

community news

The Newsletter of the Community Church of Boston
A Peace and Justice congregation since 1920
April 2012

Knowing Our History, Building for Our Future

by Rev. Jason Lydon, Minister

Dear Members and Friends, over the past few weeks I have been reading the recently published *Love and Struggle* by David Gilbert, former Weather Underground Organization member and current political prisoner. Throughout his writing he reflects on not only the politics of the WUO and other revolutionaries within the United States but he also includes theory and praxis from leaders throughout the Third World/Global South. While reading his reflections I realized that I know so little about African anti-colonial struggles, stories certainly never told to me in high school history classes. I have been taking some time to learn a bit of history and particularly reading some pieces by Amilcar Cabral. Many in this congregation probably remember when Cabral was alive and living as a freedom fighter, you may have even protested outside the Portuguese Consulate.

Amilcar Cabral wrote "Tell No Lies, Claim No Easy Victories" in 1965. He was writing to strengthen the revolutionary movement to throw Portugal out of Guinea Bissau and Cape Verde. He starts the essay stating, "Always bear in mind that the people are not fighting for ideas, for the things in anyone's head. They are fighting to win material benefits, to live better and in peace, to see their lives go forward, to guarantee the future of their children." These two beginning sentences feel contradictory to me at first. When living under colonization, under foreign occupation, how can a fight for liberation not be a fight for ideas? Yet I think the point he is making presents itself in the lived reality of oppressed people, fighting for freedom is not a fight for simple ideas, it's a fight for bread and roses too. I also think it's an important reminder for those of us who get attached to particular ideologies to continuously challenge ourselves and ask ourselves questions. Are we being directly accountable to those who are most impacted by the violence of oppression? David Gilbert details explicitly in

his book, "Revolutionary action must be clearly in the interests of the vast majority, the oppressed, and action must be geared to build their participation and power rather than to consolidate the organization as a power over them; any such action must be rigorously tailored toward mobilizing the people and weakening the power structures."

When you read this newsletter our congregation will have just gone through a visioning and reflecting retreat together. As a congregation we have shared values of justice and a common commitment to transformation. We may have differing opinions and beliefs about concepts of and plans for revolution, but there is still much we can all gain from the words of Cabral and Gilbert. The Community Church of Boston is in a period of transition. You, the membership and friends of the church, have the responsibility to be true to the legacy of this place. Dean Stevens has been diligently bringing up and sharing history from our archives, most recently reminding us that Helen Keller spoke at the church in the early 1920s - likely sharing her commitment to socialism with our congregational predecessors. Knowing our history and committing to utilize our open pulpit for the uplift of voices too often silenced are part of our survival and resistance as a radical congregation in the belly of the empire.

Closing out with Amilcar Cabral, "History allows us to know the nature and extent of the imbalance and conflicts (economic, political and social) which characterize the evolution of a society; culture allows us to know the dynamic syntheses which have been developed and established by social conscience to resolve these conflicts at each stage of its evolution, in the search for survival and progress." What do you see as the culture of the Community Church of Boston? How do we create and share a culture of survival? It is our charge to do so and our great potential to do well.

COMMUNITY CHURCH OF BOSTON



Sunday Service &
Speakers Forum

April 1st

April Fools' Day

SPEAKER TBA

"Giving the 1% Their Due"

April 8th

Easter Sunday

Rev. JASON LYDON

"From Resurrection to Insurrection"

April 15th

LEE FICH

"Liberation Seder"

April 22nd

Earth Day

JEFF NAPOLITANO

**"Mandate for a Carbon-Free,
Nuclear-Free Future"**

April 29th

Celebrating International Workers' Day

SEIU 615

**"Justice for Janitors, Security Guards,
Airport workers... Everyone!"**

**REMINDER: The CCB Retreat will be held at
The Peace Abbey (Sherborn, MA)
on Saturday, March 31st, 10am-4pm!**

Questions? Email: ccbretreat@gmail.com

CCB Board Meeting

The Board of Directors met on March 13th, 2011

Following are highlights of the meeting.

The board meeting scheduled for March 13th was cancelled due to a fire that erupted in two Back Bay transformers causing widespread power outage through the Copley Square area.

The next meeting of the board will take place on Tuesday, April 17th, 2012 at 7:15pm. Members and friends of the Church are invited to attend.

-Dick Keshishian, Clerk

Remembering Christina Braidotti

The Memorial Service for Christina Braidotti was beautiful. It was an excellent celebration of and testament to her life. A warm collection of family, friends, colleagues, and Community Church members paid tribute to a woman with so many gifts. During the service Christina's daughter, Regina, shared this beautiful piece that she found while cleaning up her mother's house. Please enjoy and fondly remember such a beloved member of our congregation.

"The Key to Happiness"
by Christina Braidotti

This could be all about unending supplies of Godiva chocolates, incessant melodies of Brahms, trips every year to Italy or the Scottish Highlands. But to define "happiness" in more realistic terms I think of satisfaction and contentedness, a sense of balance, an inner peace.

How do I think one experiences this type of harmony? - by carrying [out] the following tasks: caring for and loving in infinite ways those whom you love; striving to do your very best work for those who you are serving; learning to accept, be satisfied with, and always create the best of what you already have; helping out those who are in need; keeping life simple; thanking God for all the wonderful things in your life; and having a good time and a good laugh whenever a chance at levity presents itself.

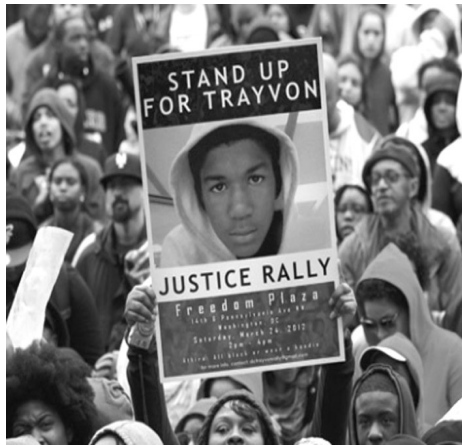
Racially-Approved American Murder: They Kill Because They Can

A Black Agenda Radio commentary by Glen Ford

~ **Rekia Boyd, 22 years old woman of color killed by off duty cop in Chicago**
~ **Shaima Alawadi, 32 year old mother of five beaten to death in Southern California, a note next to her body read, "go back to your country"**
~ **Trayvon Martin, 17 year old Black youth killed by Crime Watch member**

Why did Staff Sgt. Robert Bales kill 16 Iraqi civilians in the deep of night and, supposedly, all by himself in the countryside of a foreign land? Why did George Zimmerman stalk and then kill 17-year-old Trayvon Martin as the 140-pound kid talked on a cell phone with his girlfriend in a gated community near Orlando, Florida? Bales and Zimmerman did it because they could, because they felt they had permission to snuff out the lives of Iraqis and Black teenagers who had never even thought to offend them. The only reason that these two instances of murder are of such deep importance in the larger scheme of things, rather than just to the families and neighbors of the victims and the killers, is because both murderers had good reason to believe that American society would approve of what they did.

Certainly, Sgt. Bales thought so. He had served three tours in Iraq, after joining the Army at the ripe old age of 27 right after 9/11. The hyper-nationalist media constantly told him and the rest of American public that the troops were "heroes" who were not only serving their own country, but also doing a great favor for the Iraqis and the Afghans. If the people of Iraq and Afghanistan didn't appreciate the presence of Sgt. Bales and his fellow soldiers and marines, well, they were ingrates of the worst kind, unworthy of the sacrifice of even one of Sgt. Bales' buddies. Besides, they were all Hajjis - a slur for Muslims that has the same venomous connotation as



"n----." Sgt. Bales was not ashamed to use the term "Hajji" in letters to his wife, so I guess he had reason to believe she was a racist, too. The U.S. military preferred to descend on villages late at night, when they had the advantage of surprise and night vision goggles and could wipe out whole extended families of Taliban - or people who were pronounced to be Taliban, post-mortem - usually without suffering a single casualty. We own the night - that's what the Americans said. And nighttime is for killing Hajjis.

"It is as if the Florida legislature had put out a call for Black people to be summarily shot all over the state."

George Zimmerman had every reason to believe that Florida's Stand Your Ground law was written especially for him. And, actually, it was. The Sanford, Florida police department clearly thought the law was meant to protect Zimmerman from murder charges, which is why they claim they didn't arrest him. When Zimmerman called the local cops from his SUV to tell them he was stalking Trayvon Martin, he confided to them that "assholes" like the unknown Black kid "always get away." But, this one wouldn't get away - not with his life. Florida and lots of other states in recent years have noted that too many Black people are getting away with life, and need to be stopped, so they crafted legislation that would allow white fear to trump Black rights to breath air. In such jurisdictions, evocation of white fear now provides the same justification for summary murder as claims of rape of white women did for mob lynchings, back in the day. It is as if the Florida legislature had put out a call for Black people to be summarily shot all over the state, when it passed the bill. The racial intention was clear, the results totally predictable. George Zimmerman doesn't seem like a very bright young man, but even he knew that Florida civil society wanted some Black folks dead.

Sgt. Bales and Steve Zimmerman murdered Afghans and an African American kid because they could, and because American society told them that they should.

Roy Zimmerman

Political Satirist Extraordinaire/ Comedic
Folkster/ Masterful Musician

Saturday, April 21st, 8:00pm
at the Community Church of Boston



Roy Zimmerman sings satirical songs - original songs about class warfare, creationism, same-sex marriage, guns, marijuana, abstinence, Republicans (a lot of songs about Republicans), ignorance, war and greed.

In this election year, Zimmerman has made a "campaign promise" to perform in all fifty states before the Republican National Convention. He'll be posting a new Song of the Week every week until November 6, just to savor the delicate and perishable absurdities of the political season.

Tickets: \$15adv/\$20 at door* (sliding scale)
<http://www.brownpapertickets.com>

** Proceeds to benefit CCB's piano fund!!*

Our Purpose

Community Church of Boston is a free community united for the study and practice of universal religion, seeking to apply ethical ideals to individual life and the democratic and cooperative principle to all forms of social and economic life.

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