

Bloom in the Desert Ministries United Church of Christ Palm Springs, CA

Fourth Sunday after Epiphany

January 28, 2024

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

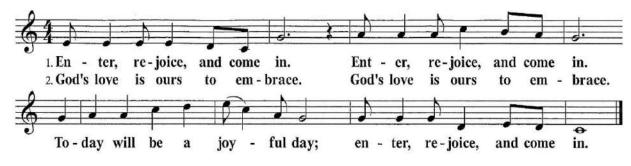
* Please rise as you are able in body and spirit.

9:50am Pre-Service Music

Mike Welden, piano

"Theme from Legends of the Fall" "Great Is Thy Faithfulness" "Sonata No. 20 in G Major, 2nd mvt."

10:00am Gathering Song



Welcome and News of the Congregation

John DiNapoli, Worship Leader

Music for Centering

"I've Got Peace Like a River"

Mike Welden, piano

* Call to Worship

We are called to live a walk of trust – invited to walk the Way of God's justice.

We gather for worship because we trust God is good. We disperse to live trusting God's love and direction along our journeys.

We come together as people in relationships. We covenant to live seeking to follow the teachings of Jesus. We pray to sense the good God is doing.

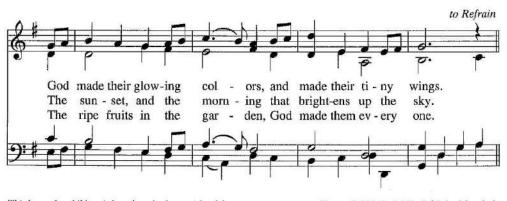
We will share with others the bounty we are given, transforming our lives into an expression of God's goodness and love.

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

* Opening Hymn



Jim Nixon



This hymn for children is based on the first article of the Apostles' Creed: "Maker of heaven and earth." The English hymnwriter Cecil Frances Alexander was married to William Alexander, who became bishop of Ireland.

Tune: ROYAL OAK 7.6.7.6. with refrain English melody Adapt. Martin Shaw, 1915

In Faith We Open Our Hearts to Ministry

Prayer for Good and Growth

Let us pray this intimate prayer, speaking our minds, filtered through our hearts:

Gracious God, Eternal source of Spirit and Creation, you call us to unity of mind and purpose.

Even when our minds and hearts are drawn to separation and division, your mutual justice and compassion remains primary.

We pray for wisdom and strength to put aside rivalries and divisions.

We look to our hearts and minds as sources of love and memory of benevolence in our community.

Help us remember that we are one body as Christ Jesus in the world. Teach us to trust your promises from Jesus.

Embrace us in Spirit, so we continually learn to live united, proclaiming with one voice the power and the potential for good in emulating Jesus.

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.)

Eternal Source of life and love, hear now our silent prayers.

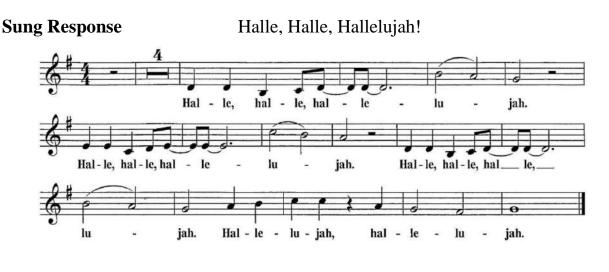
~ Silence ~

To all our silent prayers let the people say amen. Amen.

Words of Encouragement

God, who is our solid rock and source of reason, promises and delivers strength for our journeys of trust and discipleship.

Blessing and praise to God forever. Let us now receive the Word.



The Word Informs Our Living with Grace and Power

Hebrew Scripture Reading Deuteronomy 18:15-20

Linda Lang

YHWH, your God, will raise up for you a prophet like me from among your own people; to that prophet you must listen. It was this that you asked of YHWH, your God, at Horeb on the day of the assembly, when you said, "Let us not hear again the voice of YHWH, our God, nor see this great fire again, or we will die."

And YHWH said to me, "This is well said. I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their people, into whose mouth I will put my words and that person will tell them all that I command. If any person will not listen to the words which my prophet speaks in my Name, I myself will call that person to answer for this. But if a prophet presumes to speak in my Name a message that I have not commanded to be spoken, or speaks in the name of other gods—that prophet will die." (Inclusive Bible Version)

* Gospel Reading

Mark 1:21-28

James Pratt

The people were spellbound by the teaching because Jesus taught with an authority that was unlike their religious scholars. Suddenly a person with an unclean spirit appeared in their synagogue. It [the spirit] shrieked, "What do you want from us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are—the Holy One of God!"

Jesus rebuked the spirit sharply: "Be quiet! Come out of that person!" At that the unclean spirit convulsed the possessed one violently, and with a loud shriek it came out.

All who looked on were amazed. They began to ask one another, "What is this? A new teaching, and with such authority! This person even gives orders to unclean spirits, and they obey!" Immediately, news of Jesus spread throughout the surrounding region of Galilee.

(Inclusive Bible Version)

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

Thanks be to God. Amen.

4

Commentary

Rev. Ron Lang

* Hymn of Response



Offering our Prayer Concerns, and Joys and Thanksgivings

Concerns:

John DiNapoli, Worship Leader

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.

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: <u>www.bloominthedesert.org</u> and click on the Donate tab. **Thank you.**

Offertory-Meditation Music

"O For a Thousand Tongues to Sing"

Presentation of Offerings and Prayer of Dedication

Most merciful and gracious God, the good that we do we owe to your righteousness. Whatever honor we receive is due to your redeeming love in Christ Jesus. All that we have is a gift of your grace. You call us, you name us, you watch over us with care. We bring our gifts in response to your goodness. Use them and us to further the work of your eternal benevolence, through Jesus Christ, whom we seek to obey. Amen.



Linda Lang

Mike Welden, piano

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

* Doxology



*Prayer of Jesus (Please join hands)

Rev. Ron Lang

Our Father (Eternal Source/Mother/Creator/Parent) in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom (Kin-dom/realm/dream), come. Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses (sins/debts), as we forgive those who trespass against us (sin against us/our debtors). And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For yours is the kingdom (Kin-dom/realm/dream), and the power, and the glory forever. Amen. (Based on Matthew 6:9-13 NRSV)

Rev. Ron Lang is an associate member of Bloom. Rev. Lang was raised in Carpenter, Wyoming, and is a retired United Methodist Minister, who served churches in the Yellowstone Conference in Montana and Wyoming. He also is a retired USDA Entomologist for biological weed control and a current certified Master Flower Show Judge.

* Sending Hymn



Benediction and Blessing

Rev. Ron Lang

Our worship has ended. Our service begins. What does God need from us? "Simply do justice, love kindness and walk humbly with your God."

Continue to serve with faith and love,

depart from this time today committed to sharing the best of yourself, through extravagant generosity of time and resources,

meeting the needs of others, both spoken and unspoken, seen and unseen, heard and unheard. We will go now seeking justice, sharing compassion, and promoting hope in the world.

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 "What the W

"What the World Needs Now is Love"

Mike Welden, piano

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
January 29	January 30	January 31	February 1	February 2	February 3	February 4
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 6pm Book Group on Zoom	10:45am – 1:00pm Lunch served at St. Paul's Episcopal	10:00am Jews and Christians Reading Together on Zoom 2:00pm Spring Fling Team Meeting in the office	4:00pm Women of Bloom Zoom Happy Hour		10:00 am Sunday Service at Demuth an on Facebook Live

Lectionary are the usual references for Sunday morning scripture readings.

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

Theme from Legends of the Fall, by James Horner, arr. by Phillip Keveren, © 1994 by TSP Music, Inc, this arrangement ©2009 by TSP Music

Great Is Thy Faithfulness, by William Runyan, arr. by Smitty Price and Harlan Rogers, © 1923, 1951 by Hope Publishing, this arrangement © 1986 by Hope Publishing

Sonata No. 20 in G Major, 2nd mvt., by Ludvig von Beethoven, public domain

I've Got Peace Like a River, arr. by Phillip Keveren, © 2001 by Hal Leonard Corporation

It Is Well with My Soul, by Phillip P. Bliss, arr. by Hartan Rogers and Smitty Price © 1986 by Marantha! Music

O For a Thousand Tongues to Sing, by Carl Glasser, arr. by Jan Sanborn, © 2003 by Alfred Publishing Co., Inc.

What the World Needs Now is Love, by Burt Bacharach, ©1965 by Casa David and New Hidden Valley Music, this arrangement ©2004 by Casa David and New Hidden Valley Music

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Congregational Life Announcements

--A warm welcome and thank you to Mike Welden, piano, for sharing his musical talents with us today

--Thank you to Jim Nixon, Linda Lang, and James Pratt, for serving as readers for today's service, and to John Dinapoli for serving as worship leader. Special thanks to **Rev. Ron Lang** for presenting our commentary this morning.

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

Thank you also to our ushers, Carol Moore and Mike Kreiser, for welcoming us this morning.

--Flowers on the Worship Center, symbolic of the living Christ, are offered to the glory of God by Carol Moore.

--Those wishing to donate flowers may contact **Carol Moore** at carolmooreinteriors@gmail.com for assistance.

Last Week's Participation

--Souls Present at Demuth: 62 --Children: 0 --First Timers: 0 --- Facebook Live Views: 24 -Facebook Total Views: 89 --YouTube Views: 2

Sunday Offerings

Tithes, Offerings, and Participation: Offering, online, by mail and text: \$3,206 Electronic Giving: \$1,216 Permanence Fund: \$100 Cumulative: \$323,034 Spring Fling Reservations: 106 Goal: 150

--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!

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



Ministries of Leadership and Support

--Open Leadership Meetings -- At the January Open Leadership meeting, it was approved to change the time of the meetings from 6:30 pm to 2:00pm going forward. The next hybrid meeting will be March 13 at 2:00pm PDT in the church office and on Zoom. All are welcome with a voice. Bloom members have a 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 February 11 after church in the Hospitality Room and on Zoom.

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, <u>dinoinps@gmail.com</u> 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-. Tuesdays at 6pm. We will be reading "When Bad Things Happen to Good People" by Harold S. Kushner. For information or to receive the Zoom link, contact Gary Lange at GaryLange13@gmail.com.

--Jews and Christians Reading Together – Isaiah, Thursdays at 10am on Zoom, led by Rabbi David Lazar and Rev. Dr. Stephen Kenney. For more information, contact Gary Lange at GaryLnage13@gmail.com

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.

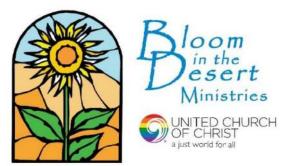
Large-print bulletins are available for your convenience.

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.





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 10 am

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

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

On-Call Pastoral Care — Rev. Ron Lang — 951—663-5237 — rflangX25@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