

During Lent, we are inviting our congregation to spend time in God's word. Once a week, we will guide this time with a devotional reading from Scripture and a reflection from someone within our church family. Begin by centering yourself in prayer; ask God to reveal something new and speak to you today. Next, spend time reading the Scripture passage for the day, noting what stands out to you and what word from the Lord might be coming through the text for *you*. Then, move to reading the reflection shared below. Below, you will see that we have also included a piece of visual art for you to consider as you reflect on the passage. I (Pastor Ashley) encourage you to actually get out your Bible and engage with the text on your own first, before reading the reflections shared below. Also, we would love to hear what God was saying to you through this passage! Comment on our [Facebook post](#) for today with what stood out to you from the Scripture passage.

Lenten Devotional: Week Five

Step One: *Prior to reading the Scripture passage, spend a moment centering yourself in prayer.*

Step Two: Our Scripture reading today is **John 10:1-21**. Read through the text (maybe even twice), noting what stands out to you and what word from the Lord might be coming through this text for *you* today.

Step Three: Now, enjoy this reflection from our wonderful Office Administrator, Kimberley Lackey:

Jesus as the Gatekeeper and Good Shepherd



"Dawn" by Hannah Garrity
A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org

In this Season of Lent as we continue to learn the Way of Jesus. This scripture passage Jesus is having a verbal fist fight with the Pharisees once again who are trying to find some way to discredit his authority to speak about God and get him in trouble so they can arrest him. The Pharisees were a group of Jewish leaders who believed in strict adherence to "the Law of Moses" (The Torah – first 5 books of the Bible) and believed that adherence to those laws and following the Pharisees direction was the right way, but Jesus is saying in these scriptures that HE is the Gate. He is the only way to access God and receive salvation.

We are wanderers in a wilderness desperately seeking direction and leadership. We all are seeking that person who can make things better, give us the answers, cheer us up, heal us, bring peace and direction to our lives, show us that "light at the end of the tunnel". Johns 14:6 Jesus says "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me". Jesus is the one and only "Light" and the Gate through which we should devote our lives. We all are lost sheep without Jesus. When we are feeling lost and

wandering it is to God we should turn for leadership, direction through prayer and by reading His word daily.

Jesus said believers will listen to His voice and call His people (sheep) by name. He knows us! Believers (sheep) will follow Him because only He can lead the way.

He goes on to compare Himself to the Good Shepherd. We can depend on Him because He alone is willing to lay down His life for His sheep. Everyone else will steal what is yours, betray you and abandon you when you are at the most vulnerable place in your life but Jesus alone cares SO MUCH for you He will lay down His life for you. Hebrews 13:5 God has said “Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you.” He is our Shepherd and our Protector.

Jesus also says in this passage, in verse 16, that He wants to unify His flock, those who know Him and those who do not yet know Him. He wants to bring us together and make them one. Together He yearns for us all to enter the Gate. Give them equal access to the Gate of salvation.

Jesus turns back to the Pharisees who are threatening Him and rebukes them for the threats saying only God has the power to take His life or lift Him up. People should believe in the signs and wonders He is showing them. Trust Him. Jesus is the Way.

- Kimberley Lackey

Step Four: Close in prayer, thanking God for what has been revealed to you today and asking the Lord to help you carry it into this day and the days ahead. Here is a prayer written by Kimberley that you may use to close your devotional time today:

Oh God our Gate and our Good Shepherd, forgive us our wanderings and our lack of trust in You. Thank you for all the ways you lead and guide us in troubling times. Thank you for being our Hope and our Salvation and the Way and the Truth and the Life. Help us to follow You faithfully and obediently and to trust that You are the Way that leads to life eternal. In Your heavenly name we pray. Amen.

Step Five: Join us as we continue reading God’s Word this week. Here are daily suggestions for further reading:

- **Thursday, Mar 18** – Ezekiel 34:1-16
- **Friday, Mar 19**– John 14:1-14
- **Saturday, Mar 20** – Psalm 23
- **Sunday, Mar 21** – John 13:1-20
- **Monday, Mar 22** – Isaiah 26:1-6
- **Tuesday, Mar 23** – Psalm 118