

Presby News

OCTOBER 2018



FROM THE PASTOR . . .

Suffering Through Storms

By Jon Cash

Remember when the disciples were on the Sea of Galilee and a storm struck? (Read Matthew 14.) The wind and waves began in the evening and continued all night long.

Meanwhile, Jesus was on a mountaintop praying, far away from the impending disaster. I'm convinced the disciples were praying for the storm to stop, or at least to be able to make it to the other side of the Sea and find safety on dry land. Jesus didn't answer those prayers. Instead, He met them out on the Sea, walking on the water. Why?

This age-old question has kept millions at an arms-length away from their Creator. Why does human suffering occur and why does God not stop it? When we are going through trials and tribulations, we can hang our hats on this truth: God has a divine purpose in the pain. Our job is to trust Him through it and wait to see the spiritual fruit that accompanies it in the future.

"Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves receive from God. For just as we share abundantly in the sufferings of Christ, so also our comfort abounds through Christ." (2 Corinthians 1:3-5)

God has not promised us an easy life. Far from it! He has promised His children that he will be with us through those trials. Jesus meets us in the middle of the storm to build our faith and to teach us to worship Him in truth and spirit.

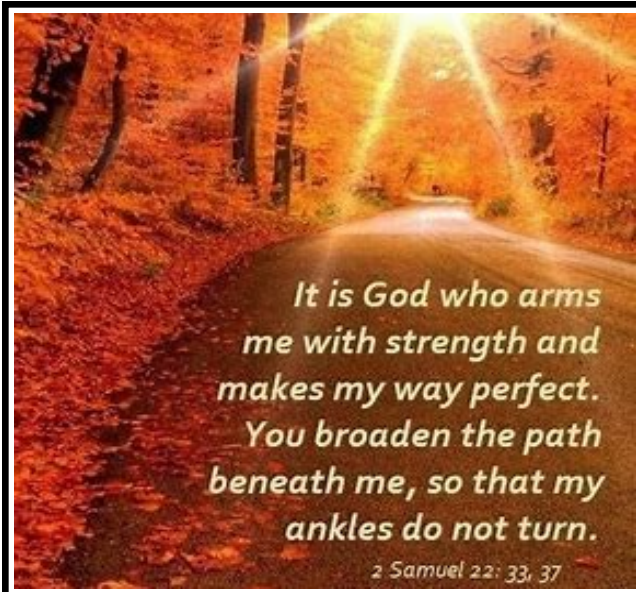
Suffering produces a reliance on God in the heart of the faithful. Suffering pushes others further from the Lord when their souls are unfaithful and bitter. In essence, tough times separate the wheat from the chaff. As we grow spiritually, God begins to show us His power and comfort as we go through the curve balls in life.

The comfort we receive from Him can be used to bring people into the Kingdom of God. When non-believers experience trouble, it's the perfect opportunity for the believer to comfort them, love them, and understand them. When we show others God's love through our lives, they will be prodded to consider Jesus as their own Lord and Savior.

We live on a fallen planet where sin and suffering is the natural order of things. Suffering will continue until sin disappears; and that will not happen until the Second Coming of our Lord.

Notice some key words in verse 5: **abundantly** and **abounds**. The word abounds comes from the Latin word abundāre, meaning to overflow. Imagine a river after a rainstorm. The water overflows its banks because it cannot be contained. There's too much water! In the same way, God provides a mechanism through the power of the Holy Spirit to bring an overflowing amount of comfort when times turn difficult.

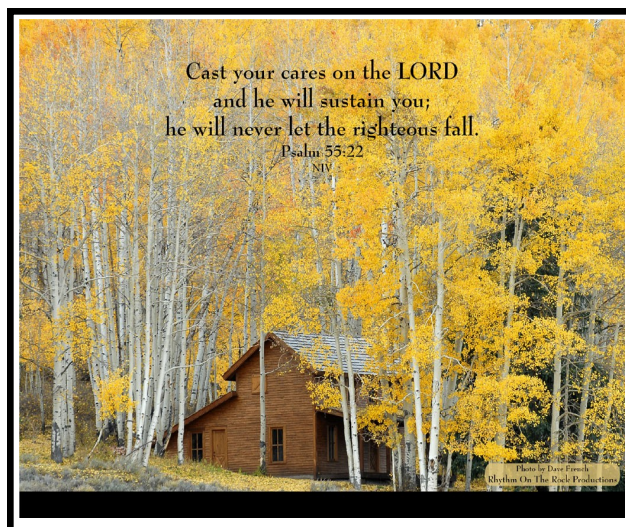
That comfort is available in very large quantities when we humble ourselves before the Lord. This builds our faith and helps us shine a brighter light into a darkened world. One of the greatest evangelism tools we have is our testimony. Every powerful testimony contains copious examples of God's grace and comfort when the wind threatens to tear us down. Seek God's comfort today. You will not only be helping yourself, but you will also be providing a wonderful weapon for your Lord to use to see others come into His glorious kingdom.



SPECIAL DATES

- Oct. 7** Brookdale Worship at 9:00 am
Communion Served
- Oct. 15** Session Meeting, 6:00 pm
- Oct. 16** Healthworx Meals are Cancelled
Through the End of the Year

Dr. Heath in office on Wednesdays 10 am to 2 pm



GOD'S SEASONS

By Cathy Irvin

Winter, spring, summer, and fall are God's seasons. I have always been a big fan of summer and spring and not too fond of fall and winter. But lately I have changed. I think it is something about those leaves of red, orange, yellow, and burgundy that fall from the trees. I feel as if I have noticed them for the very first time.

I like taking a ride and watching people setting out pumpkins in the yard with hay bales and planting mums in the yard. I am looking forward to getting some lavender and yellow mums myself for my yard and a few pumpkins.

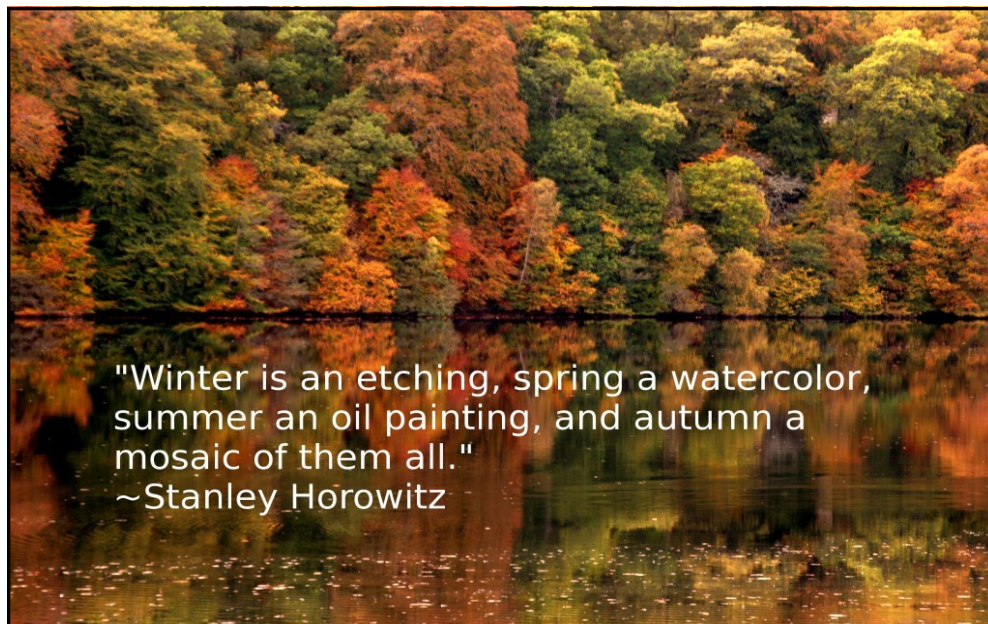
The other day, one of my friends and I went to visit a friend who has been ill, and in her neighborhood, we noticed many yards decorated for fall. I don't remember seeing this too much in the past. Have I missed this season all these years, or is it just that as I get older I appreciate God's world just a little more?

The latter is what I concluded. The Bible says, "This is day that the Lord hath made, and I will rejoice in it." Each day He has given me beauty to enjoy, so I think I should sit back and take in this glorious creation.

God is the best artist in the world, for only He can create such different themes. We see many artists that try to capture the seasons on their canvases by painting what they see around them, and they do a wonderful job. However, neither picture nor paint could ever replace the real thing splashed across the sky and spilled over the earth like the Master's display of His finest artwork. God's creativity is unmatched, for every day is different, just like every snowflake in winter.

When people say there is no God, I know they do not see with eyes like mine. They must see a plain, white canvas or a black drop cloth and not the blue skies that fade into light pink in the evening. Nor do they see the flowers that no paint on any artist's palate could attempt to match or the trees that were each given a certain color leaf to change into when autumn arrives. 'No God,' they say. It is just that they do not know the Master of the seasons, the One who has created such magnificent displays of perfect art.

Instead of always looking forward to the summer and springtime, I have decided to enjoy the Master's autumn masterpiece for the rest of my life.



October Responders Schedule

	Usher Narthex	Monitor	Communion Servers
October 7	Robert Kennedy	Dirk Benade	Elder Liturgist: Jim Hockensmith Communion Team: Annelize & Dirk Benade
October 14	Annelize & Dirk Benade	Jim Hockensmith	
October 21	Robert Kennedy Elizebette Kennedy	Bill Higgins (May-Oct) Vacancy	
October 28	Jim Hockensmith Robert Kennedy	Jim Smolenski	



October 3 Jace Huffman
October 9 Debbie Ware
October 29 Jim Smolenski



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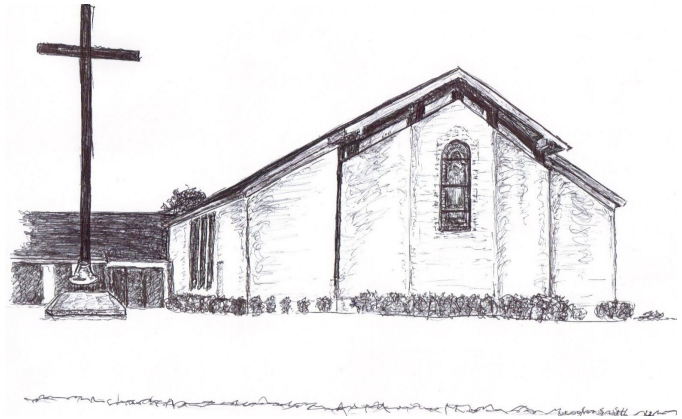
Jim Heath, *Stated Supply Pastor*

Aaron Rogers, *Choir Director*

Vacancy, *Pianist*

Carolyn Sterne, *Secretary*

Charles Bell, *Sexton*



WEDNESDAY NIGHT SCHEDULE

3:00 pm Prayer Service

First Presbyterian Church

357 Windermere Blvd.

Alexandria, LA 71303

Come experience God's love at First Presbyterian Church

Sunday School—9:45 a.m., Worship—11:00 a.m.