



Bloom in the Desert Ministries
United Church of Christ
Palm Springs, CA
Palm Sunday ~ March 24, 2024
New Member Reception
Honoring Women's History Month

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 (for meditation and gathering) Doug Holder, piano

10:00am Gathering Song

Enter, Rejoice, and Come In

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 Rev. Jeff Munnis

Music for Centering Doug Holder, piano

* Call to Worship

Paul Gibb

This is the day that God has made, let us rejoice and be glad in it.

This is the day we celebrate Jesus' riding into the Roman-occupied holy city of Jerusalem and being proclaimed by those who spread cloaks and branches along his way to be their embodiment of God's salvation.

Let their adulation be our sign and assurance of Jesus' victory over all deaths, including those caused by hatred, bureaucracy, fear, politics, idolatry, and madness. Grant that we who commit to walk in the path of Jesus be mindful of his passion and God's love.

Hosanna, Hosanna in the Highest!

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

* Opening Hymn

"Hosanna, Loud Hosanna"

213

Jennette Threlfall, 1873; alt.

Mark 11:8-10; Matt. 21:15

1 "Ho - san - na, loud ho - san - na," the lit - tle chil - dren sang;
2 From Ol - i - vet they fol - lowed a - mid a cheer - ing crowd,
3 "Ho - san - na in the high - est!" That an - cient song is ours.

through pil - lared court and tem - ple the love - ly an - them rang;
the vic - tor palm branch wav - ing, and chant - ing clear and loud.
We hail our great Re - deem - er and sing with all our powers:

To Je - sus, who had blessed them close fold - ed to his breast,
 The one whom an - gels wor - ship rode on in low - ly state,
 "Ho - san - na, Christ, we praise you with heart and life and voice.

the chil - dren sang their prais - es, the sim - plest and the best.
 and glad to see the chil - dren, slowed down the don-key's gait.
 Ho - san - na! In your pres - ence for - ev - er we'll re - joice!"

Jennette Threlfall of England, who was disabled by two accidents, wrote hymns that inspired hope and courage in others. This text was published in her collection Sunshine and Shadow.

Tune: ELLACOMBE C.M.D.
 Gesangbuch der herzoglichen Württembergischen
 katholischen Hofkapelle, 1784

In Faith We Open Our Hearts to Ministry

A Prayer for Good and Growth

**God give me faith—all else will follow course.
 Give me the heart that hopes when skies are grey.
 Give me the eyes that smile along life's way,
 give me the soul that whispers, "Do not fear,
 God, though unseen by mortals, still is near."
 If when the path is dark, I cannot see
 open my eyes and light the way for me.
 If from my lips come prayers that seem unheard,
 give me the strength to make "Thy Will" my word.**

**What if I had to bear my pain alone?
 Could not unto Thee make my sorrows known,
 had not the sweet assurance of Thy care
 braving me onward – on to do and dare?
 Just as a flower secluded from the sun
 gives up life's race before 'tis scarce begun,
 without the knowledge of Thy Guiding Grace
 I would not even dare to start the race.
 God give me faith – all else will follow course.**

Mirla Greenwood Thayne

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 creative and loving kindness, receive now our silent prayers.

~ Silence ~

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

Words of Encouragement

Throughout the testaments and witness statements, God promises love and justice to all.

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

Isaiah 54:4-9a

Carol Moore

Fear not! You will not be put to shame.

Do not cower! You will not be disgraced.

You will forget the shame of your youth

and the disgrace of the past will be forgotten.

For now your Creator will be your spouse,

whose name is YHWH Omnipotent.

Your Redeemer is the Holy One of Israel,

who is called ‘the God of all the earth.’

For YHWH calls you back—

like a grieving spouse abandoned by a mate,

a couple who married too young,

who part impetuously and then regret it.”

says your God.

I did abandon you for a brief moment,
but with much tenderness I will take you back.

In an outburst of anger, I hid my face momentarily;
but with everlasting love I will gather you,”
says YHWH, your Redeemer.

I am now as I was in the days of Noah
when I swore that Noah’s waters
should never flood the earth again.”

~Inclusive Bible Translation

Here ends the Hebrew Scripture Lesson.

Silent Meditation

*** Gospel Reading**

Mark 11:1-11

Larry Metcalf

As they approached Jerusalem and came to Bethphage and Bethany at the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent off two of the disciples with this instruction, “Go into the village straight ahead of you, and as soon as you enter it you will find tethered there a colt on which no one has ridden. If anyone says to you ‘Why are you doing that?’ say ‘The Rabbi needs it but will send it back very soon.’”

So they went off, and finding a colt tethered out on the street near a gate, they untied it. Some of the bystanders said to them, “What do you mean by untying that colt?” They answered as Jesus had told them to, and the people let them take it.

They brought the colt to Jesus and threw their cloaks across its back, and he sat on it. Many people spread their cloaks across the road, while others spread leafy branches which they had cut from the fields. And everyone around Jesus, in front or in back of him, cried out,

“Hosanna!

Blessed is the One who comes in the name of our God!

Blessed is the coming reign of our ancestor David!

Hosannah in the highest!”

Jesus entered Jerusalem and went into the Temple precincts. He inspected everything there, but since it was already late in the afternoon, he went out to Bethany accompanied by the twelve.

~Inclusive Bible Translation

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

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Ride On! Ride On in Majesty

Luke 19:36-38; Zech. 9:9

Henry H. Milman, 1827; adapt. Lavon Bayler, 1993

1 Ride on! Ride on in maj - es - ty!
 2 Ride on! Ride on in maj - es - ty!
 3 Ride on! Ride on in maj - es - ty!
 4 Ride on! Ride on in maj - es - ty!

O Christ, with brave hu - mil - i - ty,
 As crowds of peo - ple come to see
 Ride on in hum - ble dig - ni - ty;
 For you have set your peo - ple free

On low - ly colt, your road pur - sue,
 And shout ho - san - nas, lift - ing high
 Be - hold the ones you came to save
 And we, re - mem - bering all your pain,

as palms and cloaks are spread for you.
 their praise for one a - bout to die.
 from sense - less life and end - less grave.
 now meet a - gain to hail your reign.

Henry H. Milman, a priest of the Church of England, served successively as professor of poetry at Oxford, canon of Westminster, and dean of St. Paul's Cathedral, London. He was also a successful playwright and historian.

Tune: ST. DROSTANE L.M.
 John B. Dykes, 1862
 Alternate tune: WINCHESTER NEW

Reception of Members

Presentation and Introduction of New Members

John DiNapoli

We invite to come forward those who are becoming members or associate members with us in Bloom in the Desert Ministries United Church of Christ.

Friends in Christ, these people have found nurture and support in the family of Christ. They are here to claim in our presence their covenantal relationship with Christ and the members of the church. They are here for service to Jesus Christ, the church, the community, and the world, using the gifts which God's Spirit bestows. *Brief words of introduction of each person.*

Welcome of New Members

Lynda Toland, Moderator

“You are no longer strangers or outsiders. You belong here. God is building a home, using us all—irrespective of how we got here! God used the apostles and prophets for the foundation. Now God is using you, fitting you in brick by brick, stone by stone, with Christ Jesus as the cornerstone that holds all the parts together. We see it taking shape day by day—a holy temple built by God, all of us built into it, a temple in which God is quite at home.

Membership Covenant

Rev. Jeff Munnis

Do you promise by the grace of God to follow in the way of Jesus Christ, to resist oppression and evil, to show love and justice, and to share in the work and word of Jesus Christ as best as you are able?

Candidates reply **I promise, with the help of God,**

Do you promise, according the grace given you, to grow in the Christian faith and to be a faithful member of the church, celebrating Christ's presence and furthering Christ's mission in the world?

Candidates reply **I promise, with the help of God,**

Vision Statement

Lynda Toland, Moderator

Let us read together the Vision Statement adopted by the congregation.

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.

The Moderator addresses the new members.

You have had spiritual encounters and experiences throughout your life, perhaps with family, churches, or other spiritual communities. Today, we rejoice in your pilgrimage of faith which has brought you to this time and place. We give thanks for every community that has nurtured you and been nurtured by your presence along your spiritual journey. Today we celebrate your presence among us in this household of faith.

Covenant Promise of Participation

Members of the congregation may also take this opportunity to reaffirm their covenant of membership.

Do you promise, as you are able, to participate in and support the life and mission of this family of God's people, sharing regularly in the worship of God and enlisting in the work of this local church as we serve this community and the world? If so, please respond: "I promise with the help of God."

Candidates reply **I promise, with the help of God,**

Covenant Promise of the Congregation

As a gathered congregation, let us express to these persons our welcome and affirm our covenant of mutual ministry in Christ.

All: We members and friends of Bloom in the Desert Ministries, joyfully welcome you into membership of this church. We promise to love you as we share the hopes and labors of the church of Jesus Christ. We will walk with you amidst life's hopes and fears, in happiness and sadness. By the power of the Holy Spirit may we continue to grow together in our faith, as we love God with all our hearts, souls, minds, and strength, and as we love one another and our neighbors as ourselves.

Prayer

Rev. Jeff Munnis

Eternal God, we praise you for calling us to be your people and for gathering us into the Body of Christ. We thank you for sending to us these new members, that we may work together in serving the needs of others. Confirm in us the power of your eternal covenant with every living creature that we may live in our spirit, share regularly in worship, and so love each other that we may have among us the same mind which was in Christ Jesus, our savior, brother, sovereign, and friend. Let the congregation say "amen."

Amen.

Greetings of Christian Love

Rev. Jeff Munnis and Lynda Toland

In the name of Jesus Christ, and on behalf of Bloom in the Desert Ministries United Church of Christ, we extend to you our Christian love, welcoming you into the community of this local church.

Congregation may affirm their welcome with applause. New members sign the Register and place a rock in the membership vase.

Offering our Prayer Concerns, and Joys and Thanksgivings

Rev. Jeff Munnis

Prayers of Concern, followed by...

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.

Prayers of Joys and Thanksgivings, followed by...

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. Amen.

Sung Response

♩ = 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.

Offering Our Gifts — Expressing God's Love and Empowering Good Works

Rev. Jeff Munnis

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. **You may use the QR Code at right to donate.**

Online giving is available and easy! Go to: www.bloominthedesert.org and click on the Donate tab. **Thank you.**



Offertory-Meditation Music

Doug Holder, piano

Presentation of Offerings and Prayer of Dedication

Lynda Toland

Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord. Blessed are the gifts we receive in Christ's name. We come before you, O God, with the many blessings that you have bestowed upon us. Accept them as in Christ you accept us. Use what we bring, so that others can shout, "Hosanna, Christ reigns. Amen.

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

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

Praise God, From Whom All Blessings Flow

The musical score is written on four staves in a 3/2 time signature with a key signature of two flats (B-flat and E-flat). The melody is simple and hymn-like. 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!"

The Prayer of Jesus

Rev. Jeff Munnis

Beloved, our God, revealed in the heavens, let us honor your name in all its holy splendor.

May your dominion come in our lifetime. May your purpose be fulfilled on earth, as your will governs the heavens.

Give us today the bread we need, and in your abundance let us feed each other.

Forgive us the harm we have done as we forgive those who have harmed us.

When temptation is near, keep us faithful to you When evil surrounds us be our savior.

For authority, power and glory belong to you, and you alone, now and forever. Amen.

~Paraphrase by Andy Lang, The Hours of Prayer ©2020

Sending Hymn

76

Sent Forth by God's Blessing

Omer Westendorf, 1964

Descant

2 With praise and thanks - giv - ing to God ev - er liv - ing, the

Unison

1 Sent forth by God's bless-ing, our true faith con - fess - ing, the
 2 With praise and thanks - giv - ing to God ev - er liv - ing, the

tasks of our ev - ery - day life we will face. Our faith ev - er

peo - ple of God from this dwell-ing take leave. The ser - vice is
 tasks of our ev - ery - day life we will face. Our faith ev - er

shar-ing, in love ev - er car - ing, em - brac - ing God's chil - dren of

end - ed, O now be ex - tend - ed the fruits of our wor - ship in
 shar-ing, in love ev - er car - ing, em - brac - ing God's chil - dren of

Omer Westendorf, author of numerous hymns, compiler of several hymnals, and founder of World Library Publications, included this hymn in People's Mass Book, 1964, the first vernacular Roman Catholic hymn and service book to implement the decrees of Vatican II.

Tune: THE ASH GROVE 6.6.11.6.6.11.D.
 Welsh folk melody
 Harm. Leland Sateren, 1972
 Descant, The New Century Hymnal, 1993

Benediction

Rev. Jeff Munnis

Mutual Blessing

Rev. Jeff Munnis

Our worship is ended. Our service begins. What does God need from us?

“Simply do justice, love kindness and walk humbly with your God.”

As we travel the days of this Holy Week;
God be your comfort, your strength,
God be your hope and support:
God be your light

My dear friends in faith, will you go from wherever you are to be people of God in Christ’s name?

We will. Amen!

Passing of the Peace

Rev. Jeff Munnis

Let us safely offer one another signs of grace and peace and go in peace. Amen.

Postlude

Doug Holder, piano

--**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.
--**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 Rev. Douglas Holder** on the piano, for sharing his musical talents with us today.

--**Thank you to Paul Gibb, Carol Moore, and Larry Metcalf** for serving as readers for today’s service. Thank you also to **John DiNapoli, Lynda Toland** and **Rev. Jeff** for leading the reception of new members.

--**Thank you to Jackson Enzler** for handling the technical aspects for today’s service. Thank you also to **Carol Moore** and **Megan Cassette** for serving as our ushers this morning.

--**Flowers on the Worship Center, symbolic of the risen Christ** are offered to the glory of God by Elaine Wang-Meyerhoffer in honor of her parents.

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

Ministries of Leadership and Support

---**Open Leadership Meetings** are typically the second Wednesday, 6:30-8:00pm PDT. The next hybrid meeting will be April 10 at 6:30pm PDT in the church office. All are welcome with voice. Bloom members have 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.

Church Growth and New Member Involvement Ministry

--**If you are interested in making covenant as a member or associate member** with Bloom in the Desert Ministries UCC, please contact **John DiNapoli** at dinops@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**-. Tuesdays at 6pm with the book " **Be Not Afraid**" by Jean Vanier on Zoom.

--**Bible Bites** Thursdays at 6:00 pm. with Reverend Shelley Alexa Somerville and studying Ezekiel on Zoom.

--**Divine Love and Wisdom** Tuesdays at 3:00 starting April 2 in person in the Bloom office with Pastor Jeff Munnis and Dr. Stelli Munnis.

For further information contact Gary Lange at 760-773-1014 or 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.

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.

Last Week's Participation

Sunday Service: --Souls Present at Demuth: 64 --Children: 2 --First Timers: 6
--Facebook Live Viewers: 18 --Facebook Total Views: 101 --YouTube Page Views 15

Last Sunday's Offering

--**Previous Week's Support**: Tithes, Offerings, and Participation:

Offering, online, by mail and text: \$1,033 Electronic Giving: \$93

Permanence Fund: \$350 Cumulative: \$311,301

--Please sign up for Ralph's Community Rewards Card. 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.

Holy Week Schedule

All times are Pacific Daylight Time

Maundy Thursday, March 28, at 6:30pm in the Church Office and on Facebook Live

Easter Sunrise Service, March 31, 6:15am, at Demuth Community Center

Easter Service, March 31, 10am, at Demuth Community Center and on Facebook Live

A wheelchair and 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 Happenings this Week

Monday March 25	Tuesday March 26	Wednesday March 27	Maundy Thursday March 28	Good Friday March 29	Saturday March 30	Sunday March 31
10:30am-1pm Lunch for our unhoused neighbors served at United Methodist	10:30am-1pm Lunch for our unhoused neighbors served at United Methodist 6pm Bloom Book Club On Zoom	10:45am – 1pm Lunch for our unhoused neighbors served at St. Paul's Episcopal	6:00pm BibleBites Bible Study on Zoom 6:30pm Maundy Thursday Service in the office and on Zoom	3:00pm Women of Bloom Zoom Happy Hour		6:15am Easter Sunrise Service at Demuth 10am Easter Service at Demuth and on Facebook Live



Bloom
in the
Desert
Ministries



Bloom in the Desert Ministries

United Church of Christ

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 10am

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

Lynda Toland, Moderator — 503-789-8743

**Rev. Jeff Munnis, Interim Minister
760-483-1454**

www.bloominthedesert.org info@bloominthedesert.org

Church Office is located at 400 South El Cielo, Suite G, Palm Springs, CA 92262
Office Hours — Tues. through Thurs. 12pm to 5pm — Office Phone — 760 327-3802