

### April 15, 2022-Good Friday

Our family photo album has a picture of me when I was four or five with my brother playing with two strips of wood he tacked together. I thought it looked like an airplane so I zoomed and swooped around the front yard, banking turns... My flight of imagination was interrupted when my brother said "It's a cross". Then he told me the story of Good Friday. I remember being upset that people would torture a nice person like Jesus. Clark tried to reassure me that Jesus did this amazing trick of defeating death...I just wasn't ready to hear it. All I could think about was that meanness had snuffed out goodness. I just couldn't see past Good Friday to Easter.

Fifty some years later, I have a tough time seeing Easter through the smoke and ash of Good Friday.

Marioupol, Bucha are Good Friday....Sri Lanka, Chile, Ethiopia, Burkino Faso ...know Good Friday.

A planet heating to alarming levels, life forms going extinct  
...smell a lot like Good Friday.

Six million deaths during the COVID pandemic....the upheaval in life, churches, society ....feel like a two year long Good Friday. .

People in in the Niagara region who don't have a place to live or a meal when they're hungry ...know something of Good Friday.

Untouchable corrupt leaders who incite violence— billionaires amassing even more wealth during the pandemic while many who have little were evicted into the streets make one think Good Friday might have the last word.

Pilate and Herod were convinced their word was law. They had colluded to get rid —an uncredentialed rabbi from some backwater town who had everybody stirred up. He's ridden into Jerusalem, people waving palm branches pleading for him to bring salvation to their people when we all know keeping the peace is Rome's job.

Pilate and Herod take point in restoring stability, law and order. Jesus is dead after a bloody public spectacle that should deter anybody else with designs to resist the empire. It's hard to know if the politicians broke out 12 year-old scotch and toasted each other, relieved that now things could get back to normal. The system weathered a threat. Empire 1—Jesus of Nazareth o

If that were all there is to the story, people around the world wouldn't gather for Good Friday services. Just showing up can be an act of resistance and defiance today. Being here becomes be an act of solidarity too...we need each other for the times in life where we're 'white knuckling' through the miasma of Good Friday. So we sing, pray and hear scripture, and we remind each other that God gets the last word. God declares to us time and again of a divine plan to save the whole ball of wax. For now, Good Friday isn't going anywhere. Yet. But Easter's coming and not even Good Friday can stop that.