

Unraveling
Good Friday
Friday, April 15, 2022
The Rev. Katherine Bush

No one is surprised anymore at how quickly it can all unravel. Even those of us who are relatively protected by privilege and comfort have made visits to the bottom of whatever our personal pits might be - whether we climbed slowly down, or fell, or were pushed. But at this point, no one is shocked at how quickly it can all slip away, right? If you needed these last years to teach you, then here was your lesson in the hair's breadth between "everything is really fine" and "no, no it's not." Though a lot of us, most of the world, in fact, already knew - had already learned or had always known that things were tenuous, shaky at best ... Some people already knew that dinner might not be on the table, that safe shelter might be a subway station, that not every disease has a cure.

But still, if you needed a reminder, today tells us again how few steps there are between a dinner party and a death, just a few short hours. And, of course, had we been paying attention, we would have always known how precarious it always was. Jesus told us again and again, and he showed us, didn't he, from the beginning - born in a fragile time with a fragile-egoed king hovering, walking toward the fear and the fearful, not hiding himself nor hiding the truth, holding his heart vulnerably out for anyone to strike.

This is the story for anyone willing to hear it: it can all turn on a dime. One minute you're at dinner with your closest friends; the next minute, one of those friends walks toward you in a garden, and you know they are coming to break your heart. One moment the small crowds tell you that they love and adore you, the next they shout for your pain. One day you're walking on water, the next you are walking up a hill carrying your own cross. The future slips away, at least the future you and I imagined: when the doctor walks in, when the car doesn't ever pull into the driveway, when the phone rings, and the thread pulls from the cloth.

Somehow, inexplicably, God is in these messy, ugly, painful, awful stories - the ones that don't go the way we would like them to go. Somehow, God is in the small back rooms where the politicians cut deals that cut lives short, and present in the pain and loneliness of grieving sons and mothers. Because God is not only in the beautiful gardens, blooming and sunny, but in the gardens where we bury the ones we love. Jesus walked through the dark, shadowy roads and sat with the questions that have no answers, revealing a God who stays with us when it all falls apart. It can be hard to imagine, so very hard to believe that it's true, yet God was there in the despair and cowardice and indifference, present in the exhaustion and fear in that small town two thousand years ago. And so perhaps, God can be found in the despair and cowardice and indifference we feel, and present in the exhaustion and fear of our small lives.

Yes, it can all come undone. And too easily. With a word, with a kiss, with a missed moment to say the brave thing, with nothing at all we could have done differently. And yet, as all the threads and yarns unravel, as the tapestry comes to shreds, somehow God is still here. Even now.