

# community

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

January 2007

# news

## A New Years Resolution of Justice in Our Community

by Jason Lydon, Congregational Director

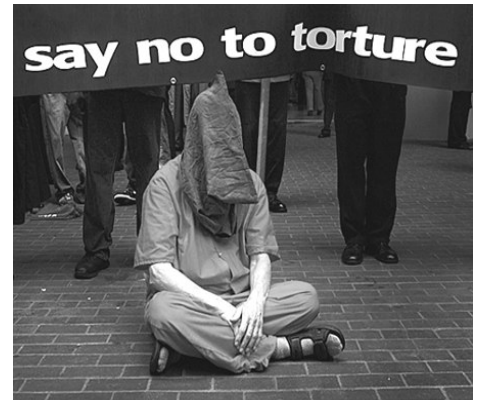
**H**appy New Year! It is with great joy and excitement that I welcome this New Year and I hope you do as well. Each transition is a time of great opportunity. This is our chance to create new routines, to commit ourselves to further our work for justice, and to build the strength we need to sustain our communities. It is because of the endless possibility that I encourage us to celebrate this New Year with feelings of joy and excitement.

While we continue to be joyous it is indeed time to organize. On January 11th of this year the imprisonment and torture of individuals at Guantánamo Bay will have been going on for five years. Since January 11th 2002 more than one thousand men and young boys have been imprisoned. Since that time NO ONE has been charged, tried, or convicted of ANY crime. Today there are more than 430 men still being held captive. This is call for outrage and, even more so, action.

We as a congregation and as a people with conscience have been called to take part in an action in Washington, D.C. Along with many other justice and faith communities we are being charged with the responsibility of bringing attention to the torture and indefinite detention committed by the U.S. government and it's so-called "War on Terror". On this 5th year anniversary of Guantánamo Bay many will gather on that Thursday morning at the United States Supreme Court to then march together to the U.S. Federal Court. At the Supreme Court, Guantánamo Lawyers and others will address the press. Individuals will then proceed to Federal Court, taking on the names and identities of the men in Guantánamo and submitting Habeas petitions on their behalf. We will be helping forge the path for the Center for Constitutional Rights and other

legal advocates demand for their clients. This action has the possibility of having great impact. We will be sending a message that the actions at Guantánamo Bay will not continue to happen in our name.

We have a responsibility to take action now. What happens in Guantánamo is no different from what is happening right here in Massachusetts' prisons. Detainment, torture, and human rights abuse at home or abroad are part of the same systems of oppression that work to tear apart the fabric binding together our human family. As those held in Guantánamo are taking their lives because of the horror they suffer



through, there are those doing the same right here in our prisons. As those held in Guantánamo continue to be detained without having been convicted of anything, here too, many sit in our prisons awaiting trial.

The action we take on January 11th concerns the rights and lives of those locked in Guantánamo and as we take that action we hold up the rights and lives of those who have been imprisoned in our own communities.

Let our New Year's resolution this year be a commitment to take action and to bring to the eyes of the public those who remain locked up behind walls with their lives and rights taken away. The time is now. Let us work together to create justice.

## **Sunday Service & Speakers Forum**

in Lothrop Auditorium  
Sundays at 11:00am

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**January 7**  
**COMMUNITY VOICES**  
*"Singing in the New Year"*

**January 14**  
*Honoring Martin Luther King, Jr.*  
**RENÉE LOPES-POCKNETT**  
*"Crossing Borders and Building Bridges"*

**January 21**  
**VICTORIA POUPKO**  
*"Chechnya: Past & Present"*

**January 28**  
**BOSTON YOUTH ORGANIZING PROJECT**  
*"The Issues of Youth Activism"*

## **Upcoming Meetings and Events:**

**CCB Board Meeting**  
is January 17th, 7:30pm (at the church).

**CCB Program Committee**  
is January 21, 2:00pm (at the church)

## **CCB Board Meeting**

*The Board of Directors met on December 6, 2006.  
Following are highlights of the meeting.*

**Congregational Director's Concerns:** Jason's report states that Joo Young, the newly appointed head of the Sunday social justice education program for children and young teenagers, has begun her tasks and is meeting with Jason on a weekly basis in order to develop an ongoing agenda.

The Committee on Ministry will be revived in January, 2007 with Mary Ann Cromer and Nancy Messom as new members.

The new 'Dinner and Discussion' is replacing the 'Dinner with Spirit' and will take place on the first and third Wednesdays of each month. Please feel welcome to join other congregants and friends of CCB as often as you are able.



The American Friends Service Committee, Amnesty International, and the Catholic Worker organization among others will be engaging in an act of civil disobedience in Washington DC on January 11, 2007 to protest the treatment of prisoners held at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba.

**Financial Concerns:** The Church needs to rent out more space and is offering reduced rates to attract new customers.

The PAX Funds have generated \$205,000 due to a rise in the financial markets. Pledges to CCB amount to \$21,962 as of December 7, 2006.

**Various Concerns:** The board approved, by a majority vote, to send the congregational director to New York to award the annual Sacco-Vanzetti Award to Mumia Abu-Jamal in absentia at Riverside Church. CCB will hold a similar presentation during March, 2007 at the local level.

The board decided the need to prepare at least eleven months before the Sacco-Vanzetti Award to come up with names and other activities relevant to the award. The board also recommended that the congregational director and the Program Committee chairperson do what they consider to be rational in their effort to select a speaker for the W.E.B. Dubois Sunday program. It was also suggested that the congregation be consulted by email regarding their input on the matter. The proposals passed by a majority vote.

A committee consisting of Audrey Coulter, David Broeg, Karl Jones, and Dean Stevens has been formed in preparation to exhibit Cynthia Foster's artistic works at CCB. Audrey has suggested presenting them in several segments depicting Cynthia's life, and how each of her works influenced her political beliefs, philanthropic efforts, her many writings and art work during a certain period.

The next meeting of the board is scheduled for Wednesday, January 17, 2007 at 7:15pm.

- Dick Keshishian, Clerk



# New Years Message from the President...

by Dean Stevens, President

*"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful committed citizens can change the world. Indeed it's the only thing that ever has".*

My hope for the New Year is that we can take those words from the late Margaret Mead, and put our hearts and minds to the task. Finally, the political tail winds are blowing a bit in our favor. Imagine the thought: we are not such a small group. Indeed for once the country agreed with us, and radically changed the makeup of the government. Maybe, just maybe, the recent election would have us believe, there are big changes on their way.

Yes, but now comes our beloved Dr. Matt Dumont, and reminds us to curb our enthusiasm, that no matter how big a sea change Nov. '06 brought us, it's still the same one party that rules, and expect lots more of the

## New Bi-Weekly 'Justice & Faith Book Group' at CCB

Beginning January 3rd at 7:00pm we will be holding Dinner and Discussion (replacing Dinner with Spirit) every first and third Wednesday of the month. We will be reading a book together and discussing a different section each week. We will be inviting members of area congregations to join us.

The first book will be *Soul Work*. Papers and discussion transcripts from the UUA Consultation on Theology and Racism held in Boston in January 2001. Addresses such questions as: What theological or philosophical beliefs bind us together in our shared struggle against racism? What are the costs of racism, both for the oppressors and the oppressed? Copies will be made available at church and can also be bought online.

## Get Your Activism On... FOR CHEAP!!

Now through May Day 2007, the Community Church of Boston is offering its beautiful Lothrop Auditorium at a reduced rental rate of \$300 for a full-day or evening event. Even better, groups that apply before the end of the year will get a second auditorium rental for only \$150! This offer is for activists, grassroots groups and local non-profits, and rentals must be booked now through May 1st. For more information or to apply or book your event, email [info@commchurch.org](mailto:info@commchurch.org) or call (617) 266-6710.

same. He's right. But I can't help but want to perceive this as a victory, at least for just a tiny honeymoon moment, until whatever is coming our way sets in, and brings us back to the real, bleak world.

Within our church, just like in the political world, things are looking forward and upward. This is the year that Social Justice Education becomes a permanent part of what Community Church will offer to families of all kinds. This is an enormous adventure, to which we are devoting tremendous energy and resources. I hope you will help us spread the word about this initiative.

My hope for this New Year is that Community Church be that place of comfort, delight and support, where we will inspire each other to be Margaret Mead's "small, thoughtful, committed group" that becomes the catalyst for big change in our city, state, country, world. Good change takes a loooooong time, so let's get to it.

## Obituary: Eric Weinberger

*"We are all related, we are human beings.  
We have an obligation to take care of each other."*

- Eric Weinberger

It is with great sadness that we bring you news of Eric Weinberger's passing. Eric had been suffering from Alzheimer's disease for quite some time, and passed away peacefully with friends and comrades at his side on December 15th. He will be greatly missed in our community.

Eric was a lifelong pacifist who courageously followed his heart and struggled tirelessly for non-violent social change and the betterment of all. First introduced to radical politics while attending the progressive Black Mountain college in the 1950s, he went on to become a civil rights activist (an account of Eric's time in the South can be found in the book *Three Who Dared* by Tom Cohen), participating in the early 'Freedom Marches' and efforts to support self-determination among the southern black population.

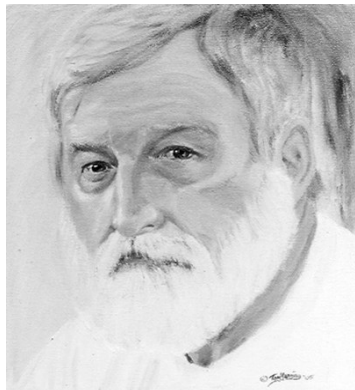
He later became involved in radical theater, the anti-war movement, military disarmament, anti-nuclear activism and homeless advocacy.

Many people know Eric best for his work with Food Not Bombs and Homes Not Jails, where he dedicated himself to cooking and sharing food with the hungry of Boston and Cambridge for over twenty years.

To read more about Eric's incredible legacy please visit here: <http://www.friendsoferic.blogspot.com>

# Can't Jail the Spirit

Art by *Political Prisoner Tom Manning (and others)*



This exhibit will be on display from December 20th until the end of January at **Community Church of Boston**, in the Lothrop Auditorium

*"It's necessary to create a dynamic that allows us to lend a voice to political prisoners and others suffering within the American gulag. Over two decades in prison has failed to crush Tom Manning's spirit. His art transcends concrete and razor wire with an unyielding vision and affirmation of life. At a time when far too many people accept without challenge the criminal acts of George Bush, et. al., the exhibit Can't Jail The Spirit conceptualizes the need for creative expression and resistance."*

- Ray Luc Levasseur, Portland Victory Garden Project

## 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*  
Joo Young Choi, *Director of Children/Youth SJE Program*  
Mark Laskey, *Office Manager*  
Luis Alonzo Guzman, *Custodian & Cook*  
Xinli Xu, *Bookkeeper*  
Jim Casteris, *Superintendent*

## Board of Directors

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Mary Ann Cromer, *Vice President*  
Ron Shapiro, *Treasurer*  
Dick Keshishian, *Clerk*  
  
Christina Braidotti, Lenny Shames, Audrey Coulter, Kevin Devine, Selma Ganz, Sara Sue Koritz, John MacLeod



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telephone: (617) 266-6710  
fax: (617) 266-0449  
email: info@commchurch.org  
www.commchurch.org

565 Boylston Street  
Boston, MA 02116

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