

*Union Church of Bay Ridge hosts a Taize worship service on the first Tuesday of every month at 7 PM. Union Church is located at 8101 Ridge Blvd. The service is a combination of scriptures, prayers, and simple, meditative songs led by Union's Minister of Music, Vince Peterson. The Taize tradition of worship is intended to be broadly ecumenical, simple and devotional. Some of us participated in last year's Mid-Lenten worship service and found it especially compelling. If you are interested and/or have questions, feel free to ask David Aja-Sigmon or call Union Church at 718-745-0438.

Quoteworthy

"If Muslims and Christians are not at peace, the world cannot be at peace."

---From an open letter written by 138 scholars from every branch of Islam, addressed to the Pope and "Christian Churches everywhere" pleading with them "to come together with us on the common essentials of our two religions" (*The Christian Century*) This letter was recently read and studied by our youth group and an adult education class.

"The prayers are helpful. They remind me that the food didn't spontaneously generate in my fridge. They make me feel more connected, more grateful, more grounded, more aware of my place in this complicated hummus cycle. They remind me to taste the hummus instead of shoveling it into my maw like it's a nutrition pill. And they remind me of my self-obsessed cranium. I'm not sure that is what the Bible intended, but it feels like a step forward."

---A. J. Jacobs, speaking about praying before a meal of hummus and bread, from The Year of Living Biblically. In the book Jacobs, a secular New Yorker, chronicles his efforts to live as close as possible to Biblical guidance.

Please Note:

* We are a couple of months removed from stewardship season, but we just received our pledge boxes in the mail this past month. Stewardship is about responding with our whole lives to God's grace, goodness, and guidance while we consider how our choices affect our neighbors, God's natural creation, and ourselves. As it relates specifically to pledging, we prayerfully consider our financial commitment and offering to the mission of the church. This year as in every year, we ask you to offer what you can to support the vital and vibrant ministries of your local church and of the greater Church. Our fervent prayer is that God will guide our stewardship, whether that gift be used to help someone receive the Good News through pastoral care and evangelism; or help a homeless single mother and child receive shelter and services; or provide a warm sanctuary in a cold weather; or support a church-based outreach in Lebanon. We believe and pray that your support will help spread God's love.

Prayer:

The prayer listed below is one that Denise Loli has brought to us at various times, written by W.E.B. Dubois. It is presented here so that we all may have a copy and have the opportunity to add it to our prayer life.

*"Lord of the springtime,
Father of flower, field and fruit,
smile on us in these earnest days when
the work is heavy and the toil wearisome.
Lift up our hearts, O God, to the things
worthwhile -- sunshine and night, the
dripping rain, the song of the birds, books
and music, and the voices of our
friends. Lift up our hearts to these this
night and grant us Thy peace. Amen."*

Next time:

If you are interested in contributing to our church's upcoming newsletter, please contact Mona Johnson or David Aja-Sigmon by May 1, 2008.
