



October 2018

The Goodnews Letter

St. Paul United Methodist Church

600 Main Street, South
Phone: 652 2547

New Ellenton, SC 29809
Fax: 652 2570

Parsonage P# 443-6401 Pastor's Cell P# 803-603-8138
65th Anniversary Issue Pastor Robert Reeves

From the Pastor's Desk

"Where is God during the hurricane?"

This is the question a five-year-old asked his father as hurricane Florence approached the North Carolina coast a few weeks ago. It is the same question asked by millions of people about untimely deaths, disasters, unexplainable chaotic events and other tragedies we've all heard of.

While anyone can ask these questions, it would be normal to ask them when someone has not worked through their presuppositions about the character of GOD or when something terrible happens to you or someone you know and/or love. The LORD certainly isn't offended by such questions. That said, He knows that the answers we seek to every question we may ask about the mysteries of life will not be the ultimate answer we need.

The most profound answers in life always include directing people back to being in relationship with GOD rather than just having GOD answer everything we want or demand to know.

When I was in college, and to this day, it seems many persons fall all over themselves with "faith crashing" when the following conversation is brought to their attention. It goes something like this:

If God is as good and as powerful as the Bible says He is, then why would He allow a hurricane like Florence to devastate the Carolina coast, allow people to die and make thousands of other people homeless?

- Where is God during the hurricane?
- Where is GOD during the DUI when someone dies in an automobile accident?
- Where is GOD when a very nice person earning a living to support their very nice family suddenly loses their job and then everything crashes for that family?

There are 1000 plus examples of the same question.

This is what we are really asking...

"If GOD is so in control and so powerful and so good then why do unexplainable bad things happen to really good people?" I trust you realize how loaded with presumptions such a question is. Sometimes the question is asked with a little more objectivity and fairness toward GOD on our part. We ask the same question but include bad events that happen to anybody including even bad people.

The short answers generally don't satisfy the inquirer. The truth is they may not know they are looking for something deeper than a concise answer or a longer one from the field of Philosophy, Theology and Law.

While any type of disaster can bring tragedy, they also can bring out the best in humanity. I will not spend the majority of this article giving answers to any skeptic who really doesn't want honest reflection about this profound issue.

It is profound.

It is legitimate to wonder.

It is real to have pain, fear, anger and emptiness in our hearts.

But JESUS CHRIST can fill all those issues not so much with His answers first but with HIS presence first. Then in the process of time HE will bring wisdom to our situation through His Word and through the wise counsel of His children whom have followed after Him for years.

With all that said, here are a few brief notes to consider and pray over.

The first is that God does not delight in disaster. When God created the world, He ordered it in such a way that human beings could flourish. The Bible's creation account repeatedly refers to the world as "good" and "very good." And at the time of creation, human beings had a perfect relationship with God, with each other, and with the world around them.

(Continued on Page 2)

Continued from page 1

It was not God who broke this perfect paradise, but humans.

Through the sin of Adam and Eve—a sin in which we all share—evil unthinkable was unleashed upon our world.

Even the natural world was poisoned by this first rebellion, transforming the world from peace into danger.

As Jesus demonstrated when He lived among us, the wind and waves still obey His voice. The disciples of Jesus were not warmed and comforted by this fact. They saw in Jesus a power more astounding than a hurricane, and it led them to a more profound fear (*cf. Mark 4:41*). Did you really read that?

Jesus calmed the storm and the disciples further panicked in response to the power of GOD to control weather patterns. They could not see that the storm in them was as big as the storm around them!

So where was GOD in the Hurricane a few weeks ago? While many will be critical of the meteorologists, believing they missed the forecast, one place GOD was, was in answering the prayers of millions who prayed this storm would subside and subside it did! While skeptics will not listen, I know part of what happened and where the LORD was, He was answering a million plus prayers.

In light of the many acts of love and courage that were worked by emergency personnel and volunteers during hurricane Florence, this could be a catalyst to bring some healing to our deeply divided nation. In the midst of the gale-force winds and surging water, Americans of every political stripe worked together to rescue the endangered. As a country, we are never greater than when we respond to disaster with unity. And we can only hope that, once the temporary disaster ceases, we can find a way to reach across the aisle to bring some healing to our social, cultural, and political wounds.

In the end, the most powerful answer to, “Where is God in the midst of terrible events?”

- He is right here with us.
- God entered the suffering of our world on a mission to end it.
- Not only is He familiar with tragedy and loss, but He willingly laid down His life to put evil to death forever.
- Jesus’ death on the cross proves the lengths He will go to identify with us in our suffering.
- And His resurrection provides a down payment on His promise to return one day to put an end to suffering once-and-for all.
- In the meantime, before He returns, these evils offer us an opportunity to respond to the needs of our world with courage, faith, and love.

And that is an answer that anyone should be able to understand.

- Pastor Robert

Flower Schedule

- 7. Communion
- 14. Virginia Richburg
- 21. Rick & Jimsie Crosby
- 28.

Church Nursery

- 7. Eirene Ferguson & Shelly James
- 14. Toby James & Ann Summer
- 21. Melinda Brinkley & Toby James
- 28. Minnie G. & Kathy Moore

Acolytes

- 7. J. B. Morrow
- 14. Zoey Hall
- 21. Justin Perry
- 28. Michael Ramos

Visitation

- 7. Pastor Robert
- 14. Sandy Webb
- 21. Minnie G.
- 28. Lynn Alexander

Ushers

- 7. 14.
- 21. 28.

Lay Assistant

- 7. Mason Morrow
- 14. Randy Stowe
- 21.
- 28.

Offering Accountants

Minnie G. & Toby James

SS Assembly Refreshment

- 7. Best Joy Circle
- 14. SS Assembly Group
- 21. SS Assembly Group
- 28. SS Assembly Group

Communion Preparation

- 7. Darlene Paradise



October 2018



ST. PAUL UMC
600 Main St. South
New Ellenton, SC 29809

P# 803-652-2547
www.umcne.org

Rev. Robert Reeves pastorrobert@umcne.org
Doreen Arns / Betty Fischer office@umcne.org

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7 Sunday Assembly 9 FH Sunday School 9:30 Sunday Worship 10:30 Ad. Council 3 FH Charge Conf. 3:30 FH Friendship Circle 4:30 FH	8	9	10 M & M Choir-5:30 Best Joy Cir. 10 FH M & M Choir-5:30	11 Good News Club 2	12 Good News Club 2	13 Eric Brinkley (B)
14 Sunday Assembly 9 FH Sunday School 9:30 Sunday Worship 10:30 Nurture/Outreach 3 FH Bible Study 5 FH	15 Lyle Usry (B)	16 Lauren Akins (B)	17 Jimmy Brinkley (B) Shelly James (B)	18 Good News Club 2	19 Good News Club 2	20
21 Sunday Assembly 9 FH Sunday School 9:30 Sunday Worship 10:30 Bible Study 5 FH	22	23	24 Lanzier Goodman (B)	25 Good News Club 2	26 Good News Club 2	27
28 Sunday Assembly 9 FH Sunday School 9:30 Sunday Worship 10:30 Ad. Council Mtg 3 BCR UMW 4 FH Bible Study 5 FH Slate Summer (B)	29	30	31 			(A) = Anniversary (B) = Birthday