

REFLECTIONS ON: A VISION STATEMENT FOR ST. PHILIP ANGLICAN CHURCH

3. We are committed to encouraging all people to listen deeply to God's voice speaking in their hearts and to thinking seriously about the implications of what it means to be followers of Jesus and to live faithfully in daily life and ministry.

Jesus said, "The gatekeeper opens the gate for the shepherd, and the sheep hear his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out...they will listen to my voice." (John 10:3,16)

There are many voices in our lives. We all choose which of these voices we will listen to. The voices of the world lead to fear, insecurity, doubt, anxiety, judgement, competition, comparison, and violence. The voice of the Shepherd leads to peace, strength, security, and trust.

We know the sound of the Shepherd's voice. He calls us "by name." It is a personal call. We are each responsible for listening to the Shepherd's voice. As we listen to the Shepherd's voice within, we will encourage those around us to listen to the voice of the Shepherd within their own hearts.

We need to find ways to allow the voices that compete with the Shepherd's voice to fall quiet. The Shepherd will not shout.

According to the writer of I Kings, God's voice is like "a sound of sheer silence." (I Kings 19:12) If we are to hear this voice we must find space in our lives for silence. According to the Psalmist, it is in silence that we can hope to discover the presence of God – "For God alone my soul waits in silence." (Psalm 62:1)

What are the voices in my life that compete with the voice of the Shepherd?

How much space in my life is there to encounter God in the silence?