

community

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

May 2007

news

Confronting Fear and Violence in Our Daily Lives

by Jason Lydon, Congregational Director

Dear friends and members, it is when I go to write the cover letter for our newsletter each month that it becomes abundantly clear that I am a New Englander. I always want to begin by commenting on the weather. If it's cold and rainy or sunny and warm, without fail, it seems noteworthy when I sit in front of my computer to type what I hope will be something inspiring, grounding, or thought provoking. But today I will leave the weather outside.

Violence. It is the headline in *The Globe* each day. It is the first thing on the news each morning and then again in the evening. It reaches out and touches people throughout our community. It sells better ads for the newest box office hit. It tears families apart. It works on an inter-personal, institutional, and cultural level. It happens with fists, guns, knives, bombs, and even with the ink in a pen. It can come in the form of manipulation. It creates new systems of power to oppress and hold down the many while lifting up and privileging the few. It is planted in fear. It has roots in greed, hatred, and oppression.

We have the option of doing something. However, because violence happens on many different levels at times it can be overwhelming to even figure out what it really is. Some suggest that we take violence on one piece at a time. The Unitarian Universalist Association is currently studying concepts of "peacemaking" and comparing what they find with the concept of "just war". At the General Assembly in Portland, Oregon UU's from around the country will be discussing the topic and coming up with some next steps. This congregation was created by individuals who opposed U.S. engagement in any war because, as John Haynes Holmes said, "War is the greatest of all evils because it has all other evils within it". But violence doesn't stop, or even start, with war. Violence is a complicated web that must be addressed at all intersections and manifestations. And

peacekeeping cannot just be the absence of one, two, or even many forms of violence but must encompass an overhaul of all the current systems that perpetuate violence (i.e. racism, classism, patriarchy, and all other oppressions). Restorative justice must be at the center of any true end to violence. At protest after protest there are many who will call out, "No justice, No Peace!" This is a challenge to us as individuals and as a community. How do we address violence in our lives? How do we address the actions of individuals who are abusive? How do we truly join in a movement to end wars happening in Iraq, Afghanistan, Sudan, Palestine, and elsewhere around the world? Rather than provide answers I invite you to engage others and me in the answers you have. Conversations about our role as individuals and as the Community Church are essential if we are to make strides forward.

One thing I do know is that we have been invited to take part in the Mothers March for Peace. The Louis D. Brown Peace Institute is working to get curriculum into schools about violence and how to address it proactively. This is a march to raise money to help that mission move forward. The march is also a time to keep in mind all of the families impacted by violence. There are those whose children have been murdered because of gun violence and others who have watched their children be taken away to serve endless years in prison, a place that simply perpetuates greater violence and hurts communities more. While this one march is by no means a final solution it is a way to engage with others who are asking similar questions as we are and with whom we could grow if we choose. We have heard the charge before, "All that is necessary for the triumph of evil is that good people do nothing." Let us continue to do something and continue to learn better ways to be part of a movement for change.

Sunday Service & Speakers Forum

in Lothrop Auditorium
Sundays at 11:00am

May 6
LOGAN PERKINS & BEN GROSSCUP
*"BioJustice from New England
to the Whole World"*

May 13
Mothers' Day
**MASS. IMMIGRANT & REFUGEE
ADVOCACY (MIRA) COALITION**
*"Real Stories of Real Mothers
from New Bedford"*

May 20
*25th Annual W.E.B. DuBois Memorial
Address (postponed from February)*
SEAN GONSALVES
"The New Crisis in Journalism"

May 27
Memorial Day Weekend
REV. WILLIAM E. ALBERTS
"Faith-Based Imperialism: At Work in Iraq"

Annual Youth Pride Celebration

Saturday, May 12th is the annual celebration of the lives and diversity of gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, and queer youth. The event begins at 12:00 noon on the Boston Common. For more info, visit: <http://www.massyouthpride.org>.

CCB Board Meeting

*The Board of Directors met on April 17, 2007.
Following are highlights of the meeting.*

The following board members were present: Christina Braidotti, Mary Ann Cromer, Audrey Coulter, Kevin Devine, Selma Ganz, Dick Keshishian, John MacLeod, Ron Shapiro, Dean Stevens, Jason Lydon, *Congregational Director*

Congregational Director's Concerns: Jason's report stated that he attended a preliminary meeting for the Unitarian-Universalist General Assembly to be held during June in Portland, Oregon. CCB as a congregation is allowed to send two representatives to the conference. Please contact Jason if you are interested in attending.



The Personnel Committee has agreed to permit Jason to be doing "denominational affairs" from the third Sunday of June until the end of the month. He will take his vacation during the entire month of July.

Many thanks to Karl Jones who has been the "taxi man" in transporting several people from the Church to their home and vice-versa on a regular basis.

Financial Concerns: Ron presented a detailed report and asserted the need for another fundraiser to initiate more income for the Church; expenses have increased substantially in the past few months.

Various Concerns: John Mannheim, chairperson of the Bylaws Committee, along with Mary Ann Cromer, Dick Keshishian, and Marty Lerman spoke of the several proposals and revisions that were formulated in the task of amending parts of the Church's bylaws which were last updated in February 2005. The committee spent many hours examining the pros and cons regarding certain changes relevant to the aforementioned document. Discussion will continue at the May board meeting in an attempt to finalize an updated document to be presented to the membership for approval at the annual June meeting.

The Cynthia Foster memorial was attended by approximately ninety people. Following the service a reception and a silent auction were held at which Cynthia's artistic works, which she had donated to the Church, were sold.

The next meeting of the board is scheduled for Tuesday, May 15, 2007 at 7:15p.m.

- Dick Keshishian, Clerk

P.S. Many thanks to Betsy Gynn who again this year composed the excellent letter for the annual pledge drive.

Art Currently on Display at the Community Church

Dean Stevens, President

I want to talk about two recent CCB art epiphanies that have of late swept me off my feet. The first one was a sheer coincidence: the Chiapas painting by Yosh Sanbornmatsu in the Guatemala Room had been taken away for a show that Yosh had somewhere else. It was returned to CCB, and stayed in storage for a while. After the painters (thank you Andrea!!) had finished that wall of the Guatemala Room, Jim Casteris rehung the painting. By some fluke of nature or the stars, the colors our interior painters had picked were an exact match with the predominant colors of the Chiapas painting, and make the painting look so vibrant and vivid, and the painting does the same to the entire room. It was just a beautiful piece of spiritual serendipity that filled me with joy one day. Check out that wall of the Guatemala Room, especially when the sun is flowing in.

But that joy didn't compare to the sight of Cynthia Foster's artwork, all over the walls of two floors of Community Church. One day we brought several boxes and bags full of her pieces to the church. They had been in safe keeping for several months at Karl Jones' house. Before that, they had been in storage with Cynthia for about seventy five years, since the day in the thirties

that she walked away from her art career, and took up the things we know her for, the political causes, and the devotion to Community Church. And we learned, during the beautiful memorial to Cynthia, about the exemplary tenacity and beauty of her activism.

Her grandnieces-in-law and their spouses came the day before the memorial, and we began to hang artwork. Out came everything from the boxes and bags. And what a sumptuous display it was, and will be for some months to come. If you would like to take a piece of Cynthia home with you, it's all for sale, for as generous an amount as you can muster, all to benefit Community Church. The scope of this display swept us off our feet. We had no idea what a prolific body of work this was going to be.

As the pieces sell, we will replace the empty spaces with more works from the boxes of that are still not hung. There is talk of another event of some kind, where perhaps we will also put out her boxes and boxes of books for sale, all to benefit our church that Cynthia loved so well and was so generous to, and cherished over a period of over 80 years!!

Thank you, Cynthia Foster. You have blessed us all with your life on this planet.



Help out with the Justice School!

On May 5th I will be passing out information about the Justice School. If you would like to help volunteer let me know! After talking with the children's activity coordinator for Wake Up the Earth, we agreed that the Justice School will work with the Wake Up the Earth event to manage a fun children's art activity. We will start setting up around 10:30am and will clean up around 5:00pm. If we have enough volunteers signed up we will also plan to carry our table over to "RACHEL WE NEED YOU NOW!" A Concert Honoring RACHEL CARSON, which is being held at 7:30 PM at the Central Congregational Church.

If you are interested in helping with setup, clean up or managing the table don't hesitate to email Joo Young at: jooyoung@commchurch.org or call her at (617) 266-6710.

BioJustice 2007

BioJustice 2007 is a week long celebration of sustainable food and alternatives to corporate healthcare. It is being developed by a wide coalition of public interest groups, activists, farmers, scientists, and concerned citizens, working together in response to the biotechnology industry's international convention scheduled for the new Boston Convention and Exhibition Center during May 6-9, 2007.

Through parades, rallies, educational events and publications, music, and free daily non-GMO meals, Biojustice 2007 will dramatize popular resistance to this agenda and highlight a wealth of community-based alternatives. For more details, visit: <http://www.biojustice2007.org>

Obituary: Bob Hibbert (1931-2007)

Bob Hibbert, a former board member and treasurer at CCB, passed away on April 20th. According to the Boston Globe obituary, he spent most of his life researching and writing (particularly about Irish culture), including two unpublished books.

Join us for the 11th Annual Mothers' Walk for Peace

The Mothers' Walk for Peace is a community event designed to bring together people from all around the State to walk to: promote peace & justice, honor mothers, publicly commit to protect all our children, and remember all victims of violence.

Clementina Chéry conceived the Mother's Day Walk as a personal effort to symbolize their defiance of the streets that stole her son. Louis D. Brown was 15 years old when on December 20, 1993 he was murdered in the crossfire of a gang shooting in Dorchester.

The proceeds collected this year will be used to fund the Survivors Outreach Services, a program of the Louis D. Brown Peace Institute: The Peace Institute has served a multi-level agenda operating as a partner to the Mayor of Boston, to the academic community, the faith community and to other grass-roots organizations.

Join the Community Church of Boston Team!

Plan on meeting with other CCB members at 8:00am in Townfield Park (the march actually begins at 8:00am and ends around 10:30am) The walk is 3.6 miles through Dorchester.

For more information: <http://www.motherswalkforpeace.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*
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

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

Christina Braidotti, Lenny Shames, Audrey Coulter, Kevin Devine, Selma Ganz, Karl Jones, John MacLeod



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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

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COMMUNITY CHURCH OF BOSTON

