

Order of Worship  
Sunday, January 11, 2026  
Baptism Sunday

**9:50: Pre-Service Music/Prelude:**

“Savior, Like a Shepherd Lead Us”  
Music by William B. Bradbury arranged by Mark Hayes

Paul Cady

**10:00 am: Welcome and News of the Congregation**

Elaine Wang Meyerhoffer

**Gathering Song:**

“Every Time I Feel the Spirit”

UMH404

**404                  Every Time I Feel the Spirit**

*Refrain*

Ev - ery time I feel the Spir - it mov - ing in my heart,  
I will pray. Yes, ev - ery time I feel the  
Spir - it mov - ing in my heart, I will pray.

1. Up - on the moun - tain, my Lord spoke, out his  
2. Jor - dan riv - er runs right cold, chills the

mouth came fire and smoke. All a - round me looks so  
bod - y, not the soul. Ain't but one train on this

shine, ask my Lord if all was mine.  
track, runs to heav - en and right back.

D.C.

WORDS: Afro-American spiritual (Rom. 8:15-17)  
 MUSIC: Afro-American spiritual; adapt. and arr. by William Farley Smith, 1986  
 Adapt. and arr. © 1989 The United Methodist Publishing House

PENTECOST  
Irr.

## Call To Worship:

Elaine Wang-Meyerhoffer

Please remain standing for our call to worship and invocational prayer.

Come, you who are weary, you who have been bruised by life, you whose flame has flickered in the winds of the world.

**All: We come, longing to be renewed.**

The Holy One who stretches out the heavens is stretching us now, stretching our hearts toward courage, our hands toward compassion, our lives toward gentle justice.

**All: We open ourselves to be stretched into new life.**

A voice from heaven says to us, as it said to Jesus: You are my beloved. This Spirit rests upon us, too.

**All: We are God's Beloved, called to bring gentle justice.**

Come, let us remember who we are.

**All: Let us worship God with joy.**

Please join me in prayer,

**All: Holy One, Breath of Creation, you stretched out the heavens and set the earth dancing with life. You whispered belovedness over Jesus rising from the Jordan, and your Spirit rested upon him like a gentle dove. Rest your Spirit upon us now. Stretch our hearts where they have grown tight. Soften the places that have been hardened by fear or disappointment. Wake the embers of joy that still glow beneath the ash. Remind us that we are your Beloved, not because of what we have done, but because of who You are and the love that holds us. As we gather at the water today, let us remember who we are, and who we are becoming together, your people of compassion, courage, and gentle justice.**

**In the name of Christ, the One who shows us how to be human, we pray. Amen.**

Now, let us remain standing as we lift our voices to sing, “Shall We Gather at the River”

Hymn:

“Shall We Gather at the River”

UMH723

Shall We Gather at the River 723

1. Shall we gath - er at the riv - er, where bright an - gel feet have  
2. On the mar - gin of the riv - er, wash - ing up its sil - ver  
3. Ere we reach the shin - ing riv - er, lay we ev - ery bur - den  
4. Soon we'll reach the shin - ing riv - er, soon our pil - grim - age will

trod, with its crys - tal tide for - ev - er flow - ing  
spray, we will walk and wor - ship ev - er, all the  
down; grace our spir - its will de - liv - er, and pro -  
cease; soon our hap - py hearts will quiv - er with the

Refrain

by the throne of God?  
hap - py gold - en day. Yes, we'll gath - er at the riv - er,  
vide a robe and crown. mel - o - dy of peace.

the beau - ti - ful, the beau - ti - ful riv - er, gath - er with the  
saints at the riv - er that flows by the throne of God.

WORDS: Robert Lowry, 1864 (Rev. 22:1-5)  
MUSIC: Robert Lowry, 1864

HANSON PLACE  
87.87 with Refrain

**Old Testament**

Isaiah 42:1-9

Bill Wallace

Today we listen for God's voice through the prophet Isaiah, a voice that speaks of chosen ones, beloved ones, called not for power, but for justice; not for domination, but for faithfulness and light. This is a promise spoken to a people remembering who they are claimed by God, formed in love, and sent to be a blessing to the world. As we prepare to renew our baptismal covenant, we hear again God's call to live gently, to bring hope without breaking bruised reeds, to bear light into places longing for justice and peace. Listen now for the Word of God in Isaiah 42:1-9.

"But here is my servant, the one I uphold; my chosen, who brings me delight. I've put my spirit upon him; he will bring justice to the nations. He won't cry out or shout aloud or make his voice heard in public. He won't break a bruised reed; he won't extinguish a faint wick, but he will surely bring justice. He won't be extinguished or broken until he has established justice in the land. The coastlands await his teaching. God the Lord says, the one who created the heavens, the one who stretched them out, the one who spread out the earth and its offspring, the one who gave breath to its people and life to those who walk on it. I, the Lord, have called you for a good reason. I will grasp your hand and guard you, and give you as a covenant to the people, as a light to the nations, to open blind eyes, to lead the prisoners from prison, and those who sit in darkness from the dungeon. I am the Lord; that is my name; I don't hand out my glory to others or my praise to idols. The things announced in the past, look, they've already happened, but I'm declaring new things. Before they even appear, I tell will you about them."

Here ends the Old Testament reading. Let us lift our voices to sing "Jesus, Name Above All Names."

**Chorus:**

"Jesus, Name Above All Names"

177    Jesus, Name Above All Names

*Unison*



glo-ri-ous Lord. Em-man - u - el, God is  
 with us, bless-ed Re-deem - er, Liv-ing Word.

WORDS and MUSIC: Naida Hearn (1944- )  
 Words and Music © 1974 Scripture In Song (a div. of Integrity Music)

## Gospel

Matthew 3:13-17

Larry Metcalf

Today we listen to the story of Jesus coming to the waters of the Jordan. Not because he needed repentance, but because he chose solidarity. In the water, Jesus steps into the fullness of human life, into vulnerability, obedience, and trust. The heavens open, the Spirit descends, and a voice of love names him: Beloved. This is not only Jesus' story. It is our story, too. In baptism, we are claimed by love before we are perfected, called beloved before we have it all figured out, and sent into the world not alone, but accompanied by God's Spirit. As we hear this Gospel, may we remember the waters that have touched our lives, the promises spoken over us, the grace that continues to flow, and the call to live as God's beloved people. Please rise as you are able to listen for the Word of God in the Gospel according to Matthew, chapter 3, verses 13 through 17.

“At that time Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan River so that John would baptize him. John tried to stop him and said, ‘I need to be baptized by you, yet you come to me?’ Jesus answered, ‘Allow me to be baptized now. This is necessary to fulfill all righteousness.’ So, John agreed to baptize Jesus. When Jesus was baptized, he immediately came up out of the water. Heaven was opened to him, and he saw the Spirit of God coming down like a dove and resting on him. A voice from heaven said, ‘This is my Son whom I dearly love; I find happiness in him.’”

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

**ALL: Thanks be to God, AMEN.**

Please remain standing as we sing “Jesus, Name Above All Names.”

**Chorus:**                   “Jesus, Name Above All Names”

## 177 Jesus, Name Above All Names

*Unison*

Je - sus, name a-bove all names, beau-ti-ful Sav - ior,  
glo-ri-ous Lord. Em-man - u - el, God is  
with us, bless-ed Re-deem - er, Liv-ing Word.

WORDS and MUSIC: Naida Hearn (1944-)  
Words and Music © 1974 Scripture In Song (a div. of Integrity Music)

**Commentary**

“Baptized? Or Just Wet?”

Pastor James

## When Jesus Came to Jordan

252

*Unison*

WORDS: Fred Pratt Green, 1973 (Mt. 3:13-17; Mk. 1:9-11; Lk. 3:21-22)  
 MUSIC: Attr. to William Walker, 1835; harm. by Carlton R. Young, 1988

Words © 1980 Hope Publishing Co.; harm. © 1989 The United Methodist Publishing House

COMPLAINER  
76.76 D

## **In Faith We Open Our Hearts to Ministry**

### **Ministry of Generosity-Expressing God's Love and Empowering Good Works**

#### **Offertory-Mediation.**

Elaine Wang Meyerhoffer

Beloved of God, we remember today who we are; a people formed in water and Spirit, held in love and called to bring gentle justice to the world. We do not give out of guilt, or out of scarcity, or because the church needs to keep the lights on. We give because love takes form in us. We give because we belong to one another. We give because our lives are woven together with all creation. Our offering is the way we say:

Yes, we will live as God's Beloved.

Yes, we will stretch our hands toward compassion.

Yes, we will join Christ in the work of healing.

Let us, then, bring our gifts, our time, our treasure, our commitments, our lives with joy.

#### **Offertory:**

**"Behold The Man"**

by Jimmy Owen's arranged by Dino Kartsonakis

Paul Cady

#### **Doxology**

### **Offering our Prayer Concerns, Joys/Thanksgivings, Prayer of Reconciliation, Words of Encouragement, and Passing of the Peace.**

Pastor James

Now let us offer up to God and each other our prayer concerns:

Pastor James: Loving God, as Jesus stepped into the waters of baptism, you named him Beloved and poured out your Spirit. We lift before you all who long to hear that they are beloved, those weighed down by illness, grief, injustice, fear, or exhaustion. Surround them with your care and renew them with your Spirit. For those standing at the edge of change or uncertainty, meet them in the waters and grant courage, clarity, and peace. Call us, your baptized people, to be a living sign of your love, speaking hope, practicing compassion, and working for justice in your world. We offer these prayers trusting your voice still speaks, and your Spirit is still moving among us.

#### **All: Lord, hear our prayers**

Pastor James: Gracious and loving God, we give you thanks for the gift of Jesus, who comes to the waters as one of us, standing in solidarity with all creation. In his baptism, you claim him as beloved, and in him, you call us beloved too as we are washed in grace, marked by love, and sent into the world rejoicing in your Spirit. With grateful hearts and joyful trust in your presence among us, we lift our voices together, praying as Jesus taught us:

**All: Loving God, who art in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For yours is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.**

Pastor James: Now as people who are loved deeply and accepted fully, let us offer one another the Peace of Christ.

## **Renewing Our Baptism**

Pastor James

Pastor James: Beloved of God, today we remember that we are a people formed in water and Spirit. We remember that Jesus stepped into the waters of the Jordan, not because he needed to be cleansed, but to show us what it means to be fully human to say yes to God, yes to belovedness, yes to the work of gentle justice. Today we step into that yes again.

## **Acknowledging Our Need for Renewal**

Pastor James: We have known bruising. We have known moments we wish we could live again. We have known times when our flame burned low.

**All: We long to begin again.**

Pastor James: The One who stretches out the heavens is still stretching us, stretching our courage, stretching our compassion, stretching our capacity to love and to be loved.

**All: We open ourselves to be stretched into new life.**

Pastor James: Hear the good news: Nothing is sealed. Nothing is beyond mending. The story is not over. It has only just begun.

**All: All is forgiven. All is being made new.**

Pastor James: Can we begin again?

**All: Yes. By the grace of God, we will begin again.**

176      *Majesty, Worship His Majesty*

Maj - es - ty, worship his maj - es - ty; un - to  
 Je - sus be all glo - ry, hon - or, and praise. Maj - es - ty,  
 king - dom au - thor - i - ty, flow from his throne un - to his own;  
 his an - them raise. So ex - alt, lift up on high the name of  
 Je - sus. Mag - ni - fy, come glo - ri - fy Christ Je - sus, the King.

Maj - es - ty, worship his maj - es - ty,  
 Je - sus who died, now glo - ri - fied, King of all kings.

WORDS: Jack Hayford, 1981  
 MUSIC: Jack Hayford, 1981; arr. by Eugene Thomas, 1981  
 © 1981 Rocksmith Music c/o Trust Music Management

MAJESTY  
 Irr.

## Blessing of the Water

Pastor James

Holy One, you moved over the waters at creation. You carried your people through the sea and into freedom. Your Spirit descended upon Jesus in the river. Bless this water now. Let it awaken memory. Let it carry mercy. Let it stir our hearts toward your dream.

**All: Amen.**

## The Renewal

Pastor James: Friends, you are invited to come forward and remember your baptism. Not to be baptized again, but to renew the promises God has already made. Come as you are, with faith or doubt, joy or weariness. I invite you to reach into the water, retrieve a stone for you to carry with you and remember you are beloved, forgiven, and called. Come, and be renewed in God's grace.

## **Affirmation of Calling**

Pastor James: We are the Body of Christ, not alone, but together.

**All: We are God's beloved.**

Pastor James: The Spirit that was in Christ is in us.

**All: We are called to bring gentle justice.**

Pastor James: We will not break the bruised reed. We will not extinguish the smoldering flame.

**All: We will walk in compassion, courage, and joy.**

Pastor James: This is our covenant. This is our life together.

**All: Amen.**

Now, I invite you to stand as you are able as we sing our final hymn: "O' For a Thousand Tongues to Sing." Vs. 1, 2, 3, and 5.

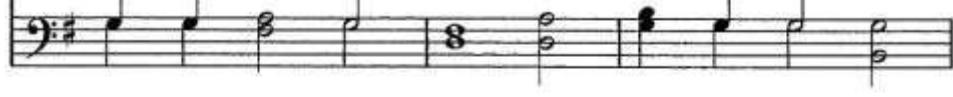
## O For a Thousand Tongues to Sing 57



1. O for a thou - sand tongues to sing my  
 2. My gra - cious Mas - ter and my God, as -  
 3. Je - sus! the name that charms our fears, that  
 4. He breaks the power of can - celed sin, he  
 5. He speaks, and listen - ing to his voice, new  
 \*6. Hear him, ye deaf; his praise, ye dumb, your  
 7. In Christ, your head, you then shall know, shall



great Re - deem - er's praise, the glo - ries of my  
 sist me to pro - claim, to spread through all the  
 bids our sor - rows cease; 'tis mu - sic in the  
 sets the pris - oner free; his blood can make the  
 life the dead re - ceive; the mourn - ful, bro - ken  
 loos - ened tongues em - ploy; ye blind, be - hold your  
 feel your sins for - given; an - tic - i - pate your



God and King, the tri - umphs of his grace!  
 earth a - broad the hon - ors of thy name.  
 sin - ner's ears, 'tis life, and health, and peace.  
 foul - est clean; his blood a - vailed for me.  
 hearts re - joice, the hum - ble poor be - lieve.  
 Sav - ior come, and leap, ye lame, for joy.  
 heaven be - low, and own that love is heaven.



*\*May be omitted*

WORDS: Charles Wesley, 1739

MUSIC: Carl G. Gläser; arr. by Lowell Mason, 1839

AZMON

CM

**Spoken Benediction:**

Pastor James

**Sung Benediction:**

“Shalom”

UMH666

666      *Unison* D

**Shalom to You**

Sha-lom to you now, sha-lom, my friends.

May God's full mer-cies bless you, my friends.

In all your liv-ing and through your lov-ing,

Christ be your sha-lom, Christ be your sha-lom.

WORDS: Elise S. Eslinger, 1980

SOMOS DEL SEÑOR

MUSIC: Trad. Spanish melody; harm. by Carlton R. Young, 1989

Irr.

Words © 1983 The United Methodist Publishing House; harm. © 1989 The United Methodist Publishing House

**Postlude:**

“Praise to The Lord, The Almighty”

Paul Cady

Music: Lobe Den Herren by Stralsund Gesangbuch, words by Joachim Neanderthal  
arranged by Mark Hayes

## Congregational Life Announcements

--**A warm welcome and thank you to Paul Cody, piano, the pop-up choir** for sharing their musical talents with us today.

--**Thank you, Elaine Wang-Meyerhoffer, Bill Wallace and Larry Metcalf** for serving as readers for today's service.

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

--Thank you to our greeter and welcome table host, **Jason Romine**, and **Sheila Dell**. Thank you to **Carol Moore** and her crew who set up our hospitality table.

--**Thank you** also to our ushers, **Bob Patnode** and **Ray Stimson** for welcoming us this morning.

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

Flowers this morning are offered to the glory of God..

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

### Last Week's Participation

Sunday 10am--Souls Present at Demuth: 56 --Children: 0 --First Timers: 5 --- Facebook  
Live: 6

### Sunday Offerings

Offering \$620 On-Line: \$2,703

Permanence Fund: \$0 Cumulative: \$397,087

Year End Appeal \$200 Cumulative: 3,098

5 for 5 Christmas Fund \$100 Cumulative: \$777

## Ministries of Leadership and Support

**--Open Council Meetings** -- The next hybrid meeting will be January 14 at 2:00 pm PDT in the church office and on Zoom. All are welcome with a voice. Only council members have a vote. Contact **Rich Fluechting** to receive the Zoom Invitation.

**--Congregation Meetings** are in February, May, and October, and special meetings as called. The next congregation meeting is February 15 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](mailto:dinoinps@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

--The Bloom Book Club: Tuesdays beginning January 13 at 6pm on Zoom. Discussing: "The Separation of Church and Hate: A Sane Person's Guide to Taking Back the Bible from Fundamentalists, Fascists and Flock-Fleecing Frauds" by John Fuglesang,

--"Blooming Together Grief Support Group" will begin on Wednesday, January 14, 2026 from 12 noon until 1:30pm in the Bloom Office. It will be facilitated by psychotherapist Chris Flores at no charge. The ongoing grief support group will help individuals heal from deaths and losses. Please reserve your space by contacting Gary Lange or the Bloom office.

For more information, please contact our Education Coordinator, 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 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. To volunteer, Go to: [wellinthedesert.com](http://wellinthedesert.com) and select location, date and time.

### 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.

--Laundry Love – Third Wednesday of each month at Wash Time Laundromat at Sunrise and Vista Chino 5:30 to 9:30pm

**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 12	Tuesday Jan 13	Wednesday Jan 14	Thursday Jan 15	Friday Jan 16	Saturday Jan 17	Sunday Jan 18
<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 Group on Zoom	<b>10:45am – 1:00pm</b> Lunch for our unhoused neighbors served at Oscars  <b>12:00pm</b> Grief Support Group in the office  <b>2:00pm</b> Open Council Meeting in the office and on Zoom	<b>10:45am – 1:00pm</b> Lunch served at Our Lady of Solitude	<b>10:45am – 1:00pm</b> Lunch served at Our Lady of Guadalupe		<b>10:am</b> Sunday Service at Demuth and on Facebook Live

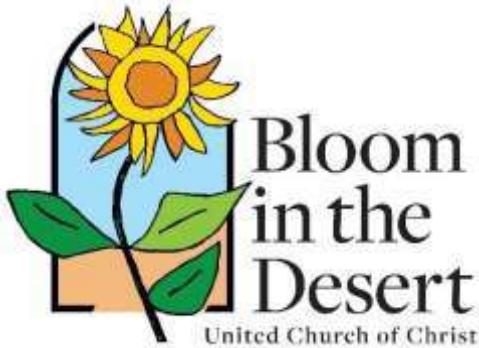
**God wants you to think for yourself and live for others.**

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

**The Common English Bible** and the **Revised Common Lectionary** are the usual references for Sunday morning scripture readings.

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

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# 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 Pastor James Harris — 404-587-9816 — [james@bloominthedesert.org](mailto:james@bloominthedesert.org)**

**Rich Fluechting, Moderator — 608-347-5178 — [moderator@bloominthedesert.org](mailto:moderator@bloominthedesert.org)**

**Bill Wallace, Administrative Assistant — [adminassistant@bloominthedesert.org](mailto:adminassistant@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)**

