

HEIRLOOM

of the Union Church of Bay Ridge
Ridge Boulevard and 80th Street

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The Parish House/Office
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8101 Ridge Boulevard
Brooklyn, New York 11209

August/September, 2008

Rev. Mary Barrett Speers, *Pastor*
Jody Levine, *Administrator*



MESSAGE FROM OUR MINISTER

August and September are full of “re-creation” for the Union Church family!

Playgroup, Yoga, and BRUCA will continue as scheduled through the summer. Our guest preachers for August will be the Rev. Cornell Edmonds (stated Clerk of the Presbytery), Elder James Tse, Joe Lynch, and Bruce MacIntyre. Our wonderful Minister of Music, Vince Peterson, will play and participate in the singing at all services, except for August 3, when we’ll have the leadership of Bruce MacIntyre. Worship will continue at 10am in the Parish House Chapel THROUGH Sunday, September 7.

On September 14th, Union Church will move back to 11am worship in the Sanctuary with a Homecoming celebration, the Lord’s Supper (“communion”) for September, and a look forward to fall and Advent. BRUCA and Playgroup begin their fall terms the week of September 15: please see inside this newsletter and the calendar sheet (printed from our website) for both. (watch the Web calendar for updates as September progresses).

Our Program and Mission committee has been working over the summer to fix the electrical problems in the Sanctuary kitchen, and is planning a Sunday School curriculum event with other Bay Ridge churches who use *Seasons of the Spirit*. If you are interested in being among the pool of teachers for 2008-09, speak to Isabel Morales, Kristin Miller, or (new member) Maryellen Vanroyen.

On Saturday, September 27, Union Church will host the September meeting of the Presbytery of New York City, in commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the ordination of Peggy Howland, who was ordained in the fall of 1958 here at Union Church, to serve with Rev. George Bonnell. Peggy was the first (and only) woman ever ordained by what was then Brooklyn-Nassau Presbytery, and only the twelfth woman in the entire denomination. Jo Tolley will be there for the occasion, as well as Rev. Bonnell if he is able. Isabel Morales and Michele DiBartolo are our Union Church “bishops” for this wonderful opportunity to show off Union Church to our presbytery. Gorgas will dance, and Vince Peterson will lead a presbytery-wide “pickup choir” of multicultural women’s voices to celebrate the occasion.

Fall events will include our continued Union Church Concerts, now under the direction of Vince Peterson, and the third annual Marathon of Prayer and Praise the first Sunday in November.

The concert series will once again include Prokofiev’s *Peter and the Wolf*, in an October Sunday community concert with a day (or two) of performances offered to local schools. Looking forward, we are already planning a mini-opera in our Sanctuary for Advent, with wreath making, the “manger service” Christmas eve blessing of the animals, and other wonderful events as Christmas approaches.



Enjoy the rest of this newsletter, and safe traveling and a safe return to you if you have vacation still to come. Blessings to you all this summer, wherever in God’s world you may be,

Mary

BIBLE STUDY RESUMES SEPTEMBER 10

Rev. Speers and Rev. Darryl Kozak co-lead Midweek Morning Bible Study, 11 am Wednesdays at Redeemer-Saint John’s Lutheran Church Parish House, 933 83rd St in Dyker Heights.



This is a great opportunity: it’s a lively daytime Bible Study, with about 20 regular participants already from Redeemer-Saint John’s, Salem, and Trinity (46th Street) Lutheran Churches. We welcome Presbyterians, Methodists, more Lutherans, Roman Catholics, Orthodox, etc. etc. The group meets every Wednesday for study, service, and fellowship.

All are invited: bring a bag lunch; coffee, tea, and cake are provided. Please let Rev. Speers know if you would like to participate, and she’ll be happy to pick you up.

The first meeting will be September 10, when the group will decide what they want to study for the next few weeks. The classes meet on the first floor of the Redeemer-Saint John’s Parish House. The office phone number there is 718-833-7700.

SUMMER WORSHIP CALENDAR FOR AUGUST

August 3—Rev. Cornell Edmonds (stated clerk of the Presbytery of New York City)
---Elder Bruce McIntyre, piano

August 10—Elder James Tse (Queens Chinese Presbyterian)

August 17—Elder Joseph Lynch (Union Church)

August 24—Elder Bruce McIntyre (Union Church)

August 31—Choir Retreat: preacher TBA; Alexie Lewis, pianist



Rev Speers preaching...



...and Gorgas dancing!

SUNDAY IN THE PARK WITH GOD

On Sunday, July 20, Union Church joined Redeemer-St John's, Salem, and Our Saviour Lutheran Churches for a wonderful alfresco worship experience that R-SJ member and photographer Peter Seyrdahl (whom we thank for these photos) has aptly named "Sunday in the Park with God." Rev. Harriet Wieber of Salem Lutheran Church presided, Rev. Speers of Union Church preached, Rev. Darryl Kozak of Redeemer-St John's made it all work together. Music was provided by *Everything We Are*, the praise band of Redeemer-St John's, and **Elizabeth Gorgas of Union Church was the liturgical dancer.** Watch our website and the website of Redeemer-St John's for photos of the event!

COME TO THE LORD'S TABLE

Our worship services are every Sunday in the Parish House through September 7th at 10:00 am, then in the Sanctuary at 11 am beginning September 14th. Communion will be served on August 3rd (in the Parish House chapel) and September 14th (in the Sanctuary). Please join us!

JUNE AND JULY FLOWERS

Chancel flowers were dedicated to the glory of God and given by: June 1st — Ruth Ward, In Memory of John Ward; June 15th — In Memory Of Ruth Cranstoun from Alexander and Margaret Cranstoun; June 22nd — Happy Birthday to Iliana Morales, from Isabel and Victor Morales; June 22nd — In Loving Memory of Madeline Stutz, from Donald and Andrea Zarou.



THE BOOK OF REMEMBRANCE is located at the back of the Sanctuary and is open to the memorial page of a different dearly departed member every Sunday. Upcoming in the Book of Remembrance: August 3rd — Rev. Dr. David Feazell; August 10th — Marion Newhouse; August 17th — Albert Mossawir; August 24th — Florance Firman; August 31st — Audrey MacFarlane; September 7th — Ruth Hassan; September 14th — Percival Buerk; September 21st — Ernest V. Skoldberg, Sr.; September 28th — Shikri Coury.



CONTINUE TO PRAY

Prayer List requests should come to the church office by telephone **718.745.0438** or email **ucoffice@earthlink.net**.



Continue to pray for/stay in touch

with: Dolores Cleary and her family, Iris Norstrand, Emile Serposs, Milford Anderson, Nazik David, Barbara Briggs, Amanda Silverman, Bill Louisa, Helen Kretiv, the Boynton family, Art, and Rev Speers who is having minor surgery on her foot August 15. You will notice that this prayer list has been edited in preparation for the new year. Please call the office or email **ucoffice@earthlink.net** to add anyone, or any place or issue, to the prayer list. God bless you!

UPCOMING BIRTHDAYS

If you worship with us and would like your birthday listed in our newsletter, fill in the birthday calendar at the back of the sanctuary with your name and birth date or call the office.



August

07 – Jennifer Green
20 – Jane Feazell
21 – Veronica Southerland
31 – Katie Samuel

September

02 – Pat Kelter
05 – Rachel Cleary
06 – Nicholas Gamaliy
08 – Andrew Greissman

CHOIR RETREAT LABOR DAY WEEKEND

August 30-September 1: Woodstock, NY!

This retreat is for choir members and inquirers. If you have any questions, please ask Rev. Speers or e-mail Vince Peterson at **vincepeterson@gmail.com**.

PRESBYTERY MEETING September 27, 2008.

The Presbytery of New York City meets here at Union Church Saturday, September 27; we are doing this because it is the 50th Anniversary of the ordination of **Peggy Howland**, the first woman ordained by Brooklyn-Nassau Presbytery and the twelfth in the whole PCUSA, right here at Union Church with **George Bonnell** in 1958! **Jo Tolley** will be here for the event, as well as **Rev Bonnell** if he is able (he is in the midst of moving house), and Isabel Morales and Michele DiBartolo are "bishops" for our hospitality. **When they call you, say YES!** (Vince will lead a pickup choir made up of volunteers from choirs all over the presbytery.)

GARDENING

Ruby Moy is garden "bishop" many Saturdays and always likes company. All of us can help keep Union Church Sanctuary looking its best, especially when Mark is on vacation in August: if you happen to be walking past the church and see a candy wrapper or a beer can within reach, take the initiative to pick it up and take it to a trash can. Gardening helps build strong bodies and good relationships. Beautify the church and yourself, and meet the neighbors!

NOTARY PUBLIC

Notary Public services are available at the Union Church Parish House located at 8101 Ridge Blvd. This service is available from 12:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m. Monday – Thursday. Calling first is recommended at 718.745.0438 ask for Jody. This service is free to all Union Church members.

RANDOM KINDNESS AND OTHER VIRTUES

By: Ruth Ward

At Union Church this is not a new concept. Some years ago our Sunday School featured a group called Sunshine Kids. They learned as youngsters the true spirit of giving. Meaning not just to teachers and friends; this was the act of giving to complete strangers. They went out armed with flowers on Mothers' Day, giving one to every woman they met. They helped, unrewarded, with packages, or guided seniors across busy streets. Back in Sunday School these deeds were reinforced by reading about Jesus and His not-so-random kindnesses, or acts of some of the Bible's ordinary people-like us.

Having been the recipient of random kindness I can attest to the self-promise of change in one's attitude and, as thankfulness grows, comes a desire to "go and do likewise." Yet, as I am older I regret that things do not easily balance out. I am far more the recipient than giver. I feel blessed that three young couples on my block implored me to let them know when I need any sort of help.

This was recently made very real. I had managed to tie up an old mattress. Sanitation would take it, but, I could not get it out and they wouldn't come in. Result: impasse. I decided when the new one came I could get it put on the porch. Before that happened my doorbell rang one night. Enter young neighbor. He remembered that I had said garbage would take it and this being "garbage night" he would put it out. Brushing aside my remonstrance, he easily carried it out to the curb. Pressing his phone number upon me he left, modestly dismissing my thanks.

Being kind is the tip of the iceberg. There are many ways to serve in our lives. Some of us can do many; some of us can do a few. ALL of us can teach by example the precepts with which God's presence has imbued us.

To paraphrase Dickens: "we live in the best of times; we live in the worst of times." I came across a book on my shelf recently, discussing Psalm twenty-three's verses. I was bemused as I read these opening words of chapter one. "The characteristic of modern life is breathless haste and rapidity. Men have no time to think, even if they wished to. Many, we fear, are losing even the power of quiet thinking." Sound like our lives? The words were written 88 years ago! And yet, quite applicable to our often feverish existence.

We need less Hi-faith. If I stop and listen, there is my inner voice (conscience, God, call it what you will) prodding me, "you DO have time to pray, to help. Just do it!" Onespecial service that encompasses quietness, prayerful solitude, meditation, softly sung chants, Bible verses, brings us close to God. They epitomize the feeling I wish to convey. That is the Taize Service. Held on first Tuesdays, they will resume in the fall. I urge you to attend; the experience is uplifting.

Two weeks later: I have just seen a vignette on TV as inspiring and compelling as a parable told by Jesus. A fitting adjunct to this piece.

There were two pastors, one, a white man in Texas ministering to a very affluent congregation; the other a black itinerant preacher in Louisiana, ministering the best he could to the poorest of the poor, serving six churches (three per Sunday). These people could not afford their own minister.

One day (not sure just how) the Texas pastor saw the black man, living literally hand-to-mouth himself, yet following God's call to ministry. He traveled miles in a battered Chevy to bring the Lord's word to those who sorely missed it, yet without his passion would not have had it. His pay was whatever was in the collection plate.

As God reaches out through us, the Texan, feeling his life had been changed, decided to act. He invited the black man to his church to preach from his pulpit. That sermon touched the hearts of all who heard it. It was lively, passionate, and from his soul. All the fervor of his sermons preached to his own flock roused this congregation and its pastor. They had not experienced such dynamism along with devotion. Not least of all was this man's humility. Doing God's work, his only return the fulfillment that is the lot of those who serve the Lord.

People who heard him had their lives lifted up; it had been a life-changing morning. The black pastor returned to his own churches with enough money to buy a brand new car. A great boon to his life and ministry.

Both ministers received a reward not counted in earthly terms.

BRUCA FALL SEASON BEGINS SEPTEMBER 15 ***OPEN HOUSE SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 13, 10-2***

We have lots of wonderful things happening in the studio this summer. We have our first college intern helping out, Katie Coughlin. She is a Bay Ridge local who is attending Alfred University (the Harvard of the clay world). Her younger brother, John, took class with us in the past, too. We are doing our best to advance Katie's pottery skills and knowledge this summer.

Also this summer, I would like to introduce our new teachers: Lynn Goodman and Doreen Baskin. Both are teaching the adults this summer. Lynn will teach wheel on Wednesday evenings and Doreen will teach the after-school kids classes on Tuesday. Check out Lynn's website www.lynngoodmanporcelain.com and read about Doreen's work at www.craftsreport.com/may98/baskin.html—Welcome, Lynn and Doreen!

With our new students in summer classes, we have our first international student, Prafulla from India. She was in visiting her new grandson (and his parents, too).

I need to thank Lynn Penney for her wonderful Art & Spirituality workshop she gave at the studio in June. We want another one again soon.

In addition to renovations to the studio, we are planning workshops for the fall & winter terms. We will have glass jewelry, silk scarf painting, beaded jewelry, as well as a wood-fired pottery workshop, if possible.

OPEN HOUSE: Visit us to see the studio, watch demos, and sign up for classes. September 13, 2008 from 10-2 PM.

Fall classes start on September 15th! Come join us!

SESSION MEETING

The next stated Session meeting is Monday, September 22 at 7pm in the Parish House.

UPDATE ON CHIBUEZE OKORIE OF THE CHURCH OF GETHSEMANE

Chibueze Okorie, Minister of Evangelism and Director of the Church of Gethsemane Project Connect Program, will be appearing before the Federal immigration Court on December 12th 2008 for his final deportation hearing. He is seeking asylum in the United States based on a law in Nigeria (Decree 33) that states that any Nigerian deported because he has been convicted of a drug crime in another country is subject to five years of hard labor in a Nigerian prison.

Chibueze paid his debt to society over 18 years ago, and since then has not only changed his life, but has been an intergal part of the ministry with and for men and women in prison, and formerly incarcerated persons and their families, of The Church of Gethsemane. His own example and his faith have helped others to turn their lives around as he has. Chibueze applied for a pardon in 2006 and it is still pending. His son Chigozie recently appealed to Laura Bush for help in getting the pardon.

DEAR BASKETBALL PLAYERS

If you would like to rent our Parish House gym, we have time slots during the week and weekends, for only \$30 per hour or \$240.00 per month. Call the office for details at 718.745.0438.

SUNDAY SCHOOL

Saturday, September 14: Sunday School Room Cleanup and Painting. See Michele DiBartolo or Kristin Miller-Lynch.

Saturday, September 20: Sunday School Curriculum Orientation. See Michele and Kristin.

Sunday, September 21: Sunday School Rally Day. 10:30 am in the Sanctuary.

THE UNION CHURCH PLAYGROUP

The Union Church playgroup has been a great success! Playgroup is a spacious place with lots of interesting things for a child to do, such as blocks, trains, housekeeping, and doll house, dress-up, puzzles, books, puppets, crafts, etc. A snack is also provided along with story time, read by the director. There is also Music Time with songs and musical instruments.

Playgroup is for toddlers and a caretaker. The playgroup meets Tuesday and Thursday from 9:30-11:00 am, and Wednesdays from 10:00-12:00 pm in the basement of the church (7915 Ridge Blvd. corner of 80th Street and Ridge Blvd.) The cost is \$175.00 - \$210.00 for 10 weeks.

Playgroup will start again in September. Please call **1.718.745.0438** for more information.

PARENTING CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

Together with Parent to Parent of New York State, Union Church sponsors a monthly Monday support group for parents of children with special needs. Start date for the fall will depend on the schedules of the participants. Please contact Isabel Morales at **800.405.8818**.

YOGA by Kristin Miller

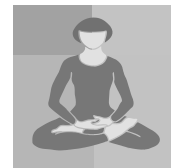
Yoga continues! Classes are every

MONDAYS and Wednesdays 6:45 -

8:15pm downstairs in playgroup area:

in the Union Church basement located on the corner of 80th Street and Ridge

Blvd. Please bring a mat and a towel and arrive a few minutes early. **NO EXPERIENCE NEEDED** for the gentle, restorative class. Open to all; cost is \$15.00 per session – call Kristin at 718-745-6594 no pre-registration required.



Scroll down for concert schedule 2008-09

The music ministry of the Union Church of Bay Ridge proudly presents

Union Church Concerts 2008-09

Season Highlights

Sunday, October 19th, 2008, 4pm

The Academy of Union Church: Peter and the Wolf and Franz Schubert: Symphony No. 5 in B-Flat (D.485)

Music Director, Vince Peterson conducts The Academy of Union Church in Prokofiev's timeless tale of the little boy who became a hero by saving his animal friends from the jaws of the angry wolf. Each of the characters in the story is played by an instrument or group of instruments of the orchestra. Then, a 19-year-old romantic Schubert brings us a quintessential classical symphony. After learning all of the instruments in the orchestra, can you tell which ones are missing? This concert is the perfect family outing for a Sunday afternoon.

Tickets: \$12/ \$8 Children under 10 and senior citizens at the door.

Sunday, November 16th, 2008, 4pm

Michael Kaminski, Organist

Michael Kaminski is Adjunct Professor of Music at Saint Francis College and Adjunct Professor of Organ at Brooklyn College. He is Director of Music Ministries at Saint Francis Xavier Church and Associate Organist at Our Lady of Angels Church, both in Brooklyn, New York. He has earned the Bachelor and Master of Music degrees from the Julliard School and the Doctor of Musical Arts degree from the Catholic University of America. His teachers have included Rollin Smith, Vernon deTar, Peter Marshall, Russell Saunders, and Delbert Disselhorst. The program will include works by Franck, Widor, Guilmant, Saint-Saens, Dupre, and Vierne: Organ Symphony No. 2.

Freewill offering at the door supports music at Union Church.

Sunday, December 14th, 2008, 4pm

The Wise Women: A Christmas Mystery Fable

The Brooklyn PREMIERE of Conrad Susa's fantastic church opera, commissioned by American Guild of Organists in 1994 with libretto by critically acclaimed librettist Philip Littell. Follow the singing star to the manger for a fresh retelling of the nativity story through the eyes of women. This candlelight Christmas piece is sure to leave you breathless. Members of the Academy of Union Church and the Union Church Choir are joined by a plethora of special guest performers including the Westminster Choral Scholars. Surround yourself with beautiful Alleluias to ring in the spirit of the season as angels sing from everywhere around you.

Tickets: \$12

Sunday, January 18th, 2009, 4pm

Duo Nova Antigua

Guitarist, Lutenist and Mandolinist, Dennis Cinelli and Flutist, Mary Cherny perform a concert of Baroque and other works.

Freewill offering at the door supports music at Union Church.

Sunday, February 15th, 2009, 4pm

Westminster Choral Scholars

Directed by Tom Colao, a longtime friend of Union Church and frequent guest artist, The Westminster Choral Scholars are the students-led chamber choir of Westminster Choir College. They sing choral music in the classical tradition, with a repertoire spanning all periods and styles, from early Renaissance to works by living composers. This excellent choir will perform a wide range of early and advanced repertoire including works by Bach, Faure, Howells, Whitacre and Colao, himself, among others.

Freewill offering at the door supports music at Union Church.

Sunday, March 15th, 2009, 4pm

Union Church Choir: Faure Requiem in D Minor

Union Church Choir and members of The Academy of Union Church, directed by Vince Peterson will perform Faure Requiem with Soloists Ryan Stoudt and Union Church's own Ericka Lloyd. The program will include Cantique de Jean Racine as well as several other composers including Paslestrina, Victoria, Byrd, and Lili Boulanger.

Tickets: \$12

Sunday, April 19th, 2009, 4pm

Lafayette Inspirational Ensemble

The Lafayette Inspirational Ensemble has developed a reputation as one of the most exciting and innovative choirs in all of New York. The Village Voice recently named the Ensemble as the best in the city in their, "The Best of New York City" series. They said, "It's an unwritten rule that black church choirs deliver roof-raising, foot-stomping hymns, while their white counterparts are a tad more, uh, sedate. Not so at Lafayette Avenue Presbyterian. The multi-cultural and multi-ethnic Lafayette Inspirational Ensemble praises Jesus with a jubilant abandon that transcends gospel stereotypes while bringing to mind that Prince lyric about 'black, white, Puerto Rican, everybody just a-freakin'."

Freewill offering at the door supports music at Union Church.

Sunday, May 17th, 2009, 4pm

SPRING POPS: Big Cabaret War

Come and see some of the best rising musical theater and cabaret artists duke it out for the title of "Union Church IDOL." Program will include Eli Bolin and Allison Posner, Cait Doyle, Sharon Kenny, and Union Church's own Paul Wyatt. You'll hear several of your favorites from the American songbook and some fantastic new theater works that will blow your socks off. Just don't get caught in the crossfire of these dueling artists.

Freewill offering at the door supports music at Union Church.

BONUS CONCERT:

Sunday, November 9th, 2008, 4pm

Ericka Lloyd: An Afternoon of 20th Century American Song

Singer/Songwriter Ericka Lloyd puts on her "classical" cap and performs an innovative and inspiring program of American song. This concert is a love song to the heart of American composers. The program will include works by Barber, Moore, Sondheim, and Bernstein.

Tickets: \$12; free for subscribers!