

# community

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

November 2013

# news

## Our Choice: Culture of Silence or Critical Consciousness

by Linda Jenkins, Congregational Director

I've written here that CCB embodies a faith of feet. We may not talk a lot about theology or the spiritual life; we express those by showing up with people who are fighting oppression.

The Program Committee has been holding the theme of "Oppression and Anti-oppression Work" as it's been inviting speakers for our Sunday services. But what exactly is "oppression"?

The Brazilian, Paulo Freire, champions the idea that education should allow the oppressed to regain a sense of humanity, in turn overcoming their current condition. In order for this to occur, the oppressed individual must play a role in their liberation. "No pedagogy which is truly liberating can remain distant from the oppressed by treating them as unfortunates and by presenting for their emulation models from among the oppressors. The oppressed must be their own example in the struggle for their redemption."

"Likewise, the oppressors must also be willing to rethink their way of life and to examine their own role in the oppression if true liberation is to occur; "those who authentically commit themselves to the people must re-examine themselves constantly".

According to Freire, the capitalist system of dominant social relations creates a *culture of silence* that instills a negative, silenced and suppressed self-image into the oppressed. The learner must develop a *critical consciousness* in order to recognize that this *culture of silence* is created to oppress. Also, a culture of silence can cause the "dominated individuals [to] lose the means by which to critically respond to the culture that is forced on them by a dominant culture."

Social domination of race, class, gender is interlaced into the conventional educational system, through which the "*culture of silence*" eliminates the "paths of thought that lead to a language of critique". Freire focuses on the individual and then recognizes that each of us exists in a context which more or less encourages a practice of this "*critical consciousness*."

We are aware that the individual only exists in relationship, in a social setting; these settings condition us. It takes work to become aware of our conditioning and to choose to act differently.

Oppression can occur when one acts *without critical consciousness*. This might be called *first order* oppression; when one repeats the behavior, thinking, even feeling, that exists because of our conditioning by the circumstances into which we are born, be that class, gender, etc. The first struggle, then, is to wake oneself, and perhaps, each other, up from that conditioning so that we can question and exercise meaningful choice. Arguably, the first person oppressed by this first order oppression is the exact person who is acting out of their conditioning and not out of a *critical consciousness*. That individual cannot help but oppress others because, at least in this capitalistic society, the structures into which all of us are born incorporate oppression intrinsically and necessarily. So we need *critical consciousness* to live a life that does not recreate those structures, a life that perpetuates oppression.

*Second order* oppression exists in actions taken *with critical consciousness*, deliberately choosing to "press down on another; subjugate by force, cruelty; afflict or torment". These are the dictionary definitions of "oppression".

Developing the practice of *critical consciousness* is a living and necessarily social process, one that continually needs to be tailored to the context in which we live, where liberation and revolution are our goals. Freire's understanding that dialogue is a necessary part of liberation echoes Lenin's statement that "Without revolutionary theory there is no revolutionary practice."

I'm grateful for the dialogue that happens every Sunday at 11am at the Community Church of Boston and invite everyone to join us!

# COMMUNITY CHURCH OF BOSTON



## Sunday Service & Speakers Forum

**November 3rd**

**MARK ROBERT SCHNEIDER**  
"Joe Moakley's Journey from  
South Boston to El Salvador"

**November 10th**

**LISA GRAUSTEIN**  
"Working through Privilege:  
A Process for Moving Forward"

**November 17th**

**SHAKIR ABDULLAH**  
"An Iraqi Look at the First Six Months of  
American Administration in Iraq"

**November 24th**

*Indigenous Peoples' Day*  
**MAGPIE**  
"Honor the Earth, A Tribute in Song"

## CCB Board Meeting

*The Board of Directors met on October 16, 2013  
Following are highlights of the meeting.*

**Congregational Director's Concerns:** The Congregational Director suggested that the board meeting be video-taped. This proposal was defeated by a vote of 7-1.

**Building Concerns:** The Congregational Director announced that four members of the newly formed rental committee named at the September 11th board meeting never met, and that a telephone conference was scheduled and that some of the members were not notified that the conference call would not take place, and that the decision that CCB would retain one of the rooms vacated by BAGLY was made by the board President.



**Various Concerns:** The board voted to go into executive session by a vote of 6-3, and the proposal for a Personnel Committee was again stressed by the Vice-President of the board.

*The meeting had to end at 9:00pm due to the closing of the library.*

- Dick Keshishian, Clerk

## Save The Dates!

The **Program Committee** will meet on Thursday, November 7th, 7pm, at Dick Crowley's house.

The next **CCB Board Meeting** will be on Wednesday, November 13th, 7pm. Location TBA.

The **Growth, Membership & Social Action Committee** meets on Thursday, November 14th, 3pm at Joshua Tree Bar (Elm St, Davis Sq, Somerville).

The **deadline** for the **December CCB Newsletter** will be on Friday, November 22nd. Please email your submissions to: [info@commchurch.org](mailto:info@commchurch.org)

## Resisting Walls & Bars

**Saturday, November 16th, 6pm**  
at Community Church

Where do struggles of migrants and incarcerated/policed people intersect? Where are the opportunities for alliances? What are strategic points of intervention and what kind of change are we fighting for?

[www.commonstruggle.org](http://www.commonstruggle.org)

## Magpie in Concert!

**Sunday, November 24th, 7:30pm**  
at the Community Church  
\$15adv/\$20dos donation

[www.brownpapertickets.com](http://www.brownpapertickets.com)

# 44th Annual National Day of Mourning



**Thursday, November 28th  
12:00pm  
Coles Hill, Plymouth, MA**

Since 1970, Native Americans have gathered at noon on Cole's Hill in Plymouth to commemorate a National Day of Mourning on the US thanksgiving holiday. Many Native Americans do not celebrate the arrival of the Pilgrims and other European settlers.

Thanksgiving day is a reminder of the genocide of millions of Native people, the theft of Native lands, and the relentless assault on Native culture. Participants in National Day of Mourning honor Native ancestors and the struggles of Native peoples to survive today. It is a day of remembrance and spiritual connection as well as a protest of the racism and oppression that Native Americans continue to experience.

Join us as we dedicate the 44th Annual National Day of Mourning to our brother, Native political prisoner Leonard Peltier. Add your voice to the millions worldwide who demand his freedom. Help us in our struggle to create a true awareness of Native peoples and demonstrate the unity of Indigenous peoples internationally.

Help shatter the untrue glass image of the Pilgrims and the unjust system based on racism, sexism, homophobia and war.

## **Basic Schedule outline with tentative times:**

12:00pm - Prayers (no photos during this time plz)  
12:20pm - Native speakers  
2pm - March with rallies by Plymouth Rock and the site of the Metacomb historical marker  
3-5pm - Indoor potluck social

*We will have a pot luck social following the rally and march. Please bring juices, desserts and side dishes. Don't bring food that still has to be cooked, but we can warm up cooked food. Drop off food at the downstairs social hall at First Parish in Plymouth UU church in the morning before you go to rally at noon.*

For more information, email the United American Indians of New England/LPSG: [info@uaine.org](mailto:info@uaine.org)

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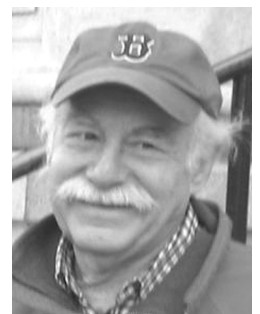
## Marty's Mighty Book Bash!

**Saturday, November 23rd (10am-4pm) & Sunday, November 24th (11am-8pm)  
at the Community Church of Boston**

Marty Lerman, beloved and lifetime committed CCB member, passed away last year. For many years Marty also chaired the Program Committee, and served on the board in several capacities, as did Dian Lerman, both of them with this church through all these years, through good times and bad. He is sadly missed.

Among other things, he left us his extensive legacy of books, which he sold for over thirty years at CCB's forums and events. We now offer them to you for sale. Pick your price. Proceeds benefit the Community Church of Boston, to further its mission of social justice.

A weekend of open house book selling will be held on Saturday and Sunday, November 23rd and 24th. There will be a reception on Sunday, November 24th, 5pm, with Central American festive food and beverage fare, (pupusas and tamales \$2 a piece!) followed by a concert by the Phenomenal Folk Duo Magpie.



For more information, contact the office: (617) 266-6710, or email: [info@commchurch.org](mailto:info@commchurch.org)

# Boston Anarchist Bookfair

November 9-11th

Simmons College  
(Paresky Center,  
300 The Fenway)

**Books! Workshops!  
Music!**



This Veterans Day Weekend, join anarchists and community members for two days of learning and organizing for a better Boston and a better world.

A variety of workshops and panels will be held, from politics to screenprinting -- along with dozens of radical organizations and vendors selling books, posters, and sharing knowledge at this community event.

For more information and a schedule of events:  
<http://www.bostonanarchistbookfair.org>

## 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

Linda Jenkins, *Congregational Director*  
Mark Laskey, *Office Manager*  
Xinli Xu, *Bookkeeper*  
Luis Alonzo Guzman, *Custodian & Cook*  
Rodney Burston, *Building Maintenance*

## Board of Directors

Dean Stevens, *President*  
Ron Shapiro, *Vice President*  
Virginia Pratt, *Treasurer*  
Dick Keshishian, *Clerk*

Mary Ann Cromer, Kevin Devine, Dian Lerman,  
Nancy Messom, Susan Mortimer



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