

**Community Church of Boston**  
*A Peace and Justice congregation since 1920*

# sunday forums

**June 2011**

**Sundays at 11:00a.m.**

## A MONTH OF EDUCATING AGAINST THE PRISON INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX

**June 5th -- JAMES P. ROONEY**

**"Is the Death Penalty Dead?"**

Death sentences and executions are down. States are abolishing their death penalty statutes and popular support for the death penalty is at its lowest ebb in a generation. Is it now realistic to ask whether the U.S. will soon eliminate the death penalty--in theory or in practice?

James Rooney is president of Massachusetts Citizens Against the Death Penalty, the oldest active anti-death penalty organization in the country. He is a lawyer in Boston and adjunct professor at New England School of Law. Jim was an assistant district attorney in Brooklyn, New York and earlier served as law clerk for a justice of the California Supreme Court.

**June 12th -- Rev. JASON LYDON**

**"Life: A Penalty Worse than Death?"**

According to *The Other Death Penalty Project*, "a sentence of life without the possibility of parole is a death sentence. Worse, it is a long, slow, dissipating death sentence without any of the legal or administrative safeguards rightly awarded to those condemned to the traditional forms of execution. It exposes our society's concealed beliefs that redemption and personal transformation are not possible for all human beings, and that it is reasonable and just to forever define an individual by his worst act." In the wake of Arnie King's commutation denial, the report created by the Norfolk Lifers group, and the ongoing work to address the violence of the incarceration system, we will look at how Life may be a fate worse than death.

Rev. Jason Lydon is the minister of the Community Church of Boston.

**June 19th -- Annual Ethel and Julius Rosenberg Commemoration**

**JENN MEEROPOL**

**"Carry It Forward and Pass It on: The Next Generation"**

Jenn Meeropol, granddaughter of Ethel and Julius Rosenberg and soon-to-be executive director of the Rosenberg Fund for Children, will discuss the activist movements that are most in the cross-hairs today, as she shares stories of several recent RFC grant recipients. She'll describe the organization's commitment to passing on a legacy of progressive values from one generation to the next, and how that is playing out on many levels--from donors to beneficiaries to the Rosenberg/Meeropol family. Finally, Jenn will explain her plans to ensure that the RFC sustains the values of resistance and community her grandparents and those who fought for them embodied, as she leads the Rosenberg Fund for Children into the future.

**COMMUNITY**  
CHURCH OF BOSTON

**Rev. Jason Lydon, Minister**

**Community Church of Boston \* 565 Boylston Street, Boston MA (in Copley Square)**  
**tel. (617) 266-6710 \* fax (617) 266-0449 \* [www.communitychurchofboston.org](http://www.communitychurchofboston.org)**

Park at the Back Bay Garage for \$3 on Sunday until 1:30 with a special sticker available from the church.  
By public transportation, Community Church is minutes from the Back Bay station (Orange line) or Copley (Green line).

# community

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

June 2011

# news

## Thinking About Patriarchy

by Rev. Jason Lydon, Minister

Dear Friends and Members, it is with great joy that I write this cover letter while just a bit sweaty from riding my bicycle. We are truly welcoming in the beauty of late Spring with gorgeous warm days that are meant to be honored with bike rides, beach visits, and picnics in the park. I hope that each of you are able to find moments of outside playing and excitement.

Our congregation does beautifully at lifting up the need for global justice and campaigns for equity in our own communities. We often do well at recognizing the way systems of privilege and oppression play out in the world, giving some power at the expense of others. When we are asked, we are strong in our collective voice, taking action to forward the work of freedom and liberation. However, I think we, like most of us in our culture, have a very difficult time with introspection and self examination. I have seen us struggle with the responsibility of taking account of our own privileges and alienating actions.

Just as oppression is active in the world it exists within our own communities. Because of the pervasiveness of oppression in the world we all internalize it, acting it out either from a place of internalized inferiority or internalized superiority. The multi-generational internalization process spans across gender, class, race, sexuality, ability, etc. Those with privilege are taught that our voices and experiences are important, valid, and essential. Those who experience oppression are taught that our voices and experiences are unimportant, invalid, and inconsequential. Even though our congregation may not intend to perpetuate this reality, when we are not intentionally challenging these practices we further create alienating spaces. Radical organizers across the country have created resources we would all do well to sit with and reflect on our personal behavior, one in particular was written by Chris Crass, *Tools for White Guys Working for Social Change*. While that

resource in particular is written for white men, it has practices that are useful for people of any privileged identity/class.

I have been thinking particularly about the ways patriarchy manifest itself within our congregation. I have been noticing mens voices dominating the conversation time during the service. I have been noticing the large presence of men in leadership positions in the congregation. I was looking at the list of my ministerial predecessors, all white men. I was reflecting on the awards and commemorations we do, primarily men (with the exception of Ethel Rosenberg). I was thinking about our Sunday speakers, especially those who spoke during the Sacco and Vanzetti Award this year, dominated by men. I want to take account of this male dominance without dismissing the incredible impact women have had on this congregation, historically and in the present. My recognition of male dominance is not intended to further make women's, and people of other genders, voices invisible, but rather to push us to question how patriarchy plays out within our own community.

In no way are my reflections intended to be an attack on particular individuals, rather an invitation for us as a congregation to look at ourselves and reflect on the ways we need to grow and transform together. The world that we want, the world that we dream of, is a world in which patriarchy, and all other forms of oppression, has been dismantled. The only way we will get to that place is by authentically engaging in the difficult work of taking it on. Not only must we challenge the patriarchy of our government and capitalist system, we also must bring the revolution to our home and take responsibility to change our own behaviors. I hope that part of our summer break could be reading together and reflecting together on ways we want our congregation to transform in order to be a more welcoming space for all people.

# COMMUNITY CHURCH OF BOSTON



Sunday Service &  
Speakers Forum

## A Month of Educating Against the Prison-Industrial Complex



**June 5th**

**JIM ROONEY**

**“Is the Death Penalty Dead?”**

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**JENN MEEROPOL**

**“Carry It Forward and Pass It On:  
The Next Generation”**

## CCB Board Meeting

*The Board of Directors met on May 10th, 2011*

*Following are highlights of the meeting.*

**Minister's Report:** The task of restoring the Church to safe and working order is almost complete. Our outstanding balance with the contractors will be paid from a combination of the insurance money, PAX Funds, withdrawals, individual loans, as well as generous personal donations. Presently, we are secure in the knowledge that there will be no problems in paying the balance due. The minister expressed his appreciation to those congregants and friends of the Church who contributed both financially and otherwise to help defray the costs of this tremendous effort.

**Financial Matters:** The treasurer reviewed the line items in the Profit & Loss Budget Performance report, stressing rental income, building expenses, utilities, insurance and maintenance costs.

**Building Concerns:** A proposal to build a wall with a door on the third floor was accepted only on the condition that a prospective tenant sign a lease to rent the space.

A motion that the third floor space be rented out also passed by a majority vote.

*The next meeting of the board is scheduled for Tuesday, June 14, 2011 at 7:15pm. Members and friends of the Church are invited to attend.*

-Dick Keshishian, Clerk

## 2011 Sacco and Vanzetti Social Justice Award Nominations!

It is time for us to choose our 2011 Sacco and Vanzetti Social Justice Award winner. We just had a wonderful celebration with Truth and Justice Radio. At the Annual Meeting we will have time to speak on behalf of those who we believe deserve the Sacco and Vanzetti Social Justice Award before we vote as a congregation.

If you get your nomination (name and 4 sentence bio of the person) to Jason by June 8th he will print it out for people to have at the Annual Meeting on June 12th.

Keep in mind that there are those names that come up each year, including people we have tried to give the award to in the past, such as Kathy Kelly and the Berrigan family. Keep in mind the legacy of the two Italian immigrant anarchist organizers as you think of who you want to give this award to.

## Annual Meeting of the Community Church of Boston Sunday, June 12th (following Church Services)

The purpose of this meeting is to receive reports from the the Church officers and committees; elect new officers and directors; elect a nominating committee; and select a 2011 recipient for the Sacco & Vanzetti Award for Social Justice.

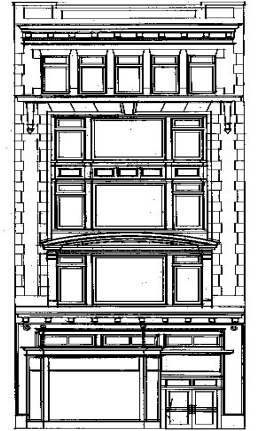
# Update on the CCB Building

It is with incredible excitement that our building is coming to completion. After a year and a half of exhausting diligence by our staff, Board, Building Committee, volunteers, Henry Putman, and BK Enterprise, we are finally able to celebrate the work that has sprung up before our eyes. Our building is now a safe place for people to come for organizing, celebrating, learning, and growing. The basement, restaurant, second floor, and third floor all have sprinklers that will provide great protection to us. The walls throughout the hallway, as well as all of the doors, are fire rated for our protection. The path out the third floor rear door to the fire escape is clear and easy to access due to the fencing around the skylight, again providing more protection.

Not only is our building more safe, the work we have had done is making our building beautiful. There is new paint throughout the hall ways, in the Lothrop Auditorium, and through much of the building. Our building is embodying the beauty we want for it. There is new lighting, including much of the hall way on sen-

sors, making our building more green as we use less energy on lights. The Lothrop Auditorium floor has been refinished to a shining beauty. The bathrooms have all been cleaned and fixed up to work perfectly for us. The third floor bathroom, as many have seen, is also wheelchair accessible - an essential addition to make our building more welcoming to our Greater Boston community.

There will always be more work to do in our building. However, just as we must celebrate the small victories in our struggle towards justice, we must also celebrate our victories towards the goal of making our building the space that we truly want. If you have questions about the building please talk to Jim Casteris, Rodney Burston, or Dean Stevens.



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## Arnie King's Commutation Denied by the Parole Board

From Arnie... *"the Board of Pardons returned a vote of 5-2 in opposition to my petition. After a steady rise from a 3-3 tie (2002), a 4-3 favorable (2004), and a unanimous 6-0 favorable (2007), this sudden switch raises serious questions. How is it possible, that two board members who voted in favor of my petition in 2007, would suddenly change their opinion in 2010? What was the cause of this change? Why were decades of exceptional achievement minimalized and meritorious service overlooked, while destructive former behaviors, going back as far as 1972, were highlighted and given as the basis for their current opinion. What was the board implying by stating that my 2 disciplinary reports were received after the 2004 hearing (opinion p24) rather than stating they were received prior to the 2007 hearing? Why do they insist that my "record is by no means exceptional" and that my "disciplinary history is, in the experience of the board, comparatively poor"?" (opinion p41)"*

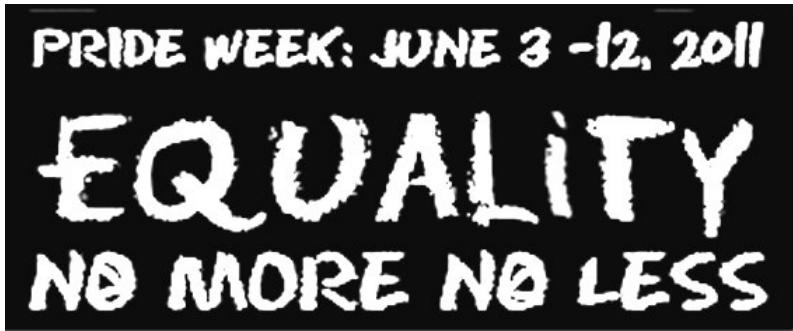
Arnie King is BY DEFINITION an exceptional man. He has organized diligently for his community and continuously built a constituency of support because of his incredible work. The Parole Board's discouraging find-

ings are drastically inconsistent with the growing support Arnie has received over the past decade. With the recent overhaul of the Parole Board, decisions like this are only going to grow. The Patrick administration has acted maliciously in its choosing of Parole Board members who will not look at the humanity of prisoners.

All of us should write emails and letters to the Parole Board and Governor expressing our outrage over this decision. We also need to reach out to the media to push them to look at Arnie's case -- especially as so many of them have written favorably of Arnie in the past.

Contacts:

**Adrian Walker**, columnist City/Regional section,  
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Boston Pride creates change and progress in society by embracing our community's diverse history, culture, and identities, promoting community engagement and inclusivity, and striving for visibility and respect in unity.

This year Boston Pride is proud to offer you a broad range of events & activities for Pride Week. In conjunction with our Community Partners, we aim to bring people together, stir the mind, shake up the dance floor, create safe and healthy spaces, and make an impact. We hope you'll join us in celebrating who are are, commemorating the victories we've won, and continuing the fight for EQUALITY. No More. No Less.

[www.bostonpride.org/prideweek](http://www.bostonpride.org/prideweek)

## Our Purpose

Community Church of Boston is a free community 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

Rev. Jason Lydon, *Minister*  
Mark Laskey, *Office Manager*  
Xinli Xu, *Bookkeeper*  
Luis Alonzo Guzman, *Custodian & Cook*  
Rodney Burston, *Building Maintenance*

## Board of Directors

David Broeg, *President*  
Mary Ann Cromer, *Vice President*  
Virginia Pratt, *Treasurer*  
Dick Keshishian, *Clerk*  
  
Jim Casteris, Kevin Devine, Nancy Messom,  
Susan Mortimer, Matt Osborn



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