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The Open Door Community – Hospitality & Resistance in the Catholic Worker Movement

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910 Ponce de Leon Ave. NE Atlanta, GA 30306-4212 404.874.9652 www.opendoorcommunity.org November-December 2009

Hating Our Children

By Murphy Davis

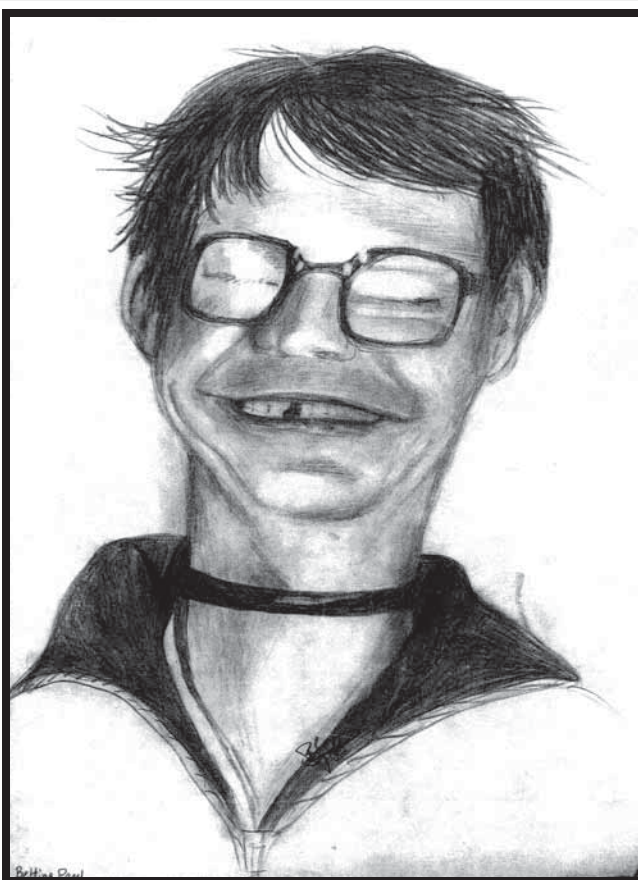
Some people brought children to Jesus for him to place his hands on them, but the disciples scolded the people. When Jesus noticed this, he was angry and said to his disciples, "Let the children come to me, and do not stop them, because the Beloved Community of God belongs to such as these. I assure you that whoever does not receive the Beloved Community of God like a child will never enter it." Then he took the children in his arms, placed his hands on each of them, and blessed them. (Mark 10:13-16)

Ronnie Rudé was an important part of our lives for many years. He was a man in an adult body, with the mind and emotional makeup of a small child. I don't even remember how many years ago it was that we met him, but he was with us for many years until he died in 2001. He never lived in the house, but he loved to come for various community events and meals. He was definitely part of the community. He was the happiest when given a job to do. He would proclaim loudly and proudly to anyone who would listen, "Look! I'm *helping!*" Everything Ronnie said and did cried out to anyone who would hear, "Here I am! Love me! Please, love me!" It was utterly disarming!

Ronnie was a model of how we are to receive Jesus and the God Movement: like a child, powerless and vulnerable in our need.

It wasn't always easy, however. Ronnie had an attention span of perhaps 90 seconds. He would furiously pursue his "job" until someone or something else diverted his attention, and then he was off in another direction. Another direction sometimes led him into areas of the house or relational space where he was not particularly invited; so we came to an understanding that Ronnie could come over to "help" only when Dick Rustay was available to supervise him. Dick, with long years of experience in early-childhood education, was well equipped for the job, and Ronnie loved Dick like the father he never had. When he came for Sunday evening worship, as he often did, Ronnie would sit as close to Dick and his clarinet as he could get and beam his pleasure from there.

But there was nothing else in the world that Ronnie loved like an Open Door party! Mardi Gras and Halloween were the high points of his year — especially if we danced. This is what brought about a very special, very particular



Ronnie Rudé

Bettina Paul

relationship that I had with Ronnie.

For many years we had a Halloween party every October. I always dressed up as a witch, and believe me, I have a to-die-for cackle! Ronnie was fascinated. He would follow me around staring at me — trying to remember that I really was Murphy, but clearly confused by what a crazy witch I had become. Every time I would let a cackle fly, he would flinch and cower ever so slightly, then he would laugh and wait for the next time. He was so impressed with this that, after the third or fourth year, he began to call me "Old Witch" year-round.

The great climax of this special relationship came for me one fine day when I got onto a bus in front of our house to go to a meeting downtown. Little did I know that Ronnie was already on the bus, sitting very close to the back. I was putting my money into the fare box when, out of the back of the bus, I heard his voice yell at the top of his lungs, "HEY, OLD WITCH!" Every head in the crowded bus turned toward me, with varying expressions. Most of them seemed to say, "I wonder what she did to earn *this* reputation." I said, "Hello, Ronnie, *DEAR!*" and tried to find an inconspicuous seat where I could fade into the woodwork for the ride downtown. Still today, after many years, I will sometimes get on a city bus and flinch for just a moment wondering if there will be a voice from the back of the bus telling everybody what a mean old witch I am!

Dumped Onto the Sidewalk

Over the years we learned Ronnie's story. He was born in South Dakota and lived his first years with his family there. But when he was six years old, they went on a "family trip."

The Disarming Child

By Jürgen Moltmann

Editor's note: Jürgen Moltmann is a German theologian whose work is read and studied all over the world. We have enjoyed the friendship of the Moltmann-Wendels since 1983, and we are pleased to reprint this sermon (originally published in "Power of the Powerless") with the author's permission. Among Moltmann's most important works are "Theology of Hope," "The Crucified God" and "The Church in the Power of the Spirit."

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on them has light shined.... The people will rejoice.... For the yoke of their burden and the staff on their shoulder and the rod of their oppressor thou hast broken as on the day of Midian. For every boot of the tramping warrior in battle tumult and every garment rolled in blood will be burned as fuel for the fire. For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government will be upon his shoulder; and his name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty Hero, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end, upon the throne of David, and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and righteousness from this time forth and for evermore. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this. (Isaiah 9:2-7)

This mighty vision of the prophet is founded on the liberation of oppressed men and women through the disarming birth of the divine child. Its goal is the turn from bloody war to the peace that endures and is unbroken. And in order to portray this hope for liberation and peace, the prophet falls back on a picture that is positively expressionist in style. The images jostle and tumble over one another, distorted beyond any possible reality, into what is impossible for human beings — possible only to God.

Realistically, though the prophet talks about hunger, slavery and occupying troops, he ends messianically. He lets his vision of the birth of the child and the appearance of the peace of God shine like a light into the conflicts and experiences of real life.

It is not easy to keep these dimensions together when one is used to splitting up faith and politics, God and experience, and when one is accustomed to celebrate Christmas only in the heart and in the bosom of one's own family. But the message of the prophet is realistic vision, and what it talks about is a visionary reality. It is a message for the people, a message sent into the camps of the exiled and

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poetry corner



Julie Lonneman

This Life

It's a hard pull
into this life —
especially coming through the door.
Coming through the front door
is easier sometimes —
refuge, a bowl of hot soup,
world's best grits, a shower,
clean clothes and a bit of love.

But that damn back door —
so much crap clinging to you,
pulling you back.
Yet all of it has no life . . .
not like the life here;
not like the love here.

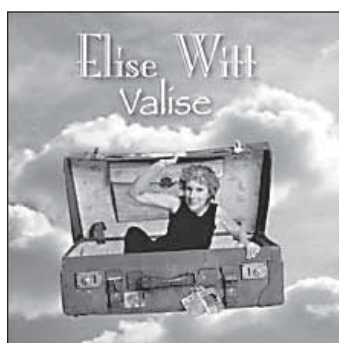
— Diane Leslie Wiggins
2009

Diane Wiggins is a former Resident Volunteer at the Open Door Community and a yearly visitor. She is a nurse and spends much of each year in Central and South America.

Hospitality welcomes poems from people in Georgia prisons or living on the streets in Georgia.

Send submissions to

Eduard Loring, Open Door Community,
910 Ponce de Leon Ave. N.E., Atlanta, GA 30306-4212
or by email to hospitalitypoetrycorner@gmail.com.



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celebrates the release of her new CD

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Valise: A Suitcase of Global, Local & Homemade Songs
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HOSPITALITY

Hospitality is published 11 times a year by the Open Door Community, Inc., an Atlanta Protestant Catholic Worker community: Christians called to resist war and violence and nurture community in ministry with and advocacy for the homeless poor and prisoners, particularly those on death row. Subscriptions are free. A newspaper request form is included in each issue. Manuscripts and letters are welcomed. Inclusive language editing is standard.

A \$10 donation to the Open Door Community would help to cover the costs of printing and mailing *Hospitality* for one year. A \$40 donation covers overseas delivery for one year.

Open Door Community

910 Ponce de Leon Avenue NE

Atlanta, GA 30306-4212

www.opendoorcommunity.org

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Calvin Kimbrough

*The Eucharist on Sunday, October 18,
during the Festival of Shelters.*

Newspaper

Editor: Murphy Davis

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Associate Editors: Eduard Loring, Gladys Rustay, Anne Wheeler, and Brother Aelred Dean

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Open Door Community

For more information about the life and work of the community, please contact any of the following persons.

Anne Wheeler: Administration & Finance

Alice Tudor, RN: Harriet Tubman Clinic Coordinator

Gladys Rustay: Jackson Prison Trip and Food Coordinator

Dick Rustay: Dayspring Farm Coordinator

Eduard Loring: Street Preacher and Word On The Street Host

Nelia and Calvin Kimbrough: Worship, Art, and Music Coordinators

Chuck Harris: Volunteer Coordinator and Resident Volunteer Applications

Murphy Davis: Southern Prison Ministry

Heather Barger: Hardwick Prison Trip Coordinator

THE CRY OF THE POOR: CRACKING WHITE MALE SUPREMACY (Part 12)

Sanctuary for the Disinherited

By Eduard Loring

Editor's note: This is the twelfth in a series of articles based on a lecture Eduard gave at Stetson University as part of the Howard Thurman Lecture Series.

Much more goes on in our home, from our Welcome Table, seen and unseen. We serve other meals. We take families to prisons to visit their beloved ones. We also visit in jails, prisons and on death row. We provide showers to brothers on Mondays and to women by appointment. Hot showers and a full change of clothes with shoes are a dimension of our baptismal covenant and an extension of our practice of Jesus' blessed sacrament, footwashing. (Jesus did not baptize.)

Nelia Kimbrough directs our Art Institute With the Homeless, while Calvin Kimbrough blesses our lives with photography and music. Eduard the Agitator takes to the streets walkingtalking our political arm into action: the Martin Luther King Campaign for Economic Justice. Ira Terrell and Joan Dewitt, our nurse, are always "on call." They keep clothes, towels, toothpaste, shampoo, powder — all the needs for hygiene and good appearance — in order in the clothes closet. Chuck Harris comes and goes. Here or there, he is our comforter and discerner. He is the even keel of our little boat in a vast sea of love and hate.

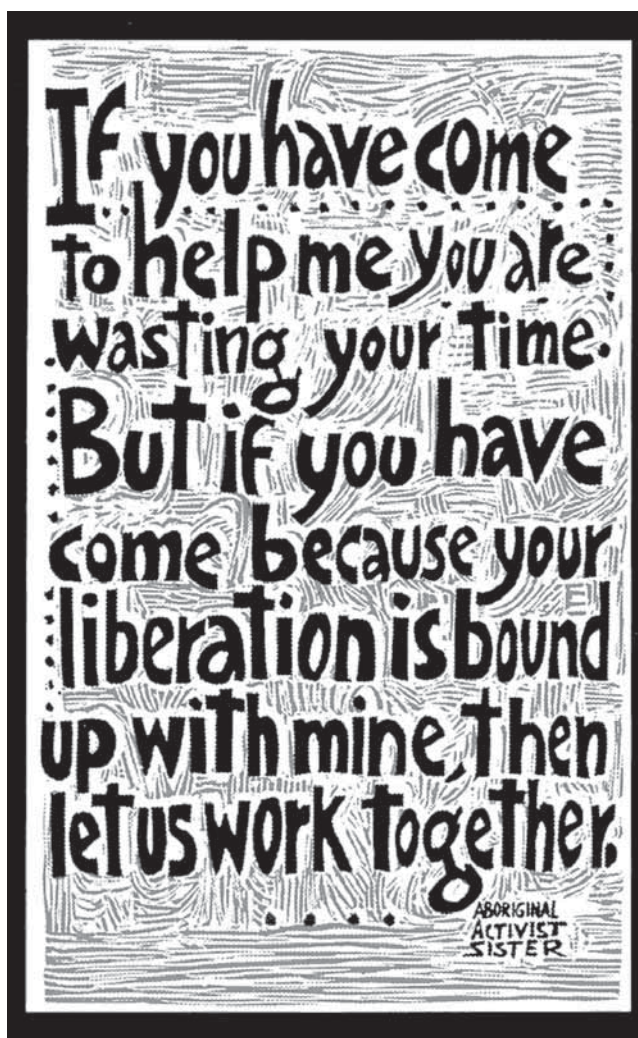
David Christian embodies helpfulness and encouragement. Tony Rust is our chef. Johnny Devlin, our youngest member, loves the poor and hungers for justice. He works at Dayspring Farm and he hits the streets for justice. Tom Monahan keeps an eye on the wires and does a million helpful works of mercy as well as "doing the door." Barbara Schenk is our prayer warrior, with a call to seek healing for those with cancer. Winston Robarts has redefined dishwashing and will not allow foolishness in the kitchen. Hobo, a.k.a. Heather Barger, repairs the breaches in the wall caused by Eduard's bumblings. Jesus laughs. Jesus weeps.

Through the mystery and glory of the human spirit, those whose backs are against the wall maintain, survive, have faith, even hope.

Ralph Dukes runs errands and fusses about the way the Resident Volunteers do their work. Dick and Gladys Rustay are solid rocks — strong, loving, ready, and present whenever needed. Without Dick and Gladys, the Open Door Community never would have made it through the 1990s. Murphy Davis is the editor of *Hospitality*, our monthly newspaper. Murphy leads us in our prison work and anti-death penalty visitation and protest. She is a gentle shepherd in our daily lives. Presently Murphy is writing her magnum opus on her journey with cancer and her life of solidarity with the poor and death row prisoners.

The Open Door Community has a wonderful staff person, Wheels, a.k.a. Anne Wheeler. She keeps the central office in an ordered mess. Wheels' hospitality and discipleship make this work space a warm and welcoming gathering point.

Please come for a visit with us. Come; listen for yourself



Ricardo Levins Morales

to the cry of the poor. Come; watch the miracles of Jesus as cracks appear in the granite walls of the White Male Supremacy Domination System of the American Empire. Someday that baby's gonna fall down hard like Rome. John the Baptist invites us to practice this truth: "It won't be long now!"

Them = Us, Us = Them

But what about the breakfast eaters? Where did they go? They are now transformed by the powers backwards from "Christ in a stranger's guise" to the enemy of the rich, scum to the business community, the ones to be mocked and beaten, even murdered for sport by youth gangs. They are abused by labor pools and "pick-up" daily contractors.

Some of our guests wait until our yard is closed. They have nowhere to go. They are afraid of the streets. When they leave, often they head to the nearby library and remain there until the security guard pushes them back onto the streets of fear and mercilessness.

Others go to work — part-time jobs or labor pools. More than 40 percent of those who eat at our home have some limited employment. They do not earn enough for room and board, much less to hope for a family life or the security of medical insurance. Yet, through the mystery and glory of the human spirit, those whose backs are against the wall maintain, survive, have faith, even hope. They continue. They depart. They return. Most have love and kindness in their eyes and in the works of their hands. The street community often incarnates the majesty of our humanity.

Some slide toward a crack house or drug corner. Enough is enough: "There must be some way outta here," said the joker to the thief." (Bob Dylan) They are like first-class fliers on Delta, heading for the big development deal in New York City, who have to have a couple of Bloody Marys before departure. Some of our homeless friends also have a life filled with the filth of fate and need a little ease in Zion.

Women, girls really, in the broken, bruised, abused bodies of our mothers' daughters, hit the streets from our bathroom after adjusting their makeup from the night before. "Sex tricks" is the current euphemism.

Once upon a time, a street prostitute lived with us for a few months. Her self-esteem was rooted in an oft-told tale: "I never went down on my back for no man." These sisters of ours, several very active and beloved in our household, walk down Ponce de Leon Avenue waiting like a small rabbit for a red-tailed hawk to swoop down and devour it. They wait for some bored men on their way to jobs they hate, tired from the wife and kids and the blaring TV with the same old bad news and the hot lies of what the newest medicine can do for you. They pull over as rush-hour drivers, already late, mad and mean, blare horns, shoot the finger and sit still for six seconds while my sister jumps into the front seat and puts her hand. . . . Five minutes later, if she is lucky, she gets \$20. (Are you aware that prostitution is not against the Law of Moses?)

Agitator: So I ask you, dear reader:

What ya gonna do?

What ya gonna do?

Where ya gonna run to?

When the winds blow down hard and cruel,

When the floods rush and the rich laugh,

When the fire burns ferociously

At you

Like Katrina in the Lower Ninth Ward,

Like the lives of the poor,

Like the deaths of the disinherited

With their backs up against the wall?

What ya gonna do?

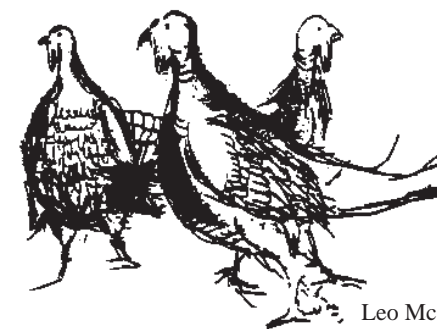
What ya gonna do?

Where ya gonna run to? ♠

Coming in January in Part 13: What can we do? Love in action.

Eduard Loring is a Partner at the Open Door Community.

Turkeys Turkeys Turkeys



The Open Door Community needs turkeys to serve for our meals!
Thanksgiving (Friday, November 27)
Christmas (Saturday, December 26)
 Turkeys already cooked and sliced are most helpful.

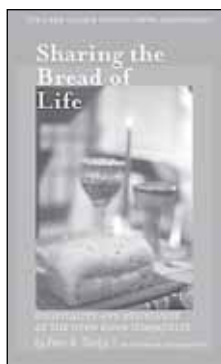
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By **Eduard Loring**
with Heather Bargeron
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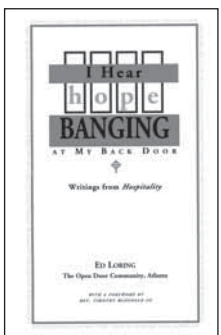
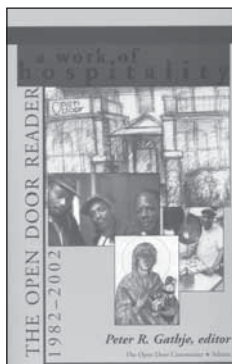
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A Work of Hospitality The Open Door Reader 1982 - 2002

Peter R. Gathje, editor

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I Hear Hope Banging at My Back Door Writings from Hospitality

By **Eduard Loring**

Foreword by Rev. Timothy McDonald III

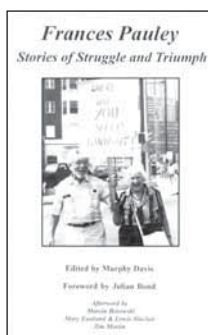
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Capital Punishment in Perspective Stoning, Anyone?

By **Anonymous**

Editor's note: The author of this article is serving a life sentence in a Georgia prison after living for many years under a sentence of death. The author's name has been withheld by request.

Since the beginning of society there has been a fascination with the idea of capital punishment. Here in Georgia since 1974, a great many people have embraced it.

It's often argued that in the Bible God says, "An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth." I've heard legislators in my state brag about Georgia's standing up for God and the Bible. So I decided to investigate my Bible and see how God actually wanted capital punishment to be carried out and for what crimes. Because the death penalty has always hinged on the claim that it's biblical law, I thought I'd see how many crimes fit the criteria for execution. Though I've read the Bible in its entirety at least 12 times, I had no idea what I would find.

Here's what I learned.

The preferred form of capital punishment in biblical times was stoning. There were no appeals. No waiting. The entire community had to participate in the stoning. Even the children. Not a sole executioner. No electric chair, lethal injection, gas, hanging or shooting. And I can see where this would actually be a deterrent.

There are several words from biblical times that mean "stoning":

Muwth — "Must needs slay."

Kerethiy — "Cut off." The person to be executed has to be cut off from the community.

Here are some of the capital crimes described in the Bible:

1. Striking someone and killing him. *Exodus 21:12; Leviticus 24:17; Leviticus 24:21; Numbers 35:16-21*
2. Attacking one's father or mother. *Exodus 21:15*
3. Kidnapping another and either selling them or having them with you when you are caught. *Exodus 21:16*
4. Cursing your father or mother. *Exodus 21:17*
5. Owning a bull that has a habit of goring and not keeping it penned up and it kills someone. *Exodus 21:29*
6. Having sexual relations with an animal. *Exodus 22:19; Leviticus 20:15-16*
7. Making perfume like the sacred anointing oil. *Exodus 30:33*
8. Making incense like the incense for God's temple. *Exodus 30:38*
9. Desecrating the Sabbath. *Exodus 31:14*
10. Working on the Sabbath. *Exodus 31:15; Exodus 35:2*
11. Eating of the fellowship offering made to God while one is unclean. *Leviticus 7:20*
12. Touching something unclean and then eating of God's fellowship offering. *Leviticus 7:21*
13. Eating the fat of an animal from which an offering by fire may be made to God. *Leviticus 7:25*
14. Eating blood. *Leviticus 7:27; Leviticus 17:10; Leviticus 17:14*
15. Killing an animal for sacrifice and not bringing it to God's temple. *Leviticus 17:8-9*
16. Offering a burnt offering outside of God's temple. *Leviticus 17:4*
17. Eating anything left of a fellowship offering on the third day. *Leviticus 19:8*
18. Offering one's child as a burnt offering. *Leviticus 20:2*

19. Committing adultery (man and woman both executed). *Leviticus 20:10; Deuteronomy 22:22*
20. Sleeping with your father's wife (both executed). *Leviticus 20:11*
21. Sleeping with your daughter-in-law (both executed). *Leviticus 20:12*
22. Having sex with another man (both executed). *Leviticus 20:13*
23. Marrying both a woman and her daughter (all three executed). *Leviticus 20:14*
24. Marrying your sister (both executed). *Leviticus 20:17*
25. Having sexual relations with a woman during her period (both executed). *Leviticus 20:18*
26. Being a medium or spiritist. *Leviticus 20:27*
27. Coming near a sacred offering while unclean. *Leviticus 22:3*
28. Working on the Day of Atonement. *Leviticus 23:28-29*
29. Blaspheming the name of the Lord. *Leviticus 24:16*
30. Failing to celebrate the Passover Feast. *Numbers 9:13*
31. Failing to purify oneself after touching a dead body. *Numbers*
32. Preaching rebellion against God. *Deuteronomy 13:5*
33. Not being a virgin when married. *Deuteronomy 22:20-21*
34. Sleeping with a woman engaged to someone else. (If in town, both executed) *Deuteronomy 22:23-24* (If in the country, only the man executed) *Deuteronomy 22:25*

I'm sure I've missed many more, but I believe these are enough to show that maybe we should rethink the idea of capital punishment being okay simply because the Bible endorses it. Because, obviously, it is not enforced as the Bible says it should be. I hope this will cause some people to re-evaluate why they support this system. It doesn't serve the purpose people think it does.

Many people don't even understand what death row is. I had someone look me in the eye recently and say, "Doesn't that mean life without parole?" And they were serious.

It's amazing to me how many people don't even know that "life" means life. Many believe that "life" means only seven or 15 years.

Because I am in prison, I like to ask people who have never been in trouble until they were arrested what they think "life" means. Even prison staff members have told me seven years. No one seems to know that life means the Parole Board decides whether or when you get out and that it can keep you in prison until you die.

The longest sentence for a woman I've known has been 35 years. She was in a wheelchair and had Parkinson's disease. Another, who's blind and also in a wheelchair, is still in prison. So don't think we don't die in prison. We do. Many lifers have.

The death penalty doesn't bring healing or closure. Only forgiveness can do that. My victim's mother taught me that. For reasons that only a prisoner can understand, I won't identify myself. My victim's mother forgave me and told me that I would punish myself more than the state of Georgia could, and she was right. She knew I had a conscience. Something the district attorney told my jury that I didn't have.

I thank God for letting me live and for being able to help educate people about capital punishment and life sentences. ♣



Rini Templeton

When a President Confronted the Unspeakable

Reviewed by John Dear

Editor's note: John Dear is a Jesuit priest and one of our leaders in the movement for peace and nonviolence. He is the author of more than 20 books, including "Put Down Your Sword," "Transfiguration" and, most recently, "A Persistent Peace: One Man's Struggle for a Nonviolent World."

Last year Orbis Books published one of its most significant books in years, a labor of 15 years by Jim Douglass. "JFK and the Unspeakable: Why He Died and Why It Matters" tells the painful, hopeful story of President John F. Kennedy's efforts to save us from nuclear war, his decision to pull U.S. troops from Vietnam, and his call for nuclear disarmament, a vision that animated shadowy forces in the American government to do away with him and his vision.

I consider Jim one of the world's leading theologians of Christian nonviolence. His brilliance is reflected in his powerful books, "The Nonviolent Cross," "Lightning East to West," "Resistance and Contemplation" and "The Nonviolent Coming of God."

We observe him transforming from conventional Cold Warrior to someone determined to pull the world back from the edge of nuclear apocalypse.

"JFK and the Unspeakable" reads like a Robert Ludlum political thriller, only the stakes are much higher, all too real and all too current. It is the ultimate American story, for it sheds light not only on our history but on the predicament we face today.

It traces the life of Kennedy into the presidency, through the Bay of Pigs invasion of Cuba and the Cuban Missile Crisis, right through the weeks before his assassination in November 1963. With every turned page, we observe him transforming from conventional Cold Warrior to someone determined to pull the world back from the edge of nuclear apocalypse.

The change is evident in his secret back-channel dialogue with Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev and his historic American University peace speech a few months before his death. He said:

I have ... chosen this time and this place to discuss a topic on which ignorance too often abounds and the truth is too rarely perceived. Yet it is the most important topic on earth: world peace. ... not merely peace for Americans but peace for all men and women,

not merely peace in our time but peace in all time. I speak of peace because of the new face of war: Total war ...

A Quaker friend, David Hartsough, told me some years ago that in 1962, when he was 22, he visited with Kennedy in the White House. He was among more than 1,000 Friends who were vigiling for nuclear disarmament outside the White House and State Department. As it turns out, JFK welcomed David and five others inside to discuss the issue. They gave the president a statement urging a change in direction "from headlong preparation for nuclear war" to "general and complete disarmament."

The group was surprised by how open and friendly Kennedy was, and surprised in particular by how seriously he listened. But then, as Jim Douglass records, he offered a sober word to them: "The military-industrial complex is very strong. If you folks are serious about trying to get our government to take these kinds of steps, you've got to get much more organized, to put pressure on the government to move in this direction."

Such a trend in Kennedy's thinking, later made evident in his speech, alarmed members of the U.S. military-intelligence establishment, and finally they regarded him as a dangerous traitor who had to be eliminated.

Douglass tells the story as no mere reporter. He keeps an eye on the mystical veins of history, relying at times on the prophetic voice of his friend Thomas Merton, the Trappist monk. It was Merton who first wrote about "the unspeakable" in his classic collection of essays, "Raids on the Unspeakable."

"I have little confidence in Kennedy," Merton wrote to a friend in January 1962. "What is needed is not shrewdness or craft, but what the politicians don't have: depth, humanity, and a certain totality of self-forgetfulness and compassion, not just for individuals, but for humanity as a whole: a deeper kind of dedication. Maybe Kennedy will break through into that some day by miracle. But such people are before long marked out for assassination."

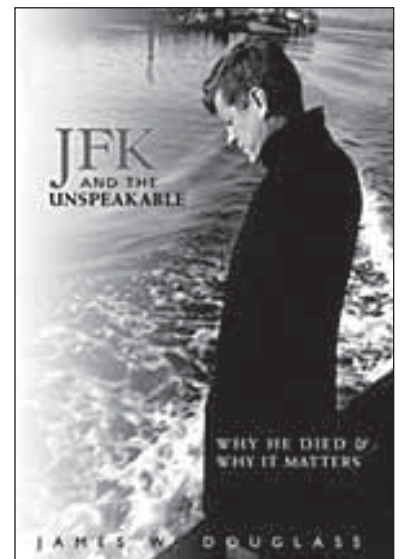
What the visionary Merton foretold, the chronicler Douglass charts in detail. Kennedy, along with Khrushchev and Pope John XXIII, had brought the world back a step from nuclear war. Kennedy planned to remove all U.S. troops from Vietnam. His heart was coming into its own. He embraced global peace; he broke through toward compassion for all of humanity under nuclear siege. And among obstinate powers, his compassion marked him as a candidate for an anonymous bullet.

The implications are staggering. Who can face them? The truth shatters the American myths that lull us to sleep, and our hearts lurch in fear. But at some level we know the truth already; American myths have recently grown patently threadbare.

JFK and the Unspeakable: Why He Died and Why It Matters

By James W. Douglass

Orbis Books
544 pages
2008



One thinks of the Bush administration's disregard of the economy, the children of Iraq, the world's poor, the planet itself — all in the name of some interest most Americans cannot name or relate to. American myths no longer add up.

The mind protests, nevertheless. Could they go so far as to assassinate a president? Certainly national institutions aren't as insane as all that? The thought sets us reeling.

But take a moment to ponder and the dissonance eases. If officials can institute policies that kill 3 million people in Southeast Asia, 1.5 million in Iraq, half a million in Central America and Colombia, if they shrug at global warming, if they institute a vast, secretive industry for building a nuclear arsenal, controlling outer space and stealing the world's natural resources, surely they can dispatch a prominent leader who tries to reverse direction, and dispatch him without compunction.

Jim says that writing this book was an experiment in truth. It was his effort to face the truth of our country, our government and our predicament today. The truth, Jim says, is humanity's only hope. Only truth can wake us to reality and inspire our work for transformation.

But Jim weaves no hovering dream. While his sober eye searches out the moral and spiritual dimensions, he's an assiduous journalist as well. Here is a story told with immense skill. He lays out the fine details (his endnotes run 100 pages). He chronicles the involvement of Lee Harvey Oswald, how CIA and Mafia operatives framed him, how the assassination was set for Chicago, how that plan was foiled, how they had a contingency plan, and how the deed was done in Dallas. He describes the spate of witnesses who died or disappeared during the next few years — facts to make us recoil and blanch.

This is an account of spirituality wedded to the gritty details of history. JFK himself began to see the two as one. He began to view history in loftier terms than mere national security. And some resolved to put it to an end. They had more in mind than to eliminate one man. They conspired to eliminate a vision.

And to this extent they succeeded: Since Kennedy's death, the military-intelligence complex, the secret government within the government, has wreaked unprecedented

havoc on our nation and the world, reaching unprecedented heights of violence with the imperial Bush-Cheney administration.

Dare we admit that we suffered a kind of coup d'état? That we've transmogrified toward dictatorship? That we have on our hands a species of national security state? That our lust for war and money and domination has risen to unprecedented heights?

Our knees tremble to think on it. But Jim's book persuades us. And ultimately it frees us, because it wakes us up to the mordant reality of our war-making government. The book shakes us awake to truth.

The Unspeakable. Merton was trying to name that ineffable, systemic evil that dominates us and beggars our powers to define it. St. Paul tried his hand at it; he gave it a sweeping name, "the principalities and the powers." Other names have emerged over two millennia: President Dwight Eisenhower's "military-industrial complex," Walter Wink's "domination system," John of Patmos' "Babylon," Dorothy Day's "filthy rotten system." However we name it, Jim urges us to face it and expose it.

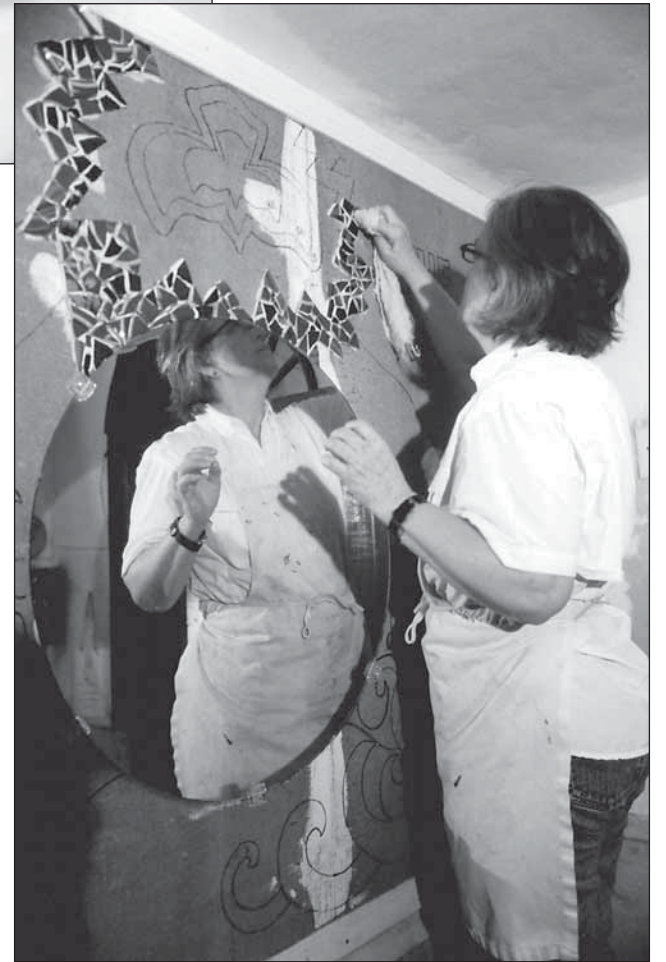
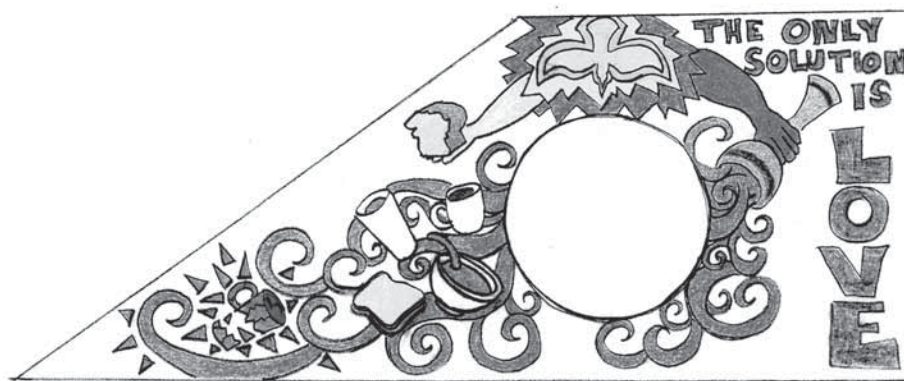
We expose it by proclaiming the truth about it. To be sure, we'll bring upon ourselves its malign gaze. But at the same time, we'll find ourselves liberated and healed. We'll find ourselves able to turn from our love of death toward new life and a sharp vision of equality for all humanity.

It was a bad time in the American 1960s. But Jim's account breaks barriers of time and space. The story is timeless, universal. I believe it points us back to another moment when myth and history converged, a time when the world gasped at the possibility of redemption, even of resurrection. Jim's story points us back to the life and death of Jesus of Nazareth — he who exposed the system of his day and by example showed succeeding generations how.

Gaeton Fonzi, staff investigator for the House Select Committee on Assassinations, calls this "by far the most important book yet written on the subject." Many other experts agree. Read it, and get a big dose of truth. ♣

Open Door Art

The 2010 Open Door Calendar will be mailed out soon. **Nelia Kimbrough** created this year's calendar art from the graphic design she and others have developed for the mosaic mural project taking shape in the entryway behind the front door at 910. In that image, the Eucharist table expands to become the table from which we provide the hospitality of the meals we serve each week (*drawing, below*). The mosaic will be made mostly from plates broken during our times of serving meals. "The only solution is love" comes from Dorothy Day's writing about the life of the Catholic Worker movement. Nelia worked with the original drawings during the summer to set shapes and colors (*right*). She then transferred the drawing onto the wall space in our entryway and has begun to do the mosaic work (*below right*).



Photographs by Calvin Kimbrough



Photograph: Stanford University

Clayborne Carson

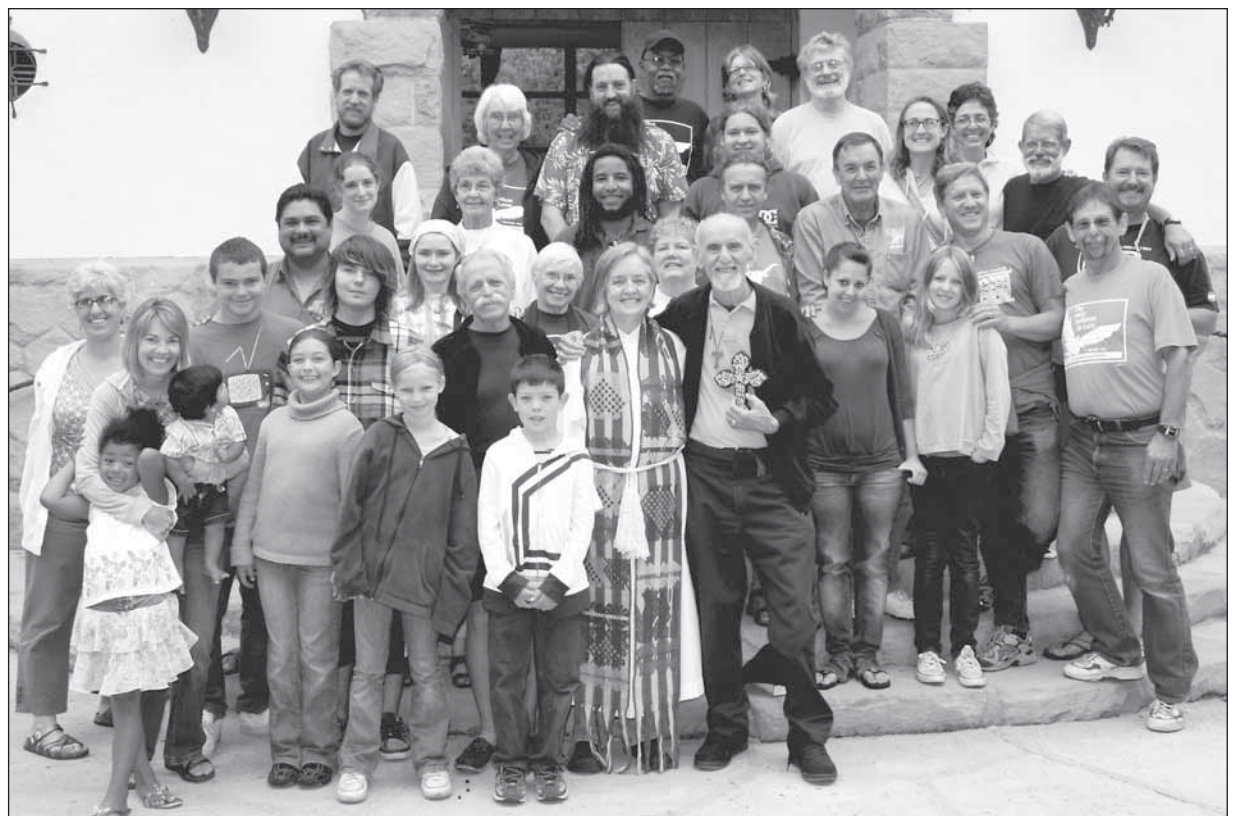
On October 13, Dr. **Clayborne Carson** spoke at an Open Door Community Clarification Meeting that was held at First Iconium Baptist Church in Atlanta. Dr. Carson is a professor of history and the founding director of the Martin Luther King Jr. Research and Education Institute at Stanford University. He is also Martin Luther King Jr. Distinguished Professor at Morehouse College and the Executive Director of the Morehouse King Collection. The subject of the meeting was "Martin Luther King Jr. and the Global Liberation Struggle." A multi-generational group of about 100 folks gathered for a fruitful evening of reflection and call into future action.

In, Out & Around 910

Compiled by Calvin Kimbrough

LACW Retreat

Each year the Los Angeles Catholic Worker graciously includes the Open Door Community in their Sister House Retreat. This year **Nelia** and **Calvin Kimbrough** got to make the trip. They joined workers from houses in California and Nevada as Fr. Louis Vitale, OFM spoke about his calling into a life of nonviolent civil disobedience in the pursuit of peace and justice. In the group picture, Nelia (*in robe*) stands between Fr. Louis and Jeff Dietrich from the LACW; Calvin is up in the back row (*right*).



Mike Wisniewski

Remember

"We remember that we are all homeless wanderers in a land that is not our own."

Resist

"We resist the powers of pride and greed that create wealth for a few and poverty for many."

Rejoice

"We rejoice that God has given us a Harvest which provides more than enough for abundant life for all."

(*"The Festival of Shelters,"* page 51)

Festival of Shelters 2009

The Open Door Community celebrated Sukkoth in our front yard this year. Our Sukkah — shelter, booth, tabernacle — was built from saplings brought from Dayspring Farm. On Sunday we assembled the Sukkah during worship and encircled it with prayers, songs and our Eucharist service. *Above right:* **John McRea, Ira Terrell, Heather Bargeron** and **James Mosley** work to tie the structure together. **Ira Terrell** serves **Ralph Dukes** (*right*) during the Eucharist. On Tuesday evening we gathered at the state Capitol (*below*) for a vigil during the execution of Mark McClain to call for the abolition of the death penalty. **Eduard Loring** led us in remembering Mark's life and urging us to continue the work of abolition. Wednesday soup kitchen was one of several meals served in our front yard during the festival. These meals are an extension of our Eucharist table. Serving were **William Hunt, Ronald Williams, Trish Demarus-Cravens,** and **Frank Ostrowski** (*bottom right, right to left*).



Photographs by Calvin Kimbrough



The Festival of Shelters A Celebration for Love and Justice

By Eduard Loring with Heather Bargeron
preface by Dick Rustay

*an Open Door Community Press publication
free for the asking
see ad on page 4*

Hating Our Children, *continued from page 1*

Driving south, they came into downtown Atlanta. On an unfamiliar street in this unfamiliar city, they stopped the car, put him out onto the sidewalk and drove away. He never saw his family again.

Ronnie became a ward of the state: a discarded child. He was raised in an endless series of foster homes and institutions. He was treated with kindness at times, and at times his life was torture. When we asked about it (on only a few occasions), he would tell us what he could and then turn his head down and to the side and for a moment he would sit quietly with an inner struggle to chase the memory out of his head. He was the picture of vulnerability.

Perhaps this was the root of his problem with wine. He knew we did not like it when he drank (his vulnerability was so painfully accentuated and got him into plenty of trouble and danger), so he always tried to pretend that he didn't. One evening in the Kroger store down the street, I ran into him while he was carrying a large bottle of wine toward the checkout. As soon as he saw me, he put the bottle behind his back and greeted me loudly, saying, "No I didn't!" He was just sure he had fooled me!

It was the alcohol that took him. In July 2001, he returned to his rooming house late one night. He passed out in the front yard and was found the next morning dead of alcohol poisoning. His memorial service was at the Open Door, and we spread his ashes in the yard at 910 and at Dayspring Farm.

What a strange gift he was, Ronnie! When we learned his last name, Ed said, "We can't call him that! Not Ronnie Rude!" So at the Open Door, Ronnie became Ronnie *Rudé* — pronounced "Rooday." He is most assuredly one of our Great Cloud of Witnesses.

And I am very certain that Ronnie was one of the first to be shooed away by the disciples. For this man-child was a big old kid and often, truth be told, a royal pain in the ass. But he would surely have been one of the first to be welcomed by Jesus, who identified him as one of the "little ones" whom we should emulate: one of the "first" in the scheme of the Beloved Community. He was the spiritually poor whom Jesus blessed — the *subject* of the Beloved Community. Ronnie was a model of how we are to receive Jesus and the God Movement: like a child, powerless and vulnerable in our need.

Jesus Among the Children

I believe that Jesus made a point of this for two reasons. The first, perhaps, was that he was trying over and over again to get his own community to understand this New Covenant — this alternative way of Life.

The liberative promise of Jubilee was coming true in their midst. To see the New Order, they — the guys in particular — would have to drop their assumptions and pretensions to power that came from the Domination System. In the system of Palestinian patriarchy, children were non-

existent. Like women, children didn't count. When a boy came of age, he became a part of the community. But until then, he might as well have been a girl or woman — "no 'count," as we say in the South. So Jesus spent his life building up a New World in the shell of the old by taking the time to heal, listen and welcome girls, boys and women in particular and unexpected ways that affirmed the humanity and dignity of these who were seen as non-persons. The disciples kept getting it wrong, so Jesus kept showing them and explaining to them. The men were shooing away the "least of these," and Jesus had to act out for them that these "least" were the first in the Kin-dom of God.

I believe that it worked that way for us at the Open Door as well. There were many times when we wanted to "shoo" Ronnie away. And sometimes we did just that. Dick was usually the one who called us back and volunteered to take on the task of corralling Ronnie's abundant and sometimes misplaced energy.

But I believe that Jesus had a second, perhaps more specifically political, strategy here. The children, like the other non-persons in Jesus' life — the hungry, the prisoner, the stranger, the sick, the naked — are the ones in whom Jesus hides himself. Why? To give us the opportunity, the *kairos* moments, to respond to the most vulnerable among us in their most basic human needs; the opportunity for our own waking up to the reality of oppression and our own complicity with oppression; and the opportunity for our own transformation. "Inasmuch as you have done it for the least of these, my sisters and brothers," says Matthew's Gospel, "you have done it to me." (Matthew 25:40) We have only to look at how we treat the prisoner, the sick and the stranger to understand how much we do or do not love Jesus and the Creator of us all. Our active reaching out in love to the "worst" of those in prison, to the uninsured sick and to the illegal immigrant are a measure of our love for God. *And* children. How we treat our children indicates the depth and breadth of our love.

When will the children who live in abandoned cars and under the bridges of our city accuse us?

Now's the moment for us to get sappy. If I ask you how much you love children, you are likely to get emotional. If you're a politician, you've been out there looking for babies to kiss. Why, Gvnuh Sonny Perdue has kissed more babies than you can shake a stick at. And he'll tell you in a flat second how many foster children he and Miss Mary have taken into the bosom of their home and hearth.

But here's the problem. We all just *luuuuuve* children. Individually. One at a

time! Cute little things! Aren't they just precious! Well, I mean *our* children — the ones who look like us!

But wait a minute! Let's talk policy. What about the children, say, right here in Georgia? I mean with these Family Values-believing, children-loving folks in power right now, children ought to be thriving, right? Wrong. We might "love" the children we know; we might even love all the children in our church or community. But as a people — a state, a nation — the facts indicate that we hate our children. We do very poorly to move from that love (which is a sort of natural love) to love for *all* the children: the dirty, snotty-nosed children of the poor, the retarded and abandoned and abused and disturbed children who land in our state institutions. Our "natural" love is not enough for followers of Jesus, who welcomed the children of the peasants who followed him because they were hungry and tired and nearly dead with despair. To do the same, we must practice the same Radical Love of Jesus the Poor Man.

What Is Our Defense?

During the summer, the Annie E. Casey Foundation released the 20th annual KIDS COUNT Data Book, profiling the well-being of America's children on a state-by-state basis and ranking the states on 10 measures of well-being such as poverty, infant mortality, access to health care, and so on. The book shows clearly that all is not well with children in the USA. Georgia comes in at a shameful 42nd. As people say around here, "Thank God for Mississippi!"

Our children are the most likely to live in poverty, the most likely to die before they reach adulthood, and the most likely not to graduate from high school. They are more likely to get sick, and when they get sick, they are less likely to get good medical care or to have access to care at all. Those who are in school are more likely to be in poor schools and to be unprepared for any kind of work when they get out. They are therefore more likely to get into trouble; and after they do, they are more likely to go to a children's jail, which will prepare them well for a life of being in and out of adult lock-ups.

Thanks to former Governor ZigZagZell Miller and the effort of our state to outdo every other one in posturing against crime, Georgia's legal system provides for — not three strikes but, get this — *two* strikes and you're out. Yes, indeed, in Georgia, if you're convicted of a second of the "seven deadly sins" as defined by a local prosecutor, the mandatory sentence is Life Without Parole. This same wave of righteous legislation in the mid-1990s provided the possibility of sentencing children as young as 13 as "adult offenders." Again, the determination is at the discretion of a locally elected prosecutor, which means the process is highly political.

Then there is the system of children's jails, euphemistically called the Georgia Department of Juvenile Justice. On any given day, more than 2,500 children are

locked up in Georgia children's jails. Some 75 percent of these are African American, and almost without exception they are poor. Most are jailed for non-violent crimes, such as shoplifting, breaking windows, running away from home or truancy. The schools in Georgia's youth jails are not accredited, so the school-age imprisoned children continue to fall behind academically. Worse yet, while confined, these children are subjected to physical abuse, rape and other mistreatment that the federal government has called egregious and unconstitutional. These patterns of abuse are largely unchecked, in part because the department makes little effort to separate non-violent "offenders" from those who have been convicted of acts of violence. Every year, there are hundreds of reports of sexual and other violent assaults on the children by staff members and stronger children. Suicide attempts are not uncommon. (For more, see the Georgia Alliance for Children, www.gac.org, and the Equal Justice Initiative, www.eji.org.)

Can we even hear Jesus when he says, "Let the children come to me, and do not stop them, because the Beloved Community of God belongs to such as these."

What will our defense be when the little children come to Jesus and he hears what they have suffered at our hands — at the hands of our merciless state and nation? When will the children who live in abandoned cars and under the bridges of our city accuse us? And what will be our excuse then?

Oh sinner man, oh sinner woman, where you gonna run to?

We have become a people whose interest in paying lower taxes is greater than our care for children. When we create an unsafe nation, the children are the first to suffer. While we can respond with great emotion to stories of individual children who have been hurt or face a desperate situation, we are not able to translate this into thinking about policy: how do we shape our corporate life in a way that helps, nurtures and encourages children and families with children? How can we respond to brokenness without creating more brokenness and heartache?

Gustavo Gutierrez said that God has no eyes in the world but the eyes of the poor. And I think that God looks at the world especially through the eyes of children who are poor. What does God see? And what will be our defense?

How can we follow Jesus in a way that welcomes the children with blessing rather than curses? How can we love the thousands of Ronnies, who are not particularly attractive but desperately need our welcome and our blessing?

How can we, in fact, become more like Ronnie, so that we are fit to enter the Kin-dom of God with all the dirty, abandoned little children who are first in the Beloved Community? ♣

Murphy Davis is a Partner at the Open Door Community.

The Disarming Child, *continued from page 1*

into the slums of the poor. It is a word against the captains of the arms industry and the fanatics of power. If we really understand what it means, it bursts the bonds of Sunday worship. For if this message really lays hold of us, it leads us to Jesus the liberator, and to the people who live in darkness and who are waiting for him — and for us.



Ade Bethune

Anyone who belongs to the people who dwell in the land of darkness, or anyone who has ever belonged to it, will find this message about the disarming birth of the child as alluring as it is unbelievable. The people in deep darkness: whom does this mean? In the prophet's time it was that section of Israel that had fallen under Assyrian dictatorship. Every imprisoned Israelite knew the tramp of the invading boots, the bloody coats and the rods of the slave-drivers. Today we can still see Assyrian warriors and overseers like this in the frescoes, with their iron shoes, their cloaks and their sticks. But for the prophet, Assyria is more than just Assyria. She is the representative of the power that is hostile to God, and this makes her at the same time the very quintessence of all inhuman oppression. The prophet looks at the specific plight of his people, but talks about a misery experienced by people everywhere. That is why his words and images are so wide open that prisoners in every age have been able to find in them their own fate and their own hope.

A people in darkness — Isaiah 8 tells us what this means: "They will pass through the land, greatly distressed and hungry; and when they are hungry, they will be enraged and will curse their king and their God, and they will stare up to the sky and look down to the earth, and will find only distress and darkness; for they are in the darkness of fear and wander lost in the darkness." God has hidden his face from them. But instead of waiting for his light, they run to fortune-tellers and mediums, and become more and more confused.

Darkness and Light

A people in darkness: let me add a personal word here. This phrase touched me directly when in 1945 we were driven in endless and desolate columns into the prisoner-of-war camps, the sticks of the guards at our sides, with hungry

stomachs and empty hearts and curses on our lips. But many of us then, and I was one, glimpsed the light that radiates from the divine child. This light did not allow me to perish. This hope kept us alive.

A people in darkness: today I see before me the millions of the imprisoned, the exiled, the deported, the tortured and the silenced everywhere in the world where people are pushed into this darkness. The important point is not the nations, which can be accused of these things. What is important is the worldwide brotherhood/sisterhood of the men and women who are living in darkness. For it is on them that this divine light now shines.

Peoples in darkness: how that cries out today from the Third World in Africa and Asia, and from the Third World in our own country — cries for liberation and human rights! The struggle for power and for oil and for weapons ruins the weak, enriches the wealthy and gives power to the powerful. This divided world is increasingly capable of turning into a universal prison camp. And we are faced with the burning question: on which side of the barbed wire are we living, and at whose cost? The people in darkness see the great light. To this people — to them first of all — the light shines in all its brightness. To these people the child is born, for the peace of us all. Do we belong to this people, or do we cling to our own lights, our fortune-tellers and our own interpreters of the signs of the times, people who tell us what we want to hear, from Nostradamus and astrological calendars down to the learned interpreters of the laws of history?

More is promised here than can be expressed simply through old-soldier reminiscences. For God's victory does not come about through new armaments and force levied against force, or through alliances and solidarity. God has his own, divine kind of victory. For God's victory puts an end to all human wars and victories once and for all. It is a final victory, which serves peace, not one that leads to the next war, as our melancholy victories usually do. The prophet gives his images of war so alien an orientation that they actually describe the conquest of war. Every weapon becomes a flame, every aggression fuel for the fire. God's victory puts a final end to the victories of human beings. People lose their taste for them. Swords are turned into ploughshares and peace treaties replace the atom bombs.

But how is this supposed to happen? Does not the power to liberate the masses stem from rifles just as much as the forces of oppression? How can oppression and war be fought against and overcome without bringing new oppressions and new wars into the world, again with bloody coats and the tramp of boots through the streets?

The Liberator as Child

All the images the prophet uses to paint the possible future point to one fact: the birth of the divine child. The burning of the weapons, the jubilation and the great lights are all caught up in the birth of God's peace-bringer. They are all to be found in him. Now the prophet stops talking in intoxicating images and thrilling comparisons, and comes to the heart of the matter: the person of the divine liberator. "To us a child is born. To us a son is given." This future is wholly and entirely God's initiative. That is why it is so totally different from our human plans and possibilities. If liberation and peace are bound up with the birth of a little helpless and defenseless child, then their future lies in the hands of God alone. On the human side, all we can see here is weakness and helplessness. It is not the pride and strength of the grown man which are proclaimed on the threshold of the kingdom, but the defenselessness and the hope of the child.

The kingdom of peace comes through a child, and liberation is bestowed on the people who become as children: disarmingly defenseless, disarming through their

*continued on page 10***Join us as a Resident Volunteer**

Calvin Kimbrough

Johnny Devlin rode in on his bicycle on September 7 for a season of service as a Resident Volunteer at the Open Door Community. Aside from his great smile and his bicycles, he also brought a willing spirit and his banjo!

Live in a residential Christian community.

Serve Jesus Christ in the hungry, homeless, and imprisoned.

Join street actions and loud and loving nonviolent demonstrations.

Enjoy regular retreats and meditation time at Dayspring Farm.

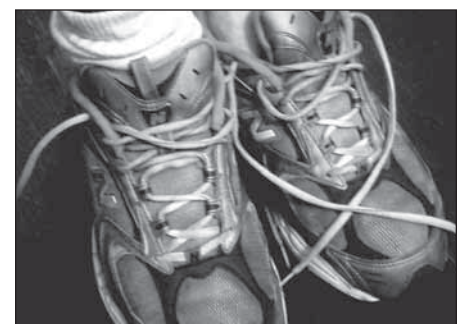
Join Bible study and theological reflections from the Base.

You might come to the margins and find your center.

Contact: Chuck Harris

at odcvolunteer@bellsouth.net
or 770.246.7627

For information and application forms visit www.opendoorcommunity.org

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Men's shoes sizes 11-15 are especially helpful.

Thank You!

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____ I would like to explore a six- to twelve-month commitment as a Resident Volunteer at the Open Door. Please contact me. (Also see www.opendoorcommunity.org for more information about RV opportunities.)

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volunteer
needs
at the
Open Door Community

Please note our new schedule for Monday & Tuesday: Volunteers for Monday showers (6:45-9:30 a.m.) and Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday Soup Kitchen (9:45 a.m.-1:30 p.m.).

Volunteers to help staff our foot clinic on Wednesday evenings (6:45-9:15 p.m.).

Individuals to accompany Community members to doctors' appointments.

Groups or individuals to make individually wrapped meat and cheese sandwiches on whole wheat bread for our homeless and hungry friends (**no bologna, pb&j or white bread, please**).

People to cook or bring supper for the Community on certain Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday evenings.

For more information,
contact Chuck Harris at
odcvolunteer@bellsouth.net
or 770.246.7627

The Disarming Child, *continued from page 9*

defenselessness, and making others defenseless because they themselves are so disarming.

After the prophet's mighty visions of the destruction of all power and the forceful annihilation of all coercion, we are now suddenly face to face with this inconspicuous child. It sounds so paradoxical that some interpreters have assumed that this is a later interpolation. The prisoners who have to fight for their rights also find it difficult to understand how this child can help them. But it is really quite logical. For what the prophet says about the eternal peace of God which satisfies our longings can only come to meet us, whether we are frightened slaves or aggressive masters, in the form of the child.

A child is defenseless. A child is innocent. A child is the beginning of a new life. This defenselessness makes our armaments superfluous. We can put away the rifles and open our clenched fists. This innocence redeems us from the curse of the evil act that is bound to breed ever more evil. We no

longer have to go on like this. And this birth opens up for us the future of a life in peace that is different from all life hitherto, since that life was bound up with death.

"For to us a child is born. To us a son is given. The government is upon his shoulders." The liberator becomes a pleading child in our world, armed to the teeth as it is. And this child will become the liberator for the new world of peace. That is why this rule means life, not death; peace, not war; freedom, not oppression.

This sovereignty lies on the defenseless, innocent and hopeful shoulders of this child.

This makes our fresh start into the future meaningful and possible. The oppressed will be free from oppression. And they will also be free from the dreams of darkness, the visions of revenge. They stand up and rejoice, and their rejoicing frees their masters too from their brutal armaments. The oppressors with their cudgels, their iron shoes and their bloody coats, will be freed from their grim machinations and will leave the poor in peace. For the new human being has been born, and a new humanity will be possible, a humanity which no longer knows either masters or slaves, either oppressed or oppressors. This is God's initiative on behalf of his betrayed and tormented humanity. "The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this." It is the zeal of ardent love.

There is no other initiative we can seize with absolute assurance, for ourselves or for other people. There is no other zeal for the liberation of the world in which we can place a certain hope.

The Zeal of Love

There are certainly many other movements, and much fervent zeal for the liberation of the masses. It certainly sounds more realistic for people in darkness to dream of God's day of vengeance, finding satisfaction in the hope that at the Last Judgment all the godless enemies who oppress us here will be cast into hellfire. But what kind of blessedness is it that luxuriates in revenge and needs the groans of the damned as background to its own joy? To us a child is born, not an embittered old man. God in a child, not as hangman. That is why he prayed on his cross, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." It sounded more heroic when, in

1934, Hitler's columns marched through Tübingen, singing with fanatical zeal, "One day, the day of revenge! One day, and we shall be free!" It was a zeal that led to Auschwitz and Stalingrad.

Emperors have always liked to be called emperors of peace, from Augustus down to the present day. Their opponents and the heroes of the people have always liked to be called "liberators," from Arminius of the Cherusci to Simón Bolívar. They have come and gone. Neither their rule nor their liberation endured. God was not with them. Their zeal was not the zeal of the Lord. They did not disarm this divided world. They could not forgive the guilt, because they themselves were not innocent. Their hope did not bring new life. So let them go their way. Let us deny them our complete obedience. "To us this child is born." The divine liberty lies upon his shoulders.

What does his rule look like? We have to know this if we want to begin to live with him. He will establish "peace

on earth," we are told, and he will "uphold peace with justice and with righteousness." But how can peace go together with justice? What we are familiar with is generally based on conflict. The life of justice is struggle. Among us, peace and justice are divided by the struggle for power. The so-called "law of the strongest" destroys justice and right. The weakness of the peacemakers makes peace fragile. It is only in the zeal of love that what power has separated can



B.M. Kavanagh

be put together again: in a just peace and in the right to peace.

This love does not mean accepting breaches of justice "for the sake of peace," as we say. But it does not mean, either, breaking someone else's peace for the sake of our own rights. Peace and righteousness will kiss and be one only when the new person is born, and God the Lord, who has created all things, arrives at just rights in the creation. When God is God in the world, then no one will want to be anyone else's Lord and God anymore.

But is this really possible here and now, or is it just a dream?

There is nothing against dreams if they are good ones. The prophet gave the people in darkness, and us, this unforgettable dream. We should remain true to it. But he could see only the shadowy outline of the name of the divine child, born for the freedom of the world; he called him Wonderful Counselor, Mighty Hero, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

The New Testament proclaims to us the person himself. He is Jesus Christ, the child in the manger, the preacher on the mount, the tormented man on the cross, the risen liberator.

So according to the New Testament the dream of a liberator, and the dream of peace, is not merely a dream. The liberator is already present and his power is already among us. We can follow him, even today making visible something of the peace, liberty and righteousness of the kingdom that he will complete. It is no longer impossible. It has become possible for us in fellowship with him. Let us share in his new creation of the world and – born again to a living hope – live as new men and women.

The zeal of the Lord be with us all. ☩

Grace and Peaces of Mail

Dear Murphy,

Your writing always inspires, and your article called "Resurrection and Restoration: A Woman and a Girl" (August-September *Hospitality*) I find especially moving. I am making copies of it to share with several people and groups.

So many of us in our community find encouragement from the Open Door's newspaper and ministry. Thank God for all of you.

With love, too, from Mary,
N. Gordon Cosby
Pastor, Church of the Savior
Washington, D.C.

Dear Ed and Murphy,

We want to thank you for your work and your writing on behalf of "the least of these." May the Open Door continue its ministry in the face of the economic crisis and the struggle for life at such a time as this.

In the coming months, as immigration takes center stage on the political agenda, the call to hospitality must become much more real for our churches and communities.

Shalom,
Ross and Gloria Kinsler
Altadena, California

Ross and Gloria Kinsler were for many years mission workers based at the Latin American University in San José, Costa Rica. They are the authors of "The Biblical Jubilee and the Struggle for Life."

Eduard and Murphy,

I hear that the Republicans are trying to sabotage Obama's proposal for health care changes in America by criticising the British National Health Service. Well, I have the NHS (in Scotland) to thank for being on the planet when I was whisked off to Aberdeen Royal Infirmary in the middle of the night last October for heart surgery. Don't believe the Republicans!

Gordon Bittern
Aberlour, Scotland

Dear Murphy,

Your articles/stories in *Hospitality* are amazing, inspiring and beautiful. Thank you!

Sincerely,
Marlys Graettinger
Graettinger, Iowa

Dear Murphy and Ed,

We are always thankful for your life and work at the Open Door Community, and we are grateful that you survive. You are important for us. What you have done and are still doing is a light of hope whenever we look over the Atlantic. Take good care. I pray for you every morning.

I am crazy enough to write another book, which will keep me busy until fall 2010. Let's see what we can do together afterwards.

You write, "The Open Door Community is small and growing old." The same is true for me, but I still cannot find time to become "old." I hope that's also true with you.

Sun of Righteousness arise!

Your friend,
Jürgen Moltmann
Tubingen, Germany

Jürgen Moltmann's latest book, "A Broad Place: An Autobiography," was published in 2008. See his article "The Disarming Child" on page 1.

Dear Open Door Community,

Your ministry over these many years continues to energize me to persevere in mine out here in Cobb County, assisting people not to become homeless. Your newspaper provides readers a window into your activities and into your souls and your love for God and the dear neighbors in deep distress.

I feel I know some of the people you visit or live and eat with as you fill your paper with their voices, their lives and heartfelt insights. I am challenged by your writings on the social justice and injustice issues of our society.

Love and Prayers,
Ellen McCoy
Marietta, Georgia



Rita Corbin

A Letter from Professor Ronald Santoni to Ted Strickland, Governor of Ohio

Dear Governor Strickland,

I have already written to you requesting that you stop all executions in Ohio. Capital punishments are barbaric and contribute to the devaluation of life in our country and the world. There is no good argument for it: nearly all advanced countries in the world recognize this. The United States of America, which claims to be a light on the hill, morally and otherwise, and proclaims itself Christian, makes a mockery of both. You as a Christian minister surely understand that it violates the Christian Gospel of Love.

The judicial process and system are a complete mess with respect to the capital punishment issue and the administration of it. To foul up, e.g., in administering a lethal injection, as it was in two recent cases, is totally unfair and dehumanizing and cruel, and shows how absurd capital punishment truly is.

I ask you again, Governor, to reconsider your acceptance of capital punishment and bring this uncivilized practice to a halt in OHIO.

Sincerely yours and Peace!
Ronald E. Santoni
Maria Theresa Barney Professor Emeritus
of Philosophy
Denison University
Granville, Ohio

Dear Open Door,

I first got your *Hospitality* newspaper almost two months ago. I thought it was a mistake the first time, then the second one came. I don't know how I ended up on your mailing list, but I thank you very, very much.

A couple of days before your newspaper came, I was thinking of how nice it is that people help the needy and homeless. I really didn't know what to think when I first looked at the paper. Then I read the words "The Open Door." I like that. I opened my door; I open them all. What you do is great. Nothing by chance.

Thanks again,
Kevin Kelly
Banning, California

Dear Murphy,

It was wonderful to be with you and Eduard to celebrate the union of Lora Shain and Ed Weir. [See photo in the August-September issue, page 12.] What a joyful occasion! You (all) help me believe in myself.

Finally I feel ready to tackle the work of answering the letter from "Anonymous" in your July issue. [The letter was in response to the article "The Death Penalty: Deterrent or Legalized Murder?" by Ellis Roberts, published in May.] When I read the letter from Anonymous the first time, it was like a sock in the gut.

Point by point. It matters not to me whether the death penalty is a deterrent. We simply don't kill people, no matter what they have done.

Next, the thought of compassion. We do feel with the people who have lost a loved one in a violent crime. We can only be with them in their grief.

If an 18-year-old can fight for our country, or refuse to do so, that's maturity enough for me.

So far, I can argue with Anonymous. But here's the part that really got me where it hurts. If anyone raped, tortured and killed my daughter (I've only got the one), Anonymous is absolutely right. I would cheerfully kill the perpetrator with my bare hands, then with any sharp instrument that came to hand, then any ... well, you get the idea.

That's where community comes in. You would stand with me in my grief and rage. I would get no "there, there, now" from you. My Christian sisters and brothers would be with me in my anger and grief. Then, this is where the community comes in. You would wait patiently, and pray, until I was able to let go a little. Remember, I have just the one little ewe lamb. You would help me to love again, to forgive, and to go forward in the work for justice and nonviolence.

More than 20 years ago I took for myself the last name of Dorothy Day. I remember most her assertion that love is a harsh and dreadful thing — she got it from Dostoevsky, who was inspired by my ancestor Adin Ballou. Now the task before me is to remember and live in the knowledge that "love is the only solution."

And I sure do love you all at the Open Door who are so important to me on the journey.

Love,
Nikki Day Parfitt
Greenville, South Carolina



Rita Corbin

Open Door Community Ministries

Men's Showers: Monday, 7 a.m.

Womens Showers: Monday - Wednesday by appointment

Soup Kitchen: Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday,
11 a.m. – 12 noon.

Harriet Tubman Medical and Foot Care Clinic:
Wednesday, 7 p.m.

Use of Phone: Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday,
11 a.m. – 12 noon.

Retreats: Five times each year for our household,
volunteers and supporters.

Prison Ministry: Monthly trip to prisons in Hardwick,
Georgia, in partnership with First Presbyterian Church
of Milledgeville; monthly Jackson (Death Row) Trip;
pastoral visits in various jails and prisons.

We are open...

Sunday: We invite you to join us for **Worship** at **5 p.m.** and for
supper following worship. We are open from 9 a.m. until
4 p.m. for donations.

Monday through Thursday: We gratefully accept donations from
9 a.m. until noon and 2 until 8:30 p.m.

Friday and Saturday: We are closed. We are not able to offer
hospitality or accept donations on these days.

Our **Hospitality Ministries** also include visitation and letter
writing to prisoners in Georgia, anti-death penalty
advocacy, advocacy for the homeless, daily worship,
weekly Eucharist, and Foot Washing.

Join Us for Worship!

We gather for worship and Eucharist at 5 p.m. each Sunday, followed by supper together.

If you are considering bringing a group please contact us at 770.246.7628.

Please visit www.opendoorcommunity.org or call us for the most up-to-date worship schedule.

November 1	No Worship at 910 E lise Witt Concert (www.mindspring.com/~emworld)
November 8	Worship at 910 Eucharist Service
November 15	Worship at 910 Heather Bargeron preaching
November 22	No Worship at 910 join us for the SOA Watch Vigil at Fort Benning, Georgia
November 29	Advent Worship at 910 Nelia Kimbrough preaching
December 6	No Worship at 910 Advent Retreat at Dayspring Farm (12/3-6)
December 13	Advent Worship at 910 Eucharist Service
December 20	Advent Worship at 910 Service of Lessons & Carols
December 24	Christmas Eve Eucharist & Supper Thursday 6:00 p.m. (please call ahead if you would like to join us)
December 27	No Worship at 910

Mary and Her Baby



Robert McGovern

Clarification Meetings at the Open Door

We meet for clarification
on selected Monday evenings
from 7:30 - 9 p.m.

Plan to join us for
discussion and reflection!



Daniel Nichols

For the latest information and
scheduled topics, please call
404.874.9652
or visit

www.opendoorcommunity.org.

Medical Needs List

Harriet Tubman Medical Clinic

ibuprofen
lubriderm lotion
cough drops
non-drowsy allergy tablets
cough medicine (alcohol free)

Foot Care Clinic

epsom salt
anti-bacterial soap
shoe inserts
corn removal pads
exfoliation cream (e.g., apricot scrub)
pumice stones
foot spa
cuticle clippers
latex gloves
nail files (large)
toenail clippers (large)
medicated foot powder
antifungal cream (Tolfanate)

**We also need volunteers
to help staff our Foot Care Clinic
on Wednesday evenings
from 6:45 - 9:15 p.m.!**

Needs of the Community



we need **blankets!**

Living Needs

- jeans
- work shirts
- short sleeve shirts
with collars
- belts (34" & up)
- men's underwear
- socks
- reading glasses
- walking shoes**
(especially sizes **11-15**)
- T-shirts**
(L, XL, **XXL**, **XXXL**)
- baseball caps
- blankets**
- trash bags
(30 gallon, .85 mil)

Personal Needs

- shampoo (all sizes)
- lotion (all sizes)
- toothpaste (all sizes)
- combs & picks
- hair brushes
- lip balm
- soap (small sizes)
- multi-vitamins
- disposable razors
- deodorant
- vaseline
- shower powder
- Q-tips
- used prescription
containers for lotions

Food Needs

- fresh fruits &
vegetables
- turkeys/chickens
- hams
- sandwiches:
meat & cheese
on whole wheat
bread

Special Needs

- backpacks
- MARTA cards
- postage stamps
- Futon sofa
- single bed
mattress and
box springs

From 10 a.m. until 2 p.m. Monday through Wednesday our attention is focused on Bible study, serving the soup kitchen, reflection and household lunch. As much as we appreciate your coming, this is a difficult time for us to receive donations. Please come before 10 a.m. or after 2 p.m. THANK YOU!