Greetings to you in the name of Christ!

This week, as the projections for where Hurricane Irma will go came out, Taylor Claire (a friend from seminary who is serving at Rosinton UMC in Robertsdale) asked me, as her hurricane savvy, Floridian friend, what her plan should be if the hurricane came this way. She wanted to know what her evacuation plan should be, and what groceries she should get, and how she should prepare her house. In truth, she thought of more details about preparing for the possibility of the hurricane than I ever would have. Perhaps the lesson for me here is that I’ve gotten a little too cavalier about the possibility of hurricanes or rely too heavily on projected paths. Either way, as we sat and went through the maps and as I tried to assuage her worries, a thought occurred to me: what preparations do we make for our lives as Christians?

As Christians, we are called to be ready at all times to serve others. So how do we prepare ahead of time for this responsibility? The most important preparation we can make is to cultivate a heart of compassion and a willingness to serve. Before we do the first thing for anyone, we must first be willing to see everyone we encounter as God sees them: beloved children created in His image. True Christian service comes from an authentic desire to serve, not a feeling of obligation. As we go throughout our lives, we can prepare ourselves to serve as Christ does in small ways. When we are angry at the car that cut us off, we can remind ourselves that the person driving is created in God’s image. When we encounter a coworker who tends to drive us nuts, we can remember that God loves that person as deeply as He loves us. Small things like this help us to remember that each person is valuable, loved, and carries God’s image. When we begin to see all people that way, service comes easily and naturally.

May we go throughout our week seeing God’s love and image in every person we meet!