

# community

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

October 2009

# news

## Community Discussions on Violence and Nonviolence

by Jason Lydon, Congregational Director

Dear friends and members, we are entering into our second month of the 2009-2010 season and with that we are greeted by the changing of the leaves, the deliciousness of fresh apples, and the exciting mystery of longer nights. Things are beginning quite well with our season. Sunday morning services are well attended by familiar faces and new faces alike. Our morning screenings of *Democracy Now* Monday through Thursday are going well. The John O'Brien Memorial Library continues to grow. We are serving ourselves and each other beautifully with this new season. It is good to be together. For those of you who have not joined us in some time, we welcome you back whenever you care to join us.

I am feeling enthusiastic about this month's array of Sunday morning topics. We are beginning off with a conversation about healthcare and the vital importance of us being involved in the national conversation. We are privileged to have a speaker from Physicians for a National Health Plan to share with us. Following that we will continue honoring Indigenous Peoples Day by educating ourselves about issues impacting Native Peoples today. It is a disgrace that Columbus Day remains a holiday; genocide is no reason for celebration.

The following two weeks are an important discussion for us to have as a community; nonviolence as an ideology followed by its critiques. This conversation is incredibly pertinent to us as a congregation. When we began in 1920 we started with the expressed opposition to World War I. We were a space where pacifists were able to come together and express religiously, as well as politically, their great frustration and sadness with the involvement of the

United States in the War. During World War II, however, Rev. Donald Lothrop expressed his vocal support for U.S. involvement in the international conflict. Some have even expressed that this is when many pacifists left the church and secular Jews joined. The primary debate within the congregation during these two wars was whether there was such a thing as "Just War Theory." This is a conversation that has been happening within the congregation ever since.

I believe the dialogue we will have together this month will push us far beyond the question of "Just War Theory." The discussion on pacifism and nonviolence brings up questions of revolutionary violence, self-defense, so-called terrorism, and even the question of what violence is. These are useful questions for us to ask as the Unitarian Universalist Association examines the Peacemaking Resolution, which I will make available on Sunday mornings during this month. These are also vital questions for us to ask ourselves as we question what solidarity looks like for us and what tactics we think will bring about the revolutionary change so many in this congregation believe deeply in. Where are we as a congregation today with the question of tactical violence versus ideological nonviolence? Is this something we could come to a consensus about? Is this something we would even want to come to a consensus about? I believe that we, as a community, have the capacity to have these conversations and continue to care for each other even if we have differing opinions. I believe that we have space to have passionate conversation while continuing to hold one another in love. I encourage us to jump in to this month with an open heart and a willingness to engage.

# COMMUNITY CHURCH OF BOSTON



## Sunday Service & Speakers Forum

in Lothrop Auditorium  
Sundays at 11:00am

**October 4th**  
**GORDON SCHIFF, MD**  
"The Road to Real Health  
Care Reformation"

**October 11th**  
*Indigenous Peoples' Day*  
"TANTANKA WOPILA"  
("Thank You, Buffalo Nation")

**October 18th**  
*Non-Violence or Violence to  
Resolve Conflict (part I)*  
**SUZANNE BELOTE SHANLEY**  
"Non-Violence and Reconciliation  
with Nations at War"

**October 25th**  
*Non-Violence or Violence to  
Resolve Conflict (part II)*  
**LANA HABASH**  
"Pacifism Through the  
Eyes of Its Victims"

## Acupuncture for Everyone

Acupuncture for Everyone is Copley Square's community acupuncture clinic, providing affordable acupuncture to everyone in the Boston area who needs it. Our sliding scale of \$15 to \$35 per visit makes the treatment you need affordable.

For your free phone consultation call:  
Anne Drogin (617) 875-1143  
Jess Gerber (617) 833-7187

## CCB Board Meeting

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

The following board members were present: Kevin Devine, Dick Keshishian, Jason Lydon, John MacLeod, Nancy Messom, Susan Mortimer, Virginia Pratt. Guests included Jim Casteris, Matt Meyer.

**Congregational Directors Report:** A brochure which details information concerning theology, Sunday speakers, forums, membership and leadership, all conducive to CCB's statement of purpose, will be passed out to newcomers. A guest book will also be printed; the congregation is urged to be more welcoming to guests, especially during the luncheon period.



**Financial Matters:** The treasurer presented a brief report on the financial situation from January through September 15, 2009. Pledges and contributions to date equal \$21,469.00. Tenant and daily rental income total \$108,499.00. Total expenses amount to \$108,292.00.

**Building Concerns:** Drain repair must be done on the CCB building. A mason will be hired to repair the two courses of the upper roof parapet in order to support and attach the new rubber roof. The board passed by a majority vote to have the work done as stated above.

**Various Concerns:** A representative from the Lucy Stone Cooperative Planning Team presented a detailed report on plans to buy a house in the Boston area which can serve as a renter for social justice organizing. The Cooperative will provide a new model for housing and faith development in the Unitarian-Universalist tradition. After some deliberation, the board decided to postpone a decision on financial support until a later date.

The next meeting of the board is scheduled for Thursday, October 15, 2009 at 7:15pm. Members and friends of the Church are invited to attend.

-Dick Keshishian, Clerk



# October 17th: New England Demonstrates Against the Wars in Afghanistan, Pakistan & Iraq

When President Obama was elected on a platform of “hope” and “change”, many hoped his presidency would bring peace to the Middle East and Central Asia.

They did not expect a prolonged occupation of Iraq or the escalation of the war in Afghanistan by sending 21,000 more troops. They did not expect the U.S. to increase drone strikes into Pakistan which have already killed over 350 people since Obama became president. They did not expect military spending to continue to increase, with \$707 billion allocated for the military in 2010. Nor did they expect billions of our tax dollars to be spent on the brutal blockade of Gaza and the occupation of Palestine.

When ever greater numbers of people are losing their homes and sinking into poverty, the government claims it lacks the resources to meet our needs! The choice of “Guns or Butter!” is not empty rhetoric but stark reality. Military recruiters have virtually unrestricted access to our schools — and the Pentagon unrestricted access to our tax dollars! Enough is enough! Sufficient money could be allocated to provide Jobs for All, Health Care, Education, Housing, Pensions, and Environmental Protection! Not one cent should be spent on military interventions, unjust wars and occupations, racist detentions and deportations, renditions, torture, and attacks on our civil and human rights!

With the support of Congress, the Administration is carrying out a protracted counter-insurgency war in which human development aid and negotiations serve only as window dressing on a war policy aimed at dominating Afghanistan, Pakistan, and the Central Asia region.

The escalating assault on Afghanistan and Pakistan points to an imperative for action and a united response from the peace and justice community. We must explain that the so called “good war” in Afghanistan/Pakistan is yet another empire building project, the same as in Iraq. Many have doubts about the occupation of Afghanistan and can be won to the understanding that our best interests lie in the immediate withdrawal of all occupation forces.

We seek to promote public education on these wars and provide opportunities for the expression of mass opposition. Please endorse the action and join us at our planning meeting as we prepare a mass protest on October 17 in Boston. All are invited.

**Eight Years of War – How Many More?  
Rally & March October 17, 1:00pm  
Copley Square, Boston**  
for more information: [stophthewars.org](http://stophthewars.org)

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## Notes from September Congregational Meetings

Suggestions and Questions for Extending Membership to Prisoners in Massachusetts:

- Is there anyway to broadcast our services (radio, tv, etc.) for access to prisoner membership?

- Should we connect with other organizations that do prison work (i.e. Jericho) to hold us accountable for the success of the program?

- Do we want to know the “crime” prisoner was convicted of? (after conversation it was generally suggested, no)

- We need to establish a stronger “Safe Congregation Policy,” regardless of the development of this program.

- Services to prisoner membership would continue all year round, even while we are on summer break.

- What will the public component look like? How do we announce our commitment to abolition?

- Should we start with incremental growth? Limit the number of prisoner members?

- We need to develop clear resources that describe who we are a congregation.

- Establishing a pen-pal portion of the membership is important and pen-pals can set up the parameters of their relationship.

- We will need to establish a process for phone calls and prison visits.

- How do we deal with prisoners who have conflict with each other but both (all) may want to be members of the congregation?

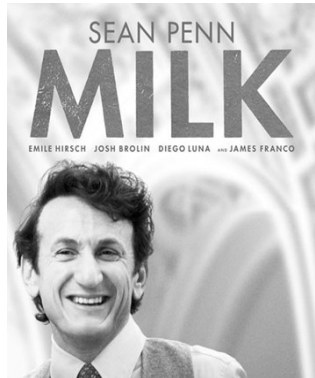
Decision from Meeting About Future of Pax Fund Money:

- We will look into obtaining services from a financial advisor (hopefully pro bono) as well as the services of a building assessor (to determine the priorities and costs of fixing the many issues with our building, also, hopefully pro bono) and if the cost is within reason we will move forward within this fiscal year, if not, there will be a request for funds in the proposed budget for 2010 to be discussed at the February Fiscal Meeting.

# Film Screening!

# MILK

Join us as we devour popcorn, candy, and soda while watching Sean Penn play Harvey Milk, San Francisco's first out gay Supervisor. Thousands of people will march in Washington D.C. this weekend proclaiming GLBT rights. We will watch the film and discuss the difference between rights and liberation. Are mainstream gay and lesbian organizations simply assimilating into the system and is there any alternative for those seeking truer revolutionary change? Join us for a fun time and good discussion.



**Saturday, October 10th, 7:30pm**  
**Community Church of Boston**

## Our Purpose

Community Church of Boston is a free community of women and men 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, *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



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telephone: (617) 266-6710  
fax: (617) 266-0449  
email: info@commchurch.org  
www.communitychurchofboston.org

565 Boylston Street  
Boston, MA 02116

**COMMUNITY CHURCH OF BOSTON**

