

Trip 2 – Episode # 60: An Historic Day

Although we'd both been to Washington D.C., we'd never been able to stay and explore enough. This trip was no different. We only had a few hours. But in this town, you can cram a lot of history into a few hours.

We were a little late for the height of the cherry blossoms, but we were greeted with bright colours wherever we went, which was so uplifting.



Even as you approach the Arlington Memorial Bridge, you feel the sense of history.



After finding a spot to park *right on the street!!* (thank you Parking Gods!), we walked in the general direction of the Lincoln Memorial and stumbled across a monument that neither of us had seen before – the Martin Luther King Jr Memorial.



It is spectacular, and so moving. To enter, you pass between two giant pieces of rock.



It's only when you get to the other side that you realize there's a third piece of rock, which seems to have been cut from the middle, to create the passage. On the side, you read the inscription:

"Out of the mountain of despair, a stone of hope."



And then when you stand in front of the piece of stone, you see the sculpture.



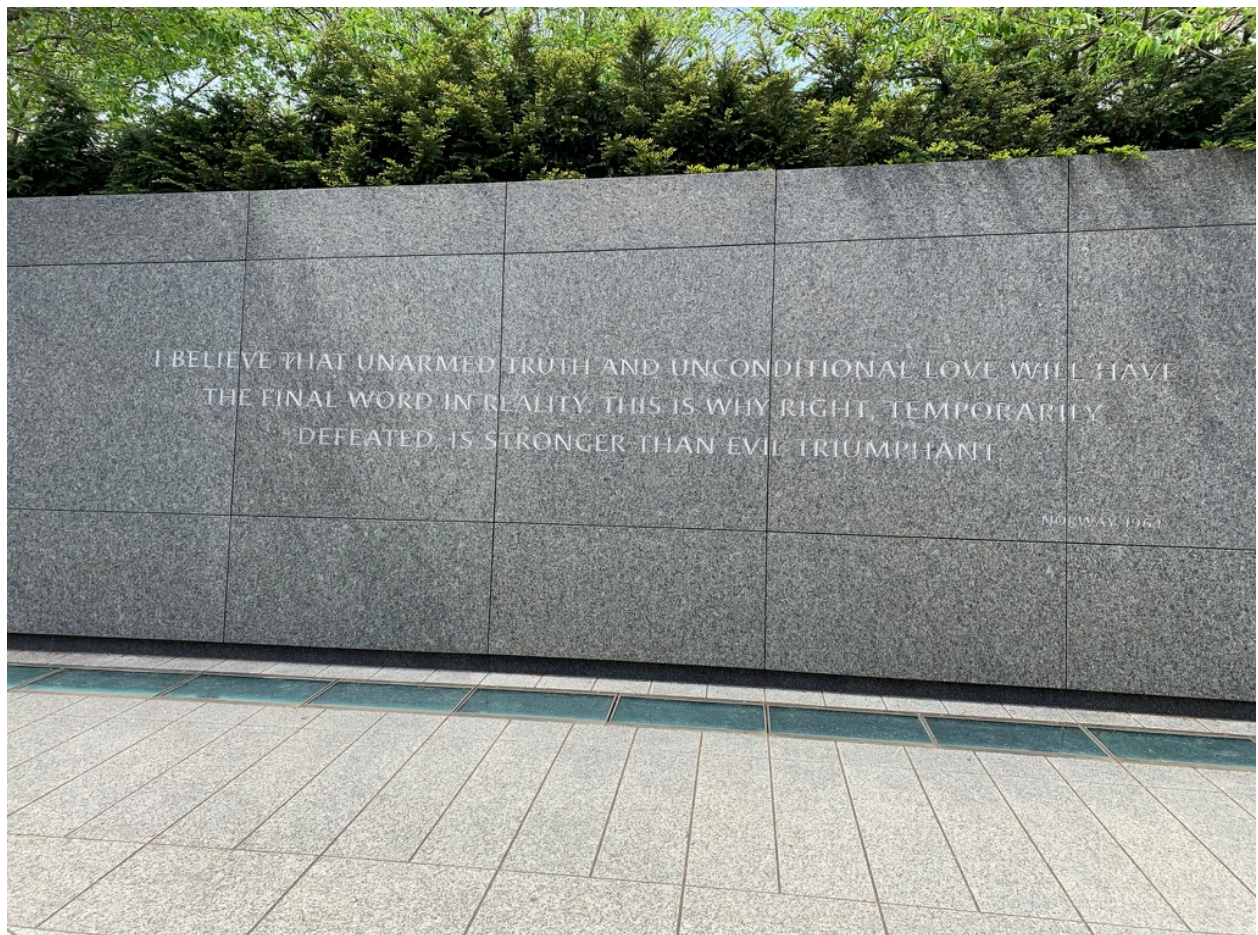
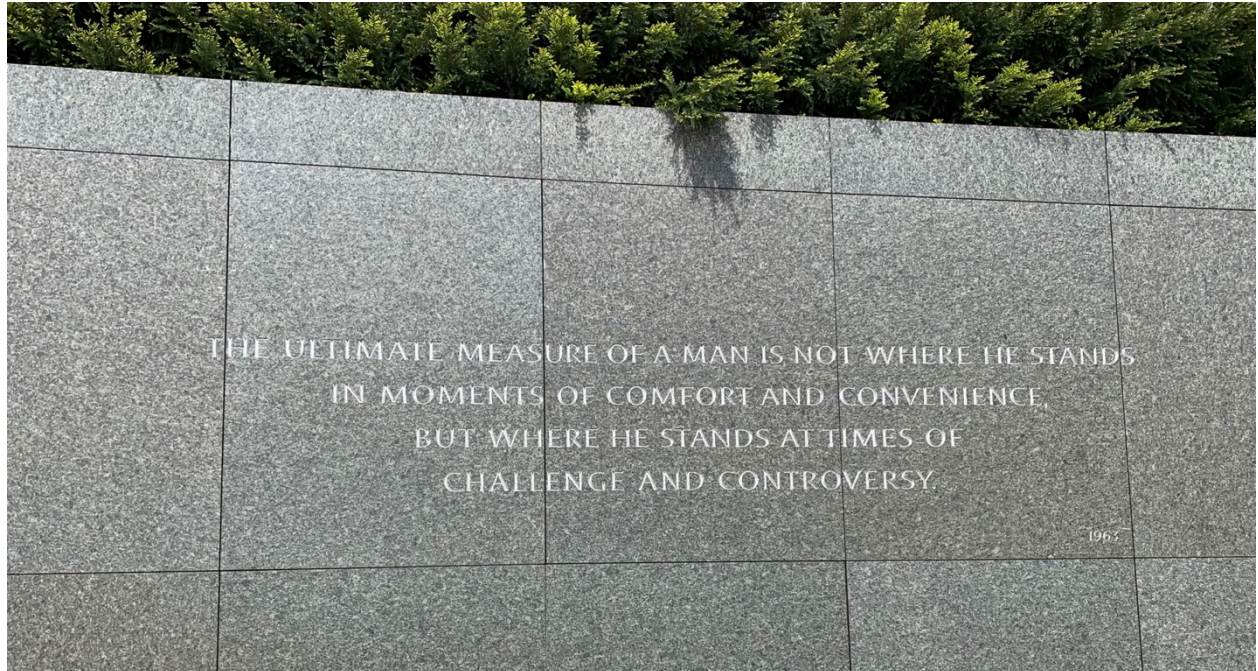
It is so powerful.

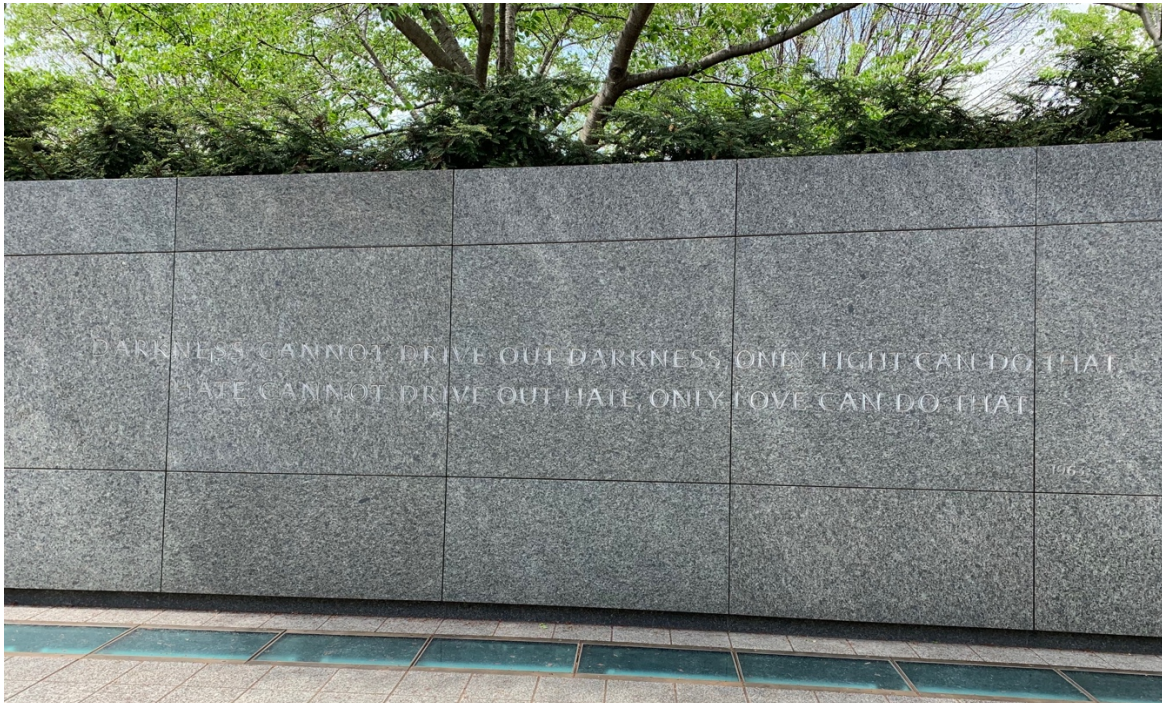


It was especially poignant to see African American parents there with their kids.



On the walls in the surrounding garden, there are MLK quotes.





Very, very powerful.

And placed, as it is, directly across from the Jefferson Memorial, is definitely no accident.



Next we went to the Korean War Veterans Memorial, which is also powerful, but in a totally different way.

It's under construction now, but the figures wading carefully through the Korean landscape still create an eerie representation of the war they fought.

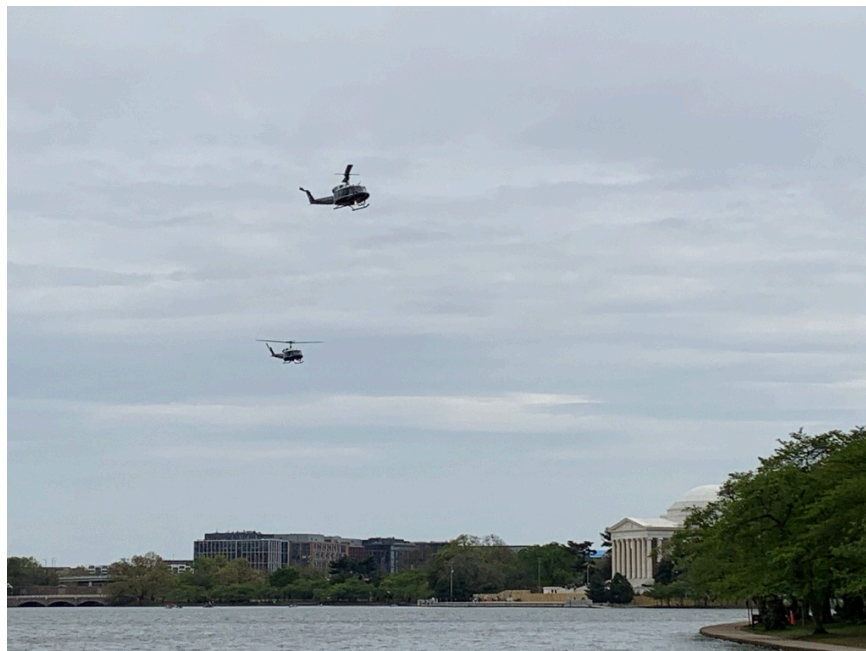




The grounds throughout the Capitol are so beautiful and peaceful.



Although every so often the peace was shattered by a motorcade or helicopters, transporting, we can only assume, very important dignitaries.

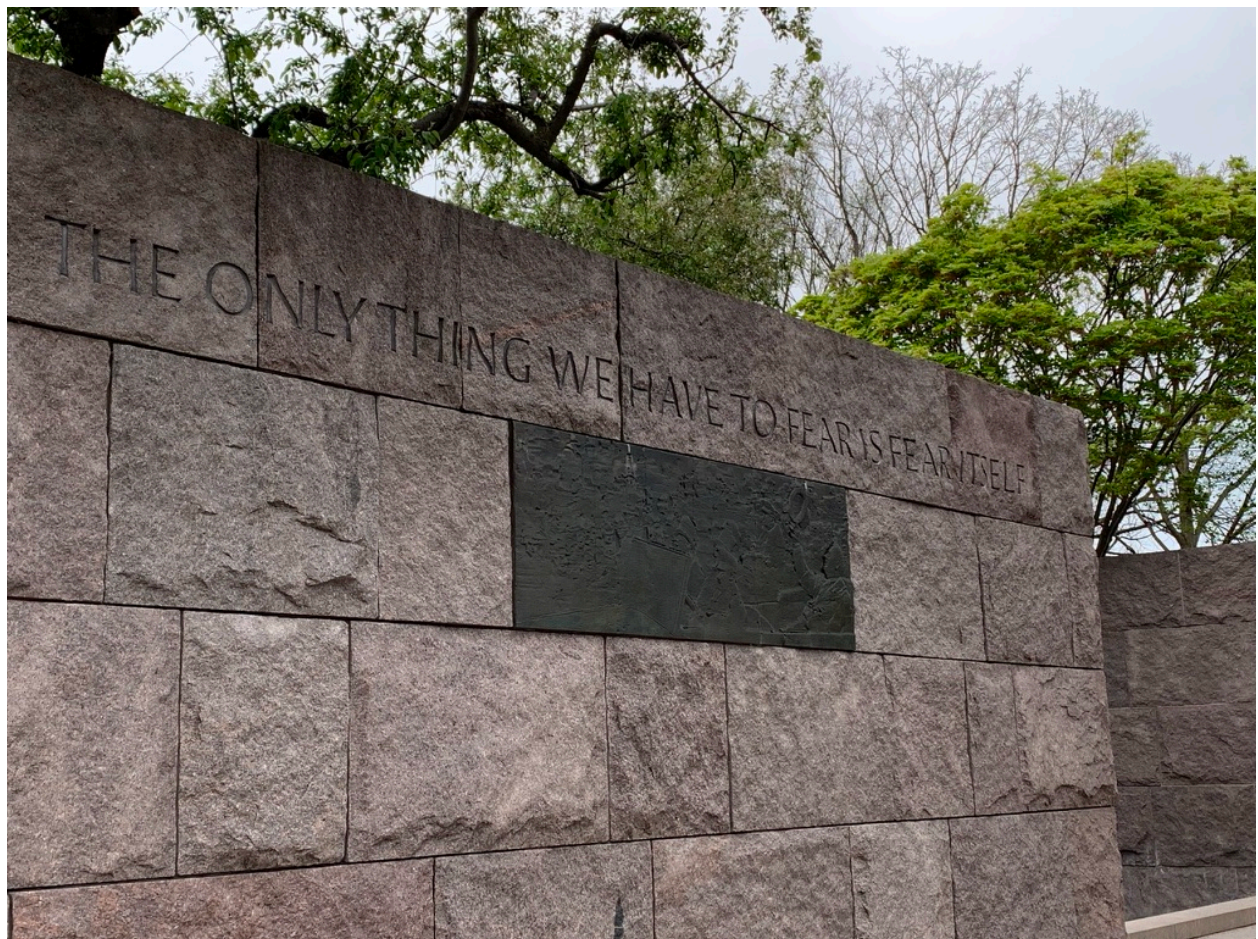
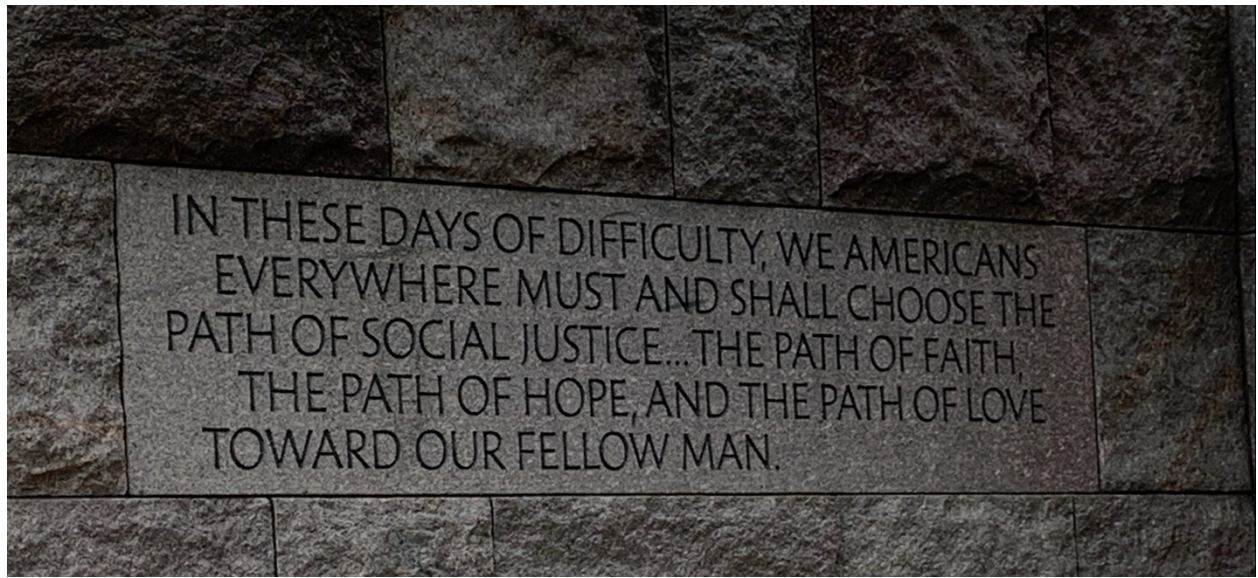


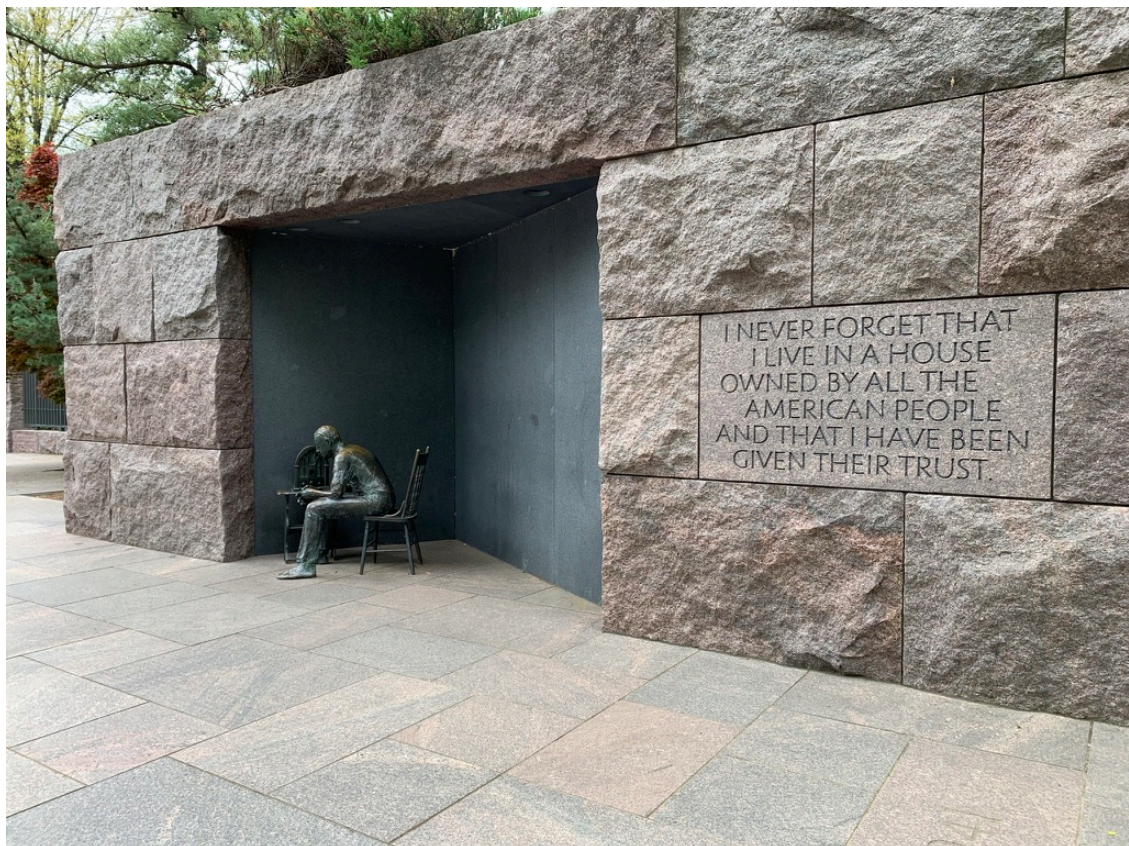
One of my favourite memorials is the one that commemorates the 12 years of Roosevelt's presidency.

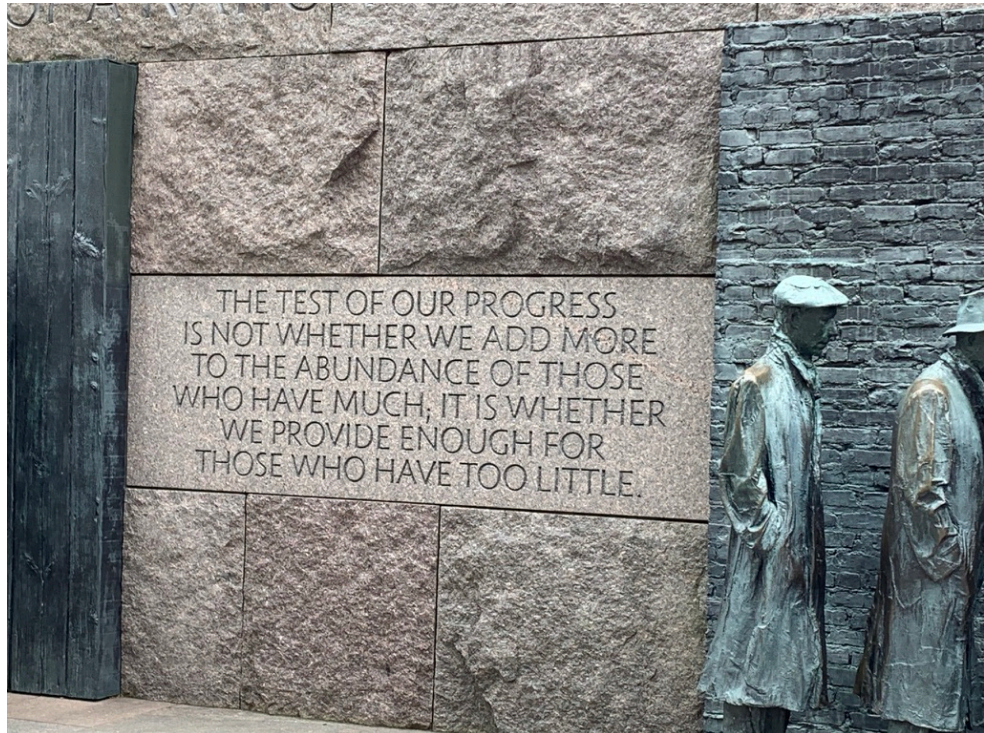


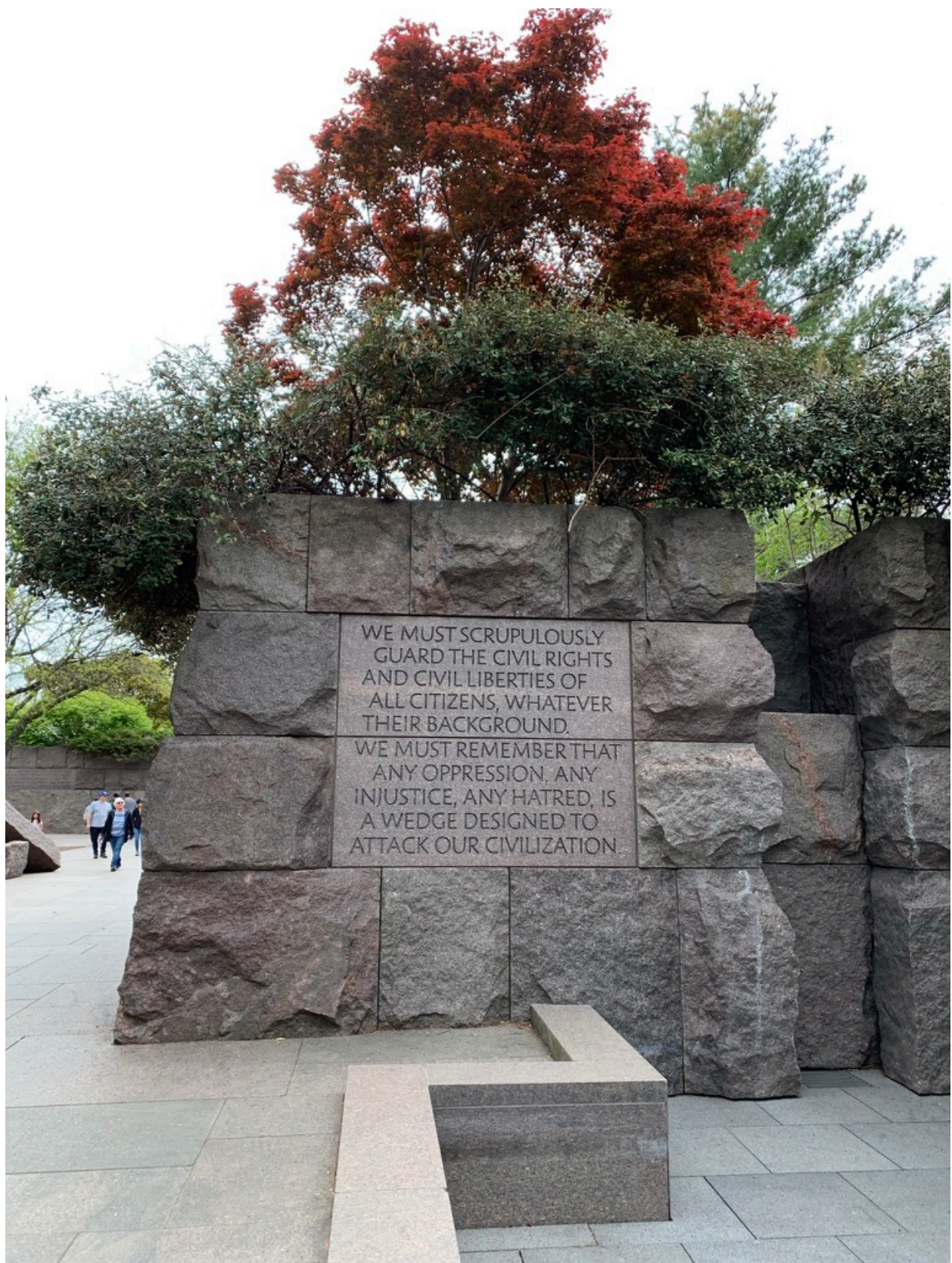
I freely admit my bias comes from my parents, my father especially, who revered both Franklin and Eleanor above just about any Americans. But the memorial itself is so well laid out and conveys so much about FDR and his beliefs in a beautiful setting surrounded by lush greenery. It's astonishingly tranquil, despite the fact that it covers such turbulent times in America's history.











It's impossible to read these quotes from FDR and not compare them to what's happening in the US today.



Me, standing next to greatness.



But in my opinion, the most magnificent of the monuments is the Lincoln Memorial. It's impossible not to be moved by the power of the statue and of his words. It's uplifting and devastating at the same time.



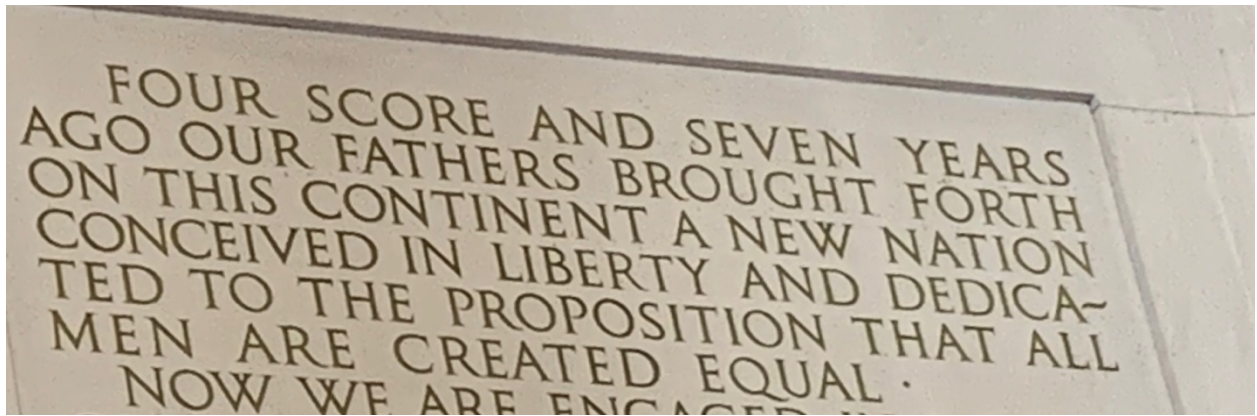
IN THIS TEMPLE
AS IN THE HEARTS OF THE PEOPLE
FOR WHOM HE SAVED THE UNION
THE MEMORY OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN
IS ENSHRINED FOREVER



The view that faces you as you step out of the Lincoln Memorial is overwhelming, even without the reflection in the pool which was empty that day. The sight fills you with memories of seeing this vast space crammed with people gathering to protect, celebrate or gain their rights.



The whole Capitol is designed to inspire pride in the country's history, and hope for its future. You can't help but wonder how the founders and shapers would feel about the state their country is in today.



After walking around the Capitol area for a while, we got back into Charles and headed toward Baltimore, where there were relatives – and memories – to visit.

Along the way, we passed some significant landmarks, representative of some highs and lows in America's history.

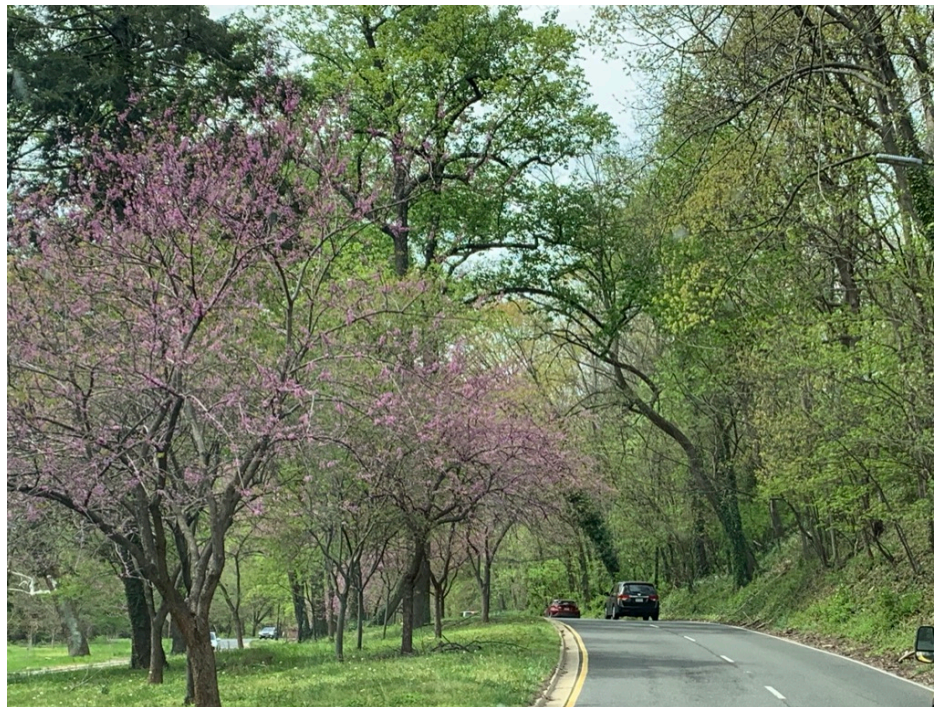
The Kennedy Center...



And the Watergate...



We were struck by the park-like feel of much of the area surrounding D.C.



And the uncomfortably low heights of some of the bridges...



The light going through this tunnel was dazzling.



And it took us to lovely neighbourhoods, made that much more glorious by the spring blossoms.









Our eventful day ended at another historical landmark, The Double T Diner in Baltimore, which my uncle and aunt owned for about 30 years. Anyone who lives in the Baltimore area knows the Double T.



It was great to go back there and dine with my cousin Barbara, (whose parents owned the original diner) her husband Lucky, Danny who looks after them so well, and cousin Nick who is invaluable to the family.

