June 18, 2023



# 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 — moderator@bloominthedesert.org
Rev. Dr. Kevin A. Johnson, Minister — 760-992-4346 — minister@bloominthedesert.org
Ken Forney, Music Director — 608-445-6767 — ken.forney@gmail.com
Bill Wallace, Administrative Assistant — adminassitant@bloominthedesert.org
Church Office is located at 400 South El Cielo, Suite G, Palm Springs, CA 92262
760-327-3802 — www.bloominthedesert.org — info@bloominthedesert.org

# 1969 to Present

Dear Bloomers and friends,

Intentional and aggravated efforts to erase homosexual and transgender personal self-confidence and empowerment are successfully expanding. We Bloomers and friends know people being affected terribly by this institutional, community, and personal aggression. Now it is even more important for us to honor Bloom's intentional "Open and Affirming" founding and official status. Please renew our covenant for welcome with all who welcome all. Our mission is to dispel the spirit of ignorant hatefulness with the enlightening Holy Spirit of faith, hope, and love. Remember and activate how — in our vision, mission, and core values — we choose love.

Rev. Dr. Kevin A. Johnson (1Corinthians 13:1-14:1)

#### Memories of the earliest days....



Zazu Nova, a black transgender woman, sits on top of a table at a Gay Liberation Front meeting in 1970. Zazu was identified by many eyewitnesses as the person who may have thrown the legendary "first brick" at the Stonewall Uprising on June 28, 1969. She was a sex worker on the streets of Greenwich Village and went by "Queen of Sex." She also was a founding member of New York Gay Youth organization to help support the gay youth of New York.

Photo by Diana Davies / New York Public Library

Many people sitting in chairs and on the floor with a Gay Liberation Front (GLF) sign in the foreground. GLF published their own newspaper, Come Out!, and became a springboard for many new semiautonomous gav and lesbian groups



that helped move the political movement for gay rights forward. Photo by Diana Davies / New York Public Library



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

Honoring Juneteenth
Fathers Day
LGBTQ+ Pride Month
June 18, 2023

For Facebook check-ins, etc., the Demuth Community Center Wi-Fi password is: D3muthP@rk

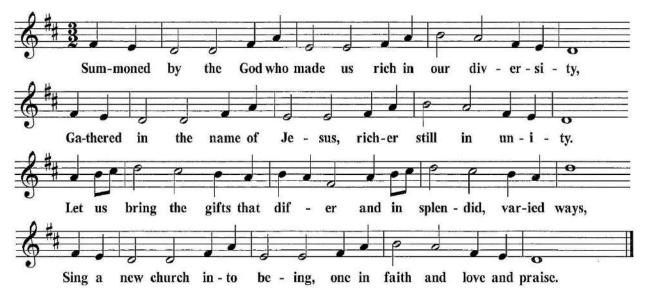
\* Please rise as you are able in body and spirit.

#### 9:50am Pre-Service Music

Ken Forney, piano

"Swing Low, Sweet Chariot" arr. Michael Hassell

## 10:00am Gathering Song



Welcome and News of the Congregation

Rev. Dr. Kevin A. Johnson

**Music for Centering** 

"Just a Closer Walk With Thee" arr. Mark Hayes

God, we come to worship in gratitude for the freedom of those long oppressed, in celebration of Juneteenth.

Empower us to see, acknowledge, and liberate those who continue to suffer under slavery of many kinds.

God, we also come to worship with gratitude for the love and nurture of worthy papas, fathers, dads, daddies, and all those who are fatherly in our lives.

Help us love, and appreciate, and be, the people of love wherever we are called. Fill us with your Spirit as we learn to carry out your purpose in all the world.

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



**Juneteenth** is the oldest known celebration commemorating the ending of slavery in the United States. Dating back to 1865, it was on June 19<sup>th</sup> that Union soldiers, led by Major General Gordon Granger, landed at Galveston, Texas with news that the war had ended and that the enslaved were now free. Note that this was two and a half years <u>after</u> President Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation, which had become official January 1, 1863. Note further that it was not until the 13<sup>th</sup> amendment was adopted in December 1865, that slavery was ended in all parts of the United States. General Lee surrendered April 9, 1865.

#### \* Opening Hymn



Among the thousands of spirituals that exist today are songs of gladness and songs of sorrow. This well-known spiritual is a song of joy, captured not only in the words, but in the lively rhythms.

Tune: African-American spiritual Arr. Joyce Finch Johnson, 1992

# Faith We Open Our Hearts to Ministry

Prayer for Father's Day

Loving God, you entrust men and women with capacities to participate with you in creating children.

Today we pray for fathers who gave us their gift of life;

for fathers who unconditionally love and nurture their children;

for expectant fathers, wondering, and waiting;

for those who want to be fathers, or have another child – hoping and trying;

for fathers whose children grew into adulthood;

for fathers whose joy is abundant;

for fathers trying to balance work and home;

for fathers whose children are challenged, or challenging;

for single fathers;

for grieving fathers;

for divorced and struggling fathers;

for fathers who return, and reconcile;

for fathers absent, who care for the children of others;

for brothers, sisters, relatives, and others who act as fathers.

Grant your blessing on all these fathers and others unmentioned. Help their love be deep and tender; their care be compassionate, encouraging, and unfailing. We bless them with our love and appreciation in the name of Jesus a son, and our savior, sibling, shepherd, and friend. Amen.

(http://bereavedandblessed.com, adapted)

Our Silent Prayers (These intentional moments of silence are included in worship to enable minds to settle, then move past the distraction of internal chatter, to connect actively with God. A few deep breaths may help make the connection. Relax, and embrace a spiritual dimension.)

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

~ Silence ~

To all our silent prayers let the people say amen.

Amen.

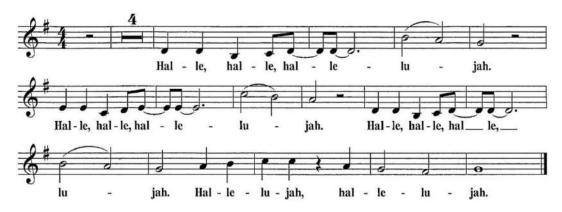
### **Words of Encouragement**

"God's love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. God's love never ends." (1 Corinthians 13:7-8a)

Amen. Let us now receive the Word.

#### **Sung Response**

#### Halle, Hallelujah!



# The Word Informs Our Living with Grace and Power

#### **Cultural Reading**

"The Hill We Climb" by Amanda Gorman -Davion

Williams

4<sup>th</sup> grader, Cabot Yerxa Elementary School, Desert Hot Springs

#### The Hill We Climb

When day comes we ask ourselves,

where can we find light in this never-ending shade?

The loss we carry,

a sea we must wade.

We've braved the belly of the beast,

We've learned that quiet isn't always peace,

and the norms and notions

of what just is

isn't always just-ice.

And yet the dawn is ours

before we knew it.

Somehow we do it.

Somehow we've weathered and witnessed

a nation that isn't broken,

but simply unfinished.

We the successors of a country and a time

where a skinny Black girl

descended from slaves and raised by a single mother

can dream of becoming president

only to find herself reciting for one.

And yes we are far from polished. Far from pristine.

Continued.

But that doesn't mean we are

striving to form a union that is perfect.

We are striving to forge a union with purpose,

to compose a country committed to all cultures, colors, characters and conditions of man.

And so we lift our gazes not to what stands between us,

but what stands before us.

We close the divide because we know, to put our future first,

we must first put our differences aside.

We lay down our arms

so we can reach out our arms

to one another.

We seek harm to none and harmony for all.

Let the globe, if nothing else, say this is true,

that even as we grieved, we grew,

that even as we hurt, we hoped,

that even as we tired, we tried,

that we'll forever be tied together, victorious.

Not because we will never again know defeat,

but because we will never again sow division.

#### Scripture tells us to envision

that everyone shall sit under their own vine and fig tree

and no one shall make them afraid.

If we're to live up to our own time,

then victory won't lie in the blade.

But in all the bridges we've made,

that is the promise to glade,

the hill we climb.

If only we dare.

It's because being American is more than a pride we inherit,

it's the past we step into

and how we repair it.

We've seen a force that would shatter our nation

rather than share it.

Would destroy our country if it meant delaying democracy.

And this effort very nearly succeeded.

But while democracy can be periodically delayed,

it can never be permanently defeated.

In this truth,

in this faith we trust. For while we have our eyes on the future, history has its eyes on us.

Continued.

This is the era of just redemption we feared at its inception.

We did not feel prepared to be the heirs of such a terrifying hour but within it we found the power to author a new chapter.

To offer hope and laughter to ourselves. So while once we asked, how could we possibly prevail over catastrophe? Now we assert,

How could catastrophe possibly prevail over us?

We will not march back to what was, but move to what shall be.

A country that is bruised but whole, benevolent but bold, fierce and free.

We will not be turned around or interrupted by intimidation, because we know our inaction and inertia will be the inheritance of the next generation. Our blunders become their burdens.

But one thing is certain, If we merge mercy with might, and might with right, then love becomes our legacy, and change our children's birthright.

So let us leave behind a country
better than the one we were left with.
Every breath from my bronze-pounded chest,
we will raise this wounded world into a wondrous one.
We will rise from the gold-limbed hills of the west.
We will rise from the windswept northeast,
where our forefathers first realized revolution.
We will rise from the lake-rimmed cities of the midwestern states.
We will rise from the sunbaked south.
We will rebuild, reconcile and recover.
And every known nook of our nation and

every corner called our country, our people diverse and beautiful will emerge, battered and beautiful.

Continued.

When day comes we step out of the shade, aflame and unafraid, the new dawn blooms as we free it. For there is always light, if only we're brave enough to see it. If only we're brave enough to be it.

#### **/**★ Gospel Reading

Matthew 9:35-38, 10:12-16

Ray Allen

Jesus continued touring all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues, proclaiming the Good News of God's reign and curing all kinds of diseases and sicknesses.

At the sight of the crowds. Jesus' heart was moved with pity because they were distressed and dejected, like sheep without a shepherd. Jesus said to the disciples, "The harvest is bountiful, but the laborers are few. Beg the overseer of the harvest to send laborers out to bring in the crops.

"If the home is deserving, your peace will descend on it. If it isn't, your peace will return to you.

"If anyone does not receive you or listen to what you have to say, leave that house or town and, once outside it, shake its dust from your feet. The truth is, on Judgment Day it will go easier for the towns of Sodom and Gomorrah than it will be for that town.

I am sending you out like sheep among wolves. So you must be as clever as snakes, but as innocent as doves.

~Inclusive Bible Version

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

#### Thanks be to God. Amen.

Commentary "Slavery to Civil Rights; Black Lives Matter and Beyond" Lorenzo Taylor

**Lorenzo Taylor** is a Palm Springs-based fiction writer, playwright, poet, and activist. His writings focus on themes of intergenerational and cross-racial relationships from a gay male perspective. He curated a series of monthly music and storytelling for Brothers of the Desert called Brothers Got Talent and often performs poetry or prose in community settings. He teaches online courses on Civil Rights History and African American Poetry. Last Spring, Lorenzo embarked on a personal Journey of civil rights

<sup>~</sup>https://www.townandcountrymag.com/society/politics/a35279603/amanda-gorman-inauguration-poem-the-hill-we-climb-transcript

<sup>&</sup>quot;As you enter a house, bless it.

#### **Hymn of Response**



The texts of these two spirituals may be used interchangeably with the tune This Joy. For an alternate version, this melody may be sung with the accompaniment of "Glory, Glory Hallelujah." A more traditional setting of "This Little Light" is provided with the tune Lattimer.

Tune: THIS JOY Irr. African-American spiritual Arr. Jeffrey Radford, 1993 See also LATTIMER

"This Little Light" continued:

- 2 Ev-ery-where I go ...
- 3 All--through the night . . .

#### Offering our Prayer Concerns, and Joys and Thanksgivings

#### 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.

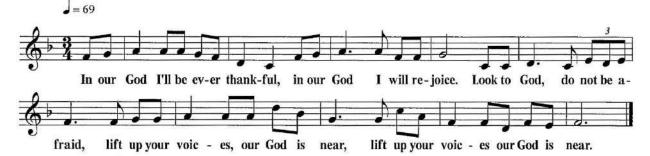
#### God, receive our prayer."

#### 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



Words by Community of Taizé, Music by Jacques Berthier, adapted

# 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 Music**

"Precious Lord, Take My Hand" arr. Mark Hayes

#### **Reception of Offerings and Prayer of Dedication**

Elaine Wang-Meyerhoffer

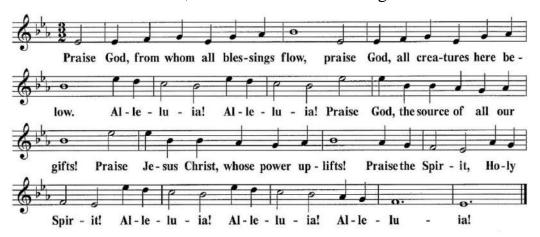
You urge us to travel lightly and proclaim your peace. Relieve us of whatever hinders our mission and give us sustenance for the journey. The gifts we offer are symbols of our commitment; by whatever peace we foster, help us to heal antagonisms that divide your people; and may our actions provide hospitality even in the midst of hostility. **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 and Presentation of Offerings

Praise God, From Whom All Blessings Flow



<sup>\*</sup>Prayer of Jesus (Please join hands)

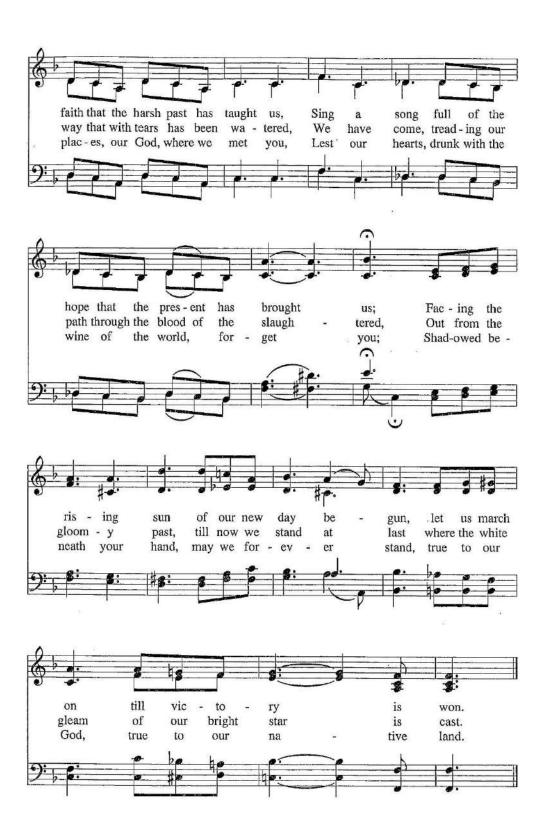
Our Father (Eternal Source/Mother/Creator/Parent) in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom (kin-dom/realm/dream), come. Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses (sins/debts), as we forgive those who trespass against us (sin against 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.

#### \* Sending Hymn



Poet James Weldon Johnson was the first African-American to pass the bar examination in the state of Florida, and served as U.S. consul in Venezuela and Nicaragua. He collaborated with his composer brother, John Rosamond Johnson, to write Broadway operettas and edit song collections. John appeared in vaudeville, directed London musicals, and headed the Music School Settlement in New York.

Tune: LIFT EVERY VOICE Irr. J. Rosamond Johnson, 1921



#### **Benediction and Blessing**

Rev. Kev

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

#### "Simply do justice, love kindness and walk humbly with your God."

Joining with the shouting earth and the roaring sea, the clapping rivers, and the joyful hills, let praise fill our homes and our hearts, now and forever

#### Amen.

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**

Rev. Kev

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

#### **Postlude**

"Old Time Religion" arr. Mark Hayes

Bloom Happenings this Week						
Monday June19	Tuesday June 20	Wednesday June 21	Thursday June 22	Friday June 23	Saturday June 24	Sunday June 25
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	10:45am – 1:00pm Lunch served at St. Paul's Episcopal 6pm BibleBites Bible Study on Zoom		4:00pm Women of Bloom Zoom Happy Hour		10:00 am Sunday Service at Demuth and on Facebook Live

# Congregational Life Announcements

- --A warm welcome and thank you to Ken Forney, piano, for sharing his musical talents with us today.
- **--Thank you** to **Elaine Wang-Meyerhoffer, Davison Williams,** and **Ray Allen** for serving as readers for today's service. A special thank you to **Lorenzo Taylor** for providing our commentary today.
- --Thank you to Nick Wass for handling the technical aspects for today's service. Thank you also to Mike Kreiser and James Tietz for serving as our ushers this morning.
- **--Flowers on the Worship Center,** symbolic of the living Christ are offered to the glory of God by **Ray Allen** in honor of his father's birthday.
- -- Those wishing to donate flowers may contact **Ray Allen** at 405-833-1817 for assistance.

#### **Last Week's Participation**

Sunday Service: --Souls Present at Demuth: 50 --Children: 0 --First Timers: 0 --Facebook Total Views: 90--YouTube Views: 12

#### **Sunday Offering**

--Previous Week's Support: Tithes, Offerings, and Participation:
Offering, online, by mail and text: \$4,087 Electronic Giving: \$2,928
Permanence Fund: \$515 Cumulative: \$315,895
Strengthen the Church: \$120 Cumulative: \$120

**--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.

- -- <u>The Inclusive Bible: The First Egalitarian Translation</u> 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.

Swing Low, Sweet Chariot, arr. Michael Hassell, ©1987 Augsburg Press

Just a Closer Walk With Thee, arr. Mark Hayes, ©1998 Glorysound

Precious Lord, Take My Hand, music George Allen, arr. Mark Hayes, ©1998 Glorysound

Old Time Religion, arr. Mark Hayes, ©1998 Shawnee Press

#### Ministries of Leadership and Support

- **--Open Leadership Meetings** are typically the second Wednesday, 6:30-8:00pm PDT. The next hybrid meeting will be June 14 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 October 15 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, <a href="mailto:dinoinps@gmail.com">dinoinps@gmail.com</a> 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 BibleBites** meets every first, third, and fourth Wednesdays (and when no Open Leadership meeting is held) at 6 pm PDT via Zoom. All are welcome. The group is currently reading I Timothy. If you wish to join the BibleBites discussion and reading notify Bill Wallace at <a href="mailto:adminassistant@bloominthedesert.org">adminassistant@bloominthedesert.org</a>. You will be sent a link to this meeting prior to the date.
- --Bloom Book Club-. The group will be taking a summer break and resume on October 2.

#### **Social Action and Missions Ministry**

--Lunch Mondays, Tuesdays, and Wednesdays: Come serve lunch at the United Methodist Church of Palm Springs on Mondays and Tuesdays, located at 1555 E. Alejo Rd, Palm Springs 10:30 am—1:00 pm PDT. On Wednesdays, lunch is served at St Paul's Episcopal Church at 125 W El Alameda, Palm Springs 10:45 am-1 pm. Contact Jon Miller at jmiller.ps@icloud.com.

#### Our focused ministries include:

- --School children's benevolence backpacks, church camp, and Christmas gift cards.
- --Relieving food insecurity Lunch Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays, food bank support.
- -- National church's wider mission "5 for 5" UCC mission offerings, disaster relief.
- --Spiritual and personal development worship, music, bible study, book clubs, lending library.
- --Loving presence birthday/anniversary cards, eyeglasses, recycling, Us Plus local outreach.
- --For peace action and social justice email alerts, sign up with Jon Miller at jmiller.ps@icloud.com.

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.