

**“RESPONDING TO MASS MURDER”  
(Psalm 46:1- 11)**

**THOUGHTS FROM PRESIDENT SCOTT RIDOUT**

**Read Psalm 46.**

**I. This HURTS.**

**Every person matters to God, so they matter to US. We hurt for the victims and families. We hurt for our NATION. We hurt for our CHILDREN who wonder what kind of world they are growing up in.**

**We must acknowledge our hurts and CHOOSE to ask God to be our comforter as Paul described him to be:**

*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 our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves have received from God. For just as the sufferings of Christ flow over into our lives, so also through Christ our comfort overflows. 2Corinthians 1:3-5*

**II. The WORLD is falling apart!**

**All of this came on the heels of three gigantic hurricanes sweeping through the South, Southeast and Caribbean.**

**Unfortunately, many started pointing fingers instead of quickly finding solutions. Our news days have been filled with controversies over tweets, nukes, earthquakes, protests and so on – and we're on edge.**

**Scripture reminds us this has been happening since the FALL in the Garden of Eden. Knowing this allows us to stop trying to place blame and instead offer HOPE. Jesus said:**

*“I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.”*

*John 16:33*

**III. We are not a people of fear, but a people of FAITH.**

**In the midst of chaos, questions and uncertainty, we find CLARITY in the Word of God. God is bigger than ANY challenge we will ever face. Our faith WILL be tested, because a faith that is never tested is a faith that cannot be trusted. We CHOOSE to trust.**

*God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble. Psalm 46:1*

**IV. The ONLY hope for this world is the gospel of Jesus Christ.**

**Our world has MANY needs – freedom from tyranny, food for the hungry, justice for the oppressed, answers for cancer and other diseases. But, what our world needs even more than better responses to the crises of life is a SAVIOR!**

**The Gospel is the only power that can transform people, communities and countries. True change requires a heart transformation, which only GOD can do:**

*The troubles of my heart have multiplied; free me from my anguish.*

*Psalm 25:17*

*Create in me a pure heart, O God ...*

*Psalm 51:10*

**The church is UNIQUELY positioned to respond to crisis with compassion, generosity and hope. It is time, more than ever, for the church to be the church. We must PRAY for those who've suffered so grievously. We must ENCOURAGE the disheartened and help the weak. We must carry the MESSAGE of hope, life and peace.**

**Everywhere the church exists should be in a state of transformation, because of OUR presence and actions, because of OUR unabashed trust and faith in God.**

**The writer of Psalm 46 chose to focus on the CHARACTER of God, not the chaos of the circumstances.**

**His God – our God – is ever present, all powerful and GOOD. Our world needs to SEE and HEAR that faith in us.**

*The Lord Almighty is with us; the God of Jacob is our fortress.*

*Psalm 46:11*