

Welcome to the
Union Church of Bay Ridge

of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)
Eightieth Street and Ridge Boulevard

January 11, 2009



Eric de Sature, from *Textes de la Bible de Jérusalem*. Taizé-Seuil. 1968.

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

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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

II EPIPHANY, THE BAPTISM OF THE LORD

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

from **Psalm 29**

The voice of the LORD shakes the wilderness:

And in the temple all cry, “Glory!”

May the LORD give strength to the people!

May the LORD bless the people with peace!

+ HYMN no. 83

O Love, How Deep, How Broad, How High

PRAYER OF THE DAY

O Love, how deep, how broad, how high, Light of Love dwelling among us, forgive us for forgetting that we are the body of Christ, that you intend us to be your light to the world. Fierce lover of all creation, kindle again the fire of heaven’s justice in our weary hearts. Burn away the cobwebs of habit and skepticism, and make us the joyful fountain of blessing you made us to be. In the fullness of your mercy, wash away all fear and self-reproach, and baptize us once again with your Spirit, so that, forgiven and renewed, we may show forth your glory shining in the face of Jesus Christ...

SILENT PRAYER

ASSURANCE OF GOD’S GRACE

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

In Jesus Christ we are forgiven!

+ RESPONSE adapted from no. 492

Baptized in Water

Baptized in water, sealed by the Spirit, marked with the sign of Christ our King;

Freed and forgiven, we are God’s children: Glory to God! All glory we sing!

+THE PEACE OF CHRIST

please turn and share the Peace of Christ with your neighbors

GREETING and **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

SUNG PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION *Hymnal no. 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 Mark 1:4-11

POETIC ANTHEM Daniel 3:1-29 *as read last Easter Vigil at Redeemer-St John's Church*

SECOND LESSON Acts 19:1-7

SERMON Fire, Water, and the Holy Spirit Rev. Speers

✚**HYMN** no. 313 *Come Down, O Love Divine*

OFFERTORY Bless the Lord, O My Soul Ippolitof-Ivanof

✚**DOXOLOGY** no. 592 and **PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

God our help, we your children offer you our selves and the fruits of our labors. We hear your call to follow your beloved child Jesus. We yearn to fulfill our vows as baptized believers. Accept these offerings in Jesus' name, and follow them with your blessing, for by the Spirit we belong to Christ Jesus, who calls us his own and in whose strong name we pray. **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

Hymnal p. 16: "debts"

✚**HYMN** no. 495 *We Know that Christ Is Raised*

✚**CHARGE AND BENEDICTION**

...and let the whole church say, **Alleluia! Amen.**

✚**CHORAL RESPONSE**

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 offer their music to the glory of God.

✚all who would like to may stand; **unison prayers are in bold.**

Mark 1:4-11 NRSV

John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. ⁵ And people from the whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem were going out to him, and were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. ⁶ Now John was clothed with camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. ⁷ He proclaimed, "The one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to stoop down and untie the thong of his sandals. ⁸ I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

⁹ In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. ¹⁰ And just as he was coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens torn apart and the Spirit descending like a dove on him. ¹¹ And a voice came from heaven, "You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased."

Daniel 3:1-29 NRSV

to be read aloud by four people

King Nebuchadnezzar made a golden statue whose height was sixty cubits and whose width was six cubits; he set it up on the plain of Dura in the province of Babylon. ² Then King Nebuchadnezzar sent for the satraps, the prefects, and the governors, the counselors, the treasurers, the justices, the magistrates, and all the officials of the provinces to assemble and come to the dedication of the statue that King Nebuchadnezzar had set up. ³ So the satraps, the prefects, and the governors, the counselors, the treasurers, the justices, the magistrates, and all the officials of the provinces, assembled for the dedication of the statue that King Nebuchadnezzar had set up.

When they were standing before the statue that Nebuchadnezzar had set up, ⁴ the herald proclaimed aloud, "You are

commanded, O peoples, nations, and languages, ⁵ that when you hear the sound of the horn, pipe, lyre, triangle, harp, drum, and entire musical ensemble, you are to fall down and worship the golden statue that King Nebuchadnezzar has set up. ⁶ Whoever does not fall down and worship shall immediately be thrown into a furnace of blazing fire.” ⁷ Therefore, as soon as all the peoples heard the sound of the horn, pipe, lyre, triangle, harp, drum, and entire musical ensemble, all the peoples, nations, and languages fell down and worshiped the golden statue that King Nebuchadnezzar had set up.

⁸ Accordingly, at this time certain Chaldeans came forward and denounced the Jews. ⁹ They said to King Nebuchadnezzar, “O king, live forever! ¹⁰ You, O king, have made a decree, that everyone who hears the sound of the horn, pipe, lyre, triangle, harp, drum, and entire musical ensemble, shall fall down and worship the golden statue, ¹¹ and whoever does not fall down and worship shall be thrown into a furnace of blazing fire. ¹² There are certain Jews whom you have appointed over the affairs of the province of Babylon: Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. These pay no heed to you, O King. They do not serve your gods and they do not worship the golden statue that you have set up.”

¹³ Then Nebuchadnezzar in furious rage commanded that Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego be brought in; so they brought those men before the king. ¹⁴ Nebuchadnezzar said to them, “Is it true, O Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, that you do not serve my gods and you do not worship the golden statue that I have set up? ¹⁵ Now if you are ready when you hear the sound of the horn, pipe, lyre, triangle, harp, drum, and entire musical ensemble to fall down and worship the statue that I have made, well and good. But if you do not worship, you shall immediately be thrown into a furnace of blazing fire, and who is the god that will deliver you out of my hands?”

¹⁶ Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego answered the king, “O Nebuchadnezzar, we have no need to present a defense to you in this matter. ¹⁷ If our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the furnace of blazing fire and out of your hand, O king, let him deliver us. ¹⁸ But if not, be it known to you, O king, that we will not serve your gods and we will not worship the golden statue that you have set up.”

¹⁹ Then Nebuchadnezzar was so filled with rage against Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego that his face was distorted. He ordered the furnace heated up seven times more than was customary, ²⁰ and ordered some of the strongest guards in his army to bind Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego and to throw them into the furnace of blazing fire. ²¹ So the men were bound, still wearing their tunics, their trousers, their hats, and their other garments, and they were thrown into the furnace of blazing fire.

²² Because the king’s command was urgent and the furnace was so overheated, the raging flames killed the men who lifted Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. ²³ But the three men, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, fell down, bound, into the furnace of blazing fire.

²⁴ Then King Nebuchadnezzar was astonished and rose up quickly. He said to his counselors, “Was it not three men that we threw bound into the fire?” They answered the king, “True, O king.” ²⁵ He replied, “But I see four men unbound, walking in the middle of the fire, and they are not hurt; and the fourth has the appearance of a god.”

²⁶ Nebuchadnezzar then approached the door of the furnace of blazing fire and said, “Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, servants of the Most High God, come out! Come here!” So Shadrach,

Meshach, and Abednego came out from the fire. ²⁷ And the satraps, the prefects, the governors, and the king's counselors gathered together and saw that the fire had not had any power over the bodies of those men; the hair of their heads was not singed, their tunics were not harmed, and not even the smell of fire came from them.

²⁸ Nebuchadnezzar said, "Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, who has sent his angel and delivered his servants who trusted in him. They disobeyed the king's command and yielded up their bodies rather than serve and worship any god except their own God. ²⁹ Therefore I make a decree: Any people, nation, or language that utters blasphemy against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego shall be torn limb from limb, and their houses laid in ruins; for no other god can save in this way."

Acts 19:1-7 NRSV

While Apollos was in Corinth, Paul passed through the interior regions and came to Ephesus, where he found some disciples. ² He said to them, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you became believers?" They replied, "No, we have not even heard that there is a Holy Spirit." ³ Then he said, "Into what then were you baptized?" They answered, "Into John's baptism." ⁴ Paul said, "John baptized with the baptism of repentance, telling the people to believe in the one who was to come after him, that is, in Jesus." ⁵ On hearing this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. ⁶ When Paul had laid his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came upon them, and they spoke in tongues and prophesied— ⁷ altogether there were about twelve of them.

Today's flowers are given to the glory of God by Carolyn and Gen. David Ramsay
in loving memory of Emma Kirk Beck

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 hiphop anthem chorus; the ushers; the LoPorto family for today's refreshments; Mary Cusack (Communion 'bishop') Kristin Miller (coffee hour 'bishop') and Michele DiBartolo (Sunday school 'bishop').

We are sad to announce the death of Barbara Briggs on Dec 28, with a private service and interment at Greenwood Cemetery December 31. Condolences may be sent to her executor, Brian Kasler, through the Union Church office.

The Book of Remembrance is open to remember: 1/11—Emma Kirk Beck; 1/18—Edward Norstrand; 1/25—Leinda Mouacdie.

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 family and friends of Barbara Briggs, Maryellen Van Royen and the Douglass family; the Moore family, the Attara family, the Peterson family, the Cleary family in their new home, Art Samuel and Mary Chamberlain, Iris Norstrand, Emile Serposs, Milford Anderson, Nazik David, Amanda Silverman, Bill Louisa, Helen Kretiv; also 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

Many thanks to all who worked yesterday, taking down the greens and budget planning for 2009: all hands are appreciated for these unlovely, necessary, spirituality-in-practice tasks.

Fortnightly Tuesday Bible Study meets this Tuesday, Jan 13 at 7pm in the Parish House.

Wednesday midweek, midday Bible Study resumes this week, January 14

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: **Feb 2** is the next meeting.

Yoga continues on Mondays and Wednesdays, 6:45-8:15 in the Sanctuary. No experience or advance registration is needed for this gentle, restorative rasa yoga class. Each evening 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

P&M and Session joint meeting 6:30 pm tomorrow, Jan 12 in the Parish House

January Union Church Concert 4pm Sunday January 18: Duo Nova Antigua

Newsletter deadline (for Feb-March including most of Lent) January 19

Session meets January 26 at 7pm in the Parish House

Next Taizé Evensong is February 5 at 7pm

Lent begins—as always—with Ash Wednesday, at the very end of February this year.

Sunday March 1: First Sunday in Lent, Mystery Pal Exchange, and Communion with guest Rev.

Mieke Vandersall of Presbyterian Welcome; Mary Cusack to sing; Mieke will be presenting Union Church with the special Communion chalice given to all Presbyterian Welcome churches.

Looking for a *positive* spiritual practice for Lent? Consider singing in the choir..Sundays at 9:30am! Or join in just to sing in the March 15 concert: the *Requiem* of Gabriel Fauré.