



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



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

**Fourth Sunday of Easter**  
**April 21, 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**

Rev. Douglas Holder, piano

“O Sons and Daughters of Our God” by Paul Sjolund

“Easter Medley” arr. by Dick Torrans.

“Jesus Christ is Risen Today,” “Crown Christ with Many Crowns,” “Christ Lives”

**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**

Rev. Jeff Munnis

**Music for Centering**

“Weather the Storm”  
by Benjamin Scheuer

Dr. Stephanie Dykes, soloist  
Rev. Douglas Holder, piano

## \* Call to Worship

Loretta Martin

We gather this morning still remembering Easter morning's resurrection, which signals the coming of new life in ways beyond ordinary.

**We have faith that, even in threats and changes to the cycles of life, we can recognize and celebrate new life in ways beyond the ordinary.**

O Compassionate Maker of this new and wonderful reality, you are among us.

**Show us how to live and love in ways that help us thrive.**

Today, break us free from conventional thinking, so we rise again and again as Easter people.  
Christ is risen.

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

## \* Opening Hymn

407

## How Firm a Foundation

*Isa. 43:2-5; 2 Tim. 2:19; Heb. 13:5*

*"K" in John Rippon's Selection of Hymns, 1787; alt.*

The musical score is written for a four-part setting (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass) in G major and 2/2 time. It consists of two systems of music. The first system contains five verses of lyrics, and the second system contains the concluding lines of the hymn. The melody is simple and hymn-like, with a strong emphasis on the first and third beats of each measure.

1 How firm a foun - da - tion for you has been laid,  
2 "Fear not, I am with you, oh, be not dis - mayed,  
3 "When through the deep wa - ters I call you to go,  
4 "When through fi - ery tri - als your path - way shall lie,  
5 "The soul that on Je - sus has leaned for re - pose,

by God in the Word, in the sac - ri - fice paid!  
for I am your God, I will still give you aid;  
the riv - ers of woe shall not o - ver you flow;  
my grace all - suf - fi - cient shall be your sup - ply;  
I will not, I will not de - sert to its foes;

What more can God say than to you has been said,  
 I'll strength - en you, help you, and cause you to stand  
 For I will be with you, your trou - bles to bless,  
 the flame shall not hurt you; for I have de - signed  
 That soul, though all hell should en - deav - or to shake,  
 to you, who for ref - uge to Je - sus have fled?  
 up - held by my gra - cious, om - ni - po - tent hand."  
 de - liv - er - ing you from your deep - est dis - tress."  
 your soul to make pure just as gold is re - fined."  
 I'll nev - er, no nev - er, no nev - er for - sake!"

*In 1787, John Rippon, English Baptist clergyman, identified the author of this hymn as "K"; no one has yet verified a complete name. The pentatonic melody has been known by several names since it first appeared in Funk's Genuine Church Music (1832).*

Tune: FOUNDATION 11.11.11.11.  
*Early United States melody  
 from Funk's Genuine Church Music, 1832  
 Alternate tune: ADESTE FIDELES*

## In Faith We Open Our Hearts to Ministry

### Prayer for Good and Growth

Faithful God of justice, our rock and our fortress: in an age when slander is mistaken for wisdom, pride masquerades as strength, and perjury defies truth, show us the way of integrity and faith. Give us courage to oppose all oppression in our land, so that today and every day we may sing your praises with upright and loving hearts.

**God of grace and truth, when we hear your story, we wonder what to change for ourselves. While some still exploit others; and some demand privilege or abuse power; we know this not only happens in society, it happens in churches, too.**

Help us avoid practices that glorify self-importance rather than enhancing the value and dignity of others, especially the poor. Help us realize our own privilege that sometimes prevents us from being empathetic.

**Help us remember that Jesus emptied himself of power so he could be the empowering servant of all. Strengthen us to care more for inner attitudes than outward appearances.**

Teach us to help rather than demand. Help us acquire the skills to build peace, integrity, and justice.

**Renew and refresh us with the gentle and selfless Spirit of Jesus, so we who gather as his followers have the same spirit in name and presence.**

**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

God graced the world with reason in the form of Jesus Christ. God energizes us to create justice, so a new world of love and blessing is empowered.

**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

Psalm 23

JR Rasch

YHWH, you are my shepherd—

I want nothing more.

You let me lie down in green meadows;

you lead me beside restful waters:

you refresh my soul.

You guide me to lush pastures

for the sake of your Name.

Even if I'm surrounded by shadows of Death,

I fear no danger, for you are with me.

Your rod and your staff—

they give me courage.

You spread a table for me

in the presence of my enemies,

and you anoint my head with oil—

my cup overflows!

Only goodness and love will follow me

all the days of my life,

and I will dwell in your house, YHWH,

for days without end.

~Inclusive Bible Version

## Anthem

“Wide Open Spaces”

by Sarah Zwartel

Rev. Douglas Holder, piano

Dr. Stephanie Dykes

## \* Gospel Reading

John 10:11-18

Gerald Chester

“I am the good shepherd. A good shepherd would die for the sheep. The hired hand, who is neither shepherd nor owner of the sheep, catches sight of the wolf coming and runs away, leaving the sheep to be scattered or snatched by the wolf. That’s because the hired hand works only for pay and has no concern for the sheep. I am the good shepherd. I know my sheep and my sheep know me, in the same way Abba God knows me and I know God— and for these sheep I will lay down my life. I have other sheep that don’t belong to this fold— I must lead them too, and they will hear my voice. And then there will be one flock, one shepherd. This is why Abba God loves me—because I lay down my life, only to take it up again. No one takes my life from me; I lay it down freely. I have the power to lay it down, and I have the power to take it up again. This command I received from my Abba.”

~Inclusive Bible Version

Here ends the reading of the Gospel. This is the Good News of Jesus Christ

**Thanks be to God. Amen.**

Hymn of Response

476

My Life Flows on in Endless Song  
(How Can I Keep from Singing)

*Ps. 46:1-7; 1 Cor. 3:21-23; 2 Cor. 5:17*

*Anon. in Bright Jewels for the Sunday School,  
ed. Robert Lowry, 1869; alt.  
St. 3, Doris Plenn, c. 1957*

1 My life flows on in end - less song; a - bove earth's lam - en -  
 2 What though my joys and com - forts die? My Sav - ior still is  
 3 When ty - rants trem - ble, sick with fear, and hear their death knells  
 4 I lift my eyes; the cloud grows thin; I see the blue a -

ta - tion, I hear the sweet, though far - off hymn that  
 liv - ing, What though the shad - ows gath - er 'round? A  
 ring - ing; When friends re - joice both far and near, how  
 bove it; And day by day this path - way smooths, since

hails a new cre - a - tion. Through all the tu - mult  
 new song Christ is giv - ing. No storm can shake my  
 can I keep from sing - ing? In pris - on cell and  
 first I learned to love it. The peace of Christ makes

and the strife, I hear the mu - sic ring - ing; It  
 in - most calm, while to that Rock I'm cling - ing; Since  
 dun - geon vile our thoughts to them are wing - ing; When  
 fresh my heart, a foun - tain ev - er spring - ing; All

finds an ech - o in my soul— how can I keep from sing-ing?  
 Love com-mands both heaven and earth, how can I keep from sing-ing?  
 friends by shame are un - de - filed, how can I keep from sing-ing?  
 things are mine since I am Christ's—how can I keep from sing-ing?

**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

Rev Douglas Holder, piano

“Christ the Lord is Risen Today” arr. by Carol Tornquist

## Presentation of Offerings and Prayer of Dedication

Loretta Martin

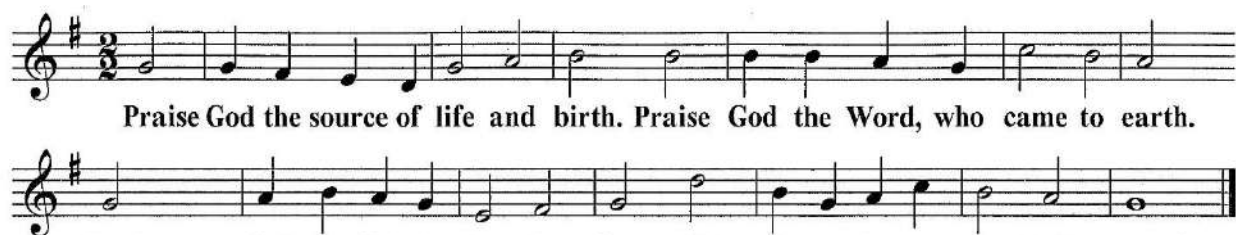
Source of healing, Bringer of wholeness, you enter the world and cause the light to shine, the lame to walk, the sins of all to be forgiven. Whatever we bring you is a gift of your graciousness. All that we offer, you have poured out upon us. Use us and mold us to conform to your will for all people. Take our talents and apply them to spread the truth of your love. 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 Prayer of Jesus

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)

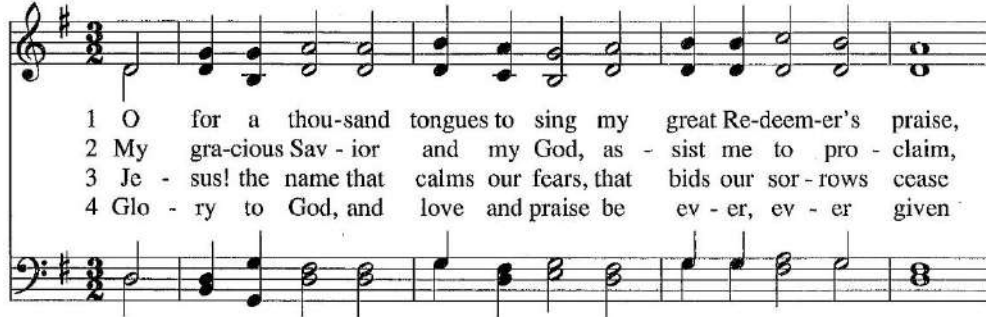


## \* Sending Hymn

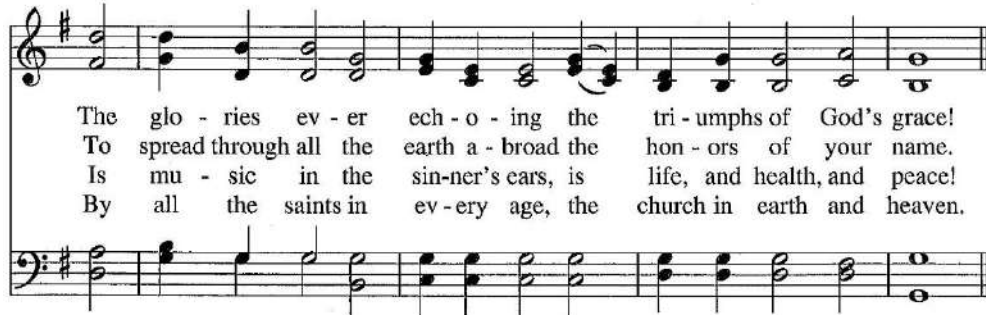
### O for a Thousand Tongues to Sing

42

Charles Wesley, 1740; alt.



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



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

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

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

## Benediction

Rev. Jeff Munnis

## Mutual Blessing

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** “Sing a Happy Song to our God” by Douglas Wagner Rev. Douglas Holder, piano

## Bloom Happenings This Week

Monday April 15	Tuesday April 16	Wednesday April 17	Thursday April 18	Friday April 19	Saturday April 20	Sunday April 21
<p><b>10:30am-1:00pm</b> Lunch for our unhoused neighbors, served at United Methodist</p>	<p><b>10:30am-1:00pm</b> Lunch for our unhoused neighbors, served at United Methodist</p> <p><b>3:00pm</b> “Divine Love and Wisdom” in the office and on Zoom</p>	<p><b>10:45am – 1:00pm</b> Lunch served at St. Paul’s Episcopal</p>	<p><b>10:45am – 1:00pm</b> Lunch served at Our Lady of Solitude</p> <p><b>6:00pm</b> BibleBites Bible Study in person or on Zoom</p>	<p><b>10:45am – 1:00pm</b> Lunch served at St. Our Lady of Guadalupe</p> <p><b>3:00pm</b> Women of Bloom Zoom Happy Hour</p>		<p><b>10:00 am</b> Sunday Service at Demuth and on Facebook Live</p>

### Stephanie Dykes, Ph.D.

Dr. Stephanie Dykes is an out and proud transwoman, living in Palm Desert, California. In her day job, she serves as the Dean of Planning, Research, and Institutional Effectiveness at Copper Mountain College in Joshua Tree, California.

Dr. Dykes earned her Ph.D. in educational research and measurement and her Master of Arts in teaching from the University of South Carolina. She completed her undergraduate work in history and business administration from Clemson University.

Dr. Dykes has spoken at numerous conferences in the United States and Canada on the topics of gender and women’s studies as well as institutional research. She has spoken at colleges and universities across the United States about her experiences as a transgender woman.

Dr. Dykes is a member and featured soloist at River of Hope (ELCA) in Palm Springs, California.

# Congregational Life Announcements

--A warm welcome and thank you to **Rev. Douglas Holder**, piano, for sharing his musical talents with us today. We also welcome **Dr. Stephanie Dykes** as our soloist today.

--Thank you to **Loretta Martin, JR Rasch, and Gerald Chester** as readers for today's service.

--Thank you to **JacksonENZler** 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 by **Mindy Harrington** in celebration of Pete's birthday.

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

## Last Week's Participation

--Souls Present at Demuth: 50--Children: 0 --First Timers: 0

--- Facebook Live Views: 17 -Facebook Total Views: 65 --YouTube Views: 12

## Sunday Offerings

Tithes, Offerings, and Participation:

Offering, online, by mail and text: \$5,248 Electronic Giving: \$653

Permanence Fund: \$203 Cumulative: \$325,169

Easteride Offerings Cumulative: \$754

--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.

**O Sons and Daughters of Our God**, by Paul Sjolund

**Easter Medley**, arr. by Dick Torrans

**Weather the Storm**, by Benjamin Scheuer

**Wide Open Spaces**, by Sarah Zwartel

**Christ the Lord is Risen Today**, arr. by Carol Tornquist

**Sing a Happy Song to Our God**, by Douglas Wagner

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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 2:00 pm going forward. The next hybrid meeting will be June 12 at 2:00 pm 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, May 7<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 pm with a new book "Learning to Disagree" by John Izazu. For information or to receive the Zoom link, contact Gary Lange at 760 773-1014 or [GaryLange13@gmail.com](mailto:GaryLange13@gmail.com).

### Social Action and Missions Ministry

--**Lunch served weekdays**: 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. On Thursdays, lunch is served at Our Lady of Solitude, 474 N Belardo, Palm Springs and on Fridays at Our Lady of Guadalupe, 204 S. El Segundo, in Palm Springs. Volunteers needed each day. Contact **Jim Nixon** at [nixonsf@aol.com](mailto:nixonsf@aol.com).

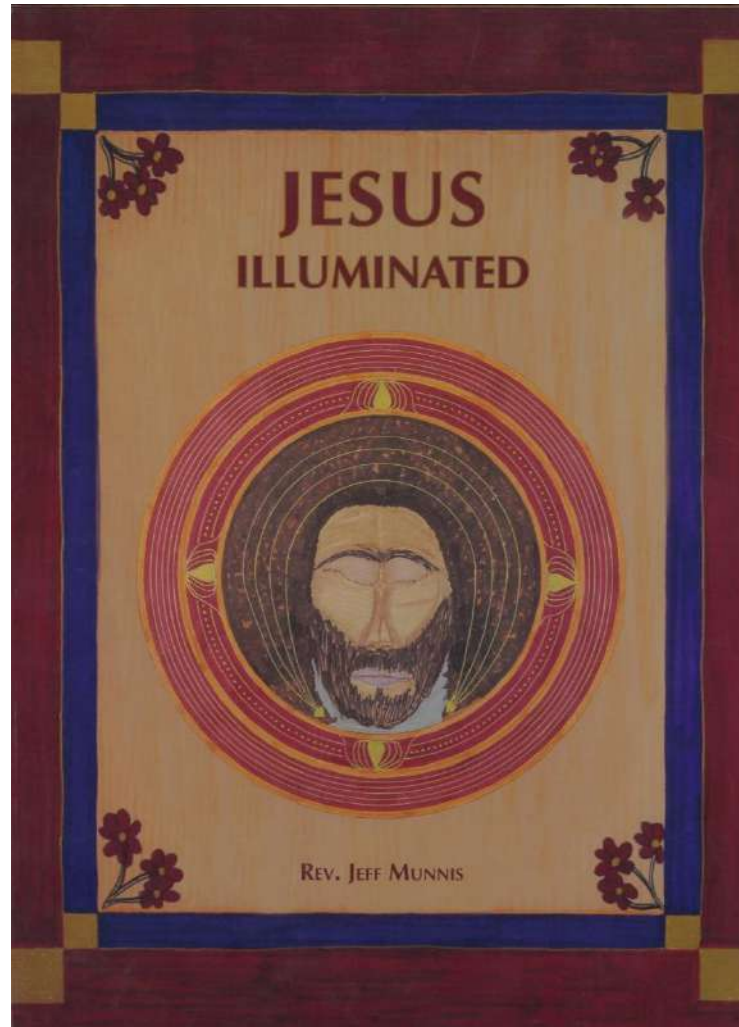
### Our focused ministries include:

- 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 **Jim Nixon** at [nixonsf@aol.com](mailto:nixonsf@aol.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.



## “Divine Love and Wisdom”

**Join Pastor Jeff Munnis and Dr. Stelli Munnis on Tuesdays from 3:00-4:30 pm for the 5 Tuesdays of April beginning April 2. You can attend as many sessions as you like, in person in the Bloom office, or on Zoom.**

**The gathering will be a contemplative journey of opening yourself to Divine Love and Wisdom. During the time together, attendees will sit in prayer and meditation, followed by contemplating passages from Pastor Jeff’s book, “Jesus Illuminated.”**

**Participants can purchase a hardback version of the book from Dr. Stelli at [stellimunnis@gmail.com](mailto:stellimunnis@gmail.com) or 415 747-1089. A PDF of the book is also available. Contact Gary Lange for more information at: [garylange13@gmail.com](mailto:garylange13@gmail.com)**



**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)**