



## **Good Intentions**

March 4, 2020

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It started innocently enough, and I had good intentions. As I was turning the corner in my neighborhood the other morning, I saw someone pull out of her driveway and onto the side road. As I followed the same route, I noticed she'd left her garage door open. No other cars were inside, and I suspected she was the last one to leave the house. Before I could alert her, she turned onto the major road and was headed away. Immediately, I was on a mission!

I followed closely behind until she approached a stop sign. Before she could even come to a full stop, I gave a friendly toot of my car horn. You know the one. Beep-beep! Not a long blare, just a double tap, to say "helloooo there." I motioned for her to stop.

Instead she zoomed away from the stop sign, and I chased. Beep-beep, I honked, motioning wildly for her to pull over. Beep-beep! Repeat motion with arm waves. She just sped up, and together we zoomed down the road. Finally she was forced to stop at a red light, and I pulled alongside, motioning for her to roll down her window. "I think you left your garage door open," I explained.

"Were you the one following me?" she wanted to know. "I heard you honking and thought I was going too slowly. I'm a terrible driver; I'm from New York." She thanked me. In the meanwhile, the car behind me started honking because the light had turned green. It wasn't a friendly beep-beep.

I felt for the driver, who must have been thoroughly annoyed or confused by my persistence, but I had good intentions. I was look out for her safety and well-being. Although I didn't know her, I cared for her. The red light gave us a moment to speak together and explain what might have seemed like erratic behavior.

I'm used to this experience, though this is the first time it's played out on the city streets. Normally this is the reaction I receive as your Presbytery Executive when I show up at worship or a session or committee meeting. I arrive with the best of intentions, offering a friendly beep-beep to signal I have information to share that you might need. Some of you zoom away, checking in the rearview mirror to see if you've managed to get away. Nooo! I am persistent: beep-beep, arms waving. "Who is she, and why doesn't she leave us alone?" is a frequent reaction. In those cases, I pray for the red light that will give us a pause long enough to talk. Typically, we then go our separate ways better understanding each other and how much the Presbytery does care for you and want the best for you...even if it means chasing you down the street.

The next time I see the neighbor, I hope a friendly toot of my horn will draw her wave and smile.