

THE VOICE OF A STRANGER
John 10:1-21

I once knew someone who was a leader in the congregation. At one time or another he had filled most (if not all) of the important leadership positions in that church. More than that, however, oftentimes he was the one who would volunteer for those tough, dirty jobs that no one else wanted: washing dishes after a potluck supper, helping to teach the confirmation class, stacking shelves at the food bank.

This is the kind of person you would like to clone and with whom you'd like to fill the congregation, right? Wrong! This person was a delight to have around until things didn't go his way, and then he was a nightmare: disruptive, divisive, even destructive. He didn't understand the meaning of community and was not a team player. And when (not for the first time) he and his wife climbed into their huff-mobile and drove away after some disagreement, the congregation finally had the good sense not to beg them to come back. Finally, that congregation had learned to distinguish between the voice of a shepherd and the voice of a stranger.

Who are we listening to? Are we seeking God's will for our lives and the life of our church? Or do we listen to the strangers' voices that leads us astray?

God bless,
Pastor Barbara