

# community

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

January 2010

# news

## Hope in Challenging Times...

by Jason Lydon, Congregational Director

Happy New Year! You will notice that this newsletter is running a week late. On Christmas evening it was discovered that much of the church had been very badly flooded. Thousands of gallons of water flowed from the third floor all the way down through the building taking out ceilings and sheetrock in its path. It was quite the sight to come upon Christmas evening. We are incredibly blessed that no one was hurt, that Rodney and Jim could respond so quickly, and that we will survive and learn in this moment of difficulty. I am asking everyone to take some time to send good thoughts, prayers, and hopes to this community that we may recover quickly and be able to fulfill our role as a congregation and home for justice in Boston.

At this moment I am asking for more than your good thoughts and prayers. While our insurance will cover a lot of the damages we are suffering from loss in rent revenue and various expenses that won't be covered. The Community Church of Boston has long been a home for Boston's left and progressive communities. We provide space for organizations, workshops, conferences, parties, gatherings, and any number of other events for all those who are seeking a better world. We need you to take account of some of your favorite moments at Community Church. Maybe this moment happened on a Sunday morning when you were greeted by a long-time member and then got to listen to a brilliant speaker and moving music. It is possible that this moment happened at an anarchist feminist conference. Maybe you came into the church for a meeting about Palestinian solidarity. You could have walked in here the first time for your Ward 5 Democratic Committee meeting. Whether your favorite memory is of a time dancing, meeting, discussing, singing, or listening I am asking you to make sure that you can come back to the church and others can come in for the first time. We need your financial support. We need you to help keep this community strong and alive as we begin rebuilding the inside of our space.

While we continue to struggle with the ongoing economic crisis in our individual lives and as a nation I am asking you to reach into your heart full of abundance and give as generously as you can. We are told to live in fear and with feelings of scarcity. As a community our resources are not scarce but great and infinitely capable. Please reach in to your capacity and make a contribution. You can make tax deductible donations online at our website, [www.communitychurchofboston.org](http://www.communitychurchofboston.org).

Last month I wrote the newsletter all about hope and expectation. I am filled with great hope right now. Even though when I walk into our building there is rubble and dust around, I have an unwavering faith that our community can come together and make this congregation stronger than it was before December 25th. We will continue gathering in our building for services on Sundays on the third floor and our presence as a community gives me hope. However, I do not stop at hope. I have great expectation of this community. I expect us to be gentle, loving, patient, and generous with one another. I expect us to have challenging times and to overcome them with grace and magical interventions. I expect us to use reason, math, and science to safely reconstruct the interior of our building in a fiscally and architecturally responsible way. I expect us to each give of ourselves what we can to make our community strong and to make our home a safe place for all of us to be in together. I expect that we will rebuild a home that we can be proud of and excited about together. This is not only a disaster for our building but an opportunity for us to reach out and humbly ask for the help we need. This is our moment to grow from the pain and to have that growth take us beyond where we began.

Again, happy New Year! We are just months from our 90th anniversary and our potential is limitless! Please hope with us for the future and expect of us greatness and continued struggle for justice and peace in the world.

# COMMUNITY CHURCH OF BOSTON



## Sunday Service & Speakers Forum

in Lothrop Auditorium  
Sundays at 11:00am

**January 3rd**  
**COMMUNITY VOICES**  
**"Singing in the New Year"**

**January 10th**  
**ANN ELDRIDGE MALONE, R.N.**  
**"Why Not Health Care 'Reform' that  
Puts People before Profits?"**

**January 17th**  
**MATT OSBORN**  
**"Honoring Martin Luther King Jr. Day"**

**January 24th**  
*Reflections on the Chinese --  
There & Here (part 1)*  
**ALAN CLEMENCE**  
**"Perspectives on a Changing China"**

**January 31st**  
*Reflections on the Chinese --  
There & Here (part 2)*  
**THOMAS CHEN**  
**"Making Boston's Chinatown: Race, Place,  
and Culture in the Postwar Metropolis"**

**DID YOU KNOW?** With the \$32.2 billion that Bank of America is expected to give out in 2009 compensation and bonuses, they could prevent or postpone 92% of all foreclosures projected to take place in the entire country from 2009 to 2012 by giving mortgage assistance to struggling families. That's 8.3 million families!

## CCB Board Meeting

The Board of Directors met on December 17, 2009  
Following are highlights of the meeting.

The following board members were present: David Broeg, Kevin Devine, Dick Keshishian, Jason Lydon, John MacLeod, Nancy Messom, Virginia Pratt.

Congregational Directors Report: Jason stated that when ordained as minister in September he would receive clergy ordination benefits such as prison visits and a few special privileges concerning taxes.

Financial Matters: The treasurer mentioned the necessity of addressing matters such as the electricity, plumbing and pointing of the roof of the CCB building. It is imperative to be informed of the up-to-date status of the Church's assets and liabilities as regards long term planning. A one and one-half percent increase should be initiated in staff wages during the coming year. More janitorial work is needed. Rodney Burston, the building attendant, was highly complimented on the excellent care of the needs of the building, as was Xinli, the bookkeeper for maintaining the Church's accounts in good order. Rodney has also compiled a list of necessary priorities to improve the physical interior of the building.

Various Concerns: The annual fiscal meeting is scheduled for Sunday, February 7, 2010 at 1:30pm.

The treasurer suggested that a note of thanks be sent to a non-member in recognition of an occasional monetary contribution.

The next meeting of the board is scheduled for Thursday, January 21, 2010 at 7:15pm. Members and friends of the Church are invited to attend.

-Dick Keshishian, Clerk

## 2010 Calendars

It's been ten years since we all made it safely into the new millennium; here we go again! Are you ready for the next decade? You will be, if armed with one of the special calendars or datebooks that will be available at our book table all of January.

Look for your favorites from the following: Syracuse Cultural Workers (peace calendars and women artists datebooks); IWW ("Solidarity Forever" calendar); War Resisters League ("Sparking Change: Poster Art & Politics" desk calendar); and Nebraskans for Peace ("Cat Lovers Against the Bomb" calendar). Also, look for a variety of environmental, indigenous, international and art calendars as

# Nuclear Energy Green or Greenwash?

by Virginia Pratt, CCB Treasurer

While there is a lot of dispute on how to address climate change there is little dispute that climate change poses a serious threat to future life on the planet. Recently Senators Boxer and Kerry proposed expansion of nuclear energy as one solution within a larger plan. However, it is worth asking whether nuclear energy is a viable option given the consequences of uranium mining, cost of development, shipment of material, safety of plants, and disposal of waste, along with the larger question of whether or not we could be fully protected from a nuclear disaster. Now is the time to discern fact from fiction.

One of the first problems would be obtaining uranium, the raw material for nuclear energy. Mining poses significant hazards. Native American tribes in both Nevada and Arizona have called for bans on mining. The estimated cleanup cost in West Kames, Texas, a former mining area, is \$350 million. Streams near the mines are now polluted and radioactive. Similarly, Rio Puerco is permanently contaminated as a result of radioactive waste water having broken through a dam in Church Park, New Mexico's uranium mine back in 1979. Even if uranium could be safely mined, would we want radioactive material to be shipped on rails or highways across the country?

What about the cost? The estimated cost of building one reactor is \$6 to \$12 billion. The estimated cost to build the 100 reactors as called for by Kerry and Boxer is over \$4 trillion. The plants generally take at least ten years to build, and if built, the plants may pose new environmental justice questions if the sites were in poor and minority communities. As recently as April 2009,

residents of Appollo, PA were awarded over \$52 million for a 14 year suit from damages from exposure to radioactivity. Would the nuclear industry pass these types of costs on to the consumer?

With climate change we have seen more severe droughts. Australia has had a problem of severe drought for four years now. Parts of the Southwest are experiencing drought as well. Nuclear power plants need a lot of cold water to cool the rods. Consequently, nuclear power plants may not be an option for the Southwest. In areas with scarce water supplies the risk of contamination may be too great. Studies from the UK report significant damage to both freshwater and saltwater fish as a result of radiation exposure from nuclear power plants.

Then we have the ultimate fear — nuclear disaster. Whether as a result of terrorism, human negligence, force of nature, an aging plant, or faulty storage, can we risk another Three Mile Island or Chernobyl? Areas near Chernobyl are predicted to remain contaminated for another 600 years. Exposure to excess amounts of radiation is correlated with high rates of cancer, leukemia, and genetic damage. If there were an accident, there would be no way of effectively notifying people at risk. There is no hospital or health system currently in existence in the US that could address a disaster in the short or long-term. And, there would be no way to protect the many forms of life on the planet: animals, birds, water, soil, air. Wouldn't it make more sense to consider conservation to reduce our energy use as we look to develop solar, wind and water power and make improvements to the current power grid?

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## CCB Membership for Prisoners Program

The Community Church of Boston has officially opened membership up to prisoners in Massachusetts. Prisoners in Massachusetts are welcome to become members and can receive the following from their membership:

1. Copies of Sunday bulletin, reading, prayer, and copy of speakers talk when provided;
2. Reflections from the Sunday attendees each Sunday on the speaker's topic;
3. Monthly Newsletter;
4. Quarterly compilation of prisoner reflections that are sent into the church;

As members we hope people held in Massachusetts prisons will consider writing reflections on what they

receive from the congregation that we can print in the newsletter. We are also open to other reflections on how prisoner members will want to interact with the congregation as a whole. This is a new program that we are excited to get off the ground and look forward to the ways it morphs and changes over the year.

Meetings of "free-world" members who are interested in this part of the Community Church of Boston's ministry will occur the first Monday of every month at the church beginning at 6:30pm. Speak with Susan Mortimer or Jason Lydon for more information. Brochures and flyers will be available for those people in your life who are locked up later this month.

# Cambridge's Annual MLK Day Commemoration and Remembrance

Monday, January 18th, 11:30am  
in front of Cambridge City Hall

We will stand up publicly to honor and remember Dr. Martin Luther King and his legacy of peace and justice, and then gather at St. Peter's Episcopal Church (838 Mass. Ave, Cambridge) at 12:30pm to hear the words of Martin Luther King Jr. calling for peace, justice and transformation. In this time of war and economic upheaval, add your presence and voice to efforts in Cambridge for peace and justice in the world. For more information call the Cambridge Peace Commission at 617.349.4694 or email Brian Corr at bcorr@cambridgema.gov



## 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.

## Staff

Jason Lydon, *Congregational Director*

Mark Laskey, *Office Manager*

Xinli Xu, *Bookkeeper*

Luis Alonzo Guzman, *Custodian & Cook*

Jim Casteris, *Building Superintendent*

Rodney Burston, *Building Maintenance*

## Board of Directors

John MacLeod, *President*

David Broeg, *Vice President*

Virginia Pratt, *Treasurer*

Dick Keshishian, *Clerk*

Kevin Devine, Nancy Messom, Susan Mortimer,  
Matt Osborn, Leonard Shames



DATED MATERIAL  
RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

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