

Welcome to your spirit's home...

Union Church of Bay Ridge

of the Presbyterian Church U.S.A.

Eightieth Street and Ridge Boulevard, Brooklyn, New York

II Advent

December 7, 2008

Union Church Chapel, Parish House and Office
8101 Ridge Boulevard at Eighty-First Street, Brooklyn, NY 11209
www.ucbr.org ❖ unionchurch@earthlink.net ❖ 718.745.0438

The Reverend Mary Barrett Speers, Pastor ❖ Vince Peterson, Minister of Music
Ed Huml, BRUCA Program Director ❖ Jody Levine, Playgroup Director and Administrator

Second Sunday in Advent



ORDER OF WORSHIP

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.

THE SECOND ADVENT CANDLE

The Segna Family

First leader says: This year, on the four Sundays of Advent, we give thanks to God, maker of all things, for the four Elements: Fire, Earth, Air, Water.

Second Leader says: In the beginning, the Bible says, God separated the sea from the dry land, and called the dry land Earth. Out of the earth God shaped the first earth-creature, the first human being. Earth is dark and cold and mysterious and life-giving. Without it there would be no food, no homes, no mountains to climb, no sight of land in a storm. Let us give thanks for the earth, as we pray in silence... *(silence)*...*After the silence, the leaders light two candles on the ring, then lead the congregation in these responses from Psalm 85:* Faithfulness will spring up from the ground,

And righteousness will look down from the sky:

The LORD will give what is good, and our land will yield its increase.

Righteousness will go before the LORD, and make a path for his steps.

Come, Lord Jesus.

after a brief prayerful silence, all sing...

+HYMN IN PROCESSION no. 13

Prepare the Way, O Zion

PRAYER OF PREPARATION

God of the future, you are coming in glory to fill your world with goodness. We confess that in all our preparations for another Christmas, we are still unprepared for you. Where we might be opening our hearts and our lives to receive you, we are busy filling them up, as though we did not really believe you were coming. Help our unbelief: give us grace to leave open our unfilled places, so that when our guest comes, they become places of honor, and we are ready with a joyful welcome in the name of Christ Jesus our Lord...

SILENT PRAYER

ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

...Friends, believe the good news of the Gospel:
In Jesus Christ we are forgiven!

✦ **GLORY TO GOD: *Gloria in excelsis Deo!***

chorus from *Hymnal* no. **23**

✦ **THE PEACE**

please remain standing and offer the Peace of Christ to your neighbors

GREETING AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

MINUTE FOR STEWARDSHIP: TRIMMING THE PROPHECY TREE

Please write your hopes, dreams, prayers for God's world on the "message bearer" you make, and hang it on the tree.

SUNG PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

verse 5 from no. **325** (NUN DANKET ALL')

*Spirit divine, attend our prayers; make a lost world Your home;
Descend with all your gracious powers; O come, great Spirit, come!*

FIRST LESSON

Isaiah 40:1-11

ANTHEM

Every Valley from *Messiah*

Scott Morwitz, tenor

G.F. Handel

SECOND LESSON

Mark 1:1-8

SERMON

Turning Round Right

Rev. Speers

OFFERTORY

And the Glory of the Lord from *Messiah*

G.F. Handel

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

Holy One, source of all power and grace, place within us the spirit of your holy child Jesus, fill us with such love and awe and delight that we become a blessing to everyone we meet, and send us into your world to share your abundant life through the one who was, and is, and is to come, Jesus Christ, our Lord. AMEN.

INVITATION TO THE LORD'S SUPPER

God's offering to God's people

PRAYERS OF THANKSGIVING AND INTERCESSION

Hymnal p. 13

THE LORD'S PRAYER "debts"

Hymnal p. 16

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

✦ **SHARING OF THE BREAD AND CUP**

Please come to the table and dip the bread in the cup

✦ **PRAYER HYMN** no. **501** *the tune is an old French carol* ***Bread of Heaven, On Thee We Feed***

✦ **CHARGE AND BENEDICTION**

...Let the whole church say: **Alleluia! Amen.**

CLOSING MUSIC

*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; artists offer their work to the glory of God.*

✦ All who are able please stand; **unison prayers are in bold.**

Isaiah 40:1-11 NRSV

Comfort, O comfort my people,
says your God.
²Speak tenderly to Jerusalem,
and cry to her
that she has served her term,
that her penalty is paid,
that she has received from the Lord's hand
double for all her sins.

³A voice cries out:

'In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord,
make straight in the desert a highway for our God.

⁴Every valley shall be lifted up,
and every mountain and hill be made low;
the uneven ground shall become level,
and the rough places a plain.

⁵Then the glory of the Lord shall be revealed,
and all people shall see it together,
for the mouth of the Lord has spoken.'

⁶A voice says, 'Cry out!'

And I said, 'What shall I cry?'

All people are grass,
their constancy is like the flower of the field.

⁷The grass withers, the flower fades,
when the breath of the Lord blows upon it;
surely the people are grass.

⁸The grass withers, the flower fades;
but the word of our God will stand for ever.

⁹Get you up to a high mountain,
O Zion, herald of good tidings;
lift up your voice with strength,
O Jerusalem, herald of good tidings,
lift it up, do not fear;
say to the cities of Judah,
'Here is your God!'

¹⁰See, the Lord God comes with might,

and his arm rules for him;
his reward is with him,
and his recompense before him.
¹¹He will feed his flock like a shepherd;
he will gather the lambs in his arms,
and carry them in his bosom,
and gently lead the mother sheep.

Mark:1-8 NRSV

¹The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

As it is written in the prophet Isaiah,
‘See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you,
who will prepare your way;

³the voice of one crying out in the wilderness:

“Prepare the way of the Lord,
make his paths straight” ’,

⁴John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. ⁵And 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. ⁶Now John was clothed with camel’s hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. ⁷He 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. ⁸I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.’

Simple Gifts (Shaker turning chant)

**’Tis the gift to be simple, ’tis the gift to be free,
’Tis the gift to come down where we ought to be,
And when we find ourselves in the place just right,
’Twill be in the valley of love and delight.**

**When true simplicity is gained,
To bow and to bend we shan’t be ashamed;
To turn, turn will be our delight,
Till by turning, turning we come ’round right.**

Words and Music by Elder Joseph Brackett (May 6, 1797-July 4, 1882) a Maine Shaker

Announcements

Visitors, welcome! Please join us after worship for refreshments and conversation, and please sign the Union Church guest book (at the back) so that we may get to know you better.

Many thanks to all leaders: the teachers; the ushers; Vince Peterson and the choir; the Segna family for Advent candle lighting; Mary Chamberlain for today's refreshments; 'bishops' Mary Cusack (Communion) Kristin Miller-Lynch (coffee hour), and Michele Di Bartolo (Sunday School).

The Book of Remembrance is open to remember: 12/7—Jean Dangman; 12/14—Andrew Stutz; 12/21—Josephine Coury; 12/28—Friends of Union Church; 1/4--Olive Buerk; 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: Paul Douglass and the Van Royen family; Diget and Ginny and the Moore family, Theresa and the Attara family, Vince and the Peterson family, the Boyle family, the Cleary family, Art Samuel and Mary Chamberlain, Iris Norstrand, Emile Serposs, Milford Anderson, Nazik David, Barbara Briggs, Amanda Silverman, Bill Louisa, Helen Kretiv; also Ed, Mark and Audrey, Helen, Wendy, Sally, Kevin. Please call the office to make changes to the prayer list.

Danny Forger is engaged! Letters of congratulation may be sent to him and Rev. Deborah Knott, in care of Daniel and Chantal Forger, 2336 East 29th Street, Brooklyn, NY 11229.

Give food for free on line: www.freerice.com and www.thehungersite.com are fun, interactive sites where you can take a vocabulary quiz and donate rice for each correct answer (no charge), or just keep clicking repeatedly, not even a quiz, and donors give food for free based on your clicks.

Holiday Food Bank: canned goods, especially tuna fish and plastic-jar peanut butter, are most welcome. Think portable, easy to store, not requiring pots and pans (or even can openers). The food collection box is on the table in the Sanctuary vestibule.

This Week and Ongoing

Nominating Committee meets after worship today in the Sanctuary.

Today at 3pm, Our Saviour's Lutheran Church invites you and your family and friends to a service of **Lessons and Carols** by Aaron David Miller and Herbert F. Brokering, Julebord to follow.

Midday Bible Study Luncheon this Wednesday; then the group is in recess until the New Year.

Tuesday evening fortnightly Bible study 7pm every other Tuesday: next date is December 17, skip December 30, then January 13, January 27, etc., in Rev. Speers's study, Union Church Parish House, one block south at 8101 Ridge Boulevard.

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: January 5 is the next planned date.

Yoga continues on Mondays and Wednesdays, 6:45-8:15 in the Sanctuary, except for Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve. 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.

The Rest of Advent and Christmas at Union Church

Advent plans include Gifts Sunday with Stewardship Dedication Dec 14, Conrad Susa's *Carols and Lullabies* at 4pm Dec 14, the Union Church Manger Service 11am Sunday, Dec 21, the Manse Christmas Party after worship Dec 21, and our "midnight" Christmas Eve Communion service with carols, candles, and choir, 10:30pm Dec 24. Brad Whiteley will join us for Lessons and Carols December 28, and we celebrate Epiphany (Three Kings) with Communion on January 4, 2009.