



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



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

**Fifth Sunday in Lent**  
**Honoring Women's History Month**  
**March 17, 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

“Sonata” “Down by the Salley Gardens” “Danny Boy”

**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**

**Music for Centering**

“Home”  
from “The Wiz”

Marc Copfer, soloist  
Mike Welden, piano

Marc Copfer is originally from Cleveland, Ohio and has been singing since childhood and through high school in various choruses and ensembles. Most recently, he was part of Cleveland’s North Coast Men’s Chorus under the artistic direction of Richard Cole for almost 15 years as a member, principal soloist, and dancer including in their signature ensemble. The Coastliners. Upon his arrival in the valley he has joined the Palm Springs Gay Men’s Chorus, where he has been a featured soloist. He is also a singing member and featured soloist with Coachella Valley Classical Voices under the direction of Douglass Nagel. He lives in Cathedral City with his partner, J.R..

**\* Call to Worship**

Rich Fluechtling

Children of light and life and love rejoice!

**God invites us here.**

Benefactors of grace, come in!

**Christ welcomes us all.**

God of grace and light, shine your Spirit through our worship and into our lives, so we may receive your word and appreciate your guidance.

**In the light of your love, we pray.**

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

**\* Opening Hymn**

## God of the Women

Carolyn Winfrey Gillette, 1998

*Slane*  
ancient Irish ballad



1. God of the wo - men who ans - wered your call,
2. God of the wo - men who walked Je - sus' Way,
3. God of the wo - men long put to the test,
4. God of the wo - men who ran from the tomb,
5. O God of Phoe - be and mi - ni - sters all,



Trust - ing your pro - mi - ses, giv - ing their all,  
Giv - ing their re - sour - ces, learn - ing to pray,  
Left out of sto - ries, for - got - ten, op - pressed,  
Prayed with the oth - ers in that up - per room,  
May we be joy - ful in an - swering your call.



Wo - men like Sa - rah and Han - nah and Ruth—  
Ma - ry, Jo - an - na, Su - san - nah, and more—  
Qui - et - ly ask - ing: "Who smiled at my birth?"—  
Then felt your Spi - rit on Pen - te - cost Day—  
Give us the strength of your Spi - rit so near



Give us their cour - age to live in your truth.  
May we give free - ly as they did be - fore.  
In Je - sus' dy - ing you show us our worth.  
May we so glad - ly pro - claim you to - day.  
That we may share in your mi - ni - stry here.

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Copied from *Gifts of Love: New Hymns for Today's Worship*

by Carolyn Winfrey Gillette (Geneva Press, 2000).

Email: carolynshymns@gmail.com | New Hymns: www.carolynshymns.com

## In Faith We Open Our Hearts to Ministry

### Prayer for Good and Growth

Gracious God, we want to walk with your guidance.

**We want to be a good help for your world.**

We want to assist the way for others with love and compassion.

**We want to fulfill the promises we make and the promise you see in each of us.**

Shine upon us with your love.

**Bathe us in your comfort and grace.**

Energize the knowledge of your Holy Spirit in us, so we will be encouraged as your children of grace, and live as your people empowering love. Amen. (Mary Scrifres Ministries, 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

The eternal source of love and life reasons us so valuable that the ministry of Jesus is given to love us and live through us. This is a gift of amazing grace!

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

**The Word Informs Our Living with Grace and Power**

**Hebrew Scripture Reading**

Jeremiah 31:31-34

Rev. Douglas Holder

“Behold, the days are coming, says YHWH, when I will establish a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah. It will not be like the covenant I made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand to bring them up out of the land of Egypt—a covenant they broke, though I was their spouse, says YHWH. But this covenant I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says YHWH: I will put my law in their minds and on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people.

“No longer will they need to teach one another or remind one another to listen to YHWH. All of them, high and low alike, will listen to me, says YHWH, for I will forgive their misdeeds and I will remember their sins no more.

(Inclusive Bible Version)

**Anthem**

“You’ll Never Walk Alone”  
from “Carousel”

Marc Copfer, soloist  
Mike Welden, piano

**\* Gospel Reading**

John 31:20-33

Ann Peterson

Among those who had come up to worship at the Passover festival were some Greeks. They approached Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, and put forth this request: "Please, we would like to see Jesus." Philip went up to Andrew, and together the two went to tell Jesus.

Jesus replied,

Now the hour has come  
for the Chosen One to be glorified.

The truth of the matter is,  
unless a grain of wheat  
falls on the ground and dies,  
it remains only a single grain;  
but if it dies,  
it yields a rich harvest.

If you love your life, you lose it;  
if you hate your life in this world  
you'll keep it for eternal life.

Anyone who wants to work for me  
must follow in my footsteps,  
and wherever I am,  
my worker will be there too.  
Anyone who works for me  
will be honored by Abba God.

Now my soul is troubled.  
What will I say: 'Abba, save me from this hour?'  
But it was for this very reason  
that I have come to this hour.

Abba, glorify your name!"  
A voice came from heaven: 'I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again.'

The crowds that stood nearby heard this and said it was a clap of thunder; others said, "It was an angel speaking."

Jesus answered, "It was not for my sake that this voice came, but for yours.  
"Sentence is now being passed on this world;  
now the ruler of this world will be overthrown.

And when I am lifted up from this earth,  
I will draw all people to myself."

By these words Jesus indicated the kind of death he would die. (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

# What Gift Can We Bring?

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Jane Marshall, 1980

1 Sam. 9:7; 1 Cor. 3:8-9; 1 John 4:13-16

*Unison*

1 What gift can we bring, what pres - ent, what to - ken?  
 2 Give thanks for the past, for those who had vi - sion,  
 3 Give thanks for to - mor - row, full of sur - pris - es,  
 4 This gift we now bring, this pres - ent, this to - ken,

What words can con - vey it, the joy of this day?  
 who plant - ed and wa - tered so dreams could come true.  
 for know - ing what - ev - er to - mor - row may bring,  
 these words can con - vey it, the joy of this day!

When grate - ful we come, re - mem - bering, re - joic - ing,  
 Give thanks for the now, for stud - y, for wor - ship,  
 The Word is our prom - ise al - ways, for - ev - er;  
 When grate - ful we come, re - mem - bering, re - joic - ing,

what song can we of - fer in hon - or and praise?  
 for mis - sion that bids us turn prayer in - to deed.  
 we rest in God's keep - ing and live in God's love.  
 this song we now of - fer in hon - or and praise!

*Jane Marshall received the first "Woman of Achievement" award at Perkins School of Theology, Southern Methodist University, where she teaches. She wrote this hymn for the twenty-fifth anniversary of her home church, Northaven United Methodist Church in Dallas.*

Tune: ANNIVERSARY SONG 11.11.11:  
 Jane Marshall, 1980

Copyright © 1982 by Hope Publishing Company

## Offering our Prayer Concerns, and Joys and Thanksgivings

Concerns:

Rev. Jeff Munnis

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



### Offertory-Meditation Music

"Molly Malone"  
"Cockles and Mussels"

Mike Welden, piano

### Presentation of Offerings and Prayer of Dedication

Ann Peterson

O God of wisdom, you open our eyes to behold the wonder of your mighty acts. You free our tongues to proclaim as good news Christ's suffering for us all. We sing, "Hosanna in the highest!" Christ has entered our lives. Accept these offerings as our garlands of welcome, and hear our shouts of praise as we seek to follow him. 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 mother,  
which art the earth,  
Nurturing are thy ways.  
Thy web of life be woven  
Thy way be found within,  
As it is all around.

Thank you this day for our daily bread and sweat  
and forgive us our misuse of you,  
as we forgive others their misuse of us.

And lead us not into exploitation,  
But deliver us  
From lording it over you,  
And over each other,  
And over all our other fellow creatures.

For thine are the waters of life,  
The hills, valleys, and plains of home,  
The breeding, seeding, feeding ground,  
For now, and for as close to forever  
As we will ever come.

Ah, woman!  
Our Father, Mother,  
who are in the world and surpass the world,  
Blessed be your presence,  
in us, in animals and flowers,  
in still air and wind.

May justice and peace dwell among us,  
as you come to us.



Your will, be our will;  
Your will that we be sisters and brothers,  
as bread is bread, water is itself,  
For our hunger, for quenching of thirst.  
Forgive us.

We walk crookedly in the world,  
are perverse, and fail of our promise.  
But we would be human,  
if only you consent to stir up our hearts.

Amen.

EARTH DANCE based on the Lord's Prayer  
published in Minnesota Women's Press, December 1999  
Author thought to be Karen Loveland, as member of Unity Church,  
Santa Rosa, CA Passed on in 2000 by Nancy Carroll

\* Sending Hymn

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Hope of the World

Georgia Harkness, 1954; alt.

1 Hope of the world, O Christ of great com - pas - sion,  
 2 Hope of the world, God's gift of our re - demp - tion,  
 3 Hope of the world, who by the cross did save us  
 4 Hope of the world, O Christ, o'er death vic - to - rious,

speak to our fear - ful hearts by con - flict torn.  
 bring - ing to hun - gry souls the bread of life,  
 from death and sad de - spair, from sin and guilt,  
 who by this sign did con - quer grief and pain,

Save us your peo - ple from con - sum - ing pas - sion,  
 Still let your Spir - it un - to us be giv - en  
 We ren - der back the love your mer - cy gave us;  
 We would be faith - ful to your gos - pel glo - rious;

from false pur - suits through which our lives are worn.  
 to heal earth's wounds and end its bit - ter strife.  
 take back our lives and use them as you will.  
 our Sov - ereign who for - ev - er more shall reign!

*Author of many books in her field and an internationally recognized teacher, Georgia Harkness was one of the leading women theologians of her generation. This text was written for the Second General Assembly of the World Council of Churches.*

Tune: ANCIENT OF DAYS 11.10.11.10  
 J. Albert Jeffrey, 1886  
 Adapt. The New Century Hymnal, 1992

Words Copyright © 1954, renewal 1982 by The Hymn Society

## 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

“The Galway Piper”

Mike Welden, piano

<b>Bloom Happenings This Week</b>						
Monday March 18	Tuesday March 19	Wednesday March 20	Thursday March 21	Friday March 22	Saturday March 23	Sunday March 24
<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>6:00pm</b> Book Study on Zoom	<b>10:45am – 1:00pm</b> Lunch served at St. Paul’s Episcopal	<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

# Congregational Life Announcements

--A warm welcome and thank you to **Mike Welden**, piano, and **Mard Copfer**, soloist, for sharing their musical talents with us today

--Thank you to **Rich Fluechtling**, **Rev. Douglas Holder**, and **Ann Peterson**, for serving as readers for today's service.

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

Thank you also to our ushers, **Randy Zeese** and **Sheila Dell**, for welcoming us this morning.

--**Flowers on the Worship Center**, symbolic of the living Christ, are offered to the glory of God from Spring Fling in memory of **Woody Miller**.

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

## Last Week's Participation

--Souls Present at Demuth: 56--Children: 0 --First Timers: 1

--- Facebook Live Views: not available -Facebook Total Views: 82 --YouTube Views: 13

## Sunday Offerings

Tithes, Offerings, and Participation:

Offering, online, by mail and text: \$2,294 Electronic Giving: \$1,651

Permanence Fund: \$350 Cumulative: \$324,026

--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.

**Sonata**, (Moonlight), 1<sup>st</sup> movement, by Ludwig van Beethoven, Op.27, No.2.

**Down by the Salley Gardens**, arr. by Phillip Keveren, ©2000, by Hal Leonard Corp.

**Danny Boy**, arr. by Phillip Keveren, ©2000 by Hal Leonard Corp.

**Home**, from "The Wiz"

**You'll Never Walk Alone**, from "Carosel"

**Molly Malone**, (Cockles and Mussels), arr. by Phillip Keveren, ©2000 by Hal Leonard Corp.

**The Galway Piper**, arr. by Phillip Keveren, ©2000 by Hal Leonard Corp.

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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.

### 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@jeffmunnis.com](mailto:jeff@jeffmunnis.com)**

**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)**