

This Pastor Might Have Died in the Emanuel AME Shooting—But God

It seemed like a normal conversation between a husband and wife. The Rev. Anthony Thompson's wife, Myra, was leading her first Bible study at Emanuel AME Church in Charleston, South Carolina, and he planned to attend.

"We're more than just the Bobbsey twins," Anthony, pastor of a neighboring church, Holy Trinity Reformed Episcopal, tells Dr. Steve Greene on a popular episode of *Greenelines* on the Charisma Podcast Network. "Where you see me, you see her. And we're doing the same things, trying to encourage [each other] in whatever we're doing."

For some reason, though, as the couple discussed their day, Myra told her husband, "I don't want you to come," Anthony says. "And we went back and forth like maybe 10 minutes with this, 'I'm coming,' and she says, 'I don't want you to be there.'"

"And a wife knows what button to push for a husband to act the way she wants him to act," Anthony adds. "She said to me, 'Well, you're having your first night of Vacation Bible School for the young people. You need to be there.' ... She convinced me to go. But I still had intentions of leaving there and going to her Bible study," he says. But his parishioners needed his help that night, he says, and so as his wife had requested, he stayed.

On that night, June 17, 2015, Myra's encouragement to her husband proved to be a lifesaving prophetic word. White supremacist Dylann Roof, 21, entered Emmanuel AME, attended her Bible study and ultimately took nine precious lives, including Myra's.

Anthony made it to the church that night, but only after he received a call informing him of the tragedy. Soon after he arrived, a friend informed him that his wife had not survived.

That began a spiritual journey of grief and forgiveness that he details in his book, *Called to Forgive*, including his public offer of forgiveness to Roof during his bond hearing.

To hear more of Anthony's compelling story, listen to the entire episode of *Greenelines* here, and be sure to subscribe to *Greenelines* on your favorite platform for more inspirational, informative content. {eoa}