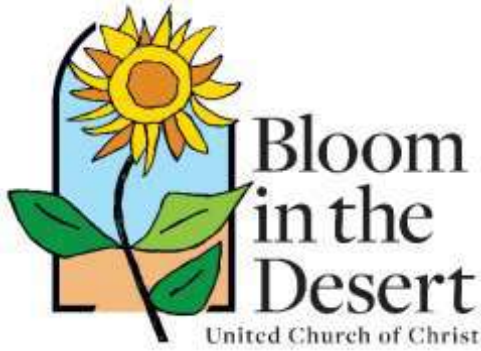




Fourth Sunday after Epiphany

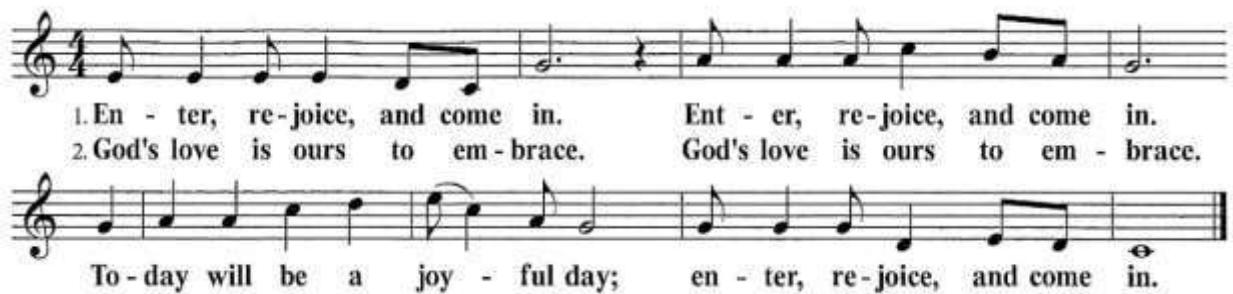
February 2, 2025

For Facebook check-ins, etc., the Demuth Community Center
Wi-Fi is: DCC_guest_WIFI, password is: LikeNoPlaceElse!!

* Please rise as you are able in body and spirit.

9:50am Pre-Service Music

Malcolm Swan, piano



Welcome and News of the Congregation

Rev. Jeff Munnis

Music for Centering

Malcolm Swan, piano

"When Morning Gilds the Skies"

Call to Worship

Gary Lange

As God shared our humanity in Jesus, God presented a new version of power.

God confronted the love of power with the power of love.

Power is not meant to be used to dominate. Power is meant to serve.

We gather today to celebrate God's realm as love in our souls and actions.

Love is the real gift of God's Spirit among us.

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

* Opening Hymn

Mothering God, You Gave Me Birth 2050

1. Moth-er - ing God, you gave me birth in the bright
 2. Moth-er - ing Christ, you took my form, of - fer - ing
 3. Moth-er - ing Spir - it, nur - t'ring one, in arms of

morn - ing of this world. Cre - at - or, source of
 me your food of light, grain of life, and
 pa - tience hold me close, so that in faith I

ev - ery breath, you are my rain, my wind, my sun.
 grape of love, your ver - y bod - y for my peace.
 root and grow un - til I flow'r, un - til I know.

WORDS: Jean Janzen, based on the writings of Juliana of Norwich (15th cent.)

MUSIC: H. Percy Smith

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MARYTON
LM

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:

Gracious God, Eternal source of Spirit and Creation, in our manifestation of church community, known traditionally as Christ Jesus, you call us to unity of mind and purpose. Even when our minds and hearts are drawn to separation

and division, your mutual justice and compassion remains primary. We pray for wisdom and strength enough to put aside envious rivalries and reactionary divisions. We look to our hearts and minds as sources of love and memory of benevolence in community. Help us remember that we are one body as Christ Jesus in the world. Teach us to trust your promises from Jesus. Embrace us in Spirit, so we continually learn to live united, proclaiming with one voice the power and potential for good in emulating Jesus' ministry.

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 and converse with God. Relax, and enjoy the embrace of a spiritual dimension.)

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

~ Silence ~

To all our silent prayers let the people say amen.

Amen.

Words of Encouragement

God, who is our solid rock and source of reason, promises and delivers strength for our journeys of trust and discipleship.

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

Sung Response

Halle, Halle, Hallelujah!



The Word Informs Our Living with Grace and Power

Hebrew Scripture Reading

Psalm 71:1-6

Glen Grayson

In you, YHWH, I take shelter—
let me never be disappointed.

In your justice, rescue me, deliver me,
turn your ear to me and save me!

Be mine, O mountain of strength!
Send your decree—deliver me,
for you are my rock, my fortress!

O God, rescue me from the hands of the
violent,
from the clutches of the thief and
outlaw!

For you alone are my hope, YHWH my
sovereign—

I have trusted you since my youth.

I have relied on you from the womb;
you sustained me from my mother's
breast;
to you I give constant praise.

~Inclusive Bible Version

Here ends the Hebrew Scripture Reading.

*** Gospel**

Luke 4:21-30

Jim Nixon

Then he said to them, "Today, in your hearing this scripture passage is fulfilled."

All who were present spoke favorably of him; they marveled at the eloquence of the words on Jesus' lips. They said, "Surely this isn't Mary and Joseph's son!"

Jesus said to them, "Undoubtedly, you'll quote me the proverb, 'Physician, heal yourself,' and say, 'Do here in your own country the things we heard you did in Capernaum.' But the truth is, prophets never gain acceptance in their hometowns.

The truth is, there were many women who were widowed in Israel in the days of Elijah, when the heavens remained closed for three and a half years and a great famine spread over the land. It was to none of these that Elijah was sent, but to a woman who had been widowed in Zarephath, near Sidon. Recall, too, that many had leprosy in Israel in the time of Elisha the prophet, yet not one was cured except Naaman the Syrian."

At these words, the whole audience in the synagogue was filled with indignation. They rose up and dragged Jesus out of town, leading him to the brow of the hill on which the city was built, with the intention of hurling him over the edge. But he moved straight through the crowd and walked away.

~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

Rev. Jeff Munnis

Concerns:

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.

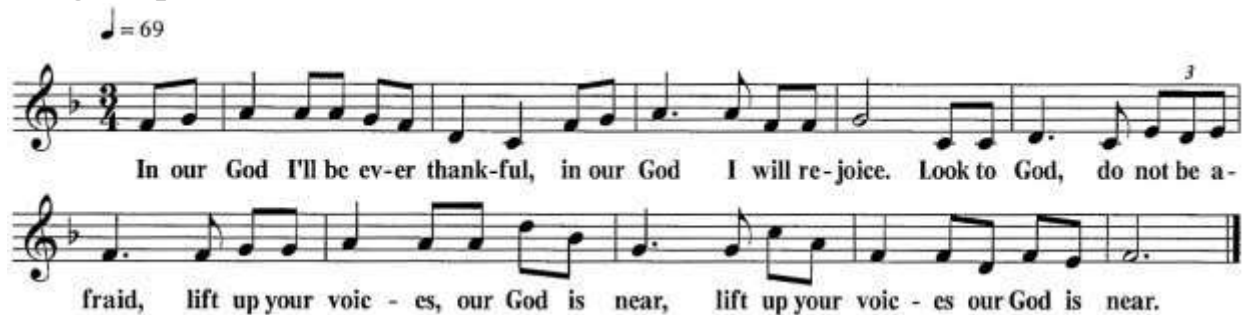
Joys and Thanksgivings:

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



Ministry of Generosity — Expressing God's Love and Empowering Good Works

Our tithes and offerings are an expression of our hearts and our discipleship.

--Checks should be made out to "Bloom in the Desert Ministries." Checks and cash in envelopes with identification are recorded for your year-end convenience. **Online giving is available and easy!** Go to: www.bloominthedesert.org and click on the Donate tab. **Thank you.**



Offertory-Meditation

Malcolm Swan, piano

"Theme from Jupiter" from "The Planets"

Presentation of Offerings, and Prayer of Dedication

Lynda Toland

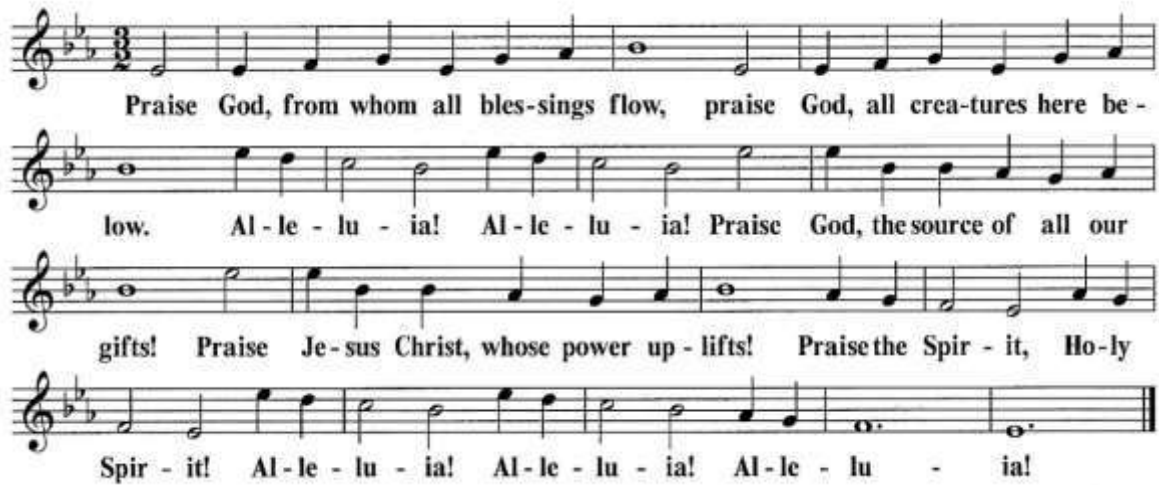
O God of faith, we put our trust in you. Source of hope, we are confident you shall never forsake us. Giver of love in ways too countless to be numbered, we return but a portion of what we have received from you. Use our gifts so that others may be assured of new life and enriched by the gift of your Holy Spirit. Amen.

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

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

* Doxology

Praise God, From Whom All Blessings Flow



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.

Lynda Toland: 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

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.

Carl Toland: 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.”

Lynda Toland: 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.”

Carl Toland: 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. Following communion, Suzanne Meyer and Lynda Toland will offer you your new Epiphany Star for the year.)

Communion Music

Malcolm Swan, piano

"Circle of Life"

The Prayer of Jesus

Rev. Jeff Munnis

**Dear One, closer to us than our own hearts,
farther from us than the most distant star,
you are beyond naming.**

**May your powerful presence become obvious
not only in the undeniable glory of the sky,
but also, in the seemingly base and common processes of the earth.**

**Give us what we need, day by day, to keep body and soul together, because
clever as you have made us, we still owe our existence to you.**

**We recognize that to be reconciled with you, we must live peaceably and your
goodness and our awareness of the evil in your creation, so deliver us from the
temptation to despair.**

Yours alone is the universe and all its majesty and beauty.

Amen.

(Progressive Christianity)

* Sending Hymn

Take My Life, God, Let It Be

448

Frances R. Havergal, 1874; alt.

Rom. 12:1

1 Take my life, God, let it be con - se - crat - ed faith - ful - ly.
 2 Take my spir - it, let it move at the im - pulse of your love.
 3 Take my will; your will be done! Make your will and mine be one.
 4 Take my love and help it grow; let my lov - ing ov - er - flow.

Take my mo - ments and my days, let them flow in cease - less praise.
 Take my in - tel - lect and use all its pow - ers as you choose.
 Take my heart, and by your grace make of it your dwell - ing place.
 Take me now, and help me be part of Christ's com - mu - ni - ty.

Frances R. Havergal wrote her hymn following a visit to Areley House in Worcestershire, England. Among the ten persons at the house were "some unconverted . . . some converted but not rejoicing." Before she left, "everyone had got a blessing."

Tune: VIENNA 7.7.7.7.
 Justin H. Knecht, 1797
 Alternate tune: HENDON

Benediction

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 our 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

"For the Beauty of the Earth"

Malcolm Swan, piano

Congregational Life Announcements

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

--Thank you, **Gary Lange, Glen Grayson, and Jim Nixon** for serving as readers for today's service. Thank you to Carl and Lynda Toland for joining in the Great Thanksgiving.

--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.

--Thank you to **Logan** and **Brooks** for setting up our worship space and hospitality hour.

--**Flowers on the Worship Center**, symbolic of the living Christ, are offered to the glory of God by **Paul Gibb**.

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

Last Sunday's Participation

--Souls Present at Demuth: 67 --Children: 0 --First Timers: 1

--- Facebook Live Views: 17 --Facebook Total Views: 130 --YouTube Views: N/A

Sunday Offerings

Tithes, Offerings, and Participation:

Offering, online, by mail and text: \$2,770 Electronic Giving: \$1,351

Permanence Fund: \$100 Cumulative: \$343,721

Fire Disaster \$100 Cumulative \$550

Spring Fling Reservations: 113 Goal: 180

--Please sign up for **Ralph's Community Rewards**. Choose Bloom in the Desert UCC (Ralphs #PG245.) as your designated charity to benefit from a small percentage of your purchase totals. Every little bit helps!

Electronic giving is easy! Scan this QR code for Bloom's mobile-friendly online giving page or visit www.bloominthedesert.org/donateparticipate.



--**The Inclusive Bible: The First Egalitarian Translation** by Priests for Equality and the **Revised Common Lectionary** are the usual references for Sunday morning scripture readings.

--**Liturgy and prayers** are original, sourced, and often adapted.

When Morning Gilds the Skies, arr. by Lloyd Larson

Theme from Jupiter, from The Planets" by Gustav Holst

Circle of Life, by Robin Spielberg

For the Beauty of the Earth, by John Rutter

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Ministries of Leadership and Support

--**Open Council Meetings** -- The next hybrid meeting will be March 12 at 2:00 pm PDT in the church office and on Zoom. All are welcome with a voice. Only 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 February 9 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**, dinoinps@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

--The Bloom Book Club is discussing the book "Living Untethered, Beyond the Human Predicament" by Michael Singer and meets Tuesdays at 6:00 pm on Zoom:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/85641302971?pwd=OKJBWngGovZg88uTgFDA88bAQQC7kU.1>

For more information: Gary Lange at GaryLange13@gmail.com

--BibleBites with Rev. Jeff resumes on Wednesday, January 15 at 4:00 pm on Zoom.

For more information, contact Gary Lange at 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.

Our focused ministries include:

- School children's benevolence – "Shoes for Students", church camp, and Christmas gift cards.
- Relieving food insecurity – Lunch Mondays through Fridays, 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.

**You are welcome to take this bulletin with you for reflection,
or leave it with the ushers for recycling.**

Bloom Happenings This Week						
Monday Jan. 27	Tuesday Jan. 28	Wednesday Jan. 29	Thursday Jan. 30	Friday Jan. 31	Saturday Feb. 1	Sunday Feb. 2
10:30am-1:00pm Lunch for our unhoused neighbors, served at United Methodist	10:30am-1:00pm Lunch for our unhoused neighbors, served at United Methodist 6:00pm Bloom Book Club on Zoom	10:45am – 1:00pm Lunch for our unhoused neighbors served at St. Paul's Episcopal 4:00pm BibleBites on Zoom	10:45am – 1:00pm Lunch served at Our Lady of Solitude	10:45am – 1:00pm Lunch served at Our Lady of Guadalupe 4:00pm Women of Bloom on Zoom		10:am Sunday Service at Demuth and on Facebook Live

God wants you to think for yourself and live for others.

Bathrooms are located through the double glass doors and to the left.

The Bloom Book Club is discussing the book "Living Untethered, Beyond the Human Predicament" by Michael Singer. It meets on Tuesdays, at 6:00 pm on Zoom.

BibleBites with Rev. Jeff resumes on Wednesday, January 15 at 4:00 pm on Zoom.

Congregation Meeting

February 9
following the service.



Welcome

Bloom in the Desert (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. Bloom is governed congregationally according to our unique bylaws. All Bloom members and friends are ministers in our faith. Our Open Council 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 — 415-747-9114 — jeff@bloominthedesert.org
Lynda Toland, Moderator — 503-789-8743 — moderator@bloominthedesert.org
Bill Wallace, Administrative Assistant — adminassitant@bloominthedesert.org
Church Office is located at 400 South El Cielo, Suite G, Palm Springs, CA 92262

