



## Trail Guide – August 16, 2020:

### Ordinary Time

#### “Storms”

The Hallwood-Sanford-Saxis U.M. Charge parsonage was on relatively high ground in the small hamlet of Sanford, VA. Even so, the Accomac County sheriff's department drove through urging everyone to evacuate north into Maryland, and higher ground. Hurricane Gloria, the strongest storm of the hurricane season, was on the way. We had only lived on the Eastern Shore for three months. Fortunately, Debbie had gotten to know some other moms through the wife of the new young doctor at the local health clinic who had a daughter the same age as ours. They invited us to come to their home in Pocomoke City to ride out the storm. We vividly remember the noise of the wind that night in the pine trees surrounding their home, expecting trees and branches to come crashing down. Fortunately, none did; although their yard was littered the next day with smaller tree branches and pine cones. We were also fortunate when we later returned home to find that the only damage to the parsonage was the toppling over of the concrete block chimney to the furnace – which landed less than three feet from our 2<sup>nd</sup> car that we left behind.

In contrast, the storms of life often come with little warning. Like a summer squall on the lake, or sudden storm at sea. When caught in a storm, we immediately seek a way out, or shelter to see us through. Many times we must weather the storm. God promises that we never have to go it alone. This week let's reflect on some of the ways God makes a way for us *through* the storm. Whatever you are facing, you do not have to go it alone. Trust Christ to be with you; know that you have a community of faith to walk with you, even in this pandemic.

Mon, 08/17 – [Job 23:10](#) – Why does God allow storms in our lives anyway? Good question. Job eventually realized that he could not know the mind of God. However, he could trust in the goodness of God. When have you been “tested”? What tests are you going through now? At the risk of sounding trite, the truth is that God can transform whatever test we go through into a testimony of God's faithfulness, God's love, God's guidance, etc.

Tues, 08/18 – [John 16:33](#) – Bad news from the lips of Jesus: “in this world you will have trouble”. Really? I thought that with God on our side, life would be smooth sailing. Not so. At least not always.

Wed, 08/19 – [Romans 8:28](#) – Every follower of Christ needs this verse impressed upon their heart, soul, and mind. Every. In addition, every follower of Christ would do well to meditate on the depth and breadth of this assurance. God can transform anything and everything that happens to you and bring good. Everything.

Thur, 08/20 – [James 1:2-3](#) – I have never liked this verse. I'd rather grumble. I'd rather blame or complain. So, why and how am I – are we – to respond to trials and tests with joy? What might this look like for you, today?

Fri, 08/21 – [2 Corinthians 1:4-5](#) – Well, this does not explain or offset the troubles and trials we face, but it can give them meaning. What sort of mindset/heartset do we need for this verse to be real in us? What must we give up/let go?

Sat, 08/22 – [2 Corinthians 12:9-10](#) – Paul learned a difficult and painful lesson. The answer to his prayer was not what he wanted. How disappointing that must have been. Yet in the midst of his disappointment, God spoke a word of encouragement and strength and hope: “my grace is sufficient.” God always gives us what we need; not always what we want. How will you rely on the grace of God today?

Please share the stories of how God has made a way for you – or the way(s) in which you are praying for God to make a way through – create a “breakthrough” – for the obstacles you are facing now. [jim@leesburgumc.org](mailto:jim@leesburgumc.org). Looking forward to next Sunday!