

Welcome to the

Union Church of Bay Ridge

of the Presbyterian Church U.S.A.
Eightieth Street and Ridge Boulevard, Brooklyn, New York

VII Epiphany
February 15, 2009



Parish House, Bay Ridge-Union Center for the Arts (BRUCA) and Office

8101 Ridge Boulevard, Brooklyn, NY 11209

718.745.0438 www.ucbr.org www.bruca.org unionchurch@earthlink.net

The Reverend Mary Barrett Speers, Pastor ❖ Vince Peterson, Minister of Music

Ed Huml, BRUCA Program Director ❖ Jody Levine, Administrator and Playgroup Director

You will always be welcome here. This is God's house and a happy church home.
Let us be your church family, for we are all beloved children of God.
Join with us regularly for Christian worship, nurture, and the doing of God's work in the world—
that you may have life, and that more abundantly.

ORDER OF WORSHIP

VII EPIPHANY

GATHERING MUSIC

We use this time to make the transition between “getting here” and “being here”. Take these few minutes to find the still, deep places within you, where God's Spirit dwells. Relax the body; quiet the mind. Focus on breathing, feeling, being. Be receptive to your center—your reservoir of inner peace, strength, love. Be aware of being together in silence with others. Feel the spirit of the community.

✚CALL TO WORSHIP

adapted from Psalm 138:7

Though I walk in the midst of trouble,

You preserve my life, O LORD.

You stretch out your hand against the wrath of all that is against me,

Your right hand delivers me.

✚HYMN *(insert)*

Steal Away

PRAYER OF PREPARATION

*adapted from a prayer of W.E.B. Du Bois**

O Great God, mighty causes are calling us—the freeing of women, the training of children, the putting down of hate and murder and poverty—all these and more. But they call with voices that mean work and sacrifice and death, and we have been weak and frightened where we might have been faithful and strong. Give us grace, O God, to dare to do the deed which we well know cries to be done. Let us not hesitate because of ease, or the words of the human mouth, or our own lives. Forgive us, and grant us the power to do your will, for we pray in the strong name of Jesus...

SILENT PRAYER

ASSURANCE OF GOD'S GRACE

...Friends, believe the good news of the Gospel:

In Jesus Christ we are forgiven!

✚RESPONSE *(tune is no. 369):* Hallelujah! means “Praise the Lord!” African-American spiritual

1. ***Glory, glory, hallelujah! since I laid my burden down,***

(refrain) Glory, glory, hallelujah! since I laid my burden down.

2. ***I feel better, so much better, since I laid my burden down,*** *(refrain)*

3. ***Feel like shouting, “Hallelujah!” since I laid my burden down,*** *(refrain)*

✚THE PEACE OF CHRIST

please exchange the Peace of Christ with your neighbors

GREETING & ANNOUNCEMENTS

SUNG PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Hymnal #322 *Spirit of the Living God*

Spirit of the Living God, fall afresh on me...melt me, mold me, fill me, use me...

FIRST LESSON: I Samuel 5:1-4; 6-11a

ANTHEM *Deep River* Traditional, arr. J. Jefferson Cleveland

SECOND LESSON: Mark 12:38-44

SERMON **The Treasure Nobody Wanted** Rev. Speers

+HYMN no. 404 *Precious Lord, Take My Hand*

OFFERTORY *Heaven's Gonna Be My Home* J. Paul Williams and Michael Barrett

+DOXOLOGY no. 592 and PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Merciful God, we dedicate these gifts as an expression of our trust in you. You alone know our hearts, and you more than any human being love us. May this act of giving draw us closer to you, and spread a table of bounty before all who come closer to you through our sharing, in Jesus Christ our Lord. AMEN.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord...

THE LORD'S PRAYER

+HYMN (*insert*) *****Mine Eyes Have Seen the Glory***

+CHARGE AND BENEDICTION...and let the whole church say, **Alleluia! Amen.**

MUSIC FOR GOING FORTH

please keep silence out of kindness to those who wish to listen or pray. Some of us like to applaud but this is not required; the musicians are not performing for an audience but offering their music to the glory of God.

*W.E.B. Du Bois (1868-1963) was a son of the Hudson River Valley, a member of the African-American branch of one of the oldest Huguenot families in the New World. Together with Mary White Ovington (for whom our Bay Ridge Ovington Avenue is named!) Du Bois cofounded the NAACP.

**This hymn has a special connection to Abraham Lincoln and to Union Church. As you sing, lift up your eyes to the farthest-back clerestory window on your left in the Union Church Sanctuary. It was given in memory of Peter Wilhousky, who composed the best-loved choral arrangement of this hymn, by his wife, who was a member of the Gilkey family of Union Church. Mr. Wilhousky organized the All-Borough Choral Concerts at Carnegie Hall, contracted the NBC Radio Orchestra choirs for Arturo Toscanini, and was the high school music teacher of Emile Serpos; Emile was our organist and choir director for 20 years.

LENT: UNION CHURCH & BAY RIDGE CHURCHES

Beyond the recent TV commercial, the Biblical Hebrew word SHALOM (which shares with Arabic the Semitic root SLM) has many meanings. It means peace, but it also means wholeness, health, well-being, prosperity, all the beautiful things that can happen...

*... when everyone has enough, and everyone who has enough
is satisfied with what they have.*

Our lectionary for Lent in Year B explores the sequence of covenants that God makes with human beings in the Bible. This year, we explore some of those meanings in our worship, special events, and Thursday evening “loaves and fishes” supper programs (bring a bag supper for yourself plus something to share), exploring God’s covenants of peace in our series “Peace Is...”

Wednesday, February 25: Ash Wednesday the first day of Lent: we give up “alleluias”

7:30 pm at Bay Ridge United Church, 636 BR Pkwy 11209 718.836.4978

Saturday, February 28: Peace Is...Healing

9am-12:30pm in the Sanctuary, massage, yoga, healing prayer: come share with others what heals you!

Sunday, March 1: Peace Is...Justice for All

11am Presbyterian Welcome Celebration, Communion

Thursday, March 5: Peace Is...a Full Heart

6:30pm “loaves and fishes” supper and Taizé evensong

Thursday, March 12: Peace Is...Understanding

6:30pm “loaves and fishes” supper: Come hear about the 4th Ave Church Christian-Muslim Sunday School!

Thursday, March 19: Peace Is...Justice for All

6:30pm “loaves and fishes” supper: come hear what’s been happening at the Church of Gethsemane!

Thursday, March 26: Peace Is...Understanding

6:30pm “loaves and fishes” supper: Bruce MacIntyre talks about the Brooklyn College choir at the Peking Olympics!

Monday, March 30: Peace Is...All Have Enough

6pm soup at Our Saviour’s, 80th and 4th Ave, joint hunger awareness supper with St Andrew the Apostle and other Bay Ridge churches.

Thursday, April 2: Peace Is...a Full Heart

6:30pm “loaves and fishes” supper and Taizé evensong

Sunday, April 5: Palm/Passion Sunday 11 am worship with communion

Thursday, April 9: Maundy Thursday Supper

6:30pm intergenerational model seder with storytelling, singing, and a meal, culminating in the Lord’s Supper

Friday, April 10: Good Friday Tenebrae

7:30pm traditional Tenebrae with the Lord’s Supper, Fourth Avenue Presbyterian Church, 6753 4th Avenue 11220 718.836.0681

Saturday, April 11: Easter Vigil

8pm Redeemer-St John’s Lutheran Church, 939 83rd St 11228 718.883.7700

Sunday, April 12: Easter Day!

11am festival worship with communion, special music, and...alleluias!

I Samuel 5:1-4,6-11a NRSV

When the Philistines captured the ark of God, they brought it from Ebenezer to Ashdod; ² then the Philistines took the ark of God and brought it into the house of [their god] Dagon and placed it beside [the statue of] Dagon. ³ When the people of Ashdod rose early the next day, there was Dagon, fallen on his face to the ground before the ark of the LORD. So they took Dagon and put him back in his place. ⁴ But when they rose early on the next morning, Dagon had fallen on his face to the ground before the ark of the LORD, and the head of Dagon and both his hands were lying cut off upon the threshold; only the trunk of Dagon was left to him.

⁶ The hand of the LORD was heavy upon the people of Ashdod, and he terrified and struck them with tumors, both in Ashdod and in its territory. ⁷ And when the inhabitants of Ashdod saw how things were, they said, “The ark of the God of Israel must not remain with us; for his hand is heavy on us and on our god Dagon.” ⁸ So they sent and gathered together all the lords of the Philistines, and said, “What shall we do with the ark of the God of Israel?” The inhabitants of Gath replied, “Let the ark of God be moved on to us.” So they moved the ark of the God of Israel to Gath. ⁹ But after they had brought it to Gath, the hand of the LORD was against the city, causing a very great panic; he struck the inhabitants of the city, both young and old, so that tumors broke out on them. ¹⁰ So they sent the ark of the God of Israel to Ekron. But when the ark of God came to Ekron, the people of Ekron cried out, “Why have they brought around to us the ark of the God of Israel to kill us and our people?” ¹¹ They sent therefore and gathered together all the lords of the Philistines, and said, “Send away the ark of the God of Israel, and let it return to its own place, that it may not kill us and our people.”

Mark 12:41-44 NRSV

Jesus sat down opposite the treasury, and watched the crowd putting money into the treasury. Many rich people put in large sums. ⁴² A poor widow came and put in two small copper coins, which are worth a penny. ⁴³ Then he called his disciples and said to them, “Truly I tell you, this poor widow has put in more than all those who are contributing to the treasury. ⁴⁴ For all of them have contributed out of their abundance; but she out of her poverty has put in everything she had, all she had to live on.”

Announcements

Visitors, welcome! Please join us after worship for refreshments and conversation, and please sign the guest book in the back of the Sanctuary so that we may get to know you better.

Many thanks to all worship leaders: Vince Peterson and the choir; the Morales family for today's refreshments; Mary Cusack (outgoing Communion 'bishop') Kristin Miller (coffee hour 'bishop') and Michele DiBartolo (Sunday school 'bishop').

February is Black History Month, with a variety of music and prayers from Africa and the African Diaspora. Watch closely, because some of these will surprise you!

The Book of Remembrance is open to remember: 2/15—Susan Ulllyette; 2/22—Emma Smith; 3/1—Alice Seely; 3/8—June Aram; 3/15—Severin Norstrand; 3/22—Janet Louisa; 3/29—Helene Ogurek.

Prayer List requests should come to the church office by telephone **718.745.0438**.

Continue to pray for peace; for all living in the midst of war, poverty, natural and economic disaster; for prisoners and all who watch and pray for them, especially the Church of Gethsemane. Continue to pray for/stay in touch with: the Dodge family, the Douglass family, the Attara family, the Peterson family; the Cleary family, Art Samuel and Mary Chamberlain, Iris Norstrand, Emile Serposs, Milford Anderson, Nazik David, Amanda Silverman, Bill Louisa, Helen Kretiv; also Bob and Louise, Helen and Paul, Ed, Mark and Audrey, Helen, Wendy, Sally.

The food collection box is in the vestibule. Or visit www.freerice.com and www.thehungersite.com

This Week and Ongoing

This afternoon at 4pm: Union Church Concerts presents Westminster Choral Scholars of Westminster Choir College under the direction of Tom Colao. Freewill offering for music.

Next Sunday: the Sacrament of Baptism: Jack Tulsa Segna, son of Jennifer and Ben Segna.

Wednesday midweek Bible Study, 11am at Redeemer-St John's Lutheran church, 939 83rd St.

Fortnightly Tuesday Bible Study meets every other Tuesday at 7pm in the Parish House.

The group is studying the letters of Paul in the New Testament: next meeting Feb 24.

Support group for parents of children with special needs first Mondays, 11-1: call Isabel Morales 800.405.8818 if you or a friend would be interested: March 2 is the next meeting.

Yoga continues on Mondays and Wednesdays, 6:45-8:15 in the Sanctuary. Each class is \$15, pay as you go; wear comfortable clothes and bring a towel and a yoga mat if you have one.

Looking to the Future

Lent begins—as always—with **Ash Wednesday, February 25** at Bay Ridge United Church. This Lent, our Sunday readings focus on covenants in the Bible, our programs explore aspects of peace in the Bible, so our Lenten theme is ***Covenants of Peace: "Peace Is..."***

Lent Reflective Saturday 9-12am Feb 28: *Peace is Healing* with massage, yoga, healing prayer

Sunday March 1, *God's Covenant of Peace with All People*, Mystery Pal Exchange, and Communion with guest Rev. Mieke Vandersall of Presbyterian Welcome; Mary Cusack to sing; Mieke will present the special Communion chalice given to all Presbyterian Welcome churches.

Lenten Suppers will be on Thursdays this year, with "loaves and fishes" supper at 6:30pm followed by program at 7pm. The full schedule for ***Covenants of Peace: "Peace Is..."*** is in your newsletter, on our website www.ucbr.org, and on the insert in this bulletin.

Maundy Thursday will again be a model seder, this time for all Bay Ridge Presbyterian churches, **here at Union Church on Thursday, April 9, beginning at 6:30pm.**

Looking for a *positive* spiritual practice for Lent? Consider singing in the choir! Or join in just to sing in the March 15 concert: the Fauré *Requiem*. See Vince Peterson for details.