

Community Church of Boston
A Peace and Justice congregation since 1920

sunday forums

January 2012
Sundays at 11:00a.m.

January 8th -- BEV GRANT & INA MAY WOOL
"Singing in the New Year"

Please join us this Sunday for our annual, traditional and upbeat beginning of the winter season at CCB. This year we welcome Bev Grant and Ina May Wool for our annual "Sing in the New Year" celebration!

Bev Grant has, for years, written and arranged music for and led the Brooklyn Women's Chorus, a splendid assemblage that sings the music of celebration in the struggle for justice. More recently, Bev has led a smaller touring ensemble known as The Dissident Daughters, and now, forms a duo with Boston native Ina May Wool. They tour our way next week, and it is our pleasure to include them in our Sunday Forum!

January 15th -- Honoring Martin Luther King, Jr.
ALEXANDER LYNN & MEGHAN DORAN

"Boston Busing/Desegregation Project: For Truth, Learning, and Change"

The need to discuss the history of busing/desegregation in Boston is made abundantly clear when one looks at the reality of segregation in Boston Public Schools today. When the white mayor, Thomas Menino, can tell the Boston Globe that he is not interested in discussing those days because he already lived through it, we know that truth telling, community learning, and systemic change are as important as ever. The project is gathering knowledge from written history, individuals, and communities. The process moves past old misunderstandings and builds on successes and shared values. This discussion will be another opportunity to hear about and participate in the work.

January 22nd -- ALEX SHAMS

"The Arab Spring Means What This Winter?"

The uprisings in Egypt were not simply about a single moment in time, the overthrow of Mubarak took a generation of collected moments. It takes a deeper analysis of oppression, imperialism, gender, and class to understand the complexity of the revolution that began and is continuing in Egypt. We will discuss the realities of the uprising, the power of Tahrir Square, the beauty of young peoples movements, and the intersectionality of identity in revolt.

Alex Shams is a student at Harvard in Middle East Studies. He has studied in Lebanon, Iran, Egypt, and traveled through much of the Arab world. He has been active in Palestine solidarity and with Occupy Harvard among other campaigns here and abroad.

January 29th -- CENTRO PRESENTE

"Just Communities, Not 'Secure Communities'!"

Centro Presente is celebrating 30 years of working with the Latin American immigrant community and fighting for social and economic justice. Staff members have made presentations at CCB several times before.

Their Just Communities/Comunidades Justas campaign was launched in response to the federal government's Secure Communities program. It seeks to counteract the current U.S. "enforcement-only" policy toward immigration by educating and mobilizing people against efforts to criminalize undocumented immigrants.

COMMUNITY
CHURCH OF BOSTON

Rev. Jason Lydon, Minister

Community Church of Boston * 565 Boylston Street, Boston MA (in Copley Square)
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Park at the Back Bay Garage for \$3 on Sunday until 1:30 with a special sticker available from the church.
By public transportation, Community Church is minutes from the Back Bay station (Orange line) or Copley (Green line).

community

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

January 2012

news

Living Among The Ruins

by Rev. Jason Lydon, Minister

Dear Friends and Members, Happy New Year! We have just wrapped up what Time magazine declared as the year of the protestor. It is clearer and clearer all the time that we are in a moment of excitement and great possibility. People are rising up around the world and they are even rising up right here in our very city. Movements for justice seem to exist like the mightiness of the ocean. These movements have low and high tides, giant waves and calm pools. Our movements have the occasional hurricane, whirlpool, and even water spout. I am sure we have all also been involved with our movements when we're all of a sudden in a warm spot wondering what the person there before us left behind. Right now we are in the midst of some choppy yet beautiful waters and it is up to all of us to harness the power of this moment right and create processes that utilize this moment to its greatest potential with support, love, and compassion.

2012 is also the year some have decided the world is going to come to an end, the year that we are going to come upon some cosmic apocalypse. I will admit that I watched the science fiction disaster film, *2012*, but I live with assurance that the world is not coming to some moment of ending in 2012. I also agree with others who have suggested that the misinterpretation of the Mayan prophesy is part of white colonialism, a mentality exhibited precisely in the 2012 film. However, I believe that Unitarian Universalist theologian Rebecca Parker expresses the reality of apocalypse best. She writes, "we need to see ourselves as people living in the aftermath of cataclysmic violence rather than as people awaiting the overthrow of the present world order and the birth of the new. ... From this place of honesty, we must discover how we can live among the ruins." We need not wait for the apocalypse, what greater violence do we need our world to see before we are able to use our greatest creativity to rebuild our planet? Do we need greater destruction to

our planet? Do we need more death? Those who are waiting for the end of the world may not remember that people die of hunger every day, people die of preventable diseases every day, our global governments are stealing our freedoms, the list goes on. I think we have seen enough world ending for enough people to recognize the apocalypse Parker directs us to. The new beginning of a new year within this calendar gives us another opportunity to entrust one another with our shared passions to "live among the ruins."

What are some ways we can "live among the ruins" of our world even while knowing we are creating something within it? One suggestion that I am sure I have made before, is to show up. We are going to be our most powerful when we put our hands, heads, and hearts together. Coming together on Sunday morning provides an opportunity for us all to listen, sing, pray, and gain knowledge together. In this space we have the capacity to strengthen not only our own individual power, we can feed one another and multiply our collective abilities. Our different passions are truly complimentary. We each are able to offer another lens for each member to look through. The green lens of environmental justice is even more beautiful when added to the pink lens of queer liberation. These two lenses grow in beauty exponentially when added to the magnifying glasses of anti-racism and class struggle. We can be most accountable to our ideals when we share them among others. This is why we have a church, this is why we keep going, it is our relationships that make us strong.

I look forward to the beauty available to us in this new year. As the days keep getting colder and as the snow begins to fall I look forward to seeing your lovely eyes poking out behind your bundle of warm scarves. Lets all look forward to each others' company on our warm 2nd floor sanctuary at the Community Church of Boston Sunday after Sunday.

COMMUNITY CHURCH OF BOSTON



Sunday Service &
Speakers Forum

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CCB Board Meeting

*The Board of Directors met on December 13th, 2011
Following are highlights of the meeting.*

Minister's Report: The Sacco-Vanzetti Award program went well. Good attendance and coordination with Through Barbed Wire, a prison advocacy group which participated in the program, brought in \$1200, of which 25% was to be turned over to Arnie King for commissary privileges.

CCB members have been attending the trial of Tarek Mehanna on a regular basis.

Financial Matters: The treasurer presented the November, 2011 Profit & Loss Budget Performance report and compared the Actual and Budget figures pertaining to the Annual Fund Drive, Rental Income, Salaries, Benefits, Expenses, CCB programming and other aspects of the Church's operations.



Building Concerns: Heaters have been purchased for the rear office in the building. The Church needs to concentrate on acquiring inspection and assembly permits on time.

Various Concerns: Plans for a March 2012 retreat will be discussed at the January, 2012 board meeting. The Church plans to provide available space to Occupy Boston at low-cost rental.

The next meeting of the board is scheduled for Tuesday, January 10, 2012 at 7:15pm. Members and friends of the Church are invited to attend.

-Dick Keshishian, Clerk

Community Church's Prisoner Pen Pal Project

The Community Church of Boston's Prison Ministry Committee invites you to take time to become a pen pal with one of the incarcerated members of the church.



Incarcerated members have been incredibly grateful to get to know folks on the outside and it strengthens those of us in the "free world" to be in authentic relationships with those who are stuck behind the walls.

If you are interested in getting a pen pal or becoming involved with the Prison Ministry Committee, talk to Mahsa, Susan, David Broeg, John Macleod, John Mcgrath, or Jason.

Drones: Thinking Through Their Use

by Virginia Pratt, CCB/WILPF

It's hard to pick an issue to focus on when we have so many pressing problems that need to be addressed such as climate change, extreme income inequality, growing rates of poverty, and a criminal injustice system just to name a few. However, right now a lot of my attention is on the US's increasing use of drones for warfare and spying. I find the use of drones reprehensible. What bothers me most about their use in warfare is that the military has chosen a method that poses absolutely no immediate risk to us. I believe that killing is wrong except in self-defense. I think many people would agree.

The more distant the murderer is from his or her victim and the greater the power differential the more cowardly the act of killing. The fact that the target of our bombs now frequently attached to unmanned vehicles commonly referred to as drones, are labeled insurgents seems a weak justification for our acts. I am also taken by the term drone. I think of a drone as someone of something which goes about its business without feeling or thinking. When I feel burnout, I feel like a "drone."

It is not surprising to me that drones rarely hit their targets and that easily 50% of those killed by our drones are civilians. When the operators are sitting thousands of miles away from their target, how could we really expect them to be fully engaged? The Pentagon reports dismay over the high rates of PTSD among drone pilots. The pilots feel bad after spying on the people that they kill and watching them die— as well they should.

Despite their flaws, crashes and missed targets, the pentagon plans to increase spending by up to 60% for drone use and development for both warfare and surveillance. This increase in spending comes at a time

when we are told that the US cannot afford Social Security, Healthcare, and Education. Sadly, drone use has increased dramatically under the Obama administration as compared to Bush. Drones have been used to kill and survey people in Pakistan, Somalia, and Yemen without congress having declared war. The US military, CIA, and Home Land Security envision further drone use for surveillance of the US borders and US citizens with increased cooperation between local police departments.

Peace activists such as Kathy Kelly and the Hancock 38 have stood up against this form of warfare on moral grounds. The ACLU recommends installing guidelines now to protect our threatened right to privacy. Drones



are the newest tools used by the US military to implement their goal of Full Spectrum Domination.

Implicit in this policy is an unspoken assumption that the US alone has the right to patrol the planet.

Thus, any true efforts to promote peace are undermined due to our unequal power. Worse, our drone use may set a new president in the same way that countries invested in nuclear weapons during the Cold War. Real security comes from good relations, not threats. As usual, the US powers are investing in the wrong thing.

Community Town Hall Forum: 3 Strikes Law in Massachusetts???

Saturday, January 7th, 12:30pm
Dudley Library (65 Warren Street, Roxbury)

Community activists, clergy, elected officials, representatives from local civil rights organizations and concerned citizens will gather to address proposed Habitual Offender legislation in Massachusetts. The proposed law will have a devastating impact on communities of color throughout the commonwealth as well as present a new and unparalleled financial strain on an already struggling MA economy. Opponents of the proposed legislation plan to express their concerns, draft alternatives and implore Gov. Patrick to veto this bill.

Panelists will include: Rev. George Walters-Sleyon (Center for Church & Prison); Rep. Carlos Henriquez (State Representative); Michael Curry (NAACP Boston President); Atty. Stephanie Soriano-Mills (NAACP Boston); Harold Adams (Committee of Friends and Relatives of Prisoners); Luis Bajana (Ex-Prisoners and Prisoners Organizing for Community Advancement); Susan Mortimer (Mass Decarcerate); Atty. Barbara J. Dougan (Families Against Mandatory Minimums).

For more information, email:
blackstonian@verizon.net

Precious Knowledge

Saturday, January 14th, 3pm
at the Community Church of Boston
565 Boylston St, Copley Square

Forty-four years ago, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. lost his life in the battle for civil rights. Today in Arizona the fight for the same cause wages on.

Precious Knowledge chronicles the modern day civil rights struggle for ethnic studies in Tucson. Following students and teachers in the Mexican-American Studies program at Tucson High School, this film is a rallying call to everyone who cares about social justice in education.

Screening includes special performances by Sociedad Latina and Zumix and a post-screening discussion with Curtis Acosta, one of the film's central teachers. Sliding scale of suggested donations for admission: \$15-\$100 (all proceeds support the Save The Ethnic Studies Legal 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.

Staff

Rev. Jason Lydon, *Minister*
Mark Laskey, *Office Manager*
Xinli Xu, *Bookkeeper*

Luis Alonzo Guzman, *Custodian & Cook*
Rodney Burston, *Building Maintenance*

Board of Directors

David Broeg, *President*
Mary Ann Cromer, *Vice President*
Virginia Pratt, *Treasurer*
Dick Keshishian, *Clerk*

Jim Casteris, Kevin Devine, Nancy Messom,
Reed Miller, Susan Mortimer



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