

Minster Bethel Congregational Church (MBCC)

02/04/2021 -- Good Friday

Good or Bad Friday?



Sunday is our Easter zoom
"Church & Chat"

A short church reflection with a hymn, reading, (children's activity), prayer, "thought for the week" and then a time to chat. If you need help to join please ask any deacon

Join us Sunday at 10 am:

Topic: Church and Chat

Time: This is a recurring meeting

Join Zoom Meeting <https://us04web.zoom.us/j/75124173520?pwd=QVB4WUx6QXg3Y3hQc1NQYkxINmozZz09>

Meeting ID: 751 2417 3520

Passcode: Bethel2021

All lockdown services can be found at: www.mbccs.co.uk

Then he called the crowd to him along with his disciples and said: 'Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me'

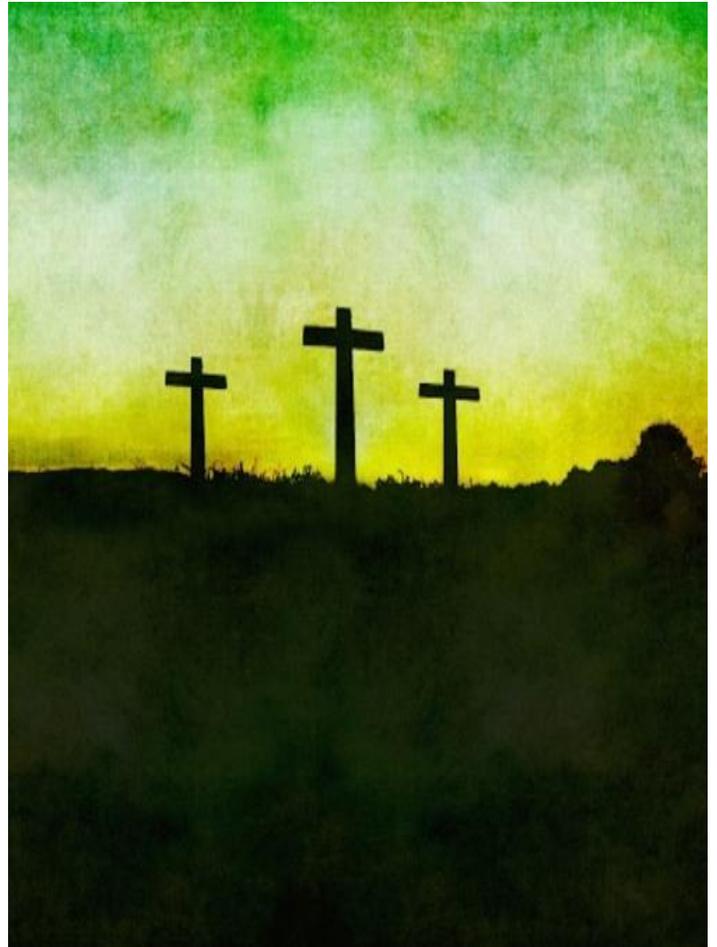
Mark 8:34

Good morning and welcome to Our Good Friday message.

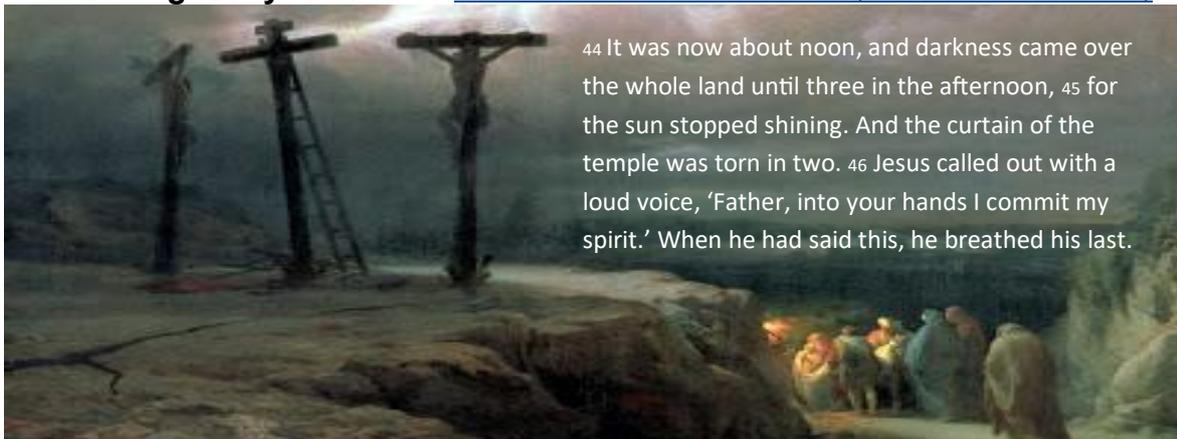
Our first hymn for today is: "There is a Green Hill Far Away"

[There's a Green Hill far away - A Hopefilled Hymn from Visual Worship Media - YouTube](#)

1. There is a green hill far away,
Without a city wall,
Where the dear Lord was crucified,
Who died to save us all.
2. We may not know, we cannot tell,
What pains he had to bear,
But we believe it was for us
He hung and suffered there.
3. He died that we might be forgiven,
He died to make us good.
That we might go at last to Him
Saved by His precious blood
4. There was no other good enough
To pay the price of sin.
He only could unlock the gate
Of heav'n and let us in.
5. Oh, dearly, dearly has he loved!
And we must love him too,
And trust in his redeeming blood,
And try his works to do.



The reading today is Luke 23 [Luke 23 NIVUK - Then the whole assembly rose and led - Bible Gateway](#)



⁴⁴ It was now about noon, and darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon, ⁴⁵ for the sun stopped shining. And the curtain of the temple was torn in two. ⁴⁶ Jesus called out with a loud voice, 'Father, into your hands I commit my spirit.' When he had said this, he breathed his last.

Before our message lets sing: “The Servant King”

[From Heaven You Came \(The Servant King\) with Lyrics - YouTube](#)

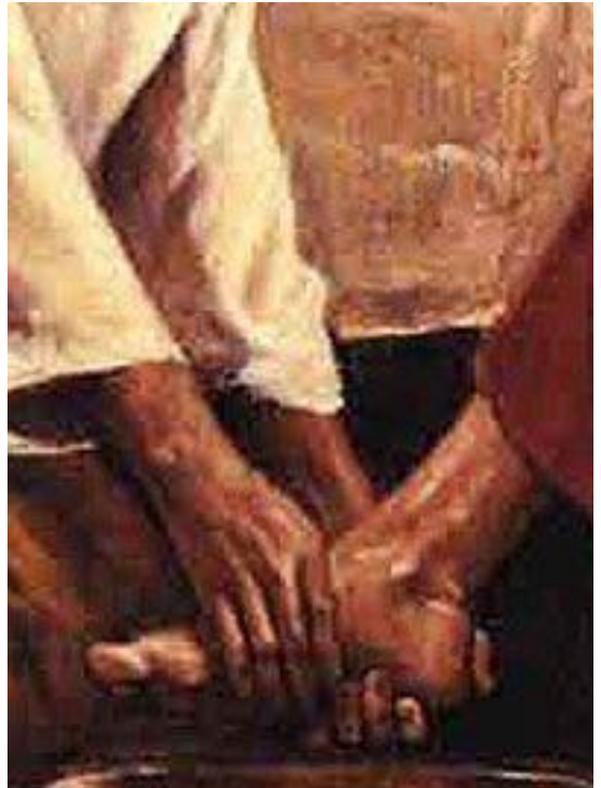
From heaven you came helpless babe
Entered our world, your glory veiled
Not to be served but to serve
And give Your life that we might live

*This is our God, The Servant King
He calls us now to follow Him
To bring our lives as a daily offering
Of worship to The Servant King*

There in the garden of tears
My heavy load he chose to bear
His heart with sorrow was torn
'Yet not My will but Yours,' He said

Come see His hands and His feet
The scars that speak of sacrifice
Hands that flung stars into space
To cruel nails surrendered

So let us learn how to serve
And in our lives enthrone Him
Each other's needs to prefer
For it is Christ we're serving



Why is Good Friday Good?

One year on and all remains strange not knowing what to expect, hopes raised and dashed really strange times but no stranger than that first Good Friday.

Good Friday is sort of a strange name for such a sad day. On Good Friday, we remember the day that Jesus was nailed to a cross and hung up to die with two criminals on either side of him. It was a very sad day. His disciples were heart-broken and his mother and other friends stood at the foot of the cross weeping. They could not believe that their wonderful teacher, friend, son was dying in front of their very eyes.

The man that had led them for the past few years, taught them new things about forgiveness and love was dying on a cross, and we call it GOOD Friday! How could such a sad day be called good?

Many years ago we had a French exchange student, Eric, staying with us over Easter. I remember him asking my mum why we called Good Friday good? I think I agreed with the question. In my mind the cross represented a very bad thing that happened. However, the cross is the symbol that is recognised the world over as something unique to Christianity. When you see a cross on a building you can know that the building has or had something to with the Christian Church – a place of worship, a school, or a hospital. Children at a very young age know in their own child-like way what the cross stands for. Its message is simple - Jesus died on a cross.

What's so amazing about this unique Christian symbol is that it represents an instrument of torture and death. The Romans used the cross to punish criminals and those who rebelled against Roman authority. It was cruel and barbaric. Nails were driven through hands and feet of the victim. The cross then raised. The victims gasped as they tried to get air into their lungs. They could hang there for days, in excruciating pain, until they died.

If that is the case, why do we display the cross so prominently in our churches, wear crosses around our necks, on our lapels or on earrings. Why is it that we allow our children to make crosses – one of the cruellest forms of torture and execution that humanity has created?

When you think about it, to hold an instrument of death with such reverence is a bit strange. Its like hanging a gallows around your neck, to remind us that this is what the cross really is – a device used to kill people – to execute criminals.

Lot's of people died on crosses, some of them murderers and the worst kind of characters imaginable who some may say deserved to be executed.

So really it should be bad Friday. Why is the cross the central symbol of our Christian faith? If the cross is so awful why wear crosses, make crosses, display crosses in our churches?

But sometimes, when we think something is bad, it is only because we don't see the whole picture... we don't know everything about the situation.

It reminds me of an old Chinese folktale where an old man's only horse, a mare, runs away. "That's bad," say his neighbours. "No, that was good," says the old man when the horse returns with a stallion by her side, and now he has two horses. "Ah, that's good," say the neighbours. "No, that was bad," says the old man after the horse throws his only son to the ground and the son breaks his hip. "That is really bad," say the neighbours. But then an army marches through the town, forcing all of the young men and sons who are healthy to go to war with them. The old man's son is not taken because of his broken hip and so he is left behind. The son heals and is able to stay and care for his old father. So the final result for this family is good.

The cross reminds us of the beginning of the whole picture. A picture where one particular person who was completely innocent and didn't deserve such a cruel death was hung - the cross reminds us of the death of Jesus of Nazareth.

Good Friday is good because of the whole picture. Jesus knew what was going to happen. He knew that he would die on the cross; but he also knew that death was not the end of the story. Jesus knew that God is more powerful than death. Jesus knew that after three days, he would rise from the dead and break the power of sin and death forever. Good Friday begins a story that ends in victory and that is why Good Friday is, indeed, good.



Our final hymn for this Good Friday is “The Old Rugged Cross”

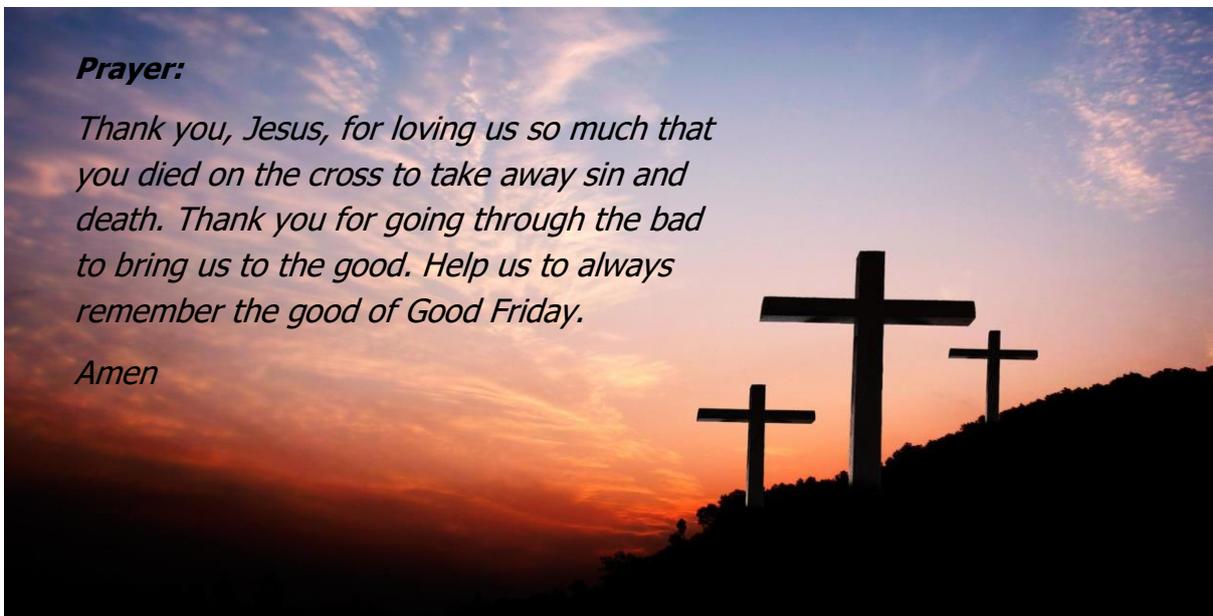
[The Old Rugged Cross Alan Jackson with lyrics YouTube - YouTube](#)

1. On a hill far away stood an old rugged cross,
The emblem of suff’ring and shame;
And I love that old cross where the Dearest and Best
For a world of lost sinners was slain.
 - *Refrain:*
So I’ll cherish the old rugged cross,
Till my trophies at last I lay down;
I will cling to the old rugged cross,
And exchange it someday for a crown.
2. Oh, that old rugged cross, so despised by the world,
Has a wondrous attraction for me;
For the dear Lamb of God left His glory above
To bear it to dark Calvary.
3. In that old rugged cross, stained with blood so divine,
A wondrous beauty I see,
For ’twas on that old cross Jesus suffered and died,
To pardon and sanctify me.
4. To the old rugged cross I will ever be true;
Its shame and reproach gladly bear;
Then He’ll call me someday to my home far away,
Where His glory forever I’ll share.

Prayer:

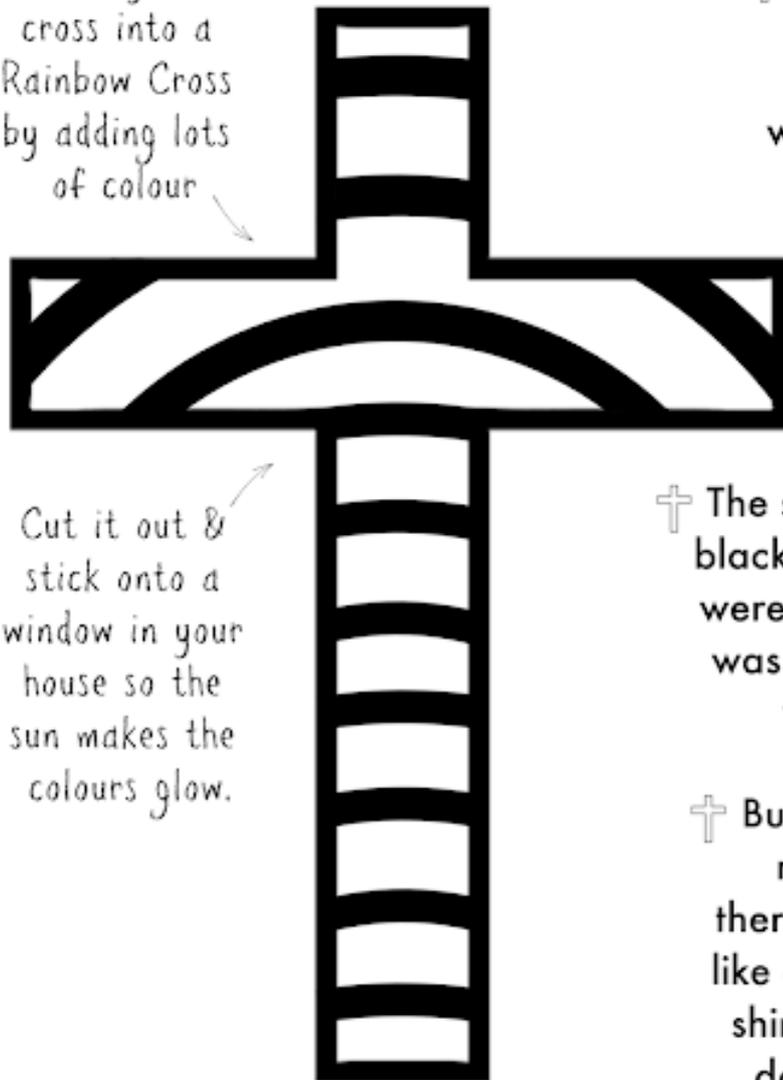
Thank you, Jesus, for loving us so much that you died on the cross to take away sin and death. Thank you for going through the bad to bring us to the good. Help us to always remember the good of Good Friday.

Amen



Cross of Hope Good Friday

Turn your cross into a Rainbow Cross by adding lots of colour



Cut it out & stick onto a window in your house so the sun makes the colours glow.

† Today we remember the day when Jesus died on a cross.

† The sky turned black & people were sad Jesus was no longer with them.

† But the cross reminds us there is Hope, like a rainbow shining in the darkest sky.



MAY GODS BLESSING SURROUND YOU
EACH DAY
AS YOU TRUST HIM AND WALK IN HIS WAY;
MAY HIS PRESENCE WITHIN
GUARD AND KEEP YOU FROM SIN.
GO IN PEACE, GO IN JOY, GO IN LOVE!