

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

III Advent



December 14, 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

Third 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. 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 THIRD ADVENT CANDLE

The LoPorto 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 universe was emptiness and nothingness, and the Spirit of God moved over the face of the deep. In the Bible, Spirit, Wind, and Breath are all the same word: the invisible power of God that gives life through the very air. Without the air, and the wind that blows, there would be no tempests, but also no sailing, no flight, no windmills, no song, no speech—indeed, no life—on our planet. Let us give thanks for the air, the wind, the Spirit, our breath, as we pray in silence... (silence)...*After the silence, the leaders light three candles on the ring, then lead the congregation in these responses from Isaiah 61:*

The Spirit of the LORD is upon me, because the LORD has anointed me

To bring good news to the oppressed, to bind up the brokenhearted,

To proclaim liberty to the captives, and release to the prisoners:

I will greatly rejoice in the LORD: my whole being shall exult in my God!

Come, Lord Jesus.

after a brief prayerful silence, all sing...

✦ADVENT CAROL no. 16

The Angel Gabriel from Heaven Came

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

STEWARDSHIP: GIFTS AND PLEDGES

Please bring forward your pledge cards and gifts of children's books for children whose parents are in prison. Pledge cards go on the Communion table, and books go under the tree. Mary Cusack will deliver the books to Gethsemane Church.

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

I Samuel 1:20,27-28,2:1-8 (*Hannah's song*)

ANTHEM

O Thou that Tellest

Sara Dougherty, mezzo-soprano

G.F. Handel

SECOND LESSON

Luke 1:39,46-56

(*Mary's song*)

SERMON

What Shall I Give?

Rev. Speers

✚**ADVENT CAROL** no. **36**

In the Bleak Midwinter

Christina Rossetti/Gustav Holst

OFFERTORY

Ríu, Ríu, Chíu

16c. Castillian villancico, arr. Udo Baake, www.cpd.org

✚**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.

GATHERING OF JOYS AND CONCERNS and **PASTORAL PRAYER**

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"

✚**ADVENT CAROL IN RECESSION** no. **49**

Once in Royal David's City

✚**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.

I Samuel 1:20,27-28;2:1-8 NRSV

In due time Hannah conceived and bore a son. She named him Samuel, for she said, 'I have asked him of the LORD.'

²⁷For this child I prayed; and the LORD has granted me the petition that I made to him. ²⁸Therefore I have lent him to the LORD; as long as he lives, he is given to the LORD.'

²Hannah prayed and said,

'My heart exults in the LORD;
my strength is exalted in my God.

My mouth derides my enemies,
because I rejoice in my victory.

²'There is no Holy One like the LORD,
no one besides you;
there is no Rock like our God.

³Talk no more so very proudly,
let not arrogance come from your mouth;
for the LORD is a God of knowledge,
and by him actions are weighed.

⁴The bows of the mighty are broken,
but the feeble gird on strength.

⁵Those who were full have hired themselves out for bread,
but those who were hungry are fat with spoil.

The barren has borne seven,
but she who has many children is forlorn.

⁶The LORD kills and brings to life;
he brings down to Sheol and raises up.

⁷The LORD makes poor and makes rich;
he brings low, he also exalts.

⁸He raises up the poor from the dust;
he lifts the needy from the ash heap,

to make them sit with princes
and inherit a seat of honour.

For the pillars of the earth are the LORD's,
and on them he has set the world.

Luke 1:39;46-56 NRSV

39 In those days Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country.

46 And Mary said,

‘My soul magnifies the Lord,

47 and my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour,

48 for he has looked with favour on the lowliness of his servant.

Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed;

49 for the Mighty One has done great things for me,
and holy is his name.

50 His mercy is for those who fear him
from generation to generation.

51 He has shown strength with his arm;
he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts.

52 He has brought down the powerful from their thrones,
and lifted up the lowly;

53 he has filled the hungry with good things,
and sent the rich away empty.

54 He has helped his servant Israel,
in remembrance of his mercy,

55 according to the promise he made to our ancestors,
to Abraham and to his descendants for ever.’

56 And Mary remained with her for about three months and then returned to her home.

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 lectors; the ushers; Vince Peterson and the choir; the LoPorto family for Advent candle lighting; Olive Reich and Marie Nelson for today's refreshments; 'bishops' Kristin Miller-Lynch (coffee hour) and Michele Di Bartolo (Sunday School).

The Book of Remembrance is open to remember: 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.

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

Family-friendly Christmas concert this afternoon at 4pm: Conrad Susa's Carols and Lullabies: Christmas in the Southwest (songs of the season from the Spanish diaspora), with selections from Messiah and other Christmas and Advent favorites, ending with participatory singing of Christmas Carols to get the whole family in the Christmas spirit.

Tuesday evening fortnightly Bible study 7pm every other Tuesday: next date is this Tuesday, 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

Still to come: 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.

Plain Living and High Thinking January 10

Budget process meeting 9am-12:30pm in the Parish House, and the inevitable Packing Away of the Greens, until next year, in the Sanctuary. All hands are needed for these necessary tasks.