



Bloom
in the
Desert
Ministries



September 17, 2023

Welcome

Bloom in the Desert Ministries (Bloom) is a United Church of Christ (UCC) that had Methodist

beginnings. This liberal Protestant church was born in 2002, as an independent ministry in collaboration with Methodist organizations seeking to start and promote inclusive Christian ministries. Sunday worship began on March 9, 2003. The fledgling congregation decided in 2004 to pursue standing in the UCC, which was established by vote of the Eastern Association of the Southern California Nevada Conference of the UCC on October 29, 2005, welcoming Bloom as a dual covenant, peace, and justice congregation. Bloom is a member of the UCC Open and Affirming Coalition and the Reconciling Ministries Network (Methodist). Bloom is governed congregationally according to our unique bylaws. All Bloom members and friends are ministers in our faith. Our Open Leadership Team and congregation meetings provide leadership and decision making to empower our vision, mission, and core values.

Our Vision

Bloom chooses to build a loving, safe, inclusive faith community that is intellectually challenging, emotionally supportive and filled with the strength, integrity, and social responsibility that spirituality inspires.

Our Mission

Guided by teachings of Jesus Christ, Bloom is a community of believers who strive to uplift and heal one another. We gather to worship God, witness our faith in the living of our lives and uphold one another in Christian living. United in our diversity we are inclusive and embracing. We agitate for God's peace and justice in our community and around the world.

Our Core Values

We are a people of God's extravagant welcome.

We are a people of covenant.

We work toward a just and loving world through service and generosity.

We listen for the still-speaking God.

We encourage a life of inquisitive and thoughtful searching.

We are grounded by Christian faithfulness.

We celebrate the joy in life.

Sunday Worship 10am

Demuth Community Center — 3601 E. Mesquite Avenue, Palm Springs, CA 92264

Lynda Toland, Moderator — 503-789-8743 — moderator@bloominthedesert.org

Rev. Dr. Kevin A. Johnson, Minister — 760-992-4346 — minister@bloominthedesert.org

Ken Forney, Music Director — 608-445-6767 — ken.forney@gmail.com

Bill Wallace, Administrative Assistant — adminassitant@bloominthedesert.org

Church Office is located at 400 South El Cielo, Suite G, Palm Springs, CA 92262

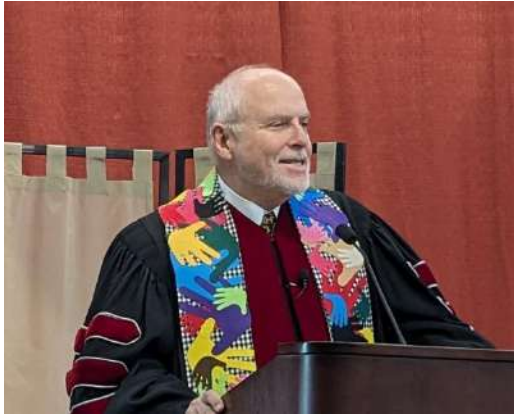
760-327-3802 — www.bloominthedesert.org — info@bloominthedesert.org

Save the Date and Time, September 24, 2023, 10am

Service of Endings and Beginnings

This is the last Sunday Morning with
Rev. Dr. Kev and Mike Shear
Called Minister and Cofounders

As our minister retires after 21 years leading Bloom in the Desert Ministries and 50 years of pastoral service: Boy Scout Summer Camp Staff Chaplain, Seminarian, Pastor, Business Entrepreneur, and Cofounding new-church-start pastor.



We bless Kevin and Mike
and bid them much love and encouragement in their many years ahead.



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United Church of Christ
Palm Springs, CA

16th Sunday after Pentecost

Honoring Hispanic Heritage Month Sept. 15 ~ Oct. 15

September 17, 2023

Sunday before the International Day of Peace, September 21

The UN General Assembly declared September 21 each year as a day devoted to strengthening the ideals of peace, through observing 24 hours of non-violence and cease-fire. Pray for compliance.

For Facebook check-ins, etc., the Demuth Community Center - Wi-Fi password is: D3muthP@rk

* Please rise as you are able in body and spirit.

9:50am Pre-Service Music “Beautiful” music by Heather Sorenson Ken Forney, piano

10:00am Gathering Song

1. En - ter, re-joice, and come in. Ent - er, re-joice, and come in.
2. God's love is ours to em - brace. God's love is ours to em - brace.

To - day will be a joy - ful day; en - ter, re-joice, and come in.

Welcome and News of the Congregation

Rev. Dr. Kevin A. Johnson

Music for Centering

“Jesus Loves Me”

The Rejoicers, Peppermint Ridge’s Choir

*** Call to Worship**

Ray Stimson

When we become calm as earth, fluid as water, and blazing as fire; we will rise to the task of peacemaking and the air will stir with God’s spirit of help.

Aloha. Shalom. Salaam. Vrede. Myr. Ping-an. Paz. Peace. Amen.

Words for peace in various languages: Hawaiian, Hebrew, Arabic, South African, Ukrainian and Russian, Chinese, Spanish and Portuguese, English.

* Opening Hymn

431 Let There Be Peace on Earth

Let there be peace on earth, and let it be - gin with

me; let there be peace on earth, the peace that was

meant to be. *With God our cre - a - tor,

chil - dren all are we. Let us

walk with each oth - er in per - fect har - mo - ny.

*Original words: *With God as our Father, brothers all are we. Let me walk with my brother in perfect harmony.*

WORDS: Sy Miller and Jill Jackson

MUSIC: Sy Miller and Jill Jackson; harm. by Charles H. Webb, 1987

WORLD PEACE

IR.

© 1955. Assigned to Jan-Lee Music, © renewed 1983

Let peace be - gin with me; let this be the mo - ment

now. With ev - ery step I take, let

this be my sol - emn vow: to take each mo - ment and

live each mo - ment in peace e - ter - nal - ly.

Let there be peace on earth, and let it be - gin with me.

In Faith We Open Our Hearts to Ministry

Prayer for Good and Growth

On this Sunday before the International Day of Peace, we pray together for Peace: **God in all goodness, our eternal safe space, your will is for the lightness of peace to shine everywhere and uplift everyone. Make strong all who hope and strive for peace with justice. We pray humankind will make peace and justice the will of our nations. Inspire this Body of Christ to take actions big and small to make peace. Inspire the hearts and minds of people to seek: Peace not war, common good over competitive domination, justice rather than greatness. Enable us to share your “peace that passes all understanding” with all on Earth near and far, so love and harmony can inhabit every life. We want all in the world as God’s creation to know happiness and live in dignity. When that happens, in those days, people will rejoice in your pleasure. United in diversity, we will see beauty and value in all lives in the peaceable realm.**

Our Silent Prayers (These intentional moments of silence are included in worship to enable minds to settle, then move past the distraction of internal chatter, to connect actively with God. A few deep breaths may help make the connection. Relax, and embrace a spiritual dimension.)

God of many names and no borders, receive now our silent prayers.

~ Silence ~

To all our silent prayers let the people say amen.

Amen.

Words of Encouragement

“Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid.”

John 14:27 RSV

Amen. Let us now receive the Word.

Sung Response

Halle, Halle, Hallelujah!

Hal - le, hal - le, hal - le - lu - jah.

Hal - le, hal - le, hal - le - lu - jah. Hal - le, hal - le, hal - le, ___

lu - jah. Hal - le - lu - jah, hal - le - lu - jah.

The Word Informs Our Living with Grace and Power

Cultural Reading

Douglas Holder

The thing that we have to remember is that change comes from the bottom, okay. All of the changes that have been made, whether it's the civil rights movement, the peace movement, the woman's movement, the LGBT movement, the immigrants' rights movement, the DREAMers have just shown this recently with all the organization they have done, that we can make the change but it's gotta start with us.

The one thing that we have to always tell people is nobody is going to do this for us. We have to do it for ourselves. Nobody is going to solve our problems.

And the one thing that we know is that the people who are suffering the problems are the ones that have the solutions. The people that are going through the suffering and the discrimination – they are the ones that have the answers to how to solve the problems.

~Remarks at 2012 Children's Defense Fund National Conference - July 25, 2012, by Dolores Huerta, Co-founder of the United Farm Workers Union, and recipient of the Presidential Medal of Freedom

*** Gospel Reading**

Matthew 18:21-27

Carol Moore

Peter came up and asked Jesus, “When a sister or brother wrongs me, how many times must I forgive? Seven times?”

“No,” Jesus replied, “not seven times; I tell you seventy times seven. And here’s why.

“The kin-dom of heaven is like a ruler who decided to settle accounts with the royal officials. When the audit was begun, one was brought in who owed tens of millions of dollars. As the debtor had no way of paying, the ruler ordered this official to be sold, along with family and property, in payment of the debt.

“At this, the official bowed down in homage and said, ‘I beg you, your highness, be patient with me and I will pay you back in full!’ Moved with pity, the ruler let the official go and wrote off the debt.

~Inclusive Bible Version

Here ends the reading of the Gospel. This is the Good News of Jesus Christ.

Thanks be to God. Amen.

Commentary

Rev. Dr. Kevin A. Johnson

* Hymn of Response

What a Friend We Have in Jesus

506

Joseph Scriven, 1855; alt.

Phil. 4:6-7

1 What a friend we have in Je - sus, all our sins and griefs to bear!
 2 Have we tri - als and temp - ta - tions? Is there trou - ble an - y - where?
 3 Are we weak and heav - y lad - en, bur - dened with a load of care?

What a priv - i - lege to car - ry ev - ery - thing to God in prayer!
 We should nev - er be dis - cour - aged; take it to our God in prayer!
 Pre - cious Sav - ior, still our ref - uge, take it to our God in prayer!

Oh, what peace we of - ten for - feit, oh, what need - less pain we bear,
 Can we find a friend so faith - ful, who will all our sor - rows share?
 Do your friends de - spise, for - sake you? Take it to our God in prayer!

All be - cause we do not car - ry ev - ery - thing to God in prayer.
 Je - sus knows our ev - ery weak - ness; take it to our God in prayer!
 Je - sus' arms will take and shield you; you will find a sol - ace there.

No stranger to sorrow himself, Joseph Scriven wrote this hymn to comfort his mother in Ireland. Scriven, who moved to Canada as a young man, attempted to follow literally the teachings of the Sermon on the Mount.

Tune: ERIE 8.7.8.7.D.
 Charles C. Converse, 1868

Offering our Prayer Concerns, and Joys and Thanksgivings

Concerns:

Keep watch, dear God, with all who work, or watch, or weep this day. Tend the sick, give rest to the weary, bless the dying, soothe the suffering, shield the joyous; and all for your love's sake.

God, receive our prayer.”

Joys and Thanksgivings:

Your hand is open wide to satisfy the needs of all creation. Keep us always thankful for your loving providence and help us be faithful stewards of your good and abundant gifts.

“God, receive our prayer.”

Sung Response In Our God I'll Be Ever Thankful

♩ = 69

In our God I'll be ev-er thank-ful, in our God I will re-joice. Look to God, do not be a-
fraid, lift up your voic - es, our God is near, lift up your voic - es our God is near.

Words by Community of Taizé, Music by Jacques Berthier, adapted.

Ministry of Generosity — Expressing God's Love and Empowering Good Works

Our tithes and offerings are an expression of our hearts and our discipleship.

--Checks should be made out to “Bloom in the Desert Ministries.” Checks and cash in envelopes with identification are recorded for your year-end convenience. **Online giving is available and easy!** Go to: www.bloominthedesert.org and click on the Donate tab. **Thank you.**



Offertory-Meditation Music

“Amazing Grace”

The Rejoicers

Presentation of Offerings and Prayer of Dedication

Carol Moore

Receive these offerings, Holy Spirit, as you receive our lives. We offer ourselves without condition, without reservations. Put us to your work in the world. Accept this offering of money and life that your “New Creation” may come now and be forever. In Christ's name, we pray. Amen.

~Rev. Gregory R. Dell (1945-2016)

(Please rise, as you are able, in celebration as we sing the Doxology.)

*** Doxology**

Praise God, From Whom All Blessings Flow

The image shows a musical score for a doxology. It consists of four staves of music in a 3/2 time signature, with a key signature of two flats (B-flat and E-flat). The lyrics are written below the notes. The lyrics are: "Praise God, from whom all blessings flow, praise God, all creatures here be - low. Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia! Praise God, the source of all our gifts! Praise Je - sus Christ, whose power up - lifts! Praise the Spir - it, Ho - ly Spir - it! Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia!"

***Prayer of Jesus** (Please join hands)

Rev. Kev

Mother God -above us, beneath us, around us – we celebrate your holy name.

**Establish in us your household,
let us live in your rhythms,
in this moment eternally present.**

In your holy realm we work, play, love, and dream.

May your presence live among us and within us.

Nourish us in body and soul.

**Give us the charity to see each other as you see us,
and provide us with the grace to forgive.**

Guide us into quiet places and work through us to create justice.

**We praise your womb, tirelessly creating home,
love’s magnificence and passion for life.**

In your love and grace is power eternal – forever.

Amen.

~Women’s Spiritual Support Group, Broadway UCC, Chicago, IL

* Sending Hymn

This Little Light of Mine

525

African-American spiritual

Matt. 5:14-16

1 This lit - tle light of mine, I'm gon-na let it shine,

this lit - tle light of mine, I'm gon-na let it shine,

This lit - tle light of mine, I'm gon-na let it shine, let it

shine, let it shine, let it shine. (let it shine.)

- 2 Ev-ery-where I go, I'm gon-na let it shine . . .
- 3 All--through the night, I'm gon-na let it shine . . .

This was the favorite song of civil rights activist Fannie Lou Hamer, who could sing as well as she could give powerful speeches. During that era this spiritual was sometimes modified and sung as "This little light of freedom."

Tune: LATTIMER Irr.
African-American spiritual
Adapt. William Farley Smith, 1987

Benediction and Blessing

Rev. Kev

As this worship gathering ends, our service begins. What does God need from us?
“Simply do justice, love kindness and walk humbly with your God.”

God said, “Let there be light.”

We are called to keep the light alive!

The prophet said, “Arise, shine, for your light has come.”

We are called to keep the light alive!

Paul said, “You are children of light.”

We are called to keep the light alive!

My dear friends in faith, will you go into your worlds to be people of God in Christ’s name?
We will. Amen!

Passing of the Peace

Let us safely offer one another signs of grace and peace and go in peace. Amen.

Postlude “Old-Time Religion with Swing Low Sweet Chariot” Ken Forney, piano
 Trad. Spirituals, arr. by Mark Hayes

Bring a Friend BloomNite Potluck
 Friday, October 6 — 6:30-9:30pm
 At Bill Wallace and Larry Metcalf’s home in Desert Hot Springs
 Plan on an evening of food and fun with friends.
 Invite a friend to join us and experience the joy of our Bloom community.

Bloom Happenings this Week						
Monday Sept. 18	Tuesday Sept. 19	Wednesday Sept. 20	Thursday Sept. 21	Friday Sept. 22	Saturday Sept. 23	Sunday Sept. 24
10:30am-1:00pm Lunch for our unhoused neighbors served at United Methodist	10:30am-1:00pm Lunch for our unhoused neighbors served at United Methodist	10:45am – 1:00pm Lunch served at St. Paul’s Episcopal	Afternoon Volunteers Requested Assemble bulletins in the office	4:00pm Women of Bloom Zoom Happy Hour		10:00 am Kevin and Mike’s final Sunday Service at Demuth and on Facebook Live

Congregational Life Announcements

--A warm welcome and thank you to music director, **Ken Forney**, piano, and the **Rejoicers**, the Peppermint Ridge Choir, under the direction of **Erin Beardemphl** for sharing their musical talents with us today.

--Thank you to **Ray Stimson, Douglas Holder** and **Carol Moore** for serving as readers for today's service.

--Thank you to **Nick Wass** and **Jackson Enzler** for handling the A/V technical aspects for today's service.

Thank you also to our ushers, for welcoming us this morning.

--**Flowers on the Worship Center**, symbolic of the living Christ are offered to the glory of God by **Nick Cefaliello** in memory of his husband, **Joseph**.

--Those wishing to donate flowers may contact **Ray Allen** at 405-833-1817 for assistance.

Last Week's Participation

--Souls Present at Demuth: 39 --Children: 0 --First Timers: 0
--- Facebook Live Views: 16 --Facebook Total Views: 83 --YouTube Views: 10

Sunday Offerings

Tithes, Offerings, and Participation:
Offering, online, by mail and text: \$2,794 Electronic Giving: \$1,654
Permanence Fund: \$140 Cumulative: \$321,483

--Please sign up for **Ralph's Community Rewards**. Choose Bloom in the Desert Ministries (Ralphs #PG245.) as your designated charity to benefit from a small percentage of your purchase totals. Every little bit helps!

Electronic giving is easy! Scan this QR code for Bloom's mobile-friendly online giving page or visit www.bloominthedesert.org/donateparticipate.



--**The Inclusive Bible: The First Egalitarian Translation** by Priests for Equality and the **Revised Common Lectionary** are the usual references for Sunday morning scripture readings.

--**Liturgy and prayers** are original, sourced, and often adapted.

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Beautiful, music Heather Sorenson, ©2012 by Hal Leonard Corporation

Old-Time Religion with Swing Low Sweet Chariot, Trad. Spirituals, arr. by Mark Hayes, ©1998 Shawnee Press

Ministries of Leadership and Support

--**Open Leadership Meetings** are typically the second Wednesday, 6:30-8:00pm PDT. The next hybrid meeting will be September 11 at 6:30pm PDT in the church office. All are welcome with voice. Bloom members have vote. Contact **Lynda Toland** to receive the Zoom Invitation.

--**Congregation meetings** are in February, May, and October, and special meetings as called. The next congregation meeting is October 15 after church.

Church Growth and New Member Involvement Ministry

--**If you are interested in making a covenant as a member or associate member** with Bloom in the Desert Ministries UCC, please contact **John DiNapoli**, dinojnps@gmail.com or **Bill Wallace** at adminassistant@bloominthedesert.org.

--**For more information on the United Church of Christ**, visit www.ucc.org.

--**Persons seeking Christian Baptism** please call **760-327-3802** for pastoral response.

Nurture and Community Life Ministry

--**We Care**: If you know of someone in the hospital, or who might enjoy a pastoral call, including yourself, please call the **church office** at **760 327-3802** and leave a message.

Education Ministry

--**Bloom Book Club**-. The group is reviewing possible books so we can start another book study soon.

Social Action and Missions Ministry

--**Lunch Mondays, Tuesdays, and Wednesdays**: Come serve lunch at the United Methodist Church of Palm Springs on Mondays and Tuesdays, located at 1555 E. Alejo Rd, Palm Springs 10:30 am–1:00 pm PDT. On Wednesdays, lunch is served at St Paul’s Episcopal Church at 125 W El Alameda, Palm Springs 10:45 am-1 pm. Contact **Jon Miller** at jmiller.ps@icloud.com.

Our focused ministries include:

- School children’s benevolence – backpacks, church camp, and Christmas gift cards.
- Relieving food insecurity – Lunch Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays, food bank support.
- National church’s wider mission – “5 for 5” UCC mission offerings, disaster relief.
- Spiritual and personal development – worship, music, bible study, book clubs, lending library.
- Loving presence – birthday/anniversary cards, eyeglasses, recycling, Us Plus local outreach.
- For peace action and social justice email alerts, sign up with **Jon Miller** at jmiller.ps@icloud.com.

A wheelchair and large-print bulletins are available for your convenience.

You are welcome to take this bulletin with you for reflection.
or leave it with the ushers for recycling.

God wants you to think for yourself and live for others.

Bathrooms are located through the double glass doors and to the left.



Spare Change Jar and Hospitality Basket

Perhaps you've wondered about these two items on the hospitality table nestled among the food items after morning worship. They have two purposes and are both opportunities for your support.

The Spare Change Jar helps fund two Social Action and Missions projects. First, the back-to-school backpacks with school supplies we deliver to area elementary schools in August. Second, the Christmastime \$100 gift cards we distribute to local schools' administrative staff to give to students' families who are struggling. Don't carry change or dollars? You can also give online to the spare change jar via the Bloom homepage Donate tab.

The Hospitality Basket helps pay for the sundry expenses of plates, cups, cutlery and coffee we use during hospitality hour. Your donations of physical goods are also welcome.



PILGRIM PINES CAMP

Fall Fun for All!

OCTOBER 6-8

Come for the weekend or come for the day, come to lend a hand or come to play!

COME FOR THE WEEKEND CAMP!

AN INTERGENERATIONAL CAMP WITH FUN ACTIVITIES FOR EVERYONE. INCLUDING SOME OPPORTUNITIES FOR SERVICE TO THE CAMP. \$200 FOR ADULTS, \$150 FOR CHILDREN UNDER 10.

APPLE PIE DAY!

**COME SATURDAY ONLY AND ENJOY CAMP, GOOD FOOD, APPLE PIE AND OUR FUNDRAISER!
\$25 FOR ADULTS, \$15 CHILDREN UNDER 10.**

RADICAL ROOF FUNDRAISER!

MOST ALL OF THE ROOFS IN CAMP ARE IN NEED OF REPAIR. HELP US RAISE MONEY TO FUND THEM. BUY TICKETS FOR PRIZE DRAWINGS.

DONATE!

WE WILL BE COLLECTING GENTLY USED JACKETS FOR A LOCAL CHARITY.