

**Community Church of Boston**  
*A Peace and Justice congregation since 1920*

# sunday forums

**March 2010**  
**Sundays at 11:00a.m.**

**March 7th -- International Women's Day**

**LEBOGANG RAMAFOKO**

**"The Challenges of Women Today: A Voice from the South"**

Lebogang Ramafoko is Senior Executive of Media at Soul City, a world renowned South African-based not for profit that harnesses the power of media for health promotion and social justice. On a more personal level, Lebo is a single mother of two children and a survivor of emotional domestic abuse. She spoke out about it in 2008, during the "16 days of no violence against women and children" celebrations on national TV.

This forum is co-sponsored with the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom.

**March 14th -- JAN CANNAVAN**

**"Centuries of Irish Revolutionary Women"**

From the time of the prehistoric Celts to the present, Irish women have struggled for national freedom and defended their rights to equality as women. Much of this history has been erased by conservative Catholic sexism, until recent years when Irish Republican feminists have begun to restore women to their rightful place in the historical record. Our speaker will give an overview of some of the women who have worked to liberate Ireland from British (and American!) imperialism.

Jan Cannavan has been an active supporter of the Irish Republican movement for over 30 years, beginning with Sinn Fein in Dublin in the '80s. For six years she worked in New York with the Irish Women's Studies Group. Her primary research interest is the intersection of gender, class and national identity, particularly as these are manifested in Irish history.

**March 21st -- LANI BLECHMAN**

**"Reproductive Justice and the Debate Over Women's Bodies"**

What do abortion rights have to do with disability, economic, environmental, gender, and racial justice? How do abortion rights fit into queer liberation and youth empowerment? What's the connection between the right to have children, the right to not have children, and the right to healthy families and communities? Lani Blechman will join us in exploring these questions through a Reproductive Justice framework, by examining our values, and beginning to translate them into action.

Lani is a collective member of Translate Gender, on the advisory board of The Prison Birth Project, and Operations Assistant at the Civil Liberties and Public Policy Program (CLPP).

**March 28th -- LEE FICH**

**"Liberation Seder"**

In celebration and honor of Passover we will gather for our annual Liberation Seder. This is the time when we remember the Jewish story of resistance and come together as a community to celebrate the timeless story of overcoming injustice and choosing to remember the connection to all struggles for liberation. Please remember to bring a potluck dish to share. This is an especially good Sunday to bring friends and family!

Lee Fich is a long time friend of the church who has led the Passover Seder for many years now.

**COMMUNITY**  
CHURCH OF BOSTON

**Jason Lydon, Congregational Director**

**Community Church of Boston \* 565 Boylston Street, Boston MA (in Copley Square)**  
**tel. (617) 266-6710 \* fax (617) 266-0449 \* [www.communitychurchofboston.org](http://www.communitychurchofboston.org)**

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

March 2010

# news

## Uncovering Women's History

by Jason Lydon, Congregational Director

**D**ear friends and members... It is a great celebration to honor Women's History Month. While our commitment to women's liberation must be an everyday occurrence, it is exciting to spend a month recognizing the particular struggles of feminism, womanism, post-colonial feminism, Black feminism, transfeminism and the voices of all women seeking justice. Unitarian Universalist Betty Hoskins writes,

"Feminism assures that we pour together integrate our heart/mind body/spirit, and speak from all of our being. We honor the individual streams. Each person swims her life as she must, and she flows into community; the personal is political is spiritual. And feminism, growing from women's life experiences, assumes the form of

rushes and ebbs, cascades and quiet reflective ponds, storms and calms, immersion in the gifts of the sea and sensitivity to the molecules in each droplet." The waters of our complex and interconnected lives flow together as we work and organize for the end to patriarchy and the violence of misogyny. Women's voices must be heard, women's actions must be respected, and a feminism that takes into account the interconnectedness of all oppression must be affirmed and supported.

Women's history/herstory is often pushed to the side or heralded in very tokenizing ways. When we talk about the Civil Rights Movement the stories of Ella Baker and Fannie Lou Hamer are too often left out. While the incredible action of Rosa Parks is honored as the start of the Bus Boycott the story is often told as if Rosa Parks was "just" and old woman who was tired of getting up for white folks, disregarding her phenomenal work as an organizer



and teacher at the Highlander School. When telling the story of the abolition of slavery the tactics of many women are also regularly ignored. The quilts hanging on laundry lines, sewn by white abolitionists and by African slaves, gave direction and messages that kept people safe on their journey to freedom. Jewish women immigrants in the 1930's living in the tenements in New York City stopped evictions and fought against union busting, even pouring boiling hot washing water out the windows onto the police trying to barge into their doors. Wherever there is a struggle for justice there are women present and their stories must be listened to. The continued struggle for collective liberation will only be possible when we learn from our foreparents of all genders.

This month everyone has some homework to do. The last Sunday of March we will gather for our annual Liberation Seder, headed up by our beloved Lee Fich. I want everyone to spend some time this month looking for stories of women in history who have been forgotten or intentionally left out of our radical history and bring what you learned to church that Sunday to share. Challenge yourself to look into a movement you may be unfamiliar with or that you have been passionately engaged in for many years but can only list one or two women's names involved. Can you list the names of women involved in the struggle for disability rights and recognition within the United States or around the globe? Do you understand how transgender women have struggled to be included in feminist communities? In the movement for reproductive rights do you know the names of women who've fought not only for the right to choose an abortion but also the right not to be sterilized or forced to give up their children?

It's Women's History Month, honor women you know and learn about women who have been hidden from you. Celebrate the struggles of women by sharing what you learn and strengthening our movements for transformation and liberation!

# COMMUNITY CHURCH OF BOSTON



## Sunday Service & Speakers Forum

in Lothrop Auditorium  
Sundays at 11:00am

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### March 7th

*International Womens' Day*

**LEBOGANG RAMAFOKO**

**"The Challenges of Women Today:  
A Voice from the South"**

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**LEE FICH**

**"Liberation Seder"**

## CCB Board Meeting

*The Board of Directors met on February 17, 2010*

*Following are highlights of the meeting.*

The following board members were present: David Broeg, Dick Keshishian, Jason Lydon, John MacLeod, Matt Osborn, Virginia Pratt.

**Building Concerns:** The greater part of the meeting was devoted to the structural codes and ongoing repairs of the CCB building. Details regarding the second floor thermostat were also discussed at length.

**Financial Matters:** The annual fiscal meeting, postponed from an earlier date, will take place on Sunday, March 28th at 1:30pm, following the morning program and luncheon. The information concerning the upcoming budget and formal announcement of the meeting will be mailed simultaneously during the second week of March.

**Various Concerns:** Susan Mortimer has drawn up a program description for a CCB brochure to be made available to incarcerated individuals who wish to become Church members.

The Jobs With Justice dinner will be held on Thursday, March 25th at Suffolk Downs in East Boston. Dick K. (at his own expense) will represent CCB at the event. CCB is one of over one-hundred organizations that belongs to Jobs With Justice.

*The next meeting of the board is scheduled for Wednesday, March 24, 2010 at 7:15pm. Members and friends of the Church are invited to attend.*

-Dick Keshishian, Clerk

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## Excerpt from "Heteropatriarchy and the Three Pillars of White Supremacy" (by Andrea Smith)

*While celebrating and honoring Women's History Month, please sit with the following passage from Andrea Smith and consider what can be learned from her words. Within Unitarian Universalism we have the responsibility to recognize the gifts of prophets who are continuously teaching throughout history and into the present.*

"In order to colonize peoples whose societies are not based on social hierarchy, colonizers must first naturalize hierarchy through instituting patriarchy. In turn, patriarchy rests on a gender binary system in which only two genders exist, one dominating the other.

Consequently, Charles Colson is correct when he says that the colonial world order depends on heteronormativity. Just as the patriarchs rule the family, the elites of the nation-state rule their citizens. Any liberation struggle that does not challenge heteronormativity cannot substantially challenge colonialism or white supremacy. Rather, as Cathy Cohen contends, such struggles will maintain colonialism based on a politics of secondary marginalization where the most elite class of these groups will further their aspirations on the backs of those most marginalized within the community."

# Activists Observe 1000th Death of a U.S. soldier

by Boston United for Justice and Peace (UJP)

With the message "Not one more Death, Not One Dollar More!", about 100 military family members, veterans, and peace activists marked the 1,000 death of a U.S. soldier in Operation Enduring Freedom Monday, February 22nd at at Park Street Station in Boston.

OEF is the military's name for the Afghanistan conflict. 930 of those victims died in Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Uzbekistan, and 70 in other parts of the world.

Veterans read aloud the names of 60 New England residents who lost their lives in the conflict, and 60 names of Afghan civilians who died were also read. The names of the 1,000 dead were inscribed on post-cards calling on Congress to stop funding the war; those assembled signed the cards, which will be sent to House Speaker Nancy Pelosi.

Pat Scanlon of Veterans for Peace Smedley Butler Brigade led songs and spoke:

"Amidst the feelings of sadness, emptiness, confusion, frustration, manipulation and anger that I am feeling today. I also feel a renewed sense of commitment. Even though we are small in number, we know we are right. We are on the right side of justice, fairness and history. Even in the face of right wing attacks and a country that has seemingly forgotten that two wars are still in process. [...] We have to carry on in hopes that today's event is never repeated. We have to carry on for

all the other soldiers who will soon be in harms way. We have to carry on for all the victims of war. We have to carry on, we can't turn away. We just have to carry on, together."



Other speakers included Melida Arredondo, stepmother of a soldier who died in the Iraq war, who denounced the war. Joyce and Kevin Lucey's statement expressing the grief of parents whose son committed suicide

after returning home from war was read by Deb Forter of Military Families Speak Out. Matt Andrews of Greater Boston Stop the Wars Coalition, Marie Jackson-Miller of Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, and Sarah Roche-Mahdi drew out the importance of opposing the war. David Fillingham of VfP read a poem by Langston Hughes, and Unitarian-Universalist minister and VfP board member Lara Hoke closed the remarks.

<http://www.justicewithpeace.org>

## "A Litany for Survival"

For those of us who live at the shoreline  
standing upon the constant edges of decision  
crucial and alone  
for those of us who cannot indulge the passing dreams of choice  
who love in doorways coming and going  
in the hours between dawns  
looking inward and outward  
at once before and after  
seeking a now that can breed futures  
like bread in our children's mouths  
so their dreams will not reflect the death of ours;

For those of us  
who were imprinted with fear  
like a faint line in the center of our foreheads  
learning to be afraid with our mother's milk  
for by this weapon  
this illusion of some safety to be found  
the heavy-footed hoped to silence us  
For all of us  
this instant and this triumph  
We were never meant to survive.

And when the sun rises we are afraid  
it might not remain

when the sun sets we are afraid  
it might not rise in the morning  
when our stomachs are full we are afraid  
of indigestion  
when our stomachs are empty we are afraid  
we may never eat again  
when we are loved we are afraid  
love will vanish  
when we are alone we are afraid  
love will never return  
and when we speak we are afraid  
our words will not be heard  
nor welcomed  
but when we are silent  
we are still afraid.

So it is better to speak  
remembering  
we were never meant to survive

# 100th Anniversary of International Women's Day

Sunday, March 7th, 1pm  
in Copley Square, Boston



Rally on the 100th Anniversary of International Women's Day on Sunday, March 7th, 1pm at Copley Square (Boston). The Greater Boston chapter of Code Pink Women for Peace invites you and all who

yearn for an end to war to celebrate the 100th anniversary of International Women's Day by rallying and marching for peace.

We propose the following theme: Bread and Peace-- Women Say NO to War. If you are interested in participating, whether as individual or organization, please let us know by emailing [iwdbos.sr@gmail.com](mailto:iwdbos.sr@gmail.com).

## 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



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