

Bouquet Caboodle



Highland Lectionary Series

April 26, 2026

The Sheep Gate

Ezekiel 34:7-15; Psalm 100; 1 Peter 2:19-25;
John 10:1-10

Today's Big Idea

The metaphor of Jesus as the gate to the sheep sets Him up as a defender against bullying counterfeits.

Jesus as the Sheep Gate: John 10:1-10

Shepherd or Gate?

The metaphor in play

Gate as a filter, as a defense

Jesus filters out bandits by being Who He is

Naming the Bandits: those who come to kill, steal, and destroy: **John 10:10**

The Killing Bandit: Ezekiel 34:7-15

The Careless: forces/people that act in self-interest without regard for consequences: **Ezekiel 34:5-8**

The Consumer: forces/people that see you as something to benefit them: **Ezekiel 34:10**

The abuser, overly demanding job, the drunk driver, dishonest salesperson, insincere friend

Jesus the Self-Giver: the One Who gives Himself **to** you and **for** you

The Stealing Bandit: Psalm 100:1-2

The Joy Stealer: forces/people that feed on negativity, entitlement, and ingratitude

Eeyore, the perpetual victim, phones/media, Devil's lies

Jesus the Joyful: the One Who sees good in every moment and rejoices in each: **John 15:11**

The Destroying Bandit: 1 Peter 2:19-25

The Transgressor: forces/people that break the rules, take short cuts, see themselves exceptions

The speeder, the cheater, the embezzler, the swindler,

Jesus the Blameless: the One Who does everything according to the integrity of the real: **1 Peter 2:22**

Use the Gate!

To go in and find safety, to go out and find food: **John 10:9**

God's desire and plan is for us to know abundant life: **Ezekiel 34:13-14; John 10:10**

Fix your eyes on Jesus: detect counterfeit by comparing to the real: **Hebrews 12:1**

Choose the way of Jesus, which is the way of life: **Deuteronomy 30:19**

Set firm but loving boundaries with the bandits: **Matthew 7:6**

The Key Excerpts for This Week's Thematic Thread

Ezekiel 34:7-15	Psalm 100	1 Peter 2:19-25	John 10:1-10
<p>8 As I live, says the Lord God, because my sheep have become a prey and my sheep have become food for all the wild animals, since there was no shepherd, and because my shepherds have not searched for my sheep, but the shepherds have fed themselves and have not fed my sheep, 9 therefore, you shepherds, hear the word of the Lord: 10 Thus says the Lord God: I am against the shepherds, and I will hold them accountable for my sheep and put a stop to their feeding the sheep; no longer shall the shepherds feed themselves. I will rescue my sheep from their mouths, so that they may not be food for them. 11 For thus says the Lord God: 12 As shepherds sort out their flocks when they are among scattered sheep, so I will sort out my sheep. I will rescue them from all the places to which they have been scattered on a day of clouds and thick darkness. 13 I will bring them out from the peoples and gather them from the countries and bring them into their own land, and I will feed them on the mountains of Israel, by the watercourses,</p>	<p>1 Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth. 2 Serve the Lord with gladness; come into his presence with singing. 3 Know that the Lord is God. It is he who made us, and we are his; we are his people and the sheep of his pasture. 4 Enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise. Give thanks to him; bless his name. 5 For the Lord is good; his steadfast love endures forever and his faithfulness to all generations.</p>	<p>19 For it is a commendable thing if, being aware of God, a person endures pain while suffering unjustly. 20 If you endure when you are beaten for doing wrong, what credit is that? But if you endure when you do good and suffer for it, this is a commendable thing before God. 21 For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you should follow in his steps. 22 "He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in his mouth." 23 When he was abused, he did not return abuse; when he suffered, he did not threaten, but he entrusted himself to the one who judges justly. 24 He himself bore our sins in his body on the cross, so that, having died to sins, we might live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed. 25 For you were going astray like sheep, but now you have returned to the shepherd and guardian of your souls.</p>	<p>1 "Very truly, I tell you, anyone who does not enter the sheepfold by the gate but climbs in by another way is a thief and a bandit. 2 The one who enters by the gate is the shepherd of the sheep. 3 The gatekeeper opens the gate for him, and the sheep hear his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. 4 When he has brought out all his own, he goes ahead of them, and the sheep follow him because they know his voice. 5 They will not follow a stranger, but they will run from him because they do not know the voice of strangers." 6 Jesus used this figure of speech with them, but they did not understand what he was saying to them. 7 So again Jesus said to them, "Very truly, I tell you, I am the gate for the sheep. 8 All who came before me are thieves and bandits, but the sheep did not listen to them. 9 I am the gate. Whoever enters by me will be saved and will come in and go out and find pasture. 10 The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.</p>

Next Week's Readings: What thread do you discern?

May 3, 2026 - 5th Sunday of Eastertide: Proverbs 4:10-18; Psalm 119:9-32; 1 Peter 2:2-10; John 14:1-14