



Bloom
in the
Desert
Ministries



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

Second Sunday in Lent
Honoring Black History Month
February 25, 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

“Dreamer’s Waltz”, “Sonata #8”

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

Linda Lang, Worship Leader

Music for Centering

“Sound the Trumpet”

Mike Welden, piano

Jenne Carey, soprano, Elaine Wang Meyerhoffer, mezzo

Soprano Jenne Carey is an award-winning singer and actor who has performed across the United States, Canada, Europe, Israel, and Japan. Jenne has premiered roles in several operas, lent her voice to the soundtrack of a major motion picture, and has sung with Andrea Bocelli in Central Park. Ms. Carey is Professor of Music at College of the Desert.

* Call to Worship

Ray Allen

Rest and quiet your spirit. We are here to be refreshed with hope and renewal.

Now is a good time to let any anxiety and worries go. Let's forgive ourselves and others, if needed. We'll try new ways, starting again.

Be assured you are not alone. There is caring support for you here. You are a part of this community. Make it what you will.

We know. We will worship God as resurrection people around a common table. Aloha, Shalom, Salaam, Vrede, Myr, Ping-an, Paz, Peace. Amen.

* Opening Hymn

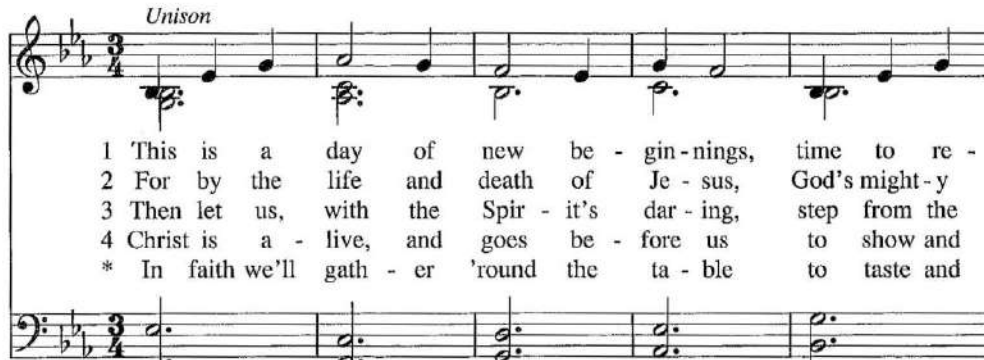
417

This Is a Day of New Beginnings

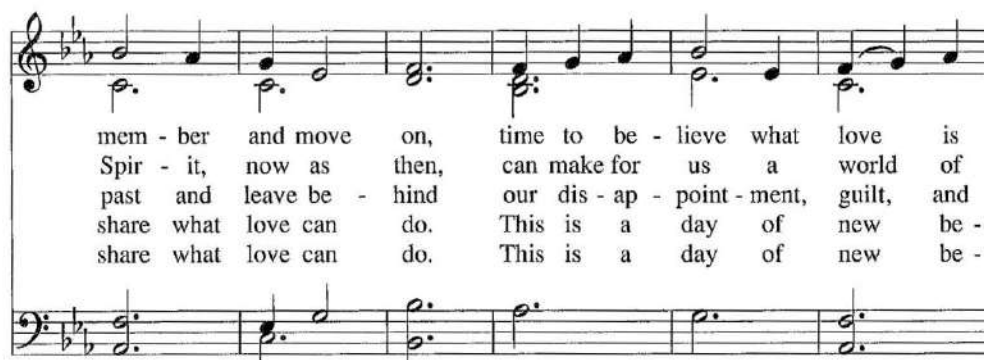
2 Cor. 5:16-17

Brian Wren, 1978; rev. 1983

Unison



1 This is a day of new be - gin - nings, time to re -
2 For by the life and death of Je - sus, God's might - y
3 Then let us, with the Spir - it's dar - ing, step from the
4 Christ is a - live, and goes be - fore us to show and
* In faith we'll gath - er 'round the ta - ble to taste and



mem - ber and move on, time to be - lieve what love is
Spir - it, now as then, can make for us a world of
past and leave be - hind our dis - ap - point - ment, guilt, and
share what love can do. This is a day of new be -
share what love can do. This is a day of new be -

bring-ing, lay-ing to rest the pain that's gone.
 dif-fer-ence, as faith and hope are born a-gain.
 griev-ing, seek-ing new paths, and sure to find.
 gin-nings— our God is mak-ing all things new.
 gin-nings— our God is mak-ing all things new.

*Alternate fourth stanza for Holy Communion

Brian Wren wrote this hymn in 1978 for a New Year's Day service in Oxford, England. The music is by the editor of two hymnals of the United Methodist Church and was composed for the original Wren text.

Tune: BEGINNINGS 9.8.9.8.
 Carlton R. Young, 1987

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In Faith We Open Our Hearts to Ministry

Prayer for Good and Growth

Educator and civil rights activist W. E. B. Du Bois became the first African American to receive a doctorate from Harvard. An agnostic for much of his life, he nonetheless wrote dozens of exquisite spiritual entreaties. In this prayer he recalls the Jewish Bible figure of Esther, who daringly confronts her husband, King Xerxes, and demands that he overturn his court's order to kill all the Jews of the Persian Empire. Let us now pray his prayer entitled, "Give Us Grace:"

Give us grace, O God, to dare to do the deed which we well know cries to be done.

Let us not hesitate because of ease, or the words of (anyone's) mouths, or our own lives.

Mighty causes are calling us—the freeing of women, the training of children, the putting down of hate and murder and poverty—all these and more.

But they call with voices that mean work and sacrifices and death.

Mercifully grant us, O God, the spirit of Esther, that we say:

I will go unto the King and if I perish, I perish.

(Beliefnet.com)

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.)

Eternal Source of love and creativity, receive now our silent prayers.

~ Silence ~

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

Words of Encouragement

As Harriett Tubman used to pray to God during her great escapes along the Underground Railway: “I’m going to hold steady on You, an’ You’ve got to see me through.”

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

Sung Response

Halle, Halle, Hallelujah!

The musical score is written on three staves in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The first staff begins with a 4-measure rest, followed by the melody for 'Hal - le, hal - le, hal - le - lu - jah.' The second staff continues the melody with 'Hal - le, hal - le, hal - le - lu - jah. Hal - le, hal - le, hal - le, -'. The third staff concludes with 'lu - jah. Hal - le - lu - jah, hal - le - lu - jah.' The lyrics are written below the notes, with hyphens indicating syllables across notes.

The Word Informs Our Living with Grace and Power

Hebrew Scripture Reading

Deuteronomy 30:9-14

Wayne Sinclair

YHWH will make you prosper in all the work of your hands, and in the fruit of your body, of your livestock and of your lands. YHWH will once again delight in you and make you prosperous, just as God delighted in your ancestors and prospered them, if you obey YHWH, your God, and keep the commandments and decrees that are written in this Book of the Law, and return to YHWH with all your heart and soul.

For the Law that I give to you today is not too difficult for you, nor is it beyond your reach. It is not up in heaven, so that you need to ask yourselves, “Who will go up to heaven for us and bring it down to us, so that we may hear it and keep it?” Nor is it beyond the seas, so that you need to wonder, “Who will cross the seas for us and bring it back to us, so that we may hear it and keep it?” No, the word of God is very near to you; it is in your mouth and in your heart, so that you can keep it.

(Inclusive Bible Version)

Anthem

“Eternal Life” A Prayer

Jenne Carey, soprano
Mike Welden, piano

When the disciples came to Jesus, they asked, “Why do you speak to the people in parables?” Jesus answered, “The secrets of the kin-dom of heaven are for you to know but not for them. To those who have, more will be given until they have an abundance; those who have not will lose what little they have.

“I use parables when I speak to the people because they look but don’t see, they listen but don’t hear or understand. Isaiah’s prophecy is being fulfilled in them, which says,

‘You will be ever listening, but never understanding;
you will be looking, but never perceiving.

For this people’s heart
has become calloused;
they hardly hear with their ears,
and they have closed their eyes.
Otherwise, they might see with their eyes,
and hear with their ears,
and understand with their hearts
and turn back to me,
and I would heal them.’

“But blessed are your eyes because they see, and your ears because they hear. The truth is, many prophets and holy people longed to see what you see but never saw it, to hear what you hear but never heard it. (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. Jeff Munnis

* Hymn of Response

433

In the Bulb There Is a Flower

Natalie Sleeth, 1985

Unison

1 In the bulb there is a flow - er; in the seed, an ap - ple tree;
 2 There's a song in ev - ery si - lence, seek - ing word and mel - o - dy;
 3 In our end is our be - gin - ning; in our time, in - fin - i - ty;

in co - coons, a hid - den prom - ise: but - ter - flies will soon be free!
 there's a dawn for ev - ery dark - ness, bring - ing hope to you and me.
 in our doubt there is be - liev - ing; in our life, e - ter - ni - ty.

In the cold and snow of win - ter there's a spring that waits to be,
 From the past will come the fu - ture; what it holds, a mys - ter - y,
 In our death, a res - ur - rec - tion; at the last, a vic - to - ry,

un - re - vealed un - til its sea - son, some - thing God a - lone can see.
 un - re - vealed un - til its sea - son, some - thing God a - lone can see.
 un - re - vealed un - til its sea - son, some - thing God a - lone can see.

Natalie Sleeth composed her "Hymn of Promise" first as a choral anthem and then adapted it to this version for congregational singing. It was dedicated to her husband, Ronald Sleeth, who died shortly after she completed it.

Tune: PROMISE 8.7.8.7.D.
 Natalie Sleeth, 1985

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Offering our Prayer Concerns, and Joys and Thanksgivings

Concerns:

Linda Lang, 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

♩ = 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 and click on the Donate tab. **Thank you.**



Offertory-Meditation Music "Theme from On Golden Pond"

Michael Welden, piano

Presentation of Offerings and Prayer of Dedication

Phyllis Ramsey

Source of all goodness, what can we give that has not already been given to us? Surely no gift of ours can repay Christ's gift of love. Therefore, we offer ourselves, with thanksgiving for new life in the Spirit, and place before you what we have in response to your love. Use us in ways that fulfill your plan for creation, and bless what we give, so that others may learn of your ways.

Amen.

~When We Gather: A Book of Prayers for Worship, James G. Kirk

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

* Doxology

Praise God the Source of Life and Birth

Praise God the source of life and birth. Praise God the Word, who came to earth.
 Praise God, the Spi-rit, ho - ly flame. All glo-ry ho-nor to God's name!
 Old Hundredth NCH #7

*Prayer of Jesus (Please join hands)

Rev. Jeff Munnis

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)

* Sending Hymn

261 Lord of the Dance

Unison
 1. I danced in the morn-ing when the world was be-gun, and I
 2. I danced for the scribe and the Phar - i - see, but they
 3. I danced on the sab-bath when I cured the lame, the
 4. I danced on a Fri-day and the sky turned black; it's
 5. They cut me down and I leapt up high,
 danced in the moon and the stars and the sun, and I
 would not dance and they would not fol - low me; I
 ho - ly peo - ple said it was a shame; they
 hard to dance with the dev - il on your back; they
 I am the life that -'ll nev - er, nev - er die; I'll

G Em Bm Em

came down from heav - en and I danced on the earth. At
 danced for the fish - er - men, for James and John; they
 whipped and they stripped and they hung me high; and they
 bur - ied my bod - y and they thought I'd gone, but
 live in you if you'll live in me;

Am D7 C G Refrain G Bm

Beth - le - hem I had my birth.
 came to me and the dance went on.
 left me there on a cross to die. Dance, then, wher -
 I am the dance and I still go on.
 I am the Lord of the Dance, said he.

Em G

ev - er you may be; I am the Lord of the

Am D G C G D7

Dance, said he. And I'll lead you all wher - ev - er you may

G C D7 G C G

be, and I'll lead you all in the dance, said he.

WORDS: Sydney Carter, 1963
 MUSIC: 19th cent. Shaker tune; adapt. by Sydney Carter, 1963;
 harm. by Gary Alan Smith, 1988

LORD OF THE DANCE
 Irr. with Refrain

© 1963, 1989 Galliard, Ltd.

Benediction and Blessing

Rev. Jeff Munnis

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

“Brother Quixote”

Michael Welden, piano

Bloom Happenings This Week						
Monday Feb. 26	Tuesday Feb. 27	Wednesday Feb. 28	Thursday Feb. 29	Friday March 1	Saturday March 2	Sunday March 3
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	10:00am Jews and Christians Reading Together on Zoom 6:00pm BibleBites Bible Study on Zoom	3:00pm Women of Bloom Zoom Happy Hour		10:00 am Sunday Service at Demuth and on Facebook Live

Congregational Life Announcements

--A warm welcome and thank you to **Jenne Carey**, soprano, **Elaine Wang Meyerhoffer**, mezzo, and **Mike Welden**, piano, for sharing their musical talents with us today

--Thank you to **Ray Allen**, **Wayne Sinclair**, and **Phyllis Ramsey**, for serving as readers for today's service, and to **Linda Lang** for serving as Worship Leader. Special welcome to our called interim pastor, **Rev. Jeff Munnis** for presenting our commentary this morning.

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

Thank you also to our ushers, **Jim Nixon** 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 **Doug Holder** in thanksgiving for John's 70th birthday.

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

Last Week's Participation

--Souls Present at Demuth: 66--Children: 0 --First Timers: 0

--- Facebook Live Views: 14 -Facebook Total Views: 91 --YouTube Views: 10

Sunday Offerings

Tithes, Offerings, and Participation:

Offering, online, by mail and text: \$3,123 Electronic Giving: \$5,333

Permanence Fund: \$242 Cumulative: \$323,651

Spring Fling Reservations: 145 Goal: 157

--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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Brother Quixote by David Lanz, ©1996 by Nara Music, Inc.

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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 May 12 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 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- Will resume on Tuesday, March 5th at 6pm with a new book" **"Be Not Afraid"** by Jean Vanier. For information or to receive the Zoom link, contact Gary Lange at GaryLange13@gmail.com.

Bible Bites will on Thursdays at 6:00 pm. with Reverend Shelley Alexa Somerville, studying the prophet Ezekiel on Zoom.

--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 GaryLange13@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 **Jim Nixon** at nixonsf@aol.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
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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

Rev. "Jeff" Munnis, Interim Minister — 760-483-1454 — jeff@jeffmunnis.com

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

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