



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



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

Third Sunday in Lent  
Communion Sunday  
Honoring Women's History Month  
March 3, 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**

Malcolm Swan, 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**

Ray Stimson

**Music for Centering**

“Romance from the Gadfly”

Malcolm Swan, piano

**\* Call to Worship**

Rich Fluechtling

Leader: God creates women and men in God's image.

**People: She calls us to work together in Harmony, respecting and honoring each other.**

Leader: Women are co-workers with God in creating, sculpting, enriching and preserving life.

**People: She took human form to redeem us from fear and prejudice, anger and hatred, greed and selfishness.**

Leader: Jesus empowers his church and gives us, women and men, new life.

**People: The Spirit manifests herself as Sophia, Wisdom. Sophia encourages, strengthens and empowers all of us in the work of the Kin-dom of God. Aloha, Shalom, Salaam, Vrede, Myr, Ping-an, Paz, Peace. Amen.**

**\* Opening Hymn**

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Be Not Afraid

*Verse 1: Slow, andante (♩ = 80)*



*Refrain*  
*Melody*



Be not a-fraid. I go be-fore you al-ways.

*Harmony*



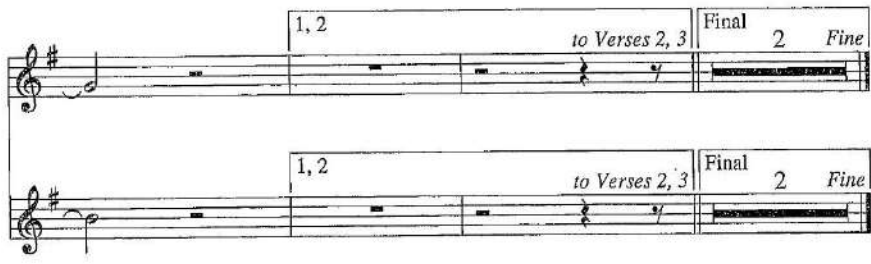
Be not a-fraid. I go be-fore you al-ways.



Come, fol-low me, and I will give you rest.



Come, fol-low me, I will give you rest.



1, 2 to Verses 2, 3 Final 2 Fine

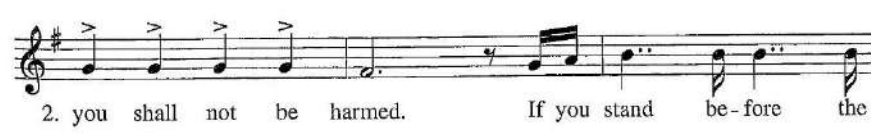
*Verse 2*



2. If you pass through rag-ing wa-ters in the sea,



2. you shall not drown. If you walk a-mid the burn-ing flames,



2. you shall not be harmed. If you stand be-fore the



2. pow'r of hell and death is at your side, know that



2. I am with you through it all. *D.S.*

## 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:  
**Dear God, Creator of us and everything, as millions of women and girls continue to walk every day to collect water, earn a living, sell their goods, mind their children, and so many other reasons, please walk beside them and keep them from harm. Loving God, fulfill many girls' longing for wisdom and a better life. Bless them with a quality education, school supplies, and a family that supports their scholastic goals. Show your compassion to the multitudes of girls and women who endure the damaging physical and relational effects of parental abuse, including child marriage. Holy One, we entrust to you the struggles many girls face every day. Enable them to gain trusting relationships and self-confidence. In your name, we pray...**

~Chris Huber, World Vision, adapted

**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

Dear Creator, You, the borderless sea of substance, we ask you to give to all the world that which we need most - Peace.

-Maya Angelou

**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

Exodus 20:1-17

Robert Van Dyke

Then God spoke all these words, and said, “I am YHWH who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.

“Do not worship any gods except me!

“Do not make for yourselves any carved image or likeness of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters under the earth, and do not bow down to them or serve them! For I, YHWH, am a jealous god, and for the parents’ fault I punish the children, the grandchildren and the great-grandchildren of those who turn from me; but I show kindness to the thousandth generation of those who love me and heed my commandments.

“Do not utter the Name of YHWH to misuse it, for YHWH will not acquit anyone who utters God’s Name to misuse it!

“Remember the Sabbath day and keep it holy! For six days you will labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath for YHWH. Do no work on that day, neither you nor your daughter nor your son, nor your workers —women or men — nor your animals, nor the foreigner who lives among you. For in the six days YHWH made the heavens and the earth and the sea and all that they hold but rested on the seventh day; this is why YHWH has blessed the Sabbath day and made it sacred.

“Honor your mother and your father, so that you may have a long life in the land that YHWH has given you!

“No murdering!

“No adultery!

“No stealing!

“No giving false testimony against your neighbor!

“No desiring your neighbor’s house! No desiring your neighbor’s spouse, or worker—female or male—or ox, or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor!”

~Inclusive Bible Version

## Gospel Reading

John 2:13-22

Pamela Robinson

Since it was almost the Jewish Passover, Jesus went up to Jerusalem. In the temple, he found people selling cattle, sheep, and pigeons, while the moneychangers sat at their counters. Making a whip out of cords, Jesus drove them all out of the Temple—even the cattle and sheep—and overturned the tables of the money changers, scattering their coins. Then he faced the pigeon sellers: “Take all this out of here! Stop turning God’s house into a market! The disciples remembered the words of scripture: “Zeal for your house consumes me”.

The Temple authorities intervened and said, “What sign can you show us to justify what you have done?”

Jesus answered, “Destroy the Temple, and in three days I will raise it up.”

They retorted, “It has taken forty-six years to build this Temple, and you’re going to raise it up in three days?” But the temple he was speaking of was his body. It was only after Jesus had been raised from the dead that the disciples remembered this statement and believed the scripture—and the words that Jesus had spoken. ~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

## Offering our Prayer Concerns, and Joys and Thanksgivings

Concerns:

Ray Stimson

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

“Water Tapestry”

Malcolm Swan, piano

## Presentation of Offerings and Prayer of Dedication

Pamela Robinson

O God of justice and mercy, your way commands our obedience; your grace gives us encouragement. We can do nothing apart from the blessing you bestow. Alive with the presence of your indwelling Spirit, we are bold to offer what we have as signs of our devotion. Accept what we bring, and multiply its effectiveness, for the sake of Jesus, your gift to us. 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

## The Great Thanksgiving

God is with you.

Rev. Jeff Munnis

**And also with you.**

Let us lift our hearts.

**We lift them to our God.**

Let us give thanks and praise.

**This is a good and joyful thing to do.**

**Pamela Robinson:** It is a right and good and joyful thing, always and everywhere, to give you praise, all-loving God, creator of energy and matter, heaven and earth. Long ago, you renewed your rainbow covenant with every living creature by entering our realm in the person of Jesus. He gave us your unconditional love and this mandate:

**I give you a new commandment: Love one another. And you're to love one another the way I have loved you. This is how all will know that you're my disciples: that you truly love one another."**

Therefore, we celebrate you, joining our voices with the wind and streams, the animals and flowers, the living and the dead, the stars, and the planets and all the company of creation, who forever sing of their devotion to your love and glory:

All sing.

## Santo, Santo, Santo!

(Sing first in Spanish, then in English)

*Text and music: Anon., Argentina*

The musical score is written for a piano accompaniment in 6/8 time. It consists of two systems of music. The first system has a treble and bass staff. The treble staff has a key signature of one flat (B-flat) and a common time signature. The bass staff has a key signature of one flat and a common time signature. The melody is in the treble staff, and the bass line is in the bass staff. The lyrics are written below the treble staff. The second system also has a treble and bass staff. The treble staff has a key signature of one flat and a common time signature. The bass staff has a key signature of one flat and a common time signature. The melody is in the treble staff, and the bass line is in the bass staff. The lyrics are written below the treble staff. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and accidentals. The lyrics are in Spanish and English.

San - to, san - to, san - to, mi cor - a - zón te a - do - ra! Mi  
Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly, my heart, my heart a - dores you! My

cor - a - zón te sa - be de - cir: san - to e - res Dios.  
heart is glad to say the words: you are ho - ly, God.

**Rich Fluechtling:** We remember that on the night before Jesus was betrayed by one whom he loved, and killed by ones who feared him, he sat at table with his friends, women and men and children, sharing the feast of the Passover, which is the celebration of the liberation of God's people. Remembering God's power, Jesus took bread, and after he had given thanks and blessed it, he broke it saying,

**“This is my work and my life, for you and with you. Take it all of you, and do this remembering me.”**

**Pamela Robinson:** After the meal Jesus took the Elijah Cup, the cup traditionally reserved for the Holy One to come. But instead of waiting, Jesus passed it to them as it is now being passed on to us, and he said,

**“This is the cup of the new covenant. It is the cup of justice and peace poured out for all. Drink of it all of you and do this remembering me.”**



**Rich Fluechtling:** Each time that we break bread together we participate in the Body of the Risen Christ, for we are the Body of the Risen Christ. And each time we share this cup we participate in the New Community, for we are God's hope of the New Community. For this, we turn to you for blessing:

**Pour out your Spirit on us and these gifts of grain and grape, so in this sharing we recognize Christ in our midst. This offering of praise and thanksgiving is an offering of us to you. Hasten the day when the prophets' dreams come to pass: when justice rolls down like waters and nations no longer threaten each other, neither shall they learn war any more. This we pray by the authority of Jesus and in your holy grace. Amen.**

### **Communion Invitation**

Rev. Jeff Munnis

These are the gifts of God for the people of God. This is bread and beverage for the journey. In this church community, we share an inclusive communion, which means you need not be a member of this congregation or any community of faith to join us at the table. We believe Jesus welcomed everyone present. We do this in remembrance of him. We do this historically... globally... personally.... For we believe Christ is the host. Christ sets the table and Christ welcomes all. Likewise, no one is required by the host to come forward. If you wish to remain in your seat, you are welcome to relax and enjoy the music. If you wish to be served at your seat, please raise your hand as the line ends, so the servers will come to you. Now, let all who wish to come, come, for God's table is ready.

(After a moment, ushers will invite you to move forward for Communion.)

### **Communion Music**

“On Eagle's Wings”

Malcolm Swan, piano

**\*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

God of Grace and God of Glory

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Harry Emerson Fosdick, 1930; alt.

1 God of grace and God of glo - ry, on your peo - ple  
 2 From the e - vils that sur - round us and as - sail the  
 3 Cure your chil - dren's war - ring mad - ness; bend our pride to  
 4 Set our feet on loft - y plac - es; gird our lives that  
 5 Save us from weak res - ig - na - tion to the e - vils

pour your power; crown your an - cient church - 's sto - ry;  
 Sav - ior's ways, from the fears that long have bound us—  
 your con - trol. Shame our reck - less, self - ish glad - ness,  
 they may be ar - mored with all Christ - like grac - es,  
 we de - plore; let the search for your sal - va - tion

bring its bud to glo - rious flower. Grant us wis - dom, grant us cour - age,  
 free our hearts for faith and praise. Grant us wis - dom, grant us cour - age,  
 rich in things and poor in soul. Grant us wis - dom, grant us cour - age,  
 in the fight to set us free. Grant us wis - dom, grant us cour - age,  
 be our glo - ry ev - er - more. Grant us wis - dom, grant us cour - age,

for the fac - ing of this hour, for the fac - ing of this hour.  
 for the liv - ing of these days, for the liv - ing of these days.  
 make our bro - ken spir - its whole, make our bro - ken spir - its whole.  
 in the quest for lib - er - ty, in the quest for lib - er - ty.  
 serv - ing you whom we a - dore, serv - ing you whom we a - dore.

Harry Emerson Fosdick, a prophetic preacher and writer, taught at Union Theological Seminary from 1915 to 1946. This hymn was written for the opening service and dedication of Riverside Church, New York City, which he served for twenty years.

Tune: CWM RHONDDA 8.7.8.7.8.7.7.  
 John Hughes, c. 1907

## 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

“Demand et Réponse”

Malcolm Swan, piano

<b>Bloom Happenings This Week</b>						
Monday March 4	Tuesday March 5	Wednesday March 6	Thursday March 7	Friday March 8	Saturday March 9	Sunday March 10
<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>10:45am – 1:00pm</b> Lunch served at St. Paul’s Episcopal	<b>10:00am</b> Jews and Christians Reading Together on Zoom  <b>6:00pm</b> BibleBites Bible Study on Zoom	<b>3:00pm</b> Women of Bloom Zoom Happy Hour		<b>10:00 am</b> Sunday Service at Demuth and on Facebook Live
<b>2:00pm</b> Spring Fling Team Meeting in the office	<b>6:00pm</b> Bloom Book Club on Zoom					

# Congregational Life Announcements

--A warm welcome and thank you to **Malcolm Swan**, piano, for sharing his musical talents with us today

--Thank you to **Rich Fluechtling**, **Robert Van Dyke**, and **Pamela Robinson**, for serving as readers for today's service, and to **Ray Stimson** for serving as Worship Leader. Thank you to Ricch Fluechtling and Pamela Robinson who will join Rev. Jeff Munnis in presenting our Communion service today.

--Thank you to **JacksonENZler** for handling the A/V technical aspects for today's service. Thank you also to our ushers, **Megan** and **Jack Cassette**, for welcoming us this morning.

--**Flowers on the Worship Center**, symbolic of the living Christ, are offered to the glory of God by **Pamela and Mike Robinson** in memory of their son, Aaron, whose birthday was March 7.

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

## Last Week's Participation

--Souls Present at Demuth: 84--Children: 2 --First Timers: 5  
--- Facebook Live Views: 17 -Facebook Total Views: 118 --YouTube Views: 49

## Sunday Offerings

Tithes, Offerings, and Participation:  
Offering, online, by mail and text: \$1,644 Electronic Giving: \$1,186  
Permanence Fund: \$0 Cumulative: \$323,651  
Spring Fling Reservations: 146 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](http://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.

**Romance from the Gadfly** by Shostakovich

**Water Tapestry** by Kevin Kern

**On Eagle's Wings** by Michael Joncan, arr. by Mark Hayes

**Demand et Réponse** by Samuel Coleridge Taylor

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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](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-** Will resume on Tuesday, March 5<sup>th</sup> 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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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](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**

**Rev. "Jeff" Munnis, Interim Minister — 760-483-1454 — [jeff@bloominthedesert.org](mailto:jeff@bloominthedesert.org)**

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

**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)**