

# community

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

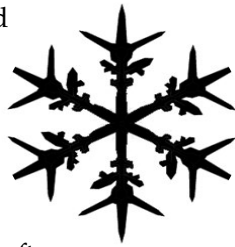
December 2007

# news

## A Season of Miracles...

by Jason Lydon, Congregational Director

Dear friends and members... Happy Holidays! Happy Hanukkah, Happy Solstice, Merry Christmas, Happy Kwanza, Happy New Year! December is a month of anticipation, expectation, and celebration. This is a time to honor the miraculous. Each of the holidays this month lifts up a story of miracles. In Hanukkah we celebrate the miracle of temple lamp oil lasting much longer than it should have. A community of resistance gathered together for survival after war. The Solstice is a time to recognize the miracle of our universe. The Earth continues to rotate on its axis and travel around the sun. After the Winter Solstice our days begin to get longer. Christmas is a birthday. Christmas is a celebration of life brought in to the world by a fierce and brave mother and father. Christmas is a story of the miracle of birth, life, and hope. Kwanza is the celebration of the miracle that is community. Kwanza honors the lives and culture of Black people in the United States. Finally the New Year is a celebration of the miracle that is our cycle of life. As the year closes we honor the lives of those who have passed away, we reflect on our own struggles of the year, we celebrate our successes, and we make plans for the future. Regardless of the hyper-consumerism that surrounds us during this season it is our responsibility to find our faith in the miraculous and celebrate the miracles in our lives.



"But Jason, I don't believe in miracles."

The miraculous has not only divine principles but also very practical ones. Science can explain how a baby is created, mathematics can determine the cycle of the planet, and social psychology can enlighten us on how communities create stories for survival. Yet even with all the reason-based practical

explanations there is incredible unexplainable beauty in the miracle of birth. Even as we calculate the exact moment the earth begins moving us closer to the sun there is something glorious about the miracle of the new stars we begin to see in the sky. While we turn to social psychologists to explain human behavior and the stages of community development there is a miracle happening as relationships are built and people come together to lift each other up even as our systems of oppression work so hard to keep us divided and at the bottom.

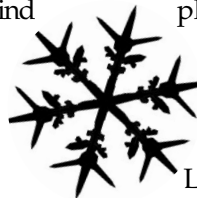
Believing in miracles does not mean one must not believe in rational thought and scientific explanation. Believing in miracles does not mean one is required to stop being proactive. Belief and faith in the miraculous does not take away responsibility. Choosing to believe in miracles can allow one to experience joyful mystery and faith.



Understanding the scientific explanation behind the miraculous only makes the experience greater and more holistic.



People around the world will be celebrating their idea of the miraculous. I invite you to see the miraculous in all things you involve yourself in. If you are in a planning meeting and someone brings in a new idea on how to address inequalities in the world take a moment to know that you are in a particular space at a particular time and with the people around you miracles can happen.



Look at your children, look at your friends, look at your parents, turn to your memories, do so and hold on to the miracle that is your life and the relationships you make. Again, happy holidays to you and yours.



## Sunday Service & Speakers Forum

in Lothrop Auditorium  
Sundays at 11:00am

### December 2nd

*31st annual Sacco-Vanzetti  
Award for Social Justice*

**CHUCK TURNER**

*"Where Do We Go From Here?:  
Strategies for the 21st Century"*

### December 9th

**REVEREND FRANKLIN HOBBS**  
*"HIV State of Emergency in Boston"*

### December 16th

**ALAA MAJEED**  
*"An Iraqi Woman's Courage in Journalism"*

### December 23rd

**JASON LYDON**  
*"A Feminist Christmas Story"*

### December 30th

No Service. Sleep in! Happy New Year!  
Happy Jason's Birthday!

## CCB Board Meeting

*The Board of Directors met on November 15, 2007.  
Following are highlights of the meeting.*

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

**Congregational Director's Concerns:** Joo Young Choi has resigned her position as head of the Justice School, effective December 30, 2007.

Jason requests more outreach to CCB's older members. The Church has acquired a few endorsers for the annual Sacco-Vanzetti Award commemoration to be held on December 2. The board also proposed and passed a motion, suggested by the congregational director, that CCB participate in the Guest At Your Table program of the Unitarian-Universalist Service Committee.

**Financial Concerns:** Ron stated that the Finance Committee is in need of more people. David Broeg has agreed to join and assist the office manager with various office tasks.



**Various Concerns:** A board retreat will be held on January 19, 2008 at the home of Dean Stevens. Board members are asked to share in a potluck meal. A congregational retreat will take place on March 8, 2008 at a venue to be announced in the future. More details will be forthcoming.

Two audits were performed at CCB by Church Mutual and Massachusetts Interfaith Power & Light, the latter of whom suggested the installation of plexiglass windows in the interior of the Church building, as well as a system of fluorescent lighting, and conversion from oil heat to natural gas.

-Dick Keshishian, *Clerk*

## Upcoming CCB Meetings:

**CCB Board Meeting**  
Thursday, Dec. 6th, 7:30pm

**Ministry Committee Meeting**  
Sunday, Dec. 9th, 2:30pm

**Program Committee Meeting**  
Sunday, Dec. 16th, 2:30pm



## JERICHO BOSTON presents...

A Dinner Fundraiser for Lynne Stewart,  
Ward Churchill, and Ralph Schonan

**Monday, December 3rd, 7:00pm**  
**Community Church of Boston**

Join us to strategize to bring our freedom fighters  
home and liberate our communities!

# Year-End 'Justice School' Report

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

Recently, I reviewed my first year experience here at Community Church of Boston. I started my position on November 6th 2006, I cannot believe how quickly the time has passed. During my time here, I am proud to say that together WE have planted the seed for a blossoming and nurturing children's program. When I look at what has been accomplished I can say that this program is an extremely vital service for families in the Boston area.

I learned from the students at the Justice School that children are not isolated from the various political issues that adults at Community Church regularly discuss. Although children and adults may be concerned about the same peace and justice issues, unlike adults, children do not always have a proper arena or forum to discuss and share their thoughts and feelings about topics like the government, the president, the Iraq War, Darfur or poverty. I feel that it is so incredibly important that adults realize that young people are deeply affected by these issues and that it is the responsibility of adults and young adults to provide safe spaces and opportunities for these types of youth focused dialogues.

I think that many times, people believe that children need to be provided with information and have adults explain to them the various current events that are occurring in the political world. I have realized after working with our young students that not only do children respond to interactive education about peace and justice but that they also need to be given the time to talk amongst each other. Listening to our students discuss why each one of them individually felt war existed was a powerful and amazing experience. Each student had their own views and opinions about why war happens or why it was creat-

ed in the first place. The opinions and feelings I was honored to learn from were not that different from the diverse views of the adult population of our church.

Although I have chosen to no longer work for the Justice School, I do so with a sense of joy and accomplishment, within my year at Community Church, I was able to start a program, register students, network with a number of social justice organizations, build a website and create a successful lesson plan format. I don't believe that I have abandoned this project, but that I have chosen to finish my work at the Justice School at a point where it will be perfect for a new director to have all the resources they need to successfully continue and nurture the growth of this powerful program. During my last few weeks here I encourage people to talk with me about ideas for the future of the Justice School and to become involved in supporting the program through this transition.

Recently, during a workshop about the Iraq War our guest asked the students why they felt the war was taking place. Kaelynn, one of our youngest students, was drawing a picture of a group of soldiers, when asked why she thought the war was occurring, she said simply, "For oil." She smiled with confidence as she answered. I hope that you will help support the continuing growth of this program, this service is greatly needed for many young people in Boston who want to work towards a more peaceful and just world. I encourage the growth of this program and hope that the Community Church of Boston will continue to provide a fun, interactive, educational and radical place of learning for young people to explore how they can make a difference and advocate for peace, justice and human rights.

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## Chuck Turner to Receive 3rd Annual Sacco & Vanzetti Award!

Sunday, December 2, 12:00pm  
Community Church of Boston

Come celebrate activism, community and our struggles for justice as the Community Church of Boston awards the 2007 Sacco & Vanzetti award to Chuck Turner. Councilor Turner will be honored for his decades-long service to the community and ongoing activism, and will present a talk to help us answer the question, "Where do we go from here? Strategies for the 21st Century."

Special guests will include Mel King, Felix Arroyo, Jean McGuire, Kerrick Johnson, and others. Music by Danielle

Scott and da Family. A delicious buffet luncheon will be served following the program. \$20 donation requested at the door or in advance; \$5 students/seniors; all are welcome regardless of ability to pay. Sponsorships are greatly appreciated. Please join us for this very special event!



Sponsored by the *Louis D. Brown Peace Institute*,  
*SafetyNet* and *Community Church of Boston*.

# Celebrate the Winter Holidays at Community Church of Boston!

## Solstice Celebration

Friday, December 21st

6:00 to 9:00pm

Come join us for singing around the piano, stories of our own traditions, potluck food, and merry times. Please bring stories to share from your holiday tradition. Please bring food or drink to share. Please bring your family and friends. We will come together to celebrate in all of our traditions.



## First Night

Monday, December 31st

5:00 to 9:00pm

We open our doors on the last day of the year with our annual Open House, as members and friends are warmly invited to watch the Boylston Street parade and goings-on from our second floor picture window and share a cup of hot cocoa or cider with others.

## 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, David Broeg, Selma Ganz, Karl Jones, John MacLeod, Virginia Pratt



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**COMMUNITY CHURCH OF BOSTON**

