

community

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

January 2008

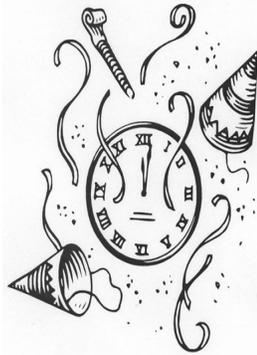
news

Growth and Internal Development in 2008

by Jason Lydon, Congregational Director

Dear friends and members... Happy New Year! We have gotten through yet another holiday season, congratulations. I hope all can allow stress levels to return to usual and be ready for the possibility of making it great in 2008!

There is a lot coming up for us at the Community Church of Boston for 2008. One of the greatest joys is that JooYoung is going to remain with us. We have the opportunity to revitalize our work with the Justice School and in our relationship with JooYoung. There are many planning and visioning meetings ahead with those who have children in the Justice School. It is up to those who want the Justice School to exist, flourish and succeed to help it do so. JooYoung will be working with the parents and youth/children in the program to structure the Justice School in the best way possible. For those who are not parents or participants please have your eyes and ears open for ways you can get involved and invested in this program. Remember that this is a program of the Community Church of Boston and those invested in the Community Church's future will want to invest in the strength and possibility of this program.



The Board of Directors voted, during the December meeting, to create an open dinner at the Community Church on Monday nights. This dinner will be to serve those in the Copley Square/Boston area who are hungry, homeless or not. Rev. Franklin Hobbs of Healing Our Land is interested in partnering with us. The Healing Our Land partnership makes it possible for us to have free and anonymous HIV testing and counseling available during the meal. Virginia Pratt, Mary

Ann Cromer, and David Broeg have all volunteered to join together in making this meal a success. I have been meeting with the director of the Doorbell ministries to get information on how to make this meal as useful as possible. We do not have an exact date to begin, as there are some questions still unanswered. By taking the right steps and having a little hope we will begin this meal in January.

These external growth possibilities are wonderful and exciting. I hope 2008 will allow us to look internally as well. What feeds the Community Church of Boston? What keeps people coming? What keeps some people away? Where are our areas for growth? What are our strengths? The second Saturday in March will be another retreat, our first in two years. This retreat will help us look at the above questions and many more. We need to invest emotional, mental, and intellectual energy into the future of our congregation. Adding new programs is not the greatest way to grow a congregation, it is only one tool. The greatest way to grow a congregation is to make it's community open, welcoming, and vital. The Community Church has no lack in programs in our building. It is likely that some of us don't even know about all of the programs and communities who use our space on a regular basis. Another exciting opportunity for 2008 is for us to meet all of those in our extended community. In February we will have an Open House with our regular renters and others to get to know each other better.

We are at the starting line of 2008. It is up to us not to forget the lessons and losses of 2007 but to hold on to the possibility and potential of 2008. We have the opportunity for as many new beginnings as we need, let us utilize this one to it's fullest. Lets make it great in 2008!

Sunday Service & Speakers Forum

in Lothrop Auditorium
Sundays at 11:00am

January 6th

MICHAEL BANCEWICZ

*"Hunger, Poverty, Homelessness,
and the State of the City"*

January 13th

**SUZIE GIROUX, DEAN
STEVENS & FRIENDS**

"Singing in the New Year!"

January 20th

Honoring Martin Luther King, Jr.

RENAE GRAY

*"Giving Back: Expanding the
Traditional Circle of Philanthropy"*

January 27th

DIANA STEIN & JACKIE WOLF

*"The Mass Medical Miracle?
No, a Mess!"*

Small Affordable Office Available in Copley Square

Nice 2-person office, \$375/month, all utilities included except phone/internet, great convenient Copley Square location, amenities include occasional use of meeting space and event space. Ideal for grassroots activists and progressive organizations. contact Mark Laskey at info@commchurch.org or at 617-266-6710 for details or to see the space.

CCB Board Meeting

The Board of Directors met on December 6, 2007.

Following are highlights of the meeting.

The following members were present: David Broeg, Mary Ann Cromer, Selma Ganz, Karl Jones, Dick Keshishian, John MacLeod, Virginia Pratt, Ron Shapiro, Dean Stevens, Jason Lydon, *Congregational Director*

Congregational Director's Concerns: Jason suggested inviting someone from the Unitarian-Universalist Massachusetts Bay District to CCB as a "hidden guest" in order to critique the Sunday morning program and evaluate the congregation on several points (among them the manner in which new comers are welcomed). It was also proposed to consult with someone with expertise in congregation growth. This is a service that is offered by the Mass. Bay District for a small fee.

Financial Concerns: Ron reported that the amount in the PAX Fund has increased due to favorable conditions on the financial markets. He emphasized the programming aspect on how the congregation may wish to spend money during fiscal 2008, i.e. the Justice School, tuning of the piano in Lothrop Auditorium, upgrades for the hearing impaired, and improvements in the fourth floor kitchen.



Various Concerns: Karl suggested organizing a group consisting of CCB members to put on a play once every couple of months. Dean proposed having occasional potluck dinners. Jason suggested a weekly free meal for homeless people in the area beginning possibly in January, 2008.

Karl is taking a leave of absence from the Church for an indefinite period due to personal reasons. The board thanks Karl for his many efforts and tasks related to CCB activities throughout the years, including providing transportation to several of the congregants in the Greater Boston area.

The yearly financial meeting of the Church will take place on February 10, 2008, following the Sunday program.

The Prince Myshkins concert with two political satirists will be held on February 17, 2008.

The next meeting of the board is scheduled for Thursday, January 17, 2008, to which CCB members and friends are invited to attend.

-Dick Keshishian, Clerk

Getting to Know Our Congregation

by Joo Young Choi, Director of Children/Youth SJE Program

For over a year I've had the privilege to serve the Community Church of Boston as the director of the Justice School. I realized recently that although I have been physically at the church each Sunday, that I haven't been able to meet each and every member of the congregation. My New Years resolution is to learn why each member of the Community Church joined our church and why ze/she/he continues to show up each Sunday.

I also realized that many people don't know much about me. I'd like to take this opportunity to introduce myself. Below is a small biography about my own life and motivations for working towards a just and peaceful world.

On November 29th 1982, I was born in South Korea. I spent the first year of my life within the loving arms of my birth parents, my Grand Father, my Great Aunt, Great Uncle, their two children, and my Father's Brother's and Sisters. My family called me JooYoung Choi, this name was made by my Grandfather and means: a crystal bowl overflowing with life.

At 12 months of age, without the consent of most of my family, I was sent to America to be adopted. When I arrived in the states I became the daughter of Joseph and Dori Schwindt and a sister to Kelly Schwindt.

My mother in America has told me numerous times that their family was not complete until I became part of their lives. I grew up in Concord, NH, and I attended public schools. I was involved in the gay/straight alliance and participated in a number of musical competitions.

When I was in high school I was invited to a conference to learn about social justice and anti-racism. This conference was sponsored by the local chapter of YRUU (the Young Religious Unitarian Universalists). As a child I was very involved in my parents' church (Protestant Congregationalist) but when I reached my teenage years, I realized that I did not see Jesus as my lord and savior. When I began participating in conferences with the Unitarian Universalists, I realized that a large component of my own faith was rooted in peace and justice.

Growing up in New Hampshire was difficult for me, I faced a lot of torment for being Asian-American and queer. When I started learning about anti-racism it was the first time in my life that I could articulate my feelings about race, racism and my experience as a person who was treated unfairly due to my identity.

As a teenager, I saw YRUU as a welcoming, loving community/family of radical youth. Within the organization I began to meet other Asian Adoptees and befriended

a large number of diverse people who also understood the importance of peace, justice and ending systemic oppression. On top of being involved in various committees within YRUU, I also worked with DRUUMM (the Diverse Revolutionary Unitarian Universalists), a supportive and loving community of people of color who are Unitarian Universalists or organized with the Unitarian Universalists. A couple years later I applied to work for the Unitarian Universalist Association as a YPS (youth programs specialist). My job was to create opportunities for youth to learn about social justice and help be a point person for support for youth of color within the Unitarian Universalists faith.

After working for the UUA (Unitarian Universalist Association) I applied for college and was accepted to Massachusetts College of Art. Around the same time that I started working for the Community Church of Boston, I started studying at MassArt (Massachusetts College of Art). I have just completed my third semester at MassArt and plan to continue to study art until I have my masters in a fine art painting.

When I look back at my life, I think about how the opportunities that the UUA, YRUU and DRUUMM gave me. Quite honestly I don't know who I would've become had I not volunteered and worked with these organizations.

Understanding how systemic oppression "works" and learning how to talk about social justice and anti-racism were some of the most empowering and inspiring skills I gained during my teenage years. When I think about our program, the Justice School, I feel that I am charged to give the same quality of social justice education to each of our students. I know now that the youth work I did when I was younger, not only taught me about the history of systemic oppression but it helped me realize what it meant to be a young leader, it taught me the importance of community, creativity, and risk taking.

Furthermore, I think about how little identified as Asian or Korean growing up until I started to get involved in YRUU. Last Summer many of you know I traveled to South Korea, I know for certain that if I hadn't done all the race and identity work with the UUA I wouldn't have ever been brave enough to fly back to my first original home and meet my birth family.

Working with children and youth is an amazing privilege. I know that my own justice education helped me grow as a person, I learned how to love myself and stand up for my rights. I am so honored to continue to be the director and teacher of the Justice School. I hope that we can all positively affect the growth and development of our students: encourage them to take risks, learn personal responsibility, create community and peer support, help them grow into young leaders who find faith not only in peace and justice but in themselves.

On the Road Again: Challenges and Opportunities in the 2008 Elections

Friday, January 25, 7pm



A forum on this year's elections, held shortly before the Massachusetts Presidential Preference Primary on "Super Tuesday", led by editor, photographer and organizer Jose A. Cruz

*Co-sponsored by Community Church of Boston
and the Center for Marxist Education*

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*
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Mark Laskey, *Office Manager*
Luis Alonzo Guzman, *Custodian & Cook*
Xinli Xu, *Bookkeeper*
Jim Casteris, *Superintendent*

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Dean Stevens, *President*
Mary Ann Cromer, *Vice President*
Ron Shapiro, *Treasurer*
Dick Keshishian, *Clerk*

Christina Braidotti, David Broeg,
Selma Ganz, John MacLeod, Virginia Pratt



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