



## WEEK THREE: John 10:1-10

### Eastertide The Resurrection Life: A Brief Introduction

In the church calendar, Easter (or Eastertide) continues until Pentecost (seven weeks after Easter, May 24). It is a period in which Christians are encouraged to reflect on the joy, transformation, and celebration of the resurrection.

During this series we will be following the lectionary readings (The lectionary is a three-year cycle of readings with four readings assigned to each Sunday; one from the gospels, one from the epistles, one from the psalms, and, usually, one from another part of the Old Testament.). The preachers each week will choose one or more of the texts as the basis of the reflections on the resurrection life.

The lectionary readings for this series are in the table below. If you would like more information you can use the following link to learn more: <https://uniting.church/wp-content/uploads/2025/10/2025-6-YearA-UCA-Lectionary.pdf>

Date	First Reading	Psalm	Second Reading	Gospel
April 12	Acts 2:14a, 22-32	Psalm 16	1 Peter 1:3-9	John 20:19-31
April 19	Acts 2:14a, 36-41	Psalm 116:1-4, 12-19	1 Peter 1:17-23	Luke 24:13-35
April 26	Acts 2:42-47	Psalm 23	1 Peter 2:19-25	John 10:1-10
May 3	Acts 7:55-60	Psalm 31:1-5, 15-16	1 Peter 2:1-10	John 14:1-14
May 10	Acts 17:22-31	Psalm 66:8-20	1 Peter 3:13-22	John 14:15-21
May 17	Acts 1:6-14	Psalm 68:1-10, 32-35	1 Peter 4:12-14; 5:6-11	John 17:1-11
May 24	Acts 2:1-21 OR Numbers 11:24-30	Psalm 104:24-34, 35b	1 Corinthians 12:3b-13 OR Acts 2:1-21	John 20:19-23 OR 7:37-39

## Sermon Outline:

### A Brief Overview of This Week's Sermon

**Key Text(s):** John 10:1-10

In this fairly well-known passage Jesus continues to confront the Pharisees. (This is yet another example of how the headings – “The Good Shepherd and His Sheep” – can distract us from seeing the continuity of context.) The confrontation in John 9 concerned the Pharisees stubborn refusal to recognise Jesus as sent from God after he healed a man born blind. The majority of the narrative is concerned with the farcical inquest into how the man had been healed. It ends with the man who had been blind being thrown out of the synagogue for merely pointing out their flawed logic (they could not get around the fact that Jesus had healed on the Sabbath and was, therefore, a Sabbath-breaker). The account ‘ends’ with Jesus answering the Pharisees’ question about whether they are blind too?

“Jesus said, “If you were blind, you would not be guilty of sin; but now that you claim you can see, your guilt remains. Very truly I tell you Pharisees, anyone who does not enter the sheep pen by the gate, but climbs in by some other way, is a thief and a robber.” (John 9:41-10:1)

The imagery has changed, but the context remains the same. Jesus is speaking to the religious leaders of the day who had demonstrated their blindness to the work of God in their midst and who, in their blindness, were proving themselves to be poor shepherds.

In the biblical literature the metaphor of shepherds is a common one for leadership (see Num. 27:17; 2 Sam. 5:2; 7:7; 1 Kings 22:17; Psalm 78:71-72). In the prophetic literature there are a couple of striking denunciations of the leaders of God’s people that may have been behind Jesus’ accusations here. In Ezekiel 34:1-16, after condemning the shepherds of Israel for self-serving leadership, the Lord promises to be their shepherd. In Zechariah 11 – a complex oracle filled with symbolism that may or may not have reflected an enacted parable – the Lord describes a coming ‘unworthy shepherd’ who will no care for the flock and who will ultimately face judgment.

On the more positive side of the ledger we have Psalm 23 – another of the readings for this Sunday – where the psalmist speaks of the Lord’s care as that of a shepherd. This too may have been in Jesus’ mind as he continues his attack on the Pharisees’ leadership.

And the attack is not very subtle. Jesus accuses them of being thieves and robbers of God’s flock! Illegitimate leaders who do not have the good of the flock in mind, but their own interests. They are outsiders who will be rejected by the sheep who will not recognise their strange voice.

When the Pharisees – true to form – did not understand, Jesus makes his role more explicit, “Very truly, I tell you, I am the gate for the sheep. All who have come before me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep have not listened to them. I am the gate; whoever enters through me will be saved.” (John 10:7-9)

This, of course, shifts from leadership/shepherds to the people/flock. Their good is tied to the one who leads them to good pasture. The poor leaders – the thieves and robbers – will not lead them to safe pasture or to a safe pen at night. There is a lesson here for us as the sheep to be listening for the voice of Jesus, becoming more and more and more familiar with his voice so that any other voice seems harsh and strange.

However, the central theme is on the leaders. While we may not all have a formal leadership position among the people of God we all have circles of influence. These may include our family, our friends, our colleagues, those who report to us, those we serve, etc., and are places where we have a chance to influence others as “good shepherds”.

The resurrection life is exhibited in our leadership of those around us. Ultimately, this has to do with pointing people to Jesus – the best shepherd – but as we seek the good of those around us, laying down our own lives for them and seeking to protect them, we take up our own shepherd’s crook and follow Jesus’ example.

## Questions to Ask

1. In Gospel of John 9–10, Jesus confronts the Pharisees’ “blindness.” What does spiritual blindness look like today, especially among people who believe they “can see”?

2. Jesus calls the Pharisees “thieves and robbers” rather than true shepherds. What distinguishes a good leader from a harmful one in light of passages like Ezekiel 34?
3. Jesus says He is both the shepherd and “the gate.” What do you think it means practically to enter through Him and “be saved” (Gospel of John 10:7–9)?
4. The sheep recognize the shepherd’s voice. What are some ways we can become more familiar with Jesus’ voice in our daily lives? What competing “voices” make this difficult?
5. Even if we don’t hold formal leadership roles, we all influence others. Where has God placed you as a “shepherd” (family, work, friendships), and what might it look like to lead like Jesus in those spaces?
6. Psalm 23 presents God as a caring shepherd. How does this image challenge or reshape the way you think about leadership and care for others?

### A Prayer to Pray

Pray for those you over whom you have influence. Pray for their good and that, through your leadership, and that of other good shepherds, they might come to know the Good Shepherd.

### A Practice to Try

Select one of the things you identified in Question 5 above to intentionally practice this week

### Readings to Read This Week

Read the remaining texts from the lectionary and reflect on how they interact with each other on the themes of the resurrection life (see the Table above).

### A Mission Commitment to Reflect on

One of our values is to be Others-Focused. Being a good shepherd is one way we can practice this value.

### A GBC Initiative to Promote/Celebrate

Each week we will provide you with a key aspect of our community news that we would encourage you to remind your Life Group about.

This coming Sunday, May 3, we launch May Mission Month. This is an opportunity to financially support the work of God around the world. We encourage people to participate in this appeal - our target this year is a little over \$200,000 - and to give over and above other financial giving. Please encourage your group to begin to prayerfully consider how God may be inviting them to participate in His work around the world.