Prayer:

We all, like sheep, have gone astray.  
We have all turned to our own way.  
We have sinned and have been the cause  
of Christ’s suffering.  
Please forgive us, we pray.  
Remove the sins that distance us from you  
and from those we love and care about.  
Remove our selfishness, our pride, our envy,  
and our greed.  
Remove from us our thoughtless acts  
and words that hurt one another.  
Remove from us the tendency to hurt others  
out of revenge and anger.  
Forgive us please.  
Create in us a clean heart, O Lord.  
And renew in us a right spirit. Amen.

On Palm Sunday I made the comment that it would probably be easier for all of us to go from the Hosanna to the resurrection. From the party to the hope… but we can’t just skip the hard parts. That is as important to know now more than ever. I hope you are all doing well during this time… I continue to have my good days and some really rough days. And Oh how I would love to skip right over those rough days- the days where I wonder if I am enough- am I enough of a Pastor right now? Am I enough of a school teacher? Am I enough of a mother? Am I enough of a daughter? Am I enough of a student? Am I enough of a Christian? Am I enough?

And then I remember. There is one person that never doubts those things…. And that’s because he didn’t skip over the hard parts. He took a deep breath and continued a walk that he knew was going to end with his death…. Because I am enough. Because he loves us all. He knew that no matter how dark it got…. Sunday was coming.

IT WAS FRIDAY

37 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.” 38 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. 39 But you have a custom that I release someone for you at the Passover. Do you want me to release for you the King of the Jews?” 40 They shouted in reply, “Not this man, but Barabbas!” Now Barabbas was a bandit.

The story of the crucifixion is probably the most repeated and familiar story of the Bible. The image of the cross is an ongoing reminder of the events that happened that day beginning in Jerusalem and ending on hill called Calvary. The events that took place may look like a bad day,

IT MAY BE FRIDAY, BUT SUNDAY IS COMING

IT WAS FRIDAY

19 Then Pilate took Jesus and had him flogged. 2 And the soldiers wove a crown of thorns and put it on his head, and they dressed him in a purple robe. 3 They kept coming up to him, saying, “Hail, King of the Jews!” and striking him on the face. 4 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.” 5 So Jesus came out, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. Pilate said to them, “Here is the man!” 6 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.” 7 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.”

Jesus was taken to Pilate and tried before the Roman procurator, false witnesses brought forth. IT WAS FRIDAY and Pilate could find nothing to charge Jesus with, but the crowd persuaded him to hand him over. Give us Barabas, whose name means “Son of a liar and murderer”, the crowd that day choose between the “Son of a murderer and liar” and the Son of God. It was Friday and Pilate washed his hands of Jesus and the case.

Maybe it is Friday for you, have you been falsely accused, told lies about. Maybe you’re being lied to, told you are no good, or worthless, maybe you are feeling unloved and unwanted- maybe the person telling you these things is a loved one, a stranger or even yourself.

IT MAY BE FRIDAY, BUT SUNDAY IS COMING

IT WAS FRIDAY

And Judas, seeing he has betrayed innocent blood, does not think that God can forgive him, goes and hangs himself. Those who were his friends just looked the other way, putting the blame on him. IT WAS FRIDAY And Jesus is taken aside and beaten. The cat of nine tails, coated in sheep’s blood, with nails and other sharp objects to bite into the skin of Jesus. 39 times that soldiers whipped Jesus, turning his flesh to hamburger. Then they took him and punched him out, mocking him.

Maybe you’re going through the same, your friends seem to have turned on you. You’re being beat up mentally or emotionally. People enjoying your shortcomings, taking opportunity to jab you with sharp cutting words, leaving you emotionally or mentally scarred.

IT MAY BE FRIDAY, BUT SUNDAY IS COMING

IT WAS FRIDAY

Mark 15:16 16 Then the soldiers led him into the courtyard of the palace (that is, the governor’s headquarters[[c](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Mark+15%3A1-16%3A20&version=NRSV#fen-NRSV-24836c)]); and they called together the whole cohort. 17 And they clothed him in a purple cloak; and after twisting some thorns into a crown, they put it on him. 18 And they began saluting him, “Hail, King of the Jews!” 19 They struck his head with a reed, spat upon him, and knelt down in homage to him. 20 After mocking him, they stripped him of the purple cloak and put his own clothes on him. Then they led him out to crucify him.

The soldiers wove a crown of thorns, Jubian thorns hard as nails, and beat it down on the head Jesus. They placed the cross on his shoulders and made him carry it up the Via Delarosa, the steepest street in Jerusalem. The crowd jeered and mocked him, pulling his beard from his face as he stumbled up the street. Isaiah tells us that his features were so beaten he was beyond recognition. He fell carrying the cross, the soldiers made Simon the Cyrene carry the cross.

Maybe it is Friday for you too, pressures of the job or the home In this strange time there are pressures we didn’t even know we had, are they wearing down on you. Worries of health of loved ones, financial burdens, your own health -that the suffering has taken your joy.

IT MAY BE FRIDAY, BUT SUNDAY IS COMING

IT WAS FRIDAY

44 It was now about noon, and darkness came over the whole land[[h](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Luke+23%3A26-24%3A12&version=NRSV#fen-NRSV-25970h)] until three in the afternoon, 45 while the sun’s light failed;[[i](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Luke+23%3A26-24%3A12&version=NRSV" \l "fen-NRSV-25971i" \o "See footnote i)] and the curtain of the temple was torn in two. 46 Then Jesus, crying with a loud voice, said, “Father, into your hands I commend my spirit.” Having said this, he breathed his last. 47 When the centurion saw what had taken place, he praised God and said, “Certainly this man was innocent.”[[j](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Luke+23%3A26-24%3A12&version=NRSV#fen-NRSV-25973j)] 48 And when all the crowds who had gathered there for this spectacle saw what had taken place, they returned home, beating their breasts. 49 But all his acquaintances, including the women who had followed him from Galilee, stood at a distance, watching these things.

And darkness covered the city, Jesus was on the cross, hanging between two thieves. The soldiers below him casting lots for his clothing, the crowd jeering him, he saved others let him save himself. It was Friday, and the thief on the other cross says “Remember we when you come to your throne.” It was Friday and Jesus cries out “My God MY God why have you forsaken me?” It was Friday and Jesus experiences for the first time in his life separation from the Father. It was Friday and Jesus says “it is finished, Father into your hands I commit my Spirit” The curtain in the Temple is torn in two. The centurion standing there confessed “This is the Son of God” It was Friday and Jesus died,

Many may feel they are surrounded by darkness right now- when we cant visit our friends or family, when we aren’t able to see our church family or work family- does it feel like you are all alone? Are you surrounded by darkness, take heart, that is the way it was for Jesus that Friday,

IT MAY BE FRIDAY, BUT SUNDAY IS COMING

31 Since it was the day of Preparation, the Jews did not want the bodies left on the cross during the sabbath, especially because that sabbath was a day of great solemnity. So they asked Pilate to have the legs of the crucified men broken and the bodies removed. 32 Then the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first and of the other who had been crucified with him. 33 But when they came to Jesus and saw that he was already dead, they did not break his legs. 34 Instead, one of the soldiers pierced his side with a spear, and at once blood and water came out. 35 (He who saw this has testified so that you also may believe. His testimony is true, and he knows[[p](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John%2018%3A1-19%3A42&version=NRSV#fen-NRSV-26850p)] that he tells the truth.) 36 These things occurred so that the scripture might be fulfilled, “None of his bones shall be broken.” 37 And again another passage of scripture says, “They will look on the one whom they have pierced.”

38 After these things, Joseph of Arimathea, who was a disciple of Jesus, though a secret one because of his fear of the Jews, asked Pilate to let him take away the body of Jesus. Pilate gave him permission; so he came and removed his body. 39 Nicodemus, who had at first come to Jesus by night, also came, bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, weighing about a hundred pounds. 40 They took the body of Jesus and wrapped it with the spices in linen cloths, according to the burial custom of the Jews. 41 Now there was a garden in the place where he was crucified, and in the garden there was a new tomb in which no one had ever been laid. 42 And so, because it was the Jewish day of Preparation, and the tomb was nearby, they laid Jesus there.

It was Friday when they took him from the cross and laid him in a borrowed tomb, sealed with a Roman seal, and a legion of soldiers placed to guard the tomb. The disciples were saddened and distraught, the women were in mourning, the enemies were worried..

IT MAY BE FRIDAY, BUT SUNDAY IS COMING

Are you weakened, overcome with stress, overcome with worries, distraught and dejected? Are you alone, self esteem at an all time low? Do you feel the walls closing in around you like there is no way out? That is how Jesus may have felt that Friday. BUT SUNDAY IS COMING.

No matter what the world has done to us, Jesus says “I have told you these things so that in me you will have peace. In this world you will have trouble, but take heart I HAVE OVERCOME THE WORLD.” [John 16:33]

Those who are His have this promise, you can have it too, all you have to do is give Him your life. He who overcame the world will help you and strengthen you. Will you give him your life today? If not why do you wait? Today is the day of salvation. Friday may seem dark it may not seem so good… but know we cant skip the bad parts to just get to the good. Sunday IS coming and the hope that Sunday brings is saved just for us.

Let me end today with a poem based on a sermon by SM Lockridge:

It’s Friday  
Jesus is praying  
Peter’s a sleeping  
Judas is betraying  
But Sunday’s comin’

It’s Friday  
Pilate’s struggling  
The council is conspiring  
The crowd is vilifying  
They don’t even know  
That Sunday’s comin’

It’s Friday  
The disciples are running  
Like sheep without a shepherd  
Mary’s crying  
Peter is denying  
But they don’t know  
That Sunday’s a comin’

It’s Friday  
The Romans beat my Jesus  
They robe him in scarlet  
They crown him with thorns  
But they don’t know  
That Sunday’s comin’

It’s Friday  
See Jesus walking to Calvary  
His blood dripping  
His body stumbling  
And his spirit’s burdened  
But you see, it’s only Friday  
Sunday’s comin’

It’s Friday  
The world’s winning  
People are sinning  
And evil’s grinning

It’s Friday  
The soldiers nail my Savior’s hands  
To the cross  
They nail my Savior’s feet  
To the cross  
And then they raise him up  
Next to criminals

It’s Friday  
But let me tell you something  
Sunday’s comin’

It’s Friday  
The disciples are questioning  
What has happened to their King  
And the Pharisees are celebrating  
That their scheming  
Has been achieved  
But they don’t know  
It’s only Friday  
Sunday’s comin’

It’s Friday  
He’s hanging on the cross  
Feeling forsaken by his Father  
Left alone and dying  
Can nobody save him?  
It’s Friday  
But Sunday’s comin’

It’s Friday  
The earth trembles  
The sky grows dark  
My King yields his spirit

It’s Friday  
Hope is lost  
Death has won  
Sin has conquered  
and Satan’s just a laughin’

It’s Friday  
Jesus is buried  
A soldier stands guard  
And a rock is rolled into place  
But it’s Friday  
It is only Friday  
[Sunday is a comin’!](http://www.rejesus.co.uk/site/module/on_the_third_day/P4/)

Let us Pray:

Almighty God,  
we would be lying to you and deceiving ourselves  
if we pretended to be joyful and satisfied tonight (today).  
We are not.  
The violent pain that our friend Christ Jesus endured  
makes us want to hide and wait until it is over;  
it makes us wish to ignore his wounds altogether.  
Yet in the miracle of grace, you have drawn us here,  
along with millions of others around the earth,  
that we might remember Christ’s once-for-all sacrifice  
and covenant of grace.  
As we worship you tonight  
and undertake the ancient work of remembering,  
we ask that you open our hearts to feel anew  
exactly why this is called “Good Friday.”  
In the name of Christ our Lord, amen.