

Sermon Title: **“I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly”**

Bible: **John 10:1-10**

Where & When: at Gilroy UMC on Sunday, May 3, 2020

Audience: about 25 YouTube Live-streaming viewers

Opening Prayer

Oh, Lord, you are our shepherd. We are your sheep. As you know our names, we know your voice. Please guide us to your pasture and your presence. Please be with my lips in your love and grace. In Jesus' name. Amen.

1. Sheep and Shepherd

Today's Gospel Reading reminds us of Psalm 23. Actually, Psalm 23 is today's psalm reading, according to the lectionary for the 4th Sunday of Easter. “The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want. He makes me lie down in green pastures; he leads me beside still waters; he restores my soul. He leads me in right paths for his name's sake.” (Psalm 23:1-3) Surely, the Lord is our shepherd. The Lord knows our names one by one, because the Lord loves us and cares about us. And we know the voice of our shepherd.

How can we know the voice of our Lord, our shepherd? That's because our Lord loves us, takes care of us, and the Lord is with us. When the baby Jesus was born, the angel went to the shepherds and shared the good news of great joy. At that time, where were the shepherds? They were in the fields, where the sheep were. They kept watching over the sheep by night and day. As many days as the stars in the sky, as many days as the flowers in the fields, they lived together with the sheep. The shepherds could not help but know the names of the sheep. The sheep could not forget the shepherds' voices.

I remember back in the time when we did not have smartphones. I also remember the time when we did not have cellular phones, but only old landline phones. Today, when I receive a phone call, I know who is calling, because the smart phone shows me the name or the phone number. When we had only old landline phones that could not show who was calling, we had to say, “May I ask who is calling?” or “This is Hwapyoung speaking.” But sometimes, we did not need to say that, because we knew the voice on the phone, just by the caller saying “Hello, this is me.” That’s because we already knew each other very well.

2. Abundant Life?

Now we have smartphones, wifi, computers, and YouTube. We are smarter than before. We watch YouTube. We do FaceTime and Google Duo. We have Zoom meetings and fellowship, even at home. We can be connected to each other, wherever we are. But, sometimes I feel that we miss out on something that we had before. We live life more comfortably than before, but we might be losing something that makes us feel warm, loved, and loving. Do we have more abundant life today than before?

3. Abundant Life at God’s Table and through our Faith Community

Today we will have Communion via online. I want to invite all of you to God’s table, as God invites all of us. Based on the worship attendance of the last few months, I wrote down all the names that I know. I wrote down more than 80 names. Thankfully, I can match the names and the faces together. I hope that God’s grace and love is overflowing through this table of God. You will listen to your name, and the names of your family and your friends. You might hear

some unfamiliar names as well. I might miss a few names, as I do not know your names yet. Please forgive me. It is challenging to build a loving faith community in this time. We cannot see each other in person. We cannot eat together. We cannot go to a movie theater together. We cannot just hang out together. However, we have our church members and friends in our hearts and minds in God's love and grace. Moreover, we can just give a call to them, and just listen to their voices. I know that many of our loving church members give calls to each other. And if you want to give a call more often, how about giving a call to someone else whom you might not know very well, just once a week? If you wonder if someone has your phone number or not, that person might be the one that you could consider giving a call. Just calling their names, listening to their voices, would be enough, because God's grace and love is already and still overflowing through you and your life. God still wants us to have an abundant life, even in this time, with our sisters and brothers in Christ. Just let it overflow and let it be abundant.

Closing Prayer

Gracious God, even in this time, your love and grace is overflowing. You are guiding us to the abundant life. As your voice leads us, we will follow you. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Questions.

1. Can you give a call to someone whom you might not know very well?
2. How can we have an abundant life in this time?