

What Did Scooby Do?

Meet Scooby, a 6-year-old dog who belongs to the Farris family in Corbin, Ky. Since Scooby's story appeared in several newspapers and on many of the national television networks, Scooby is now the most famous dog in the Commonwealth.

When a recent thunderstorm rolled through the foothills of the Appalachians, Scooby apparently broke loose from his owners and ran away. As he ran across a street, he was struck by a vehicle, injuring his leg and tail.

Once the storm subsided, rather than lingering by the roadside or finding his way back to his own yard, Scooby, showing remarkable canine sensibility, traveled several blocks finding his way to a local veterinary clinic.

When the staff at the Corbin Animal Clinic arrived the next morning, the recently injured Scooby was waiting on the doorstep. According to the staff, Scooby followed them inside and walked straight to the operating room, awaiting treatment.

Shortly afterwards, when Scooby's owners called the clinic to notify the staff that Scooby was missing, the owners were relieved and amazed to learn that Scooby has taken himself to the vet. Some may speculate that Scooby's adventure was mere luck or coincidence. Local veterinarian, Dr. Majors said, "He knew us. We had treated him before." Scooby's owner, Shirley Farris said, "He obviously knew that this was the place to get help."

Scooby's story triggered my pastoral imagination. If a hurting dog knows to take himself to the veterinarian for treatment, where does a hurting person know to go? Of course if a person is hurting physically, he or she goes to visit a physician. But if a person is hurting emotionally or spiritually, where would he or she go?

When people are hurting, perhaps a "basic homing instinct" is activated and they go to a place they know that will be safe and supportive. Could the reputation of a local church become so characterized by hospitality, compassion and grace, that

both the hurting and the healthy will find their way through our doors?

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