on them in the silence of your heart.

One: The story of this night calls us to take stock and tell the truth about in whose and in what power we place our trust. What “Caesars” have we as a community, as a society, given our trust to, mistaking them for the way to safety, freedom, and flourishing? You are invited to name them in the silence of your heart.

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One: With our hands on our hearts, let us pray:

**Many: Earth-maker, Pain-bearer, Life giver,
you know the powers and principalities
that have taken root in our bodies, minds, and spirits.
You know the way they shape
our desires, our loyalties, our imagination.
Unpledge us, Earth-maker, from these breath-stealing allegiances.
Release us, Pain-bearer, from these death-dealing dreams.
Reclaim us, Life-giver, from these death dealing dreams.
Teach us again the ways of your kin-dom.
For you reign in the glory of the power that is love, now and forever.
Amen.**

***HYMN**

“My Song Is Love Unknown”

NCH 222

THE SIXTH WORD:

Susan Hulbert

“Woman, here is your son. Beloved, here is your mother”

John 19:16b-27

So they took Jesus, and carrying the cross by himself he went out to what is called the Place of the Skull, which in Hebrew is called Golgotha. There they crucified him and with him two others, one on either side, with Jesus between them. Pilate also had an inscription written and put on the cross. It read, “Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews.” Many of the Jews read this inscription because the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city, and it was written in Hebrew, in Latin, and in Greek. Then the chief priests of the Jews said to Pilate, “Do not write, ‘The King of the Jews,’ but, ‘This man said, I am King of the Jews.’ ” Pilate answered, “What I have written I have written.” When the soldiers had crucified Jesus, they took his clothes and divided them into four parts, one for each soldier. They also took his tunic; now the tunic was seamless, woven in one piece from the top. So they said to one another, “Let us not tear it but cast lots for it to see who will get it.” This was to fulfill what the scripture says,

“They divided my clothes among themselves,
and for my clothing they cast lots.”

And that is what the soldiers did.

Meanwhile, standing near the cross of Jesus were his mother, and his mother’s sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing beside her, he said to his mother, “Woman, here is your son.” Then he said to the disciple, “Here is your mother.” And from that hour the disciple took her into his own home.

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING AND DEDICATION

Susan Hulbert

One: For the gift of presence in troubled times, and the ones who stay near to suffering,

Many: Thanks be to God.

One: For the gift of kinship emerging in the worst of days, and the ones who say yes to love,

Many: Thanks be to God.

One: For the gift of care from those most impacted by oppression and the ones whose vision reaches beyond present horrors,

Many: Thanks be to God.

One: We dedicate our lives to becoming these gifts. We dedicate our lives to becoming these kin.

Many: In the name of all that is holy, just, and compassionate, we pray and live. Amen.

THE SEVENTH WORD: "It is finished."

Deb Fenn

John 19:28-30

After this, when Jesus knew that all was now finished, he said (in order to fulfill the scripture), "I am thirsty." A jar full of sour wine was standing there. So they put a sponge full of the wine on a branch of hyssop and held it to his mouth. When Jesus had received the wine, he said, "It is finished." Then he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

CHORAL RESPONSE

"Were You There?"

Bob Chilcott

MOMENT OF SILENCE / CLEARING OF THE ALTAR

CHARGE

Rev. Dr. David Nicol

When Jesus said
it is finished
what if he was saying
there will be an end
to the powers and principalities
that steal our very breath
there will be an end

(continued on the next page)→

to the culture of fear
to all the ways we die to ourselves and each other

if resurrection begins
when we are no longer invested in the power of death
begins with the women who will not let him die alone
who will not let the murder be unseen
who will remain close by his wounds
and say his name
until the sky is torn in two
then let this be the blessing that comes when
it is finished

SILENT CONTEMPLATION

DEPART IN SILENCE

Easter Sunday

Join us for worship and celebration on April 5 at 10:00 AM.



Hamburg United Methodist Church

116 Union Street



**SAINT JAMES
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST**


76 Main Street

Won't You Let Me Be Your Servant?



539

Richard Gillard, 1977; alt.

Rom. 12:9-18; Col. 1:24-29




1 & 6 Won't you let me be your ser - vant, let me be as Christ to you?
2 We are pil - grims on a jour - ney, we are trav - elers on the road;
3 I will hold the Christ - light for you in the shad - ow of your fear;
4 I will weep when you are weep - ing; when you laugh, I'll laugh with you.
5 When we sing to God in heav - en we shall find such har - mo - ny,



Pray that I may have the grace to let you be my ser - vant, too.
We are here to help each oth - er go the mile and bear the load.
I will hold my hand out to you, speak the peace you long to hear.
I will share your joy and sor - row till we've seen this jour - ney through.
Born of all we've known to - geth - er of Christ's love and ag - o - ny.

(repeat stanza 1)



ONE LICENSE A-723905



GOOD FRIDAY

Why?

$\text{♩} = 80$

1. Why must our ter - ri - ble an - guish seem end - less?
 2. Why is there suf - fer - ing, cha - os and tor - ture?
 3. Why do we fail to see God in our strug - gles?

What can di - min - ish our sense of de - spair?
 What is the truth in a world with - out sense?
 What is the cov - e - nant pro - mise of old?

Where is our re - fuge when ha - tred con - sumes us?
 Where is the wis - dom that leads to dis - cern - ment?
 Where are the pro - phets to wit - ness for jus - tice?

Who will de - liv - er us, — wel - come each prayer? —
 Who will en - cour - age us, — be our de - fense? —
 Who will em - pow - er us, — mak - ing us bold? —

$\text{♩} = 110$

Come, grac - ious God, — bring peace to each mind, hope to each soul,
 Come, Je - sus Christ, bring jus - tice for all, truth to our lips,
 Come, Ho - ly Spir - it, bring breath to each dream, move - ment to stone,

love to each heart, that we — may praise you, — day by day.
 strength to our hands, that we — may fol - low you, — day by day.
 wings to each prayer, that we — may know you, — day by day.

My Song Is Love Unknown

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Samuel Crossman, 1664; alt.

2 Cor. 5:15-19; Heb. 5:7-10

1 My song is love un - known, my Sav - ior's love to me,
2 God left the rich - est throne sal - va - tion to be - stow;
3 Some - times they threw down palms and sweet - est prais - es sang.
4 What has my Sov - ereign done? What makes this rage and spite?
5 I sing my plain be - lief, one song my heart out - pours:

Love to the love - less shown, that they might love - ly be.
But Christ as flesh and bone the world re - fused to know.
Ho - san - nas and glad psalms through streets and mar - kets rang.
Christ gave new strength to run, re - stored the gift of sight.
Nev - er was pain nor grief, nev - er was love like yours.


O who am I, that for my sake my God should take frail
But, O my Friend, my Friend in - deed, who at my need did
Then "Cru - ci - fy!" is all their breath, for blood and death they
Sweet in - ju - ries! Yet they at these them - selves dis - please, and
This is my Friend, in whose sweet praise I all my days could

flesh and die? My God should take frail flesh and die?
life ex - pend; who at my need did life ex - pend.
thirst and cry; for blood and death they thirst and cry.
'gainst Christ rise; them - selves dis - please, and 'gainst Christ rise.
glad - ly spend; I all my days could glad - ly spend.

join us!



HAMBURG CLERGY ALLIANCE
of Western New York

 @hamburgclergywny

EASTER SUNDAY SERVICES • APRIL 5, 2026
We invite you to celebrate Easter with us!

HAMBURG PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH • 10:00 AM
hamburgpresbyterianchurch.org *177 Main Street, Hamburg*

HAMBURG UNITED METHODIST CHURCH • 10:00 AM
hamburgumc.org *116 Union Street, Hamburg*

ORCHARD PARK COMMUNITY CHURCH • 10:00 AM
opcommunitychurch.org *7451 Quaker Road, Orchard Park*

ORCHARD PARK UNITED METHODIST CHURCH • 10:30 AM
opumc.com *3700 N. Buffalo St., Orchard Park*

ST. JAMES UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST • 10:00 AM
hamburgucc.org *76 Main Street, Hamburg*

ST. MATTHEW'S UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST • 10:00 AM
stmattsucc.org *5289 McKinley Parkway, Hamburg*



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