

# community

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

March 2009

# news

## Celebrating Women's History and Struggle

by Jason Lydon, Congregational Director

The best part about months being designated for certain topics, such as Black History Month, Queer Pride Month, Domestic Violence Awareness Month, etc. is those of us who write monthly newsletters always have a topic to write about. March is Women's History Month. Knowing our histories is an essential aspect of knowing who we are. I greatly appreciate those faith traditions that honor and celebrate ancestor worship. Those who have come before us need to be recognized. Our ancestors are not just those who we share blood history with. Our ancestors include those who have struggled for justice before us. We remember the women of the Bread and Roses Strikes, we remember revolutionary women like Ida B. Wells, Emma Goldman, Ella Baker, Clara Lemlich Shavelson, and so many more. We remember the women who resisted Japanese internment in the U.S. We remember women who kept traditions alive even during the Trail of Tears. We remember the women held as political prisoners and prisoners around the world for resistance to empire, whether they are Palestinian, Chechen, Irish, Congolese, or Mexican. We know that women's struggle includes struggle for nationhood, an end to free trade, self-determination, food justice, and the right to be seen as equally human. We remember our ancestors in this struggle as they give us the strength to continue tearing down the systems that benefit off the exploitation of women around the world and right here at home.

Theologian and scholar Elizabeth Schussler Fiorenza encourages us to use the term *kyriarchy* rather than the term *patriarchy*. The term is derived from two Greek words, (*kyrios*) meaning "lord" or "master" and (*archein*) meaning "to rule or dominate". Schussler Fiorenza encourages us to use this term as

it gets into the multilayered understanding of power. If we look at our society structured as a pyramid we will quickly see that not all women are on the same level (women legislators over women in prison) and there are women who oppress men (Women in the U.S. over Men in the Third World). Like most things understanding *kyriarchy*/*patriarchy*/*sexism* requires us to be stretched and remember that the complexities of systemic oppression can be difficult to navigate. However, challenging these systems and understanding new ways they operate must be a priority of a community committed to justice. Feminism cannot be the same thing today as it was in the 1930's, 1950's, 1970's, or 1990's. We must be open to the deeper understandings offered to us by those struggling in movements today.

At the Community Church of Boston we have our own work to do. The paid clerical leadership of the church has always been a man. Our speakers are nearly half women and men, but we are not there. Men dominate the question and answer period and even ask questions that perpetuate *sexism*/*patriarchy*/*kyriarchy*. We are a place for growing and transforming however we need to be aware of when that growth and transformation comes at the expense of other people. We must commit to grasping a greater understanding of gender and gender oppression. Our feminism must remember to include transgender people. Our learning must include a challenge to those with privileged positions to do our internal work and help make Community Church a safer space. Intentions are important however the impact of our actions matter the most. Let us use March as a month to celebrate Community Church of Boston's women, our women who have past, and the strength of a feminism that includes a commitment to true justice for people of all genders.

# COMMUNITY CHURCH OF BOSTON



## Sunday Service & Speakers Forum

in Lothrop Auditorium  
Sundays at 11:00am

**March 1st**

**VIRGINIA PRATT**

**"Foreclosure and Its Ugly Subprime Roots"**

**March 8th**

*International Women's Day*

**JANE NGONDO**

**"Women of the Congo"**

**March 15th**

**ELLEN O'BRIEN**

**"The New Media Revolution:  
What It Means to You"**

**March 22nd**

**KWOK PUI LAN**

**"Christianity, American Empire  
and Globalization"**

**March 29th**

**JEROME GROSSMAN**

**"Must the U.S. Rule the World?"**

## CCB Board Meeting

*The Board of Directors met on February 19, 2009.*

*Following are highlights of the meeting.*

The following board members were present: David Broeg, Kevin Devine, Dick Keshishian, Jason Lydon, Nancy Messom, Virginia Pratt, Lenny Shames, Ruediger Volk. Guests included Mary Corcoran and Jim Casteris.

**Congregational Director's Report:** Jason met with the district executive of the Massachusetts Bay District of

the UUA (Unitarian Universalist Association) to move forward his status for the candidacy for fellowship with the UUA.

## COMMITTEES

**Tenants/Facilities:** Virginia reported on the present rental status of the tenants within the CCB building.

**Committee on Ministry:** Nancy stated that the committee had conducted the congregational director's evaluation. The committee is taking the task of contacting individuals who have not been attending Sunday morning programs, as of late, and reaching out to those in need of help with their daily chores.

**Growth and Membership:** The committee proposed the following agenda:

(1) Two categories of Church affiliation - "membership" or "friend of Church".

(2) Requirements for membership eligibility would include at least one of the following: financial contribution, volunteer time regarding Church activities, nominal attendance at Sunday morning programs.

If the above requirements are not met for a two-year period the individual will lose membership privileges and be reverted to "friend of Church" status.

Dick also suggested that envelopes be distributed at the Sunday morning collection so as to enable those offering cash donations be given credit for their contribution for income tax purposes.

The above proposals were passed unanimously by the board.

**Building Committee:** The board voted to hire an assistant to help the building superintendent. A formal letter was forwarded to the applicant this past week.

**Financial:** The treasurer examined the line items in the budget, emphasizing income from rentals, the downstairs restaurant, and monies received from member pledges and from Sunday morning collections. She also paid a deserving compliment to Betsy Rueda Gynn for her invaluable contribution in formulating the 2009 budget, which will be presented to the membership at the upcoming fiscal meeting.

A flat \$200 bonus will be offered to all CCB employees instead of the usual one-week pay.

*The next meeting of the board is scheduled for Thursday, March 12, 2009 at 7:15pm. Members and friends of the Church are invited to attend.*

-Dick Keshishian, Clerk

# We Declare Peace:

## Taking Non-Violent Direct Action to End the U.S. Occupation of Iraq

During the days surrounding the 6th anniversary of the U.S. invasion of Iraq (March 19-20), opposition and nonviolent resistance to the U.S. occupation of Iraq will be manifested in events and actions across the country in clear repudiation of current U.S. policy in Iraq, and will hopefully reach huge levels of public participation.

The Declaration of Peace calls upon all local Peace groups and organizers to organize special events and nonviolent actions during the week of March 16th to the 21st, to demonstrate the will of the people and call upon the Congress and the Obama Administration to: "End the U.S. Occupation! Withdraw All Military Forces Now! Work for Peace for Iraq!"

Let us act together in solidarity with the millions of Iraqis whose lives have been so tragically changed since March 2003, and who continually call for an end to the U.S. occupation of their country.

There is no more appropriate time to remind the government of their responsibility to the Iraqi people and to bring U.S. soldiers home alive and intact, than on the anniversary of the devastating "Shock & Awe" assault on Iraq.

The people of Iraq — indeed, the people of the world — will be watching. All eyes will be on the United States of America.

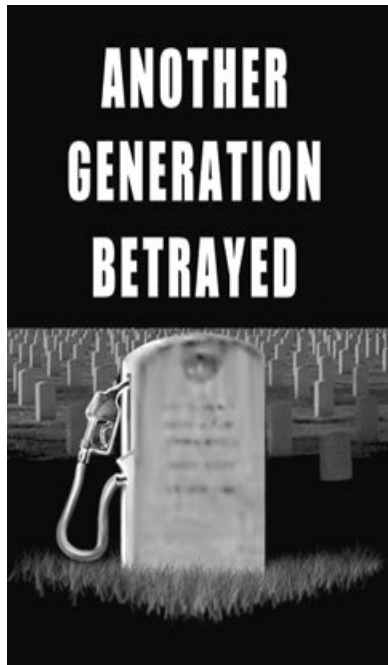
For more information:  
<http://declarationofpeace.org>

### March 19th on Boston Common: Sixth Anniversary of Beginning of Iraq War

UJP will join with the Unitarian Universalists, Massachusetts Peace Action, veterans organizations and other groups in a reading of the names of the dead in Iraq and Afghanistan.

The event will be a solemn witness to the destruction of these horrific wars.

To volunteer to help organize the event, contact 617-354-2169.



### Report from the Annual Fiscal Meeting

Eighteen members were present, constituting a quorum.

The treasurer, Virginia Pratt, reviewed the line items in the 2009 fiscal budget. A lengthy discussion followed with the members questioning the treasurer concerning several of the line items. The membership voted 15 yes, 2 abstentions, and 1 no vote to pass the budget.

The remainder of the meeting was devoted to the PAX World Fund. CCB's PAX investment has lost 29.95% during 2008, or \$70,409.86.

A proposal put forth by the John Mannheim states the following: The Finance Committee is directed to hold its next meeting within 45 days of today in order to discuss the fate of the PAX World Funds with CCB and to invite Reverend Nancy Taylor, a member of the PAX World Fund Board to participate in the meeting. Subsequently, the Finance Committee would make a recommendation to the Church membership at a future meeting or at the annual meeting in June. The motion passed 16 yes, 1 abstention, 1 no vote.

-Dick Keshishian, Clerk

# New Strategies for the Obama Era

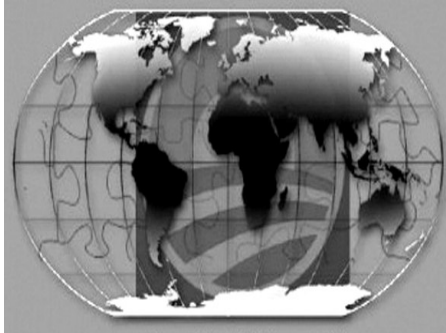
A Conference Sponsored by AFSC and Tufts University Peace and Justice Department

March 27-29th  
Tufts University

The Obama Administration and Congress will deliver some of changes that we and the world need, but powerful grassroots pressure on the new Administration and Congress will be required if our hopes for change are to be realized. "New Strategies" will be an extraordinary and critically important opportunity for our movements.

Speakers include Noam Chomsky, Phyllis Bennis, Bill Fletcher Jr, Tom Hayden, Anna Galland, Joseph Gearson, Arjun Makhijani, Emily Kawano, and more!

<http://www.afsc.org/newstrategies2009>



## 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*  
Luis Alonzo Guzman, *Custodian & Cook*  
Xinli Xu, *Bookkeeper*  
Jim Casteris, *Superintendent*

## Board of Directors

John MacLeod, *President*  
David Broeg, *Vice President*  
Virginia Pratt, *Treasurer*  
Dick Keshishian, *Clerk*

Christina Braidotti, Kevin Devine,  
Nancy Messom, Leonard Shames,  
Ruediger Volk



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