

Sermon Title: **“Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest.”**

Bible: **Matthew 11:16-19, 25-30**

Where & When: at Gilroy UMC on Sunday, July 5, 2020

Audience: about 25 YouTube Live-streaming viewers

Opening Prayer

Our Lord, source of peace and comfort, we are coming to you. We are weak. We are broken. We are exhausted. Please lead us to come to you. Please be with my lips in your love and grace. In Jesus' name. Amen.

1. We Are the Church

(Singing) “I am the church! You are the church! We are the church together! All who follow Jesus, all around the world! Yes, we’re the church together!...” This is the Hymn 558 of the United Methodists. What is the church? While we miss our in-person worship so much, I consider a lot. What is the church? What is Gilroy United Methodist Church?

There is a comic about the conversation between Satan and God during this time. Satan told God, “With COVID-19, I closed your churches!” And God responded, “On the contrary, I just opened one in every home!” It is true that we have closed our church buildings. If the church is a building, Satan might be right. However, the church is not a building. The church is a people. As God said, God opened the churches in every home! Your home is the church, because you are the church.

I wonder what Gilroy United Methodist Church looks like. I saved your addresses in my smartphone, and my map application shows where you are. Can you see the red spots? While we worship together through this YouTube live-streaming, God opened many churches throughout San Jose, Morgan Hill, San Martin, Hollister, and Gilroy. In Gilroy, we can see many churches. Thanks be to God!

2. The First Sunday of My 3rd Year Appointment in Gilroy UMC

Today is the first Sunday of my 3rd year appointment. The United Methodist pastors are appointed to local churches every July 1st. In other words, the United Methodist Church sends the pastors to each local church according to the congregation's context and need, and the pastor's gift. Thankfully, I am appointed to serve Gilroy United Methodist Church for the 3rd year. I am so excited to serve the church, to serve you for the 3rd year. I am still passionate, or probably picky. In July, 2018, I came to Gilroy. I was asked to write about myself for the church website. Because this was my first appointment, it was not that easy. After consideration, I shared my hope. My hope is to serve the church as the place for healing and growth in spirit and body in God's love and grace. For the last two years that I have served this church, I hope that there has been healing and growth in this church. In the first year, our church made a difficult decision to support the position of the pastor more, while removing the position of a church secretary. In the second year, we experienced the tragedy of the Gilroy Garlic Festival shooting. At the beginning of my third year, we are still in the COVID-19 pandemic. Even though there have been big and unexpected challenges here and there, I hope that there has been and will continue to be healing and growth in our church. What hope do you have? We

are the church, those who follow Jesus, and those whom God loves. As a church, what hope do you expect? What are you looking for?

3. Come to Jesus and the table of God!

Jesus told us, “Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest.” In this time, there are many things that we cannot do and that we should do. We cannot go out freely. We cannot meet each other face-to-face. We cannot come to the church buildings. We should stay home as much as possible, as we are vulnerable. We should wear a mask in public places. Somehow, these are heavy burdens, and make us feel down and tired. Jesus knows that our burdens are heavy and that we are weary. Jesus invites us to come to him. Aha! Jesus does not invite us to come to the church buildings. As we are already the church, we are called to come to Jesus. Let us come to Jesus. Jesus is gentle and humble. Let us come to Jesus. Jesus will give us rest. Let us come to Jesus. We will find a rest for our souls. Today, we will have a Holy Communion. If you prepare communion elements at your home, it is wonderful. If not, it is totally okay. That’s because you yourself are the most important ones. Jesus is calling you, welcoming you, and accepting you. Just come to the table of God. From wherever you are, just come to Jesus as you are.

Closing Prayer

O Lord, in this time, we come to you, because we are exhausted. We come to you, because we are weak. O Lord, please cover us in your love and grace. Please guide us to find a rest in you. In Jesus’ name. Amen.