



**Bloom**  
in the  
**Desert**  
Ministries



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, 2<sup>nd</sup> mvt.”

**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**

John DiNapoli, Worship Leader

**Music for Centering**

“I’ve Got Peace Like a River”

Mike Welden, piano

## \* Call to Worship

Jim Nixon

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

### All Things Bright and Beautiful

31

*Cecil F. Alexander, 1848; alt.*

*Unison Refrain*

All things bright and beau-ti - ful, all crea-tures great and small,

*Last time, end*

All things wise and won - der - ful, our dear God made them all.

1 Each lit - tle flower that o - pens, each lit - tle bird that sings,  
2 The pur - ple-head - ed moun-tain, the riv - er run - ning by,  
3 The cold wind in the win - ter, the pleas-ant sum-mer sun,

*to Refrain*

God made their glow-ing col - ors, and made their ti - ny wings.  
 The sun - set, and the morn - ing that bright-ens up the sky.  
 The ripe fruits in the gar - den, God made them ev - ery one.

*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.**

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

## 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.**

\* Hymn of Response

43

Love Divine, All Loves Excelling

Mat. 3:1; 2 Cor. 3:18; 5:17; Eph. 5:27

Charles Wesley, 1747; alt.

1 Love di-vine, all loves ex-cel-ling, joy of heaven, on earth be found,  
 2 Breathe, O breathe your lov-ing Spir-it in-to ev-ery trou-bled breast;  
 3 Come, al-might-y to de-liv-er, let us all your life re-ceive;  
 4 Fin-ish, then, your new cre-a-tion; pure and spot-less may we prove;

Fix in us a hum-ble dwell-ing, all your faith-ful mer-cies crown;  
 Let us all in you in-her-it, let us find your prom-ised rest;  
 Sud-den-ly re-turn, and ne-ver, ne-ver-more your tem-ples leave.  
 Let us see your great sal-va-tion per-fect-ly re-stored in you;

Je-sus, you are all com-pas-sion; pure, un-bound-ed love im-part.  
 Take a-way our love of sin-ning; Al-pha and O-me-ga be;  
 You we would be al-ways bless-ing, love you as your an-gels love,  
 Changed from glo-ry in-to glo-ry, till in heaven we take our place,

Vis-it us with your sal-va-tion, en-ter ev-ery trem-bling heart.  
 End of faith, as its be-gin-ning, set our hearts at lib-er-ty.  
 Pray and praise for your un-fail-ing, wound-ed arms out-stretched a-bove.  
 Crowned as saints, we ev-er shall be lost in won-der, love, and praise.

*This hymn is said to have been suggested by a "Song of Venus" from Dryden's King Arthur. It is one of 6,500 written by Charles Wesley, the "sweet singer of Methodism," who was skilled at interweaving literary and scriptural images.*

Tune: BEECHER 8.7.8.7.D.  
 John Zundel, 1855  
 Alternate tune: HYFRYDOL  
 For another harmonization, see 368, 495

## 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.**

### Sung Response In Our God I'll Be Ever Thankful

$\text{♩} = 69$



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.

### 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](http://www.bloominthedesert.org) and click on the Donate tab. **Thank you.**



### Offertory-Meditation Music

Mike Welden, piano

"O For a Thousand Tongues to Sing"

### Presentation of Offerings and Prayer of Dedication

Linda Lang

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.

(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 3/4 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. 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

O for a Thousand Tongues to Sing

42

Charles Wesley, 1740; alt.

1 O for a thou-sand tongues to sing my great Re-deem-er's praise,  
2 My gra-cious Sav - ior and my God, as - sist me to pro - claim,  
3 Je - sus! the name that calms our fears, that bids our sor - rows cease  
4 Glo - ry to God, and love and praise be ev - er, ev - er given

The glo - ries ev - er ech - o - ing the tri - umphs of God's grace!  
To spread through all the earth a - broad the hon - ors of your name.  
Is mu - sic in the sin-ner's ears, is life, and health, and peace!  
By all the saints in ev - ery age, the church in earth and heaven.

*The hymn is a cento from a longer poem of eighteen stanzas written by Charles Wesley on the first anniversary of his conversion. The present form of the hymn is one edited by John Wesley for The Wesleyan Hymn Book, 1780.*

Tune: AZMON C.M.  
Carl G. Gläser, 1828  
Adapt. in L. Mason's Modern Psalmody, 1839  
Alternate tune: RICHMOND

**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 World Needs Now is Love”

Mike Welden, piano



## Bloom Happenings This Week

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

--**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.

**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, 2<sup>nd</sup> 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

--**All music** contained in this worship service is Reprinted / Podcast / Streamed with permission under ONE LICENSE #A-700000. All rights reserved.

# 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](mailto: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!

**Electronic giving is easy! Scan this QR code for Bloom's mobile-friendly online giving page or visit [www.bloominthedesert.org/donateparticipate](http://www.bloominthedesert.org/donateparticipate).**



## 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**, [dinoins@gmail.com](mailto:dinoins@gmail.com) or **Bill Wallace** at [adminassistant@bloominthedesert.org](mailto:adminassistant@bloominthedesert.org).

**--For more information on the United Church of Christ**, visit [www.ucc.org](http://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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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



# ***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 10 am**

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

**Lynda Toland, Moderator — 503-789-8743 — [moderator@bloominthedesert.org](mailto:moderator@bloominthedesert.org)**

**On-Call Pastoral Care — Rev. Ron Lang — 951—663-5237 — [rflangX25@gmail.com](mailto:rflangX25@gmail.com)**

**Bill Wallace, Administrative Assistant — [adminassitant@bloominthedesert.org](mailto:adminassitant@bloominthedesert.org)**

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

**760-327-3802 — [www.bloominthedesert.org](http://www.bloominthedesert.org) — [info@bloominthedesert.org](mailto:info@bloominthedesert.org)**