

community

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

Summer 2009

news

Summer Updates and Reflections...

by Jason Lydon, Congregational Director

Dear friends and members... I hope that everyone is having a wonderful summer. It sure did take its sweet time to show up here in Boston but now that it has we have the great pleasure of sweating in the hot sun. Summer also means good tastes of sweet tea and lemonade. Summer brings the ringing of ice cream trucks and the late night sounds of teenagers making the best of the break from school. Summer is a delightful gift to our many senses.

Summer is also, often, a time of tank tops, short shorts, bathing suits, shirtless adventuring, and more simply - less clothing. Most unfortunately we live in a culture that celebrates some bodies while degrading others. Magazines are filled with images of women who look as though they haven't eaten a meal in weeks and men who haven't done anything but go to the gym and run laps around the track. These same models have no pores on their skin, perfect hair, beautifully shaped lips, and are almost always white skinned and tanned. Whether flipping through magazines, looking at billboards, watching TV, going to the movies, or whatever aspect of mass media you indulge in, we are all surrounded with images telling us that our bodies are not what they should be. Regardless of how radical our politics are we all can be impacted by the images we see. We begin to judge our own bodies, desire unattainable goals, and can even judge the bodies of other people around us. Like all the other systems of control we look at the beauty industry is also shaped by capitalism, white supremacy, hetero-patriarchy, ableism, and the many other institutions of domination we work so hard to oppose.

I think that the Left tries very hard to create spaces outside of and beyond the mainstream culture. I think the Community Church of Boston strives to celebrate community resistance to oppression. However, there is a lot of

work still to be done in the area of body image support. Eating disorders, over-exercising disorders, and internalized body hatred are all part of our movements as well. It is often declared that real militant activism is not concerned with the issues affecting individuals internally but we must not forget the reminder from so many feminists, "the personal is the political," and if we are not able to thrive as individuals in this world we will not be effective as organizers within our communities. I am not suggesting that we are going to end the struggles around body image overnight but I do believe there are some things we need to do in order to affirm each other's bodies and to become comfortable within our own skin.

A few practices to consider include the following: when looking at images of models and famous people remember that their photos are airbrushed, falsified, and altered to so-called "perfection"; take time to be naked by yourself and get to know your entire body, say nice things to yourself and remember that each of the molecules in your body are scientific and divine miracles; tell the people around you that they are beautiful, affirm the many parts of themselves, mental, intellectual, spiritual, and physical; see the beauty in people you historically may not have seen as beautiful, challenge your own standards of beauty; practice using your body physically, exercising and learning your limits can feel empowering and healthy; eat delicious things, both healthy things and sugary treats, listen to what your body likes. Knowing our bodies is an essential part of any revolutionary movement. We must feel good about our bodies and aware of their strengths and challenges. The more we know about ourselves and the more we love the bodies we live with the stronger we will be as a movement. I hope you can take some time to love your body as the summer continues.

Upcoming CCB Events

Next CCB Board Meeting

The next board meeting will be held on Thursday, August 6, 2009 at the home of Virginia Pratt. Pertinent information will be mailed to each board member via first-class mail.

Hiroshima/Nagasaki Remembrance Day

Join us for Hiroshima/Nagasaki remembrance day on Sunday August 9th. We will gather at the ticket booth by Columbus Park at 10:00am to head out to George's Island. We come together on this day to remember the atrocities of the U.S. bombing of the Japanese people. We remember the pain of war, the loss of life, and the tragedy that is the invention of nuclear warfare. Please come and bring friends, family, and snacks to share. Please RSVP to the church - (617) 266-6710 so we know to wait for you.

Save the Date! CCB Picnic Saturday, August 22nd!

This year's annual CCB picnic will take place at the home of Lenny Shames, 81 Nyack St. Watertown. Drinks and ice cream will be provided.

Directions by car: From Watertown Square - go west on Main St. (toward Waltham) about 8 or 9 blocks, to Lexington St. Turn right, go 6 blocks, to Philip Darch Rd. Turn left, go 6 blocks to Nyack St. (corner house)

Directions by the T: Kenmore bus (#57), to Watertown Square. Or Harvard Square, #73 bus to the end (Waverly Square). Then, call to be picked up: (617) 926-0088.

Potluck Reception for Ron Shapiro and Alex Escobar

On August 29th, from 4-9pm, there will be a potluck reception for Ron Shapiro and Alex Escobar at the home of Audrey Coulter. Please RSVP! Email: rjes24amor@hotmail.com or telephone: (508) 735-0102.

CCB Board Meeting Notes

The Board of Directors met on June 18, 2009.

Following are highlights of the meeting.

The following board members were present: David Broeg, Kevin Devine, Dick Keshishian, Jason Lydon, John MacLeod, Nancy Messom, Virginia Pratt, Lenny Shames. Guests included Dick Crowley, Jim Casteris.

Financial Concerns: The treasurer reported that \$50,000 has been withdrawn from the PAX fund for building repairs. Several line items (ie, rental income and operating expenses) were also discussed at length. Pledges received to date equal \$7,830.00.

Virginia also noted that the membership at the recently held congregational meeting had voted to withdraw 50% of the amount in the PAX funds and to invest it in an annuity. More on this will be discussed at a later time.

Building Concerns: The CCB building superintendent stated in his report that the cost of repairing the CCB roof would cost between \$40,000 and \$80,000. Preliminary work on the roof (pointing around the bricks) will begin soon. The board approved the measure.

Congregational Director's Report: Jason proposed the following summer projects: creation of a "Building Power" committee to be made up of representatives from groups and organizations that use the Church on a regular basis or who have offices in the CCB building; the committee would begin a mural art creation to go in the stairwell from the entrance floor to the third floor; establishment of a more consistent home-visiting pastoral care project; improving the CCB website; developing a plan for publicity goals for the 2009-2010 season.



Various Concerns: The CCB summer activities schedule is as follows:

(1) Sunday brunch and social through the end of August beginning at 12:00 noon, under the auspices of the Growth and Membership Committee, coordinated by Mary Ann Cromer and David Broeg. Please RSVP to David Broeg at 617-909-3706 as to which dish you intend to bring in order to coordinate the potluck dishes.

(2) August 9th, Hiroshima-Nagasaki Commemoration at George's Island in Boston Harbor.

(3) August 22nd, CCB picnic at the home of Lenny Shames. (August 23rd rain date)

(4) August 29th, Potluck reception for Ron Shapiro and Alex Escobar at the home of Audrey Coulter in Brookline during the afternoon hours.

-Dick Keshishian, Clerk

Summer Reading Suggestions for Social Justice Activists

Stir It Up: Lessons in Community Organizing and Advocacy, by Rinku Sen, \$30. How to mobilize constituencies for social change. Jossey-Bass, www.josseybass.com

Teaching Rebellion: Stories from the Grassroots Mobilization in Oaxaca, edited by Diana Denham, \$21.99, Pat Farren Lecturer and anti-torture activist Jennifer Harbury wrote, "These remarkable people tell us of the historic teachers' struggle for justice in Oaxaca, Mexico, and of the larger, hemispheric battle of all Indigenous people to end five hundred years of racism and repression." PM Press, www.pmpress.org

The Counter-Counterinsurgency Manual, by the Network of Concerned Anthropologists, \$12.95. In Iraq and Afghanistan, the Pentagon's Counterinsurgency Field Manual advocated mobilizing anthropologists into a Human Terrain System Program in order to conduct "Human Terrain Mapping" studies. This manual offers a blueprint for resisting the deformation and exploitation of anthropological knowledge by the military. Prickly Paradigm Press, www.prickly-paradigm.com

Prison Profiteers: Who Makes Money from Mass Incarceration, edited by Tara Herivel and Paul Wright, \$18.95. Called "an essential read for anyone who wants to understand what's gone wrong with criminal justice in the United States" by ACLU National Prison Project director Elizabeth Alexander, this incisive and deftly researched volume shows how billions of tax dollars designated for the public good end up lining the pockets of those private enterprises dedicated to keeping prisons packed. New Press, www.thenewpress.com

Talking the Walk: A Communications Guide for Racial Justice, by Makani Themba-Nixon & Hunter Cutting, \$15. Jeff Cohen, founder of Fairness and Accuracy in Reporting said, "In my decades in and around media, I can't recall a 'how to' book as smart and easy to use. I'm an old dog--this book taught me new tricks." AK Press, www.akpress.org

A Living Revolution, by James Horrox, \$17.95. Against the backdrop of the early development of Palestinian-Jewish and Israeli society, James Horrox explores the history of the kibbutz movement: intentional communities based on cooperative social principles, deeply egalitarian and anarchist in their organization. AK Press, www.akpress.org



A Young People's History of the United States, by Howard Zinn and Rebecca Steffoff, \$19.95. Now in paperback, this is the new, illustrated, and updated single-volume young adult edition of Howard Zinn's classic telling of American history. *A Young People's History of the United States* brings to US history the viewpoints of workers, slaves, immigrants, women, Native Americans, and others whose stories, and their impact, are rarely included in books for young people. Seven Stories Press, www.sevenstories.com

Soil Not Oil, by Vandana Shiva, \$18.00. With *Soil Not Oil*, Vandana Shiva brilliantly reveals what connects humanity's most urgent crises—food insecurity, peak oil, and climate change—and why any attempt to solve one without addressing the others will get us nowhere. South End Press, www.southendpress.org

Courting Equality: A Documentary History of America's First Legal Same-Sex Marriages, by Patricia Gozemba & Karen Kahn, \$20.00. The inspiring story of America's first successful battle for gay marriage—the court cases, the protests, and, finally, the weddings. Beacon Press, www.beacon.org

CORI Hearing at the State House!

Monday, July 27th, 1-6pm
Gardener Auditorium

Do you or someone you know have a CORI? Have you been denied a job or housing because of a criminal record? Do you agree that the CORI system is broken and should be reformed (or abolished)? Then please come to the State House to push for CORI reform in 2009. The time for change is NOW! For more info: atanaka@bostonworkersalliance.org

4th Annual Sacco & Vanzetti Memorial Day March



On August 23, 2009 we will march for the fourth time on the streets of Boston to remind people of how justice was crucified in the case of Nicola Sacco and Bartolomeo Vanzetti. The Boston City Council itself will pass a resolution introduced

by Councilor Chuck Turner to designate August 23rd. as "Sacco and Vanzetti Memorial Day" in the City of Boston.

As we march we would like to invite all who yern for social justice to join in. We will meet in Copley Square to march through downtown Boston to the Paul Revere Mall in the North End, where we will conclude with a rally.

For more information:
www.saccoandvanzetti.org

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, *Building 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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COMMUNITY CHURCH OF BOSTON

