

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

# sunday forums

**September 2009**  
Sundays at 11:00a.m.

## SEPTEMBER IS BACK TO SCHOOL MONTH!

**September 13th -- JASON LYDON**  
"Homecoming Sunday"

After a summer vacation from formal Sunday services we will come back together to celebrate and share in new beginnings. Please bring water from your journeys or from your faucet at home so we can tell stories of our personal growth and change over the summer. As we are focusing this September, again, on issues around education Jason's talk will examine some alternatives to standard education such as unschooling, vocational programs, and homeschooling. Learning does not have to happen the same for everyone. Education is a political and spiritual practice that leads us to becoming more whole beings. We will use this month to reflect on this.

**September 20th -- PRESS PASS TV**  
"Standardized Failure"

Press Pass TV is a youth adult partnership organization whose mission is to produce socially responsible video journalism, which promotes a more diverse media, empowers communities and increases civic engagement. They work with middle and high school students to create news stories that tell of community power and connect issues in our community to root causes. By providing an alternative to the repetitive one-sidedness of mainstream media, they connect community members to pathways for action.



In *Standardized Failure*, Press Pass TV partnered with the City School to go inside the dangerous affects that the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System has on youth and schools. They also just created a discussion and action guide to accompany the video. They will use both to discuss solutions and next steps.

**September 27th -- MARTINA M. CRUZ**  
"Working Families and the Economic Crisis"

Martina Cruz is a member of the Lawrence School Committee and active with Latinos United for Justice. She is an endorser of Welcoming Massachusetts, a pro-immigrant organization working toward just and humane immigration policies. In 2006, she was one of eleven Latino elected officials from the U.S. chosen as international observers during the presidential election in Venezuela.

Since she came to the U.S. nearly 25 years ago, Martina has led a life of activism based on Liberation Theology. Because of her efforts organizing for the rights of immigrants, women & workers and against war, she was asked to run for School Committee. She won and now continues her social justice work there and "in the streets", where she assists indigent families in crisis to access services for children with mental health issues. Martina's talk will focus on Lawrence, the only majority Latino city in New England, and on jobs, services & education.

**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

September 2009

# news

## Fresh Starts and Renewal at Community Church

by Jason Lydon, Congregational Director

Dear friends and members... Throughout the calendar year there are so many opportunities for new beginnings and fresh starts. We have secular markings for renewal like New Year's Day, the first day of school, birthdays, and anniversaries. We also have religious markings like Rosh Hashanah, Ramadan, Easter, Solstice, and many others. The beginning of a new season at Unitarian Universalist congregations provides for another opportunity for a fresh start. It is with this openness to possibility that we begin the 2009-2010 season.

Similar to last year we are beginning our season with a month focused on the education system. We will listen to speakers share about the complexities of the schooling young people receive here in Massachusetts. Tragically the Boston Public Schools are laying off over 300 people, including more than 100 teachers. The budget for the schools is getting cut by over a million dollars. The youth of our city are not only our future leaders; they are the leaders of today and must be listened to now. Access to equitable and safe education is a vital issue for our community to hold on to and push forward.

The Board of Officers and Directors voted to open up membership for the church to those who are currently incarcerated in Massachusetts. The details of how this will work and, more importantly, be sustained are still being worked out. I hope that this is something many of us can participate in. Developing relationships with people who are locked up is beneficial not only to the person locked up on the inside but also to those in the "free" world. In Massachusetts 1 in 24 people are either in prison, jail,

on probation or parole. We can benefit and grow our community when we include those who are so often excluded from other spaces. We need to continue widening our arms to welcome those seeking a home like ours.

Another big transformation for the church this season is in the structure of our building. We are, finally, getting a new roof. At some point in late September or early October we will have a crew of people tearing off rubber, moving things around, and adding all new material to make our building safer and drier for all inside. This may not sound like the most exciting aspect of renewal but our building provides a home to so many different people and organizations, this roof covers the heads of those working for change and transformation.

When you are spending time on the 2nd floor you will discover our growing library. We received the large part of Cynthia Foster's personal library as well as many books donated by other people. We are growing our social justice library. Books can be borrowed, read while at the church, and you are welcome to donate more. Please utilize this library and invite others to do so as well.

This is a great time to recommit yourself to the Community Church of Boston. You have the opportunity to join us on Sunday mornings or volunteer in a multitude of other ways. Bring friends with you on Sunday morning and help us to continue strengthening our community. This is our time for fresh starts and renewal.

# COMMUNITY CHURCH OF BOSTON



## Sunday Service & Speakers Forum

in Lothrop Auditorium  
Sundays at 11:00am

### BACK TO SCHOOL MONTH!

**September 13th**  
**JASON LYDON**  
"Homecoming Sunday"

**September 20th**  
**PRESS PASS TV**  
"Standardized Failure"

**September 27th**  
**MARTINA M. CRUZ**  
"Working Families and the  
Economic Crisis"

### 2009 Sacco and Vanzetti Award

The Community Church of Boston membership voted to honor Joyce and Mel King of Boston with the 2009 Sacco and Vanzetti Social Justice Award. First runner up was Amy Goodman, followed by the San Francisco 8. All nominees are greatly worth honoring and their work is vital to movements for social change.

### CORI Reform Phone Banking at the Community Church of Boston

On September 15th, from 6-8pm, we will be calling voters in key districts to ask them to pressure their legislators to support the CORI reform that we need! Come to the Community Church to make calls, network with one another, strengthen the campaign, and eat free pizza! Please bring cell phones to use if possible.

## CCB Board Meeting

*The Board of Directors met on August 6, 2009  
Following are highlights of the meeting.*

The following board members were present: David Broeg, Dick Keshishian, Jason Lydon, Nancy Messom, Susan Mortimer, Virginia Pratt. Guests included Jim Casteris.

**Building Concerns:** The building superintendent proposed that repairs on the CCB roof be postponed for one year, claiming it was not a pressing issue at the moment. The suggestion was rebuffed by two board members who stated that the congregation had already voted to make repairs at the earliest possible time and that bids had already been received from the contractors. It was also indicated that funds from the PAX fund had been withdrawn when the financial markets were at their lowest ebb to complete this project. The board agreed to continue discussion on the matter at a joint Finance and Building Committee meeting on August 18th.

**Financial:** The treasurer presented a detailed report of the Church funds as of July 31, 2009. The total checking account amount is \$85,727.00. Total assets including the four CCB funds equal \$115,241.00. Total liabilities amount to nearly \$195,500.



**Various Concerns:** The clerk met recently with Janice & Peter Hanson, daughter and son-in-law of the late Guna Oster, longtime member of CCB. They donated a large collection of Mrs. Oster's drawings and sketches, along with other memorabilia. The drawings will be kept under safekeeping until the Church purchases a safe to store the donated items. Janice Hanson also presented a generous financial donation to the Church from her late mother's estate.

Dick brought several of the drawings and sketches to the board meeting and, as they were being passed from hand to hand, words of "beautiful," "priceless," and "awesome" were uttered in describing these works of art. David proposed making a DVD of the drawings at an appropriate time.

At the conclusion of the meeting, those present thanked Virginia for hosting the meeting at her home and for the delicious vegetarian supper she had so meticulously prepared.

*The next meeting of the board is scheduled for Thursday, September 17, 2009 at 7:15pm. Members and friends of the Church are invited to attend.*

-Dick Keshishian, Clerk

# The Anne Braden Anti-Racist Training Program

by Matt Osborn, CCB Board Member

Hi everyone! I am currently in the Bay Area in California doing the Anne Braden Anti-Racist Training Program, which is great so far -- it has been emotional and intellectually-stimulating. It is a four month training run by Catalyst Project to help white social justice organizers deepen our understanding of racism and the ways that we can participate in multiracial movements for justice. The program includes workshop sessions, readings, a mentorship program, grassroots fundraising, a volunteer placement in a local racial justice organization, and more. I am volunteering at the Asian Pacific Environmental Network (APEN), an organization that does environmental justice organizing with communities of color in the East Bay. One of their projects is the Laotian Organizing Project in Richmond, where there is a huge Chevron oil refinery that is polluting the area. There has been an impressive and inspiring grassroots coalition of groups that APEN is part of that has come together to challenge Chevron on their proposed refinery expansion.

One of our recent workshop sessions was called Indigenous Resistance and Colonization in North America, and there was a panel of four amazing Native activists: Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz, who has white and indigenous ancestors, has been active in anti-war and indigenous rights work, Randy Burns, a Northern Paiute and the founder of Gay American Indians, Cathy

Chapman, a Chiricahua Apache and Yaquai, who is a health worker and who produced a Native radio program on KPFA, and Ras K'dee, a California Pomo/Kenyan, who is a hip-hop artist and founder of SNAG magazine. They talked about the boarding schools where Native children were kidnapped, forced into Christian schools and beaten for speaking their language, the forced sterilization of Native women, California extermination laws, and the survival and activism of indigenous peoples: The Longest Walk in 1978, two-spirit Native people, current struggles to protect and reclaim sacred sites, and an indigenous youth delegation to Palestine where they built connections with Palestinians around similar histories of dispossession, colonization, and resistance. This history is tremendously heavy, and it's hard at times to think how my family has benefitted from genocide, but there are many ways that we can support the vibrant movements of Native peoples today. For more information you can visit [www.indigenouaction.org](http://www.indigenouaction.org).

I am coming back to Boston in December and I am interested in sharing what I have learned throughout the program and helping to build an anti-racist community in Boston as part of larger movements for justice. I would love to talk more about this work or program, so feel free to email me at [mattosborn@riseup.net](mailto:mattosborn@riseup.net) or call me at 617-699-4127. I hope you all are well!

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## Remembering Selma Ganz (1917-2009)

It is with sadness, but with fond memories, that we acknowledge the passing of Selma Ganz. Selma had been a member and good friend of the Community Church of Boston since the mid 90's. Selma was born on May 19, 1917 in the Bronx where she grew up. Selma was a child through World War I and a young working-class woman during the depression. While Selma would not have considered herself an observant Jew she was often known to say, "Hitler made me a Jew." Along with her husband Alex, Selma lived outside of the country during World War II and spent nearly twenty-five years in Latin America. While living in Latin America Selma gave birth to a boy, David, who now lives in California with his wife.

Selma had a great devotion to progressive politics. Her first significant involvement with the Community Church was on a trip to Cuba. The books lining her Beacon Street condo were devoted to issues of economic and social justice. Selma strived to impart this commit-

ment to justice on to her family. During 2008 Selma's granddaughter, Ellen, lived with her while doing an internship at the National Police Accountability Project. Selma took great pride in her granddaughter's pursuits to become a lawyer. Selma began her own higher education when she was in her 60's. She, proudly, graduated from Harvard nearly 30 years ago.

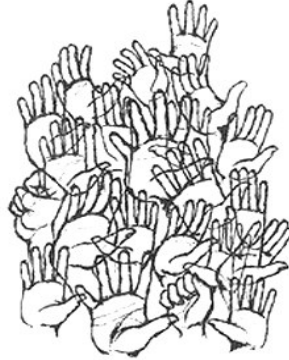
Selma was an incredible part of the Community Church of Boston. You could always count on watching her strut in 20 minutes into the service, on Sundays, to take her seat in the front row. She sat on numerous committees, including the Board and ministry committee. Selma's voice will be greatly missed. The hearts and thoughts of the Community Church go out to all her other friends and family.

(Many thanks to Virginia Pratt for sharing her interview with Selma that shaped this obituary)

# Theater of the Oppressed Weekend Workshop

Wheelock College, Brookline, MA  
October 9-11, 2009

Julian Boal, son of Theatre of the Oppressed creator, Augusto Boal, is doing his first workshop in Boston, for the Wheelock Family Theatre. This is a unique opportunity to work with Julian and to learn more about Theatre of the Oppressed, Image Theatre, and Forum Theatre.



The workshop will include games and exercises, leading to the creation of Forum Theatre plays, which will be presented to a participating "audience" on Sunday October 11th at 2:00.

For more information: [boalboston.wordpress.com](http://boalboston.wordpress.com)

## 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



DATED MATERIAL  
RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

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