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Racist Sport Names and Mascots

There's More to Be Done**By Bradley Hauff**

When the Washington, D.C. NFL team recently decided to change its name, it was after decades of demonstrations and protests of various kinds by Indigenous Native Americans and others who see the use of Indigenous people and culture for team names and mascots as a clear demonstration of racism in America. It took time, but grassroots efforts translated into the loss of corporate sponsorships for the team, resulting in its management making the change to a soon-to-be-determined moniker.

I am one of the people rejoicing over this. I have, with many others, protested the Washington team name for years. As an enrolled member of the Oglala Sioux Tribe, as were both my parents, I was raised with a sense of pride in my Indigenous heritage and have developed a great deal of sensitivity to our people's well-being. We are survivors of genocide. We were targeted for subjugation and colonization by the rulers of Europe, encouraged and blessed by the pope in edicts that became known as the Doctrine of Discovery. We were nearly annihilated over the course of 400 years (between the 1492 Columbus "discovery" to the 1890 Wounded Knee massacre), and were specifically, in writing, excluded from the Declaration of Independence. Jefferson referred to us as "merciless Indian savages." Our homelands were stolen and we were driven onto reservations by armies and settlers inspired by the philosophy of Manifest Destiny. Our tribal treaties with the U.S. government were repeatedly broken. We were forcibly subjected to cultural assimilation, the intention being to "kill the Indian in order to save the man." The goal was to make us disappear, one way or the other. And it basically succeeded, perpetrated by a government still very much in power today, and orchestrated by people seen as the good guys. Yet we are still here. Today in America there are over six million Indigenous people living all over the country. We have over 560 tribes, not including

those not federally recognized. We are not a thing of the past, and we are not going to be treated as such. We matter, and we are not going to tolerate insults or verbal abuse.

To Indigenous people, the R-word is the equivalent of the N-word. Now, there is no way a team would be allowed to be called the N-word, correct? Of course. So why is the R-word okay? Yet it has been the name of our national capital's team for over eighty years. In spite of objections and protests, the team's white ownership and their fans and supporters refused to budge. They simply said, "It's not racist," demonstrating one of the luxuries of white privilege—the ability to declare what is not racist on behalf of people of color. The issue was dismissed, time and again.

I am a sports fan. I like to watch football and baseball in particular. But every game day I, and millions of other Indigenous people, hear that awful R-word uttered by the announcers. We see our culture and people mocked by the tomahawk chop. We see racist imagery on the fan's clothing and costumes. We hear bogus chanting in the form of meaningless vocalizations, pretending to be a Native war song. We see non-Indigenous people dressed up in phony feathers and war paint. Each time we see and hear these things, it's like being whipped.

While I'm relieved by the Washington team's decision, there's more to be done. The Cleveland and Atlanta baseball teams, the Chicago hockey team, the Kansas City and Florida State football teams, and others, have long-overdue changes to make. Their use of Indigenous people and culture, and imagery associated with both, is degrading and humiliating. Have our people not endured enough abuse? Why must it continue, simply because it entertains our oppressors? Additionally, I'm tired of hearing white people tell me, "It's not racist." For those who might be having difficulty understanding my viewpoint or thinking that this is much ado about

Reparation

By Nibs Stroupe

In her fine article in the May *Hospitality*, "Rheumatoid Arthritis Teaches Me About Racism," Dr. Catherine Meeks gives us a powerful metaphor of racism as disease. In our book, *Passionate for Justice: Ida B. Wells as Prophet For Our Time*, Catherine and I suggest another metaphor for engaging racism: addiction. We list seven steps that those of us classified as "white" must work in order to lessen the power of race in our lives: recognition, repentance, resistance, resilience, reparation, reconciliation and recovery. Racism is a spiritual issue, because it is rooted in the idea of white supremacy. It is a primal, demonic force that taunts and seeks to diminish the power of the Gospel.

These are all difficult steps for those of us classified as "white" because we are in such deep denial about our captivity to white supremacy, in which racism is rooted. In that sense, the first step of "recognition" is the most difficult, but the most controversial step is reparation. Reparation is the fifth step and it must be approached in the context of the other four steps: recognition, repentance, resistance and resilience. Reparation is the idea that public acknowledgement and economic recompense must be made to the descendants of those who were held in slavery. In these days of protest and reinvigoration of justice movements, this can be the time when we move closer to racial equity and justice. The powerful captivity to white supremacy in American culture, however, has lasted for centuries, so it will take some monumental work to accomplish this. Taking down monuments is important—we were part of that work in Decatur, Georgia—but as the Rev. William Barber put it, we must take down both statues and statutes.

Slavery and neo-slavery ended not in 1865, but in 1965, with the passage of the Voting Rights Act. Slavery and neo-slavery were designed to use unpaid and cheap labor to create economic wealth. That is a fundamental fact of the American story. Many more stories and studies are revealing the depth and extent of slave and neo-slave labor in creating wealth that was not shared by the laborers and their descendants. This idea of reparation for the stolen labor and wealth of slavery is not new. After Union General William Sherman captured Atlanta and had begun his march to the sea, he issued special field order #15 in January 1865, confiscating 400,000 acres of coastal land in Georgia, South Carolina and Florida, giving it out in 40-acre plots to former slaves who were now free. It held for awhile, until new President Andrew Johnson rescinded it in the fall of 1865.

In 1988, President Ronald Reagan signed into law the Civil Liberties Act, which granted reparations of about \$20,000 each to surviving Japanese Americans who had been imprisoned in this country during World War II. Some 82,219

Racist Sport Names *continued on page 6***Reparation** *continued on page 6*

Introducing Eduard Loring

Board Member of the Open Door Community

By Lee Carroll

In 2016 when key partners in the Open Door Community “retired,” it was decided that the organization would continue as a much smaller residential community of only three people — Ed Loring, Murphy Davis and David Payne, and that it would relocate from Atlanta to Baltimore. At that point a new external Board of Directors was created to lead the organization.

This is the ninth in a series of short articles introducing readers to those who serve on the Board of Directors. These brief “spiritual biographies” describe the theological journeys of individual directors and how they help continue the legacy of the Open Door.

In this edition we tell the story of Eduard Loring, one of the founding partners of The Open Door Community. Many Hospitality readers will be familiar with Ed’s years in Atlanta where he is well known for his work among the poor and imprisoned. But fewer people know much about his life following the move to Baltimore in 2016. This article will focus on those four years.

Leaving Atlanta

Saying good-bye to Atlanta in 2016 was very difficult for Ed Loring, Murphy Davis and other members of the Open Door Community (ODC). Ed remembers it as an unanticipated loss of a way of life. “Something died,” he laments.

In 1981 — 35 years earlier — Ed, his wife Murphy Davis and other partners in the newly formed Open Door Community purchased a rambling 66-room, 1920-vintage house at 910 Ponce de Leon Avenue. They vowed to live there in Christian community and create a home where they could serve the poor, homeless and incarcerated. In time it became a base from which they fought for social justice, where meals were shared, where worship was offered and where residents engaged in Bible study and theological reflections.

After so many years, none of the partners really wanted to leave. “We were rooted in Atlanta,” Ed explained. “The streets of Atlanta had become a place of revelation, passion and action.” He and Murphy knew hundreds of homeless men and women, and they were supported by countless

friends, volunteers and ODC residents.

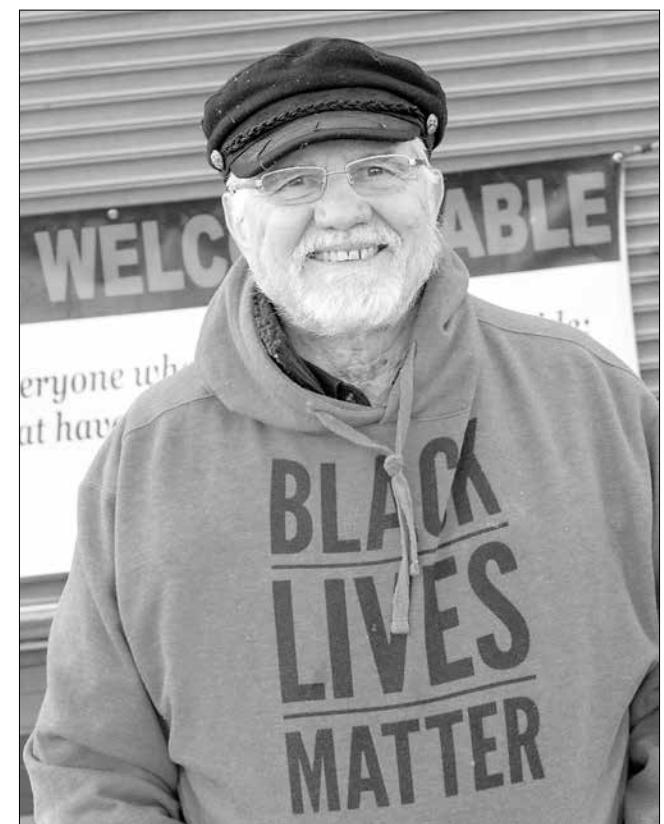
By 2016, Ed and Murphy were the only original partners who remained at 910 Ponce de Leon. Over the years, new, dedicated partners had invested their lives in the ODC and helped live out the ODC’s mission. But now all of the long-term partners were getting older, and some, including Murphy Davis, were experiencing serious health issues.

They had searched diligently for a “next generation” of ODC leaders who would commit themselves to serving there for the foreseeable future. A few excellent candidates emerged from time to time, but dedicating themselves to being there for “the long haul” was asking a lot — apparently, too much! To complicate matters, the tired old house on Ponce de Leon urgently needed repairs and costly improvements. Raising funds for ministry among the poor was manageable; but generating the cash for major capital improvements was prohibitive.

Finally, after a long, agonizing process of discernment, the surviving partners came to the inevitable decision that they must conclude their work at 910 Ponce and sell the house. Dick and Gladys Rustay moved to Vancouver, Washington, and Calvin and Nelia Kimbrough moved to Nashville, Tennessee. Other ODC residents went their own ways.

Ed and Murphy planned to remain in Atlanta and rent a small house, and to continue serving there as long as they were physically able. However, before they could act on that plan, they received an urgent call from their beloved daughter, Hannah Buc — now married and living in Baltimore, Maryland with her husband Jason and daughter Michaela. She urged Ed and Murphy to move to Baltimore to help them raise their daughter and build their family. Hannah’s invitation was heartfelt and compelling, and Ed and Murphy readily accepted.

Moving is inherently disruptive and stressful, but before they departed from Atlanta, Murphy — who had already survived multiple bouts with cancer — was diagnosed with yet another attack. A large squamous cell carcinoma had formed on her scalp. So, as difficult as it was for the couple to sell the house, dispose of the community’s belongings and say good-bye to Atlanta, this stress was compounded by learning that Murphy was facing yet another regimen of surgery and therapy. As things turned out, Baltimore proved to be an ideal place for Murphy to be treated, as she was able to go to the



Alison Reeder

highly regarded Johns Hopkins Hospital. Also, Hannah — who teaches nursing at the University of Maryland — lived nearby and was able to help Ed and Murphy navigate the medical system and decide about treatments. Following extended medical treatments, Murphy has weathered not only the cancer but several other health challenges. Grace abounds!

A Different Kind of Community

When Ed and Murphy announced their plans to move to Baltimore, David Payne and Robert Lee — two members of the ODC — raised the possibility that they might move to Baltimore with Ed and Murphy. While it was not initially a part of their thinking, Ed and Murphy began to consider the possibilities of creating a smaller, less complex Open Door Community in Baltimore. That idea quickly took root, and soon they were persuaded that this was the way to go!

They rented a small house that became their new home in Baltimore. Today the household consists of only Ed, Murphy, David Payne (ODC business manager) and Simon

Introducing Eduard Loring *continued on page 7*

HOSPITALITY

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 Thank you. David, Eduard and Murphy.

Dancing with the Angels

A Review of *Surely Goodness and Mercy*

By Catherine Meeks

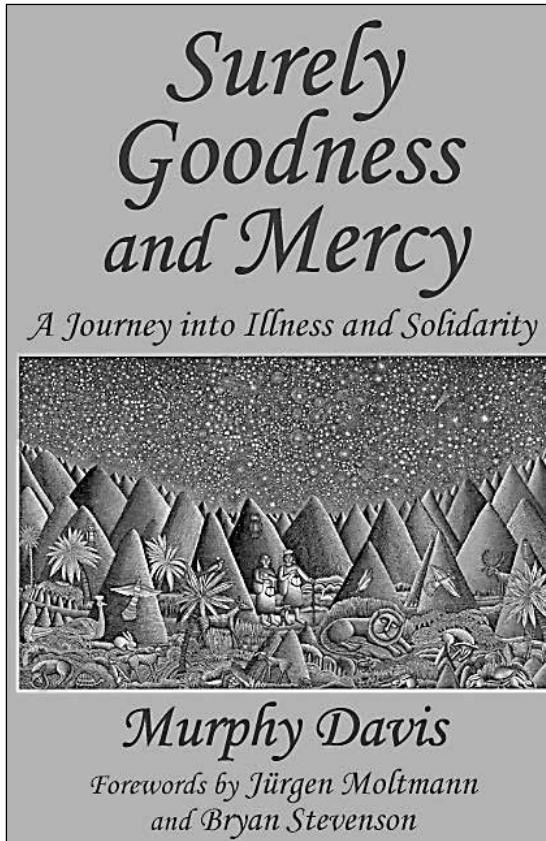
I wept. I laughed. I cheered. I was captivated. I sat in disbelief. I was inspired. These words describe some of the responses that I had while reading Murphy Davis' beautifully crafted *Surely Goodness and Mercy: A Journey into Illness and Solidarity*. She is a glorious storyteller who chronicles her long night's journey with bouts of Burkitt's lymphoma, breast cancer and fungal pneumonia, along with nine major surgeries, massive doses of chemotherapy, side effects and complications, radiation and seemingly endless hospital stays and clinic visits. In addition to the illness, she has participated along with her husband, Ed Loring, as a patient advocate for herself, since she had made the commitment along with all of the Open Door Community partners not to have health insurance. This commitment was made because the men and women who came from the streets and prisons to live at the Open Door had no health insurance and the partners were seeking to be genuinely connected to them in as many ways as possible. Thus, Grady Hospital, the public hospital for Atlanta, was the resource that was available to Murphy for her medical care and it was crucial to advocate for herself and to pay close attention to the medicine protocols that she was following, because the excessive workloads carried by Grady staff created challenges from time to time with promptly getting medicines that had to be administered on a strict schedule.

Though she received good medical care at Grady, there are many times when her ability to advocate for herself contributed to her survival. She describes several instances where her conscientiousness and active participation as a member of her healing team made it clear to her, as it does to the reader, that a person with a lesser sense of the need or ability to be involved in their treatment regimen would not have done as well and in some cases might not have survived at all. Unfortunately, this is part of the plight of the poor and of people who cannot imagine themselves as a part of their medical team. This is one of the many junctures of solidarity with the poor and the prisoner that Murphy embraced. It was the sojourn through the public hospital system at Grady while battling devastating illnesses that broke her heart, enlivened her soul and clearly marked her as one who can claim solidarity without hesitation with the folks to whom she has dedicated her life.

Our dear brother Bryan Stevenson characterizes Murphy as a person "dancing with the angels," and that is such a good image to help describe her spectacular journey, unfolding in these past years as she walks on the path of illness into solidarity with herself and God. Of course, no one except the person experiencing it can know what it is really like to be invited to death's door multiple times and to have the great hand of God's Grace rescue her from death but not from the pain that was nearly enough to take her life even if the cancer or other illnesses did not. But Murphy manages to invite us into her story in a manner that allows us to experience some of the transforming energy that comes from going to death's door and back.

One cannot encounter angels and stay the same. It appears that it is costly to engage angels, and any who are brave enough to stay on such a journey will be led to having a broken heart. But it is the broken-hearted person who knows better than anyone how to walk alongside the poor, the prisoner and others who are deemed expendable by society. Extreme suffering slices through all of the ego's defenses, leading the person to the core of themselves and allowing a new light to shine in them. Such a light shines in Murphy and it lights up her life and story.

request your copy now!
Open Door Community Press



*Surely
Goodness
and Mercy*
A Journey into Illness and Solidarity

Murphy Davis
Forewords by Jürgen Moltmann
and Bryan Stevenson



Alison Reeder

Surely Goodness and Mercy
A Journey into Illness and Solidarity

by Murphy Davis

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At times, I found myself crying as I read this extraordinary story, only to be surprised by Murphy's sense of humor, which is sprinkled throughout the book just as it is in her everyday life. The capacity to laugh is priceless whether one is sick or well. It is a gift to be able to laugh with a person that you are accompanying to their death, especially death by execution, which she has done many times because of her ability to forge deep connections to precious persons who are deemed expendable. She knows that they are not; she always affirms their humanity and they want her to be with them at their death. The ability to spontaneously respond with humor even in times of death and dying is related to joy and faith and is deeply rooted in the relationships formed in broken-heartedness and the seams where that brokenness is mended by love and solidarity.

It takes a community of loving and committed people along with close family members to help call forth that mysterious quality that resides in the depths of a person that keeps her on the dance floor with the angels. Murphy

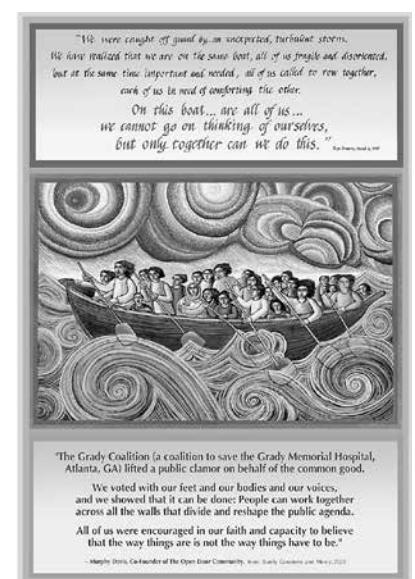
has stayed on the dance floor way past the times that physicians and others thought that she surely would vacate it for release from her suffering. The mystery of it all simply has to be held in our hearts as we listen to her awesome story and experience her fierceness about living. She brings that same spirit of fierceness to the quest for justice and right treatment of those whom society is quick to discard. She brings her nonsense, matter of fact, faith-filled way of being to all parts of her journey, and has been met in turn by amazing grace.

Surely Goodness and Mercy tells us about holding on to God's unfailing and unchanging hand while falling into what appears to be the abyss, only to find that the angels are waiting there ready to dance. This book will encourage you to make sure that you are prepared to die even though you may never be ready. It affirms the necessity of coming to terms with death and being set free from the fear of death that hinders one from living fully. This is an account of a journey into the depths of life and death that lead to new birth, new capacities for love, care and solidarity with the least of God's children as well as others who cross her path. It is a testimony to the essential value of community and the absolute necessity for the sufferer to be wrapped in the rainbows of the community's love and support if the struggle is to be engaged. Yes, Murphy Davis dances with the angels and this powerful account of her journey into illness and solidarity will give the reader renewed hope and determination to dance. ♦

Catherine Meeks is the Founding Executive Director of the Absalom Jones Episcopal Center for Racial Healing, and the retired Clara Carter Acree Distinguished Professor of Socio-cultural Studies and Sociology from Wesleyan College. She has published six books and is editor of *Living Into God's Dream: Dismantling Racism in America* (2016), which focuses on racial healing and reconciliation. She and Nibs Stroupe are authors of *Passionate for Justice* (2019), a book about the life and witness of Ida B. Wells for our time. She writes for the Huffington Post and is a regular contributor to Hospitality. She is involved with prison work, visits on death row and works for the abolition of the death penalty. (kayma53@att.net)

Artist John August Swanson, who created the beautiful cover art for *Surely Goodness and Mercy*:

"Murphy Davis's book is so powerful and moving that it inspired me to use a quote from it along with Pope Francis's quote on my new poster *Storm*."



The poster sells for \$15 and can be ordered at:
<https://temp.johnaugustswanson.com/product/storm2020-poster>

The Oil that Keeps the Lamp Burning

Dorothy Day and the Books She Loved

By Rosalie Riegle

Even as a child, Dorothy was an avid reader. Books were important through her entire life, feeding her curiosity about the world and its peoples, nurturing her Christianity, helping her to understand the challenges and changes of history, providing practical help when times were tough, taking her mind off the troubles in the world and the Catholic Worker in which she lived, giving her both solace and courage, enabling her to gently guide the people with whom she worked, and yes, providing endless entertainment. She once ended a diary entry with, "So I shall read Conrad to forget about my troubles." Some of her favorite escape books were the detective novels of Tony Hillerman and Dorothy Sayers. She enjoyed the Jewish world of Chaim Potek and from the Rabbi Small mysteries she "learned much about the Talmud."

"What a help Dickens is in times of trouble," she once wrote in her diary. She read his *Life of Our Lord*, and particularly loved *Bleak House*, *Barnaby Ridge*, and *David Copperfield*. When she traveled to London, she took the bus to visit places Dickens had mentioned. She loved other great novelists as well — the Russians, Sigrid Undset, Jack London, Charlotte Brontë, Jane Austen — too many to name.



Catholic Worker Archives | Marquette University

The late Julian Pleasants of South Bend told me her suitcase was heavy with books, as they provided comfort and courage as well as entertainment on long bus rides.

Dorothy frequently wrote in her diary about what she was currently reading, and would sometimes recall books she had once read, especially if she was worried or upset. Toward the end of her life, she confided, "My heart can still leap for joy as I read and suddenly assent to some great truth enunciated by some great mind and heart."

She loved especially the Russian novels, and for good reason. She once wrote, "Chekhov is a never-failing inspiration and Dostoevsky gave me insights into such work as ours." Jim Forest said, "So significant was Dostoevsky's influence on Dorothy's basic vision of Christianity that I sometimes wonder whether [he] ought not to be listed among the co-founders of the Catholic Worker." She read and re-read his works, and her often-quoted saying, "Love in action is a harsh and dreadful thing," comes from *The Brothers Karamazov*.

In 1979, one year before she died, she told her friend Rosemary Morse, "I think I'm in love with Solzhenitsyn." She read everything he wrote, especially when confined to her room with age and ill health. In her diary of that last full year, she wrote that she liked a long book, one "she could live with for a few weeks."

She frequently talked about books in her letters, as well, and would sometimes use fiction to make a point. For instance, in 1969 she wrote to her friend Karl Meyer, now of Nashville Greenlands Catholic Worker, about his plans for large buildings to lodge the homeless. First, she asked him if he remembered Maxim Gorky's stories, "The Lower Depths" and "Creatures Who Once Were Men." Note that she didn't ask if he had read them or tell him to read them; she cemented their friendship by assuming shared reading interests. Both these Russian stories tell of abysmal conditions in municipal lodging houses. Dorothy doesn't come right out and say that she disagrees with Karl's plan; instead she reasons gently with him, pointing to personalism and the Catholic Worker objective to "build a new society in the shell

of the old," and depending on her novelist friend Gorky to bolster her argument.

Dorothy would compare her real-life friends to people in novels. She also considered books themselves as friends and never traveled without them. The late Julian Pleasants of South Bend told me her suitcase was heavy with books, as they provided comfort and courage as well as entertainment on long bus rides. To give you some idea of the small-c catholicity of her tastes, these are the books mentioned in her marvelous autobiography, *The Long Loneliness*, (including pages where mentioned) many of them while recounting her pre-conversion life: Carl Sandburg (37), Upton Sinclair (37, 41, 42), Edgar Lee Masters and William Shakespeare (49), Francois Mauriac (59, 71), Arthur Koestler (74), James Joyce and Eugene O'Neill (84), Honore de Balzac, Victor Hugo, (94), Guy de Maupassant (94), Karl Huysmans and Blaise Pascal (107), Hart Crane and Allen Tate (113), Romain Rolland (134-5), Charles Péguy (170, 177), Jacques Maritain (186), Paul Claudel (209), Andre Gide (221), Pierre Joseph Proudhon (245), Henri de Lubac (258), Leon Bloy (283), and John Steinbeck (212, 230, 236). When she speaks of James Joyce's, *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, what she doesn't mention is that her lover Lionel Moise ripped it out of her hands and threw it out the window of the "L" when they were together in Chicago.

Of course, spiritual reading was as important as fiction, and she was one of the first lay Roman Catholics to read the Bible constantly and consistently. Early on in her conversion she wrote, "No matter how old I get, I will always have the torrents of pleasure promised in the Psalms." She once wrote Catherine de Hueck Doherty that she "could get along for a long time on the New Testament, the *Imitation*, and de Caussade's *Abandonment to Divine Providence* [with its advice to live in the present moment]." She often mentioned spending time with Thomas a Kempis' *Imitation of Christ*. Written in the fifteenth century, it has apparently been trans-

lated into more languages than any book other than the Bible.

Dorothy read many books about saints, including the massive *Lives of the Saints* by Fr. Alban Butler, where she looked especially for lay saints and biographies and autobiographies of St. Therese of Lisieux, St. Teresa of Avila, and others. She also wrote a biography of St. Therese. Like many seekers today, she read and recommended Brother Lawrence's *The Practice of the Presence of God* and wrote an introduction to the Templegate edition in 1974.

As Dorothy became older, she resonated with the Benedictine Van Zeller's *Approach to Calvary* "on accepting discouragement that comes with age." Earlier, she had been attracted to the Benedictine liturgist Fr. Virgil Michel, and the Karl Huysmans novels helped her decide to become a Benedictine Oblate.

Contemporary Christian writers included Martin Luther King Jr., Thomas Merton and Jacques Maritain. She recommended her friend William Story's *Praise Him! A Prayer-book for Today's Christians*, a small book of the Hours for daily reading, with many of the prayers written by saints.

Dorothy once called books "the oil that keeps the lamp burning." Reading about her life and her reading in her autobiography, letters and diaries can give all of us the courage to keep our own lamps burning in these troubled times. ♦

Books for Reference:

- The Long Loneliness* (several editions)
- The Duty of Delight: The Diaries of Dorothy Day*. Robert Ellsberg, Editor
- All the Way to Heaven: The Selected Letters of Dorothy Day*. Robert Ellsberg, Editor.

Rosalie Riegle is a grandmother; an oral historian and emerita in English from Saginaw Valley State University in Michigan. Now living in Evanston, Illinois and active with Su Casa Catholic Worker on the South Side of Chicago, Rosalie's latest books are *Doing Time for Peace: Resistance, Family, and Community*, and *Crossing the Line: Nonviolent Resisters Speak Out for Peace*. (riegle@svsu.edu)

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Mystery, Myth and Majesty

The Creation Story #1 in the Hebrew Scriptures, Genesis 1:1-2:4 GNB

By Eduard Loring

Ancient pathologies plague folks. Like whites and police killing African Americans at will for centuries. The police prior to 1865 were named patty rollers or slave patrols, first established in South Carolina in 1704, or bounty hunters. (See the films *Harriet* and *Retrieval*). Another plague for Protestants (Protestors) is Luther's narrow Sola Scriptura: the Word of God alone. This has never worked even for those who do not believe in science. The Roman Catholics have plagues too. Like the inferiority of women and a corollary, celibacy for grown men!

The Creation Story is a majestic tale full of light and hope. We believe that God is Love and Jesus is Black. Discipleship's inward journey is a continuing growing into a mature human being. William Stringfellow suggests that integrity is being the same person everywhere and at all times. He believes that our vocation is to be who we are. Our outward journey is to give our lives for children, women, men, queers and especially the poor, the prisoner, the hungry, the homeless ones. We are "with the poor" in love for neighbor and we live in solidarity for the sake of our own salvation. A mix of the love ethic and self-interest. What must I do to be free, fully human and mature? Reduce the distance and live for The Other. We fight the Powers and Principalities of White Supremacy and The American Empire. In the usa context this means concretely people of color and our transgender brothers and sisters. The Creation Story is a poet's song.

The Creation Story is a dance. A mythic tale told by a poet signifying the love of earth and animals and the sea and the sky and the birds and God and lastly Human Beings. Loving this tale will turn the heart toward the Progressive Agenda of Earth Care and Animal Care and Human Care. And NO WAR!!!

I read the Bible stories with literary criticism or interpretation. I learned this method from Phoebe Smith, Ched Myers, Will O'Brien and Robert Penn Warren's poetry, particularly "Original Sin: A Short Story." I am thankful for Feminist writers and the continual workshopping by Murphy Davis and Hannah Murphy Buc. I give little loyalty to any religion or religious institution that does not embrace, yea, incarnate the equality of women. One cannot cherish the first Creation Story without resisting, coming out and engaging to tear down the filthy rotten religious structures of sexism and misogyny. As James Baldwin put it in his prophetic *The Fire Next Time*, "If the concept of God has any validity or any use, it can only be to make us larger, freer and more loving. If God cannot do this, then it is time we got rid of Him." (p. 314 Library of America edition)

How does the story begin? How can it be? The story begins with something already there.

Genesis 1-4a: "In the beginning, when God created the universe, the earth was formless and desolate. The raging ocean that covered everything was engulfed in total darkness, and The Spirit of God was moving over the waters." Then God commanded, "Let there be light" — and light appeared. God was pleased with what she saw"

In 1971 when I was ordained, I told several lies. I had

to lie to be ordained and many of my friends were lying also. As one who came to theological education initially interested in theology and literature, I knew Sola Scriptura was narrow and impossible. For ordination's sake I subscribed to it and to the Just War theory. I confessed to the philosophical, unbiblical attributes of God in the Westminster Confession of Faith. I subscribed to the Virgin Birth, which in our seminary campus life meant you were for Barry Goldwater and White Supremacy vs. those of us who denied the virgin birth (until ordination exams) which meant we were with Lyndon Johnson and Martin Luther King Jr. Nashville Presbytery refused to ordain me. Ordained by the Florida Presbytery, I almost did not pass because I refused to say I believed Hell was a place. Oh well, I made it and here I am.

"What does Jerusalem have to do with Athens?" was the way our great theology teacher Shirley Guthrie put it. Meaning that Sola Scriptura did not make use of philosophy (Athens). This introduced a great dilemma for Biblical theology and fidelity because faith required, so it was said, that nothing existed before God spoke. That contradicts the Scripture. Well, protecting God is more important than protecting the Bible, though to many, God and the Bible (and the usa) are the same. (Today, First Presbyterian Church, Vancouver

wife, Pat, and our son, Neely, less than a year old, lived. The darkness was so dark I could see nothing. I was afraid. The only way I could make my way was the sound of my boots on the crushed rock on the unpaved road. Total darkness is difficult to experience in the usa. Even at our former Dayspring farm in the mountains of Georgia, our neighbors had "security lights" because of their fear of the darkness.

God is Light. God is love. God is not afraid of the dark. God wills you and me to be "Children of the Light." God's first act is to create Light. God begins with light.

Genesis 1:2b: ... And the Spirit of God was moving over the water."

Spirit is an all-powerful word (ruah) in the Hebrew Scriptures. In verse 2b the Spirit of God is the imaginative, creative force of the God who is love. This is the creation of Life. All life. Which by the end of this engaging narrative will include the birth of men and women, human beings. We could say, "And the breath of God was moving over the water."

Pause. Breath is God? Breath is of God? Breath is life? Human Life. God's life. My life. Your life. But not Mr. George Floyd's life or Many Thousand Gone. The horror of "I can't breathe." Eleven times Mr. Eric Garner pleaded with Daniel Panteleo.

Then he was a dead man. Sometimes a Blue Brotherhood misanthrope will use 9 minutes. The White Horror is no breath for others. No life for others. The exact opposite of the love and action of the God of love who is the God of breath who is the God of life who is the God of creation. When will the breath-destroying



Meinrad Craighead

Washington has an American flag close to the altar.)

You may well never have heard of the needle and thread used to stitch the torn garment in the Creation Story: *Creation ex Nihilo*. Translated from the Latin: Creation out of nothing. But you can read above that "the earth was formless and desolate." To read the Creation Story as beautiful literature, at points even profound poetry, is to let all the contradictions of the Bible and the needs of systematic theology go to sea with Captain Ahab. The Creation Story offers symbols, myths and mystery which sustain our souls in the days of the dying American Empire and the crumbling of white Christianity. The story before us is great literature and like great literature brings light to our journey — our understanding of life, our identity, the aims and purposes toward which we move if we are blessed enough to have a destiny instead of a fate.

Please walk with me:

Genesis 2b: "The raging ocean that covered everything was engulfed in total darkness"

All human experience is subject to raging waters and darkness. If not literally, then as images and metaphors of our experience. The operative word in this verse is darkness. In the beginning we have raging waters and darkness. Darkness brings the unknown. Fear. I remember a darkness in the summer of 1970 in the Appalachian strip-mining area of Tennessee where a group of us created a folk school for the summer. This is the location of the binding relationship between Nibs and me. Our friendship is a David and Jonathan relationship. I am still chasing his arrows! One night I was alone, walking back to the abandoned strip-mine workers' shack where my

lynching stop? (Ask Ron Paul of Kentucky.)

Irony. An inspiring man of the movement, Colin Kaepernick, took a knee. Not on anyone's neck, but on the earth. Taking the knee can be a sign of humility and reverence even during the warring national anthem (see Barbara Kingsolver for a critique of the 1812 song of military victory. Why not Woody Guthrie's "This Land is My Land, This Land is Your Land"?). But Kaepernick took his knee to protest the Blue Brotherhood's brutality, a witness for life and peace. The police take a knee to take a life. Today taking a knee is a mark of defunding the police, remaking police departments and defanging police unions. Kaepernick suffered for his witness. Here is a Black Jesus Disciple!

When Derek Chauvin, Thomas Lane, J. Alexander Kueng, and Tou Thao bled the breath from "Perry," they killed him and the God of love who was in him. This same breath that created the universe and saw that it was good. What is murder but an attempt to kill God? Or is God simply collateral damage? Either way, death is death is death and now white America, which has been killing the God in us and especially in African Americans, is dying. To steal the breath from one is to abominate God: an act of dismantling creation. ♦

Eduard Nuessner Loring is an Activist/Advocate/Ally at the Open Door Community in Baltimore. Pronouns: he, him, his. (edloring@opendoorcommunity.org)

Racist Sport Names and Mascots: There's More to Be Done *continued from page 1*

nothing, I ask that you consider the following four points.

First off, Indigenous team names and mascots are not necessary. They don't *have to* exist at all. So why are they continued, and why the hesitancy to change them? I understand that there's money involved. Signs at the stadium will have to be modified and new uniforms and souvenirs will have to be produced. But isn't restoring dignity to a people worth it? And haven't Indigenous people paid a much bigger price so that America could become the affluent and thriving nation that it has been since 1776?

Secondly, Indigenous team names and mascots *are* racist. Racism is about prejudice and power. Prejudice is obvious in the tomahawk chop, in which Indigenous people are mocked as violent people intent on murdering or scalping others (scalping, by the way, was practiced for centuries in Europe prior to 1492), who chant wordless made-up tunes as if they don't have a language or a language that is worth learning. Racism is obvious in the white ownership's denial that it is offensive, their unwillingness to change, and their financial profiting from the practice. They have the power to change, but most of them won't. If the ownership were Indigenous it would be a different story. But in that case the tomahawk chop would not be tolerated. It is racist. The chop stops here.

Thirdly, Indigenous team names and mascots are insensitive and hurtful. It's as simple as that. Yet in some instances team owners who don't want to change will find a handful of Indigenous people, or maybe the chairperson of one or two

tribes, who are willing to say that they're not offended, to justify not changing. I believe that the Washington owners did this at one time. And that silences the opposition, even though the opposition consists of many more people and tribes. So, how many people have to be offended by something in order for it to be considered offensive? Ninety percent? Seventy-five percent? If 50 percent of the people are offended, is that enough? It is my opinion that Indigenous names and mascots do not have to be seen as offensive by 100% of Indigenous people in order to be offensive, and anyone trying to make that case is manipulating a group of people in order to perpetuate racism.

Fourthly, Indigenous team names and mascots destroy the humanity of the Indigenous people they attempt to portray. The majority of mascots are animals (Tigers, Panthers, etc.), anonymous legendary figures of history (49ers, Vikings, etc.), fictional characters (Fighting Irish, Padres, etc.) and anonymous figures associated with the team's city (Twins, Steelers, etc.). They tend not to be actual human beings, although there are some exceptions. One is the Cleveland Browns, named after founder Paul Brown, who was one of the team's owners. Their mascot is Brownie the Elf, a mythological figure not intended to be or represent Brown himself. Another is the high school team my father, an Oglala Lakota, played for when he attended the Pine Ridge Indian Boarding School in South Dakota — the Thorpes, named after the great Sac and Fox athlete Jim Thorpe. They did not have a mascot however. To me this indicates that mascots are not intended

to be actual people, unless they are of a historical nature. This is what the use of Indigenous sports team names and mascots does: It takes contemporary people, made in the image of God, and relegates them to historical, mythological status. It reduces us to figures of the past who no longer exist. It takes the human out of the being. The Indigenous theologian Vine Deloria, Jr. said that Indigenous people have become, and are expected to be, people we have never been.

We've come a long way, and we still have a long way to go. The people who are content with the status quo, and those who are vociferously defensive of it, are many in number. They don't care because they don't have to care. There is no consequence for them if they don't. That's white privilege. Furthermore, they have a mentor and cheerleader currently in the Oval Office. Someone who validates and compliments them. So Indigenous sports names and mascots are likely not to completely disappear anytime soon. But those who know how racist and damaging they are to the psyche of Indigenous people are not going away either. I hope you will join us. Pass the word on. Make your view known. Protest. Write the owners of teams. Write the corporate sponsors of teams. It worked in Washington, and it can work again. ♦

*Reverend Dr. Bradley Hauff is Missioner for Indigenous Ministries for The Episcopal Church and an enrolled member of the Oglala Sioux Tribe of South Dakota.
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Reparation *continued from page 1*

people received checks. That number is dwarfed by the numbers of African American descendants of people held in slavery, but this example serves as a starting point. Reparation could focus on both individuals and on institutions. Universities like Georgetown, Yale and Princeton have begun to take initial actions in relation to the profits they made off slave labor, and while they seem significant at the moment, they are only a small beginning. The depth of the problem is seen in this way: Those involved in the discussions see significant progress being made, while those whose ancestors had their labor stolen see such actions as only gestures to make white people feel better about continuing to profit from the stolen labor.

For those of us in the Christian tradition, we have biblical resources that also point the way forward. Old Testament passages like Leviticus 25:1-10 and Deuteronomy 15:12-18 remind us that this idea of reparation was built into the codes of Israel, but also intriguing is Luke 19:1-10. In this passage the hated tax collector Zaccheus is welcomed by Jesus, and in return, he promises to make reparation to those whom he has cheated. For those of us in the church, reparation is a spiritual issue because it forces us to face the false gods in our lives. It also offers us the opportunity to engage the joy that Zaccheus experienced when Jesus, moved by the pledge for reparation, made the great pronouncement: "Today salvation has come to this house." Until I began to work these seven steps, I never perceived this Luke passage to be about reparation, but it clearly is. Our Biblical heritage also reminds us that we will not know the true power of the Gospel until we begin to work on the breaches in the community. The economic disparity created by slavery and neo-slavery is one of those central breaches.

In this abbreviated space, I cannot begin to touch the depth of the issue of reparation, but I want to offer four areas as beginning points. First, reparation is a powerful spiritual challenge because it hits so close to the home that we have made for ourselves in accommodating the Gospel to

American culture: the interweaving of the Gospel, materialism and white supremacy. To engage the idea of reparation will require all of us, but especially those of us classified as "white," to acknowledge the deep and lasting spiritual and economic impact that slavery and neo-slavery have had on those whose labor has been stolen and on those who have stolen it. We must also acknowledge the deep and lasting effect that these forces have had on those of us who are classified as "white." We believe that we are supreme, that we own the world and all who are in it.

Second, the consideration of reparation requires us to swim against the stream of the ideas of individual achievement and earned privileges that permeates our consciousness in this culture. This idea emphasizes that if one has "stuff," it is because they have worked hard and earned it, while if someone does not have "stuff," it is because they have been irresponsible and idle. This does not mean that people do not work hard — it means an acknowledgment that many people work hard and use their money well. Those who accumulate wealth often do so because the system of white supremacy favors them. Reparation means that we will be required to acknowledge this system of meritocracy and will seek to reshape our idea of equity so that all those who work hard will have access to the desirable "stuff" of the system.

Engaging these first two points would be such a monumental step for all of us, but even if we agree that reparation is an idea whose time has come, the practicalities of implementing it are mind-boggling. How would we determine an amount? Who would be eligible? How would we pay for it? Given the divisive nature of our current public life, it will be difficult to make much progress on this in governmental life. Yet, there are at least two directions that communities of faith could take, regardless of what any legislature does. We could strongly encourage our church judicatories to designate parts of our budgets to supply floors of income to descendants of people held as slaves. While there are many problems inherent in this approach, it can be done. We did it during my

time at Oakhurst Presbyterian Church, sponsoring floors of income for families who were descendants of people held as slaves. It was helpful that all four were members of the church, and this is an approach worth considering — it needs no governmental sanction.

Finally, we can begin to take action to help Congress consider an amendment to the Constitution that would end the "three-fifths" clause, which designated people of African descent and Native American people as 60% human beings. This would be a huge step in moving forward the discussion about racism and reparation. Here's one suggestion that I made a couple of years ago in my weekly blog:

Human Beings Amendment

This amendment to the Constitution specifically repeals the phrase "which shall be determined by adding to the whole Number of free Persons, including those bound to Service for a Term of Years, and excluding Indians not taxed, three fifths of all other Persons," of Article 1, Section 2, paragraph 3, and replaces it with the phrase "which shall be determined by the number of American population. All American citizens are acknowledged to be 100% human beings in this Constitution."

If you like it, contact your Congressperson and suggest that they bring it up. If you have suggestions to improve it, contact me. But whatever you do, remember that short guy Zaccheus and his decision to make reparation. He heard Jesus say: "Today salvation has come to this house." ♦

Nibs Stroupe is a longtime friend of the Open Door; retired pastor and author of Deeper Waters: Sermons for a New Vision. He and Catherine Meeks are authors of Passionate for Justice, a book about the life and witness of Ida B. Wells for our time. He writes a weekly blog at www.nibsnotes.blogspot.com. (nibs.stroupe@gmail.com)

Introducing Eduard Loring: Board Member of the Open Door Community *continued from page 2*

(immigrant and guest in the “Christ Room”). Daughter Hannah and her family live nearby. Beyond them, others volunteer to help with ODC’s Welcome Table food ministry, but they all live in separate homes. Circumstances make it unfeasible for this non-residential community daily to share meals, worship and have theological reflections together. Instead, ODC-Baltimore exists as a loose federation of kindred spirits sharing the work of the Open Door.

The Mission Continues

When they resettled in Baltimore, Ed was guided by three basic goals.

First, he wanted to continue publishing *Hospitality*. Writing articles for this newspaper had long been an important part of his work, but after the move, he also found it necessary to assume the role of managing editor — a time consuming administrative role. He values *Hospitality* as an alternative voice for speaking truth to power, and he finds particular satisfaction in hearing from many prisoners that they appreciate this witness.

Second, he wanted to continue ODC’s long-standing prison ministry. He and Murphy still correspond with prisoners in Georgia; but since they now live in Maryland and must be careful about Murphy’s health, pastoral visits have become logistically and financially unsustainable. Therefore, the ODC recently arranged for New Hope House — a sister organization near Jackson, Georgia led by Mary Catherine Johnson with a strong reputation for their work with prisoners — to assume many aspects of this ministry, especially the pastoral care of those on Georgia’s death row.

Third, Ed wanted to continue a ministry of compassion and be present on the streets of his adopted city. This goal has been addressed primarily through ODC’s “Welcome Table,” a twice-weekly meal for the poor of the Sandtown neighborhood of West Baltimore. Initially, the Welcome Table served only free coffee, bananas and granola bars. But thanks to the commitment of neighborhood volunteer Erica Prettyman, hot soup is now also available. In addition, Tyrone Cole and Beth Dellow have become loyal volunteers who make the program possible. When asked what parts of his life in Baltimore energize him the most, Ed readily responded, “The Welcome Table — where I get to interact with our guests.”

Beyond these priorities, resistance and advocacy are essential parts of his ministry. He distinguishes between resistance and advocacy, understanding *resistance* as calling public attention to injustices through non-violent mass

demonstrations and marches, and *advocacy* to be working for just and equitable public policies. In earlier years he focused almost exclusively on resistance, but he has come to believe that both are equally important. He and Murphy both want to be more active in resistance *and* advocacy, but to date, health issues have made this very difficult. Still, Ed finds that his experiences on the streets are pushing him to resist and advocate for the poor

Core Vocation

In their years in Baltimore, Ed has come to understand his vocation as being a follower of the “Black Jesus” and resisting the “white Christ.” This entails taking a stance against the all-too-common notion that Jesus is a domesticated deity who endorses the misguided and unbiblical ideology of white supremacy. Ed finds the Synoptic Gospels — Matthew, Mark and Luke — to be of special relevance in unmasking such idolatry, and from a careful reading of those biblical texts, he finds himself called to a life of social activism on behalf of the poor and oppressed.

Spiritual Disciplines

Along with his role as an activist, Ed also engages routinely in spiritual disciplines — a practice that he learned from Dorothy Day and the Catholic Worker Movement. Except for days when travel or family obligations prevent him from doing so, Ed spends about an hour each morning praying, reading the Scriptures and other theological writings, observing silence and following other spiritual practices. Typically, he situates himself in a quiet area of their home, lights a candle and sets up a painting to help center him, and then enters into a season of meditation and reflection. Ed finds that contemplative disciplines help him discern the will of God for his life and ministry.

Theological Underpinnings

Ed has long believed that the vocation of all humans is to do justice. But more recently he has also come to believe that God elects *not* to intervene in human history to relieve suffering, eradicate diseases, or solve other human problems. Instead, he asserts, “God embodies God’s Self in those who do God’s will, and *that* is the way God acts in history.”

Because he believes that God elects to work through human agency, he finds it essential that we seek to discern

“God’s will” through spiritual practices like studying the Scriptures, listening to the voices of the poor, worshipping, praying and theological reflection. Through such practices, he says, we experience a “revolution of the heart” that brings urgency to our work for justice.

Social analysis is another way Ed seeks the mind of God. While numerous perspectives may be valid, Ed believes that economics is the essential lens for understanding human history and current affairs. “Just as bread and water are essential to human life,” he says, “economics is essential for understanding public values and actions.”

Accordingly, when Ed compares U.S. economic values to the teachings of Jesus, he finds that materialism immorally dominates U.S. culture and marginalizes the poor — a reality that begs for social justice. This is precisely the kind of analysis that has led Ed to embrace the labor movement in the U.S., as he sees them championing social and financial equality for the poor and middle classes. He also contends that the U.S. is now ruled by a wealthy *minority* of citizens who employ covert strategies to expand their own wealth and power — a sure sign of moral decay, a clear call for moral revival.

A Grateful Heart

A casual reading of this article will quickly lead the reader to appreciate the important role that Murphy Davis has played in Ed’s story. Their life stories and ministries have been inextricably bound. So to tell the story of Ed Loring is to tell the story of Murphy, and vice versa.

That is especially true when one looks back at Murphy’s 25-year history of dealing with cancer and other health issues. They have always faced the cancer demon together, and through that long series of struggles, Ed has come to have a profound sense of gratitude to God for journeying with them through this time of pain and tumult. As Ed often reminds us, God never promised to spare us from suffering and hardship. But God did promise always to be with us. And Ed believes at a very deep level that God has been faithful to that promise. ♦

Lee Carroll is an ordained minister of the Presbyterian Church (USA) and Associate Professor Emeritus of Columbia Theological Seminary, Decatur, Georgia. He is the current chair of the Board of Directors of the Open Door Community. (lcarroll@ix.netcom.com)

The Box

1

Have you read the 1930 abortion novel by Faulkner, *As I Lay Dying*?

A recurring theme and a part of the plot of this famous novel is the unwanted pregnancy of the 17-year-old Dewey Dell Bundren. The story describes the life of a dirt-poor white family in the ruined South. Dewey Dell’s story represents the “place” of the powerless and “worthless” girl when abortion is illegal. She has agency. (Ask, Seek, Knock.) Twice she attempts to get an abortion pill. On her first attempt, the pharmacist tells her to go home and get married (anti-abortion). He fails to listen to her cry. In Jefferson, the fake doctor gives her a fake pill and tells her to return at night. He then concludes the abortion treatment by raping her. (He has no morals. He is pro-abortion when it works for his lust and pleasure.) The doc may remind the reader of the Christian Right Republicans who oppose all abortions in the name of the White Christ until, lo and behold, their wives, daughters and/or mistresses get pregnant. According to William Faulkner, there is nothing

new under the sun about Religious Bigots and males wanting to control women’s bodies. Dewey Dell’s experience is the experience of many a girl lost in the hands of dehumanized men and a culture of patriarchy.

The novel ends with Dewey Dell carrying the unwanted fetus. She is obsessed with her pregnancy and cannot even grieve her mother’s death. What happens? We don’t know. It is left to our imagination. What is your conclusion? Here is mine, given that the mother’s understanding is that “the reason for living was to get ready to stay dead a long time.”

On Saturday night, the 17-year-old girl goes to the barn. She lies down on a pile of hay. She takes a fish-cleaning knife and slowly pushes it up her vagina into the birth canal. The knife blade bites the placenta, puncturing the uterus. She whimpers. Slowly, the blood covers the straw. The darkness covers her face. A barn swallow darts overhead.

So, may I, a No War advocate, ask? Do you care? Give a damn? Will you help make abortion legal? Safe? Give loving support to those who make the forever-painful decision? Or will you follow the misogynistic God and our “superior” white patriarchs? Letters to the Editor are welcomed.

— Eduard Loring

2

Hospitality, the Meal and the Spiritual Life

But if there is a food politics, there are also a food esthetics and a food ethics, neither of which is dissociated from politics. Like industrial sex, industrial eating has become a degraded, poor, and paltry thing. Our kitchens and other eating places more and more resemble filling stations, as our homes more and more resemble motels. “Life is not very interesting,” we seem to have decided. “Let its satisfactions be minimal, perfunctory, and fast.” We hurry through our meals to go to work and hurry through our work in order to “recreate” ourselves in the evenings and on weekends and vacations. And then we hurry, with the greatest possible speed and noise and violence, through our recreation — for what? To eat the billionth hamburger at some fast-food joint hellbent on increasing the “quality” of our life? And all this is carried out in a remarkable obliviousness to the causes and effects, the possibilities and the purposes, of the life of the body in this world.

— Wendell Berry, from *The Pleasures of Eating* (1990)

Grace and Peaces of Mail

Dear Murphy,

To my favorite writer, dear friend and author of *Surely Goodness and Mercy*; inspiring — challenging — tender — honest — deep — courageous — hopeful — enlightening — insightful — moving — humorous — soulful.

You have been a gracious friend and model for me and Anne for so, these many years. Your words and encouragement to participate in the death row ministry were very important to us. Your life and example spoke volumes. You didn't suggest to us how to do it; your belief in us and seeing your example gave us the boost we needed to get involved.

Your courage, faith, family, the Beloved Community and your incredible will have brought you thru an arduous medical and spiritual journey. You are a miraculous woman! You and your work have influenced countless numbers of people who know you and many who have never met you. What a wonderful witness to the legacy of your life.

We have been thinking of you and praying for you (and Ed and Hannah and the Open Door folks) since we met so long ago at Clifton Presbyterian. Your wonderful life and influence have been a significant part of our lives and our journey.

God's gracious peace, love and grace be with you now and through eternity. "The arc of the moral universe is Long, but it bends toward justice." I think of you when I read these challenging words by MLK

Love,

Jack Crain
Lumberton, North Carolina

Ed & Martha Murphy:

We always read *Hospitality*. The Lord uses it to change us more and more as He opens our eyes to truly see all humanity.

Thank you,

Lamar & Kaye Thomas
Charlotte, North Carolina

(Nephew of Ruby Davis. We stayed in the house in Montreal many times!)

Ed and Murphy,

Thank you so much for sending Murphy's book. I have started reading it and find it wonderful and deep. I do not know how she has accomplished all that she has in serving the unfortunate, giving us words of wisdom, sharing her life with those on death row and dealing with the problems of her health, not to mention putting up with Ed over all these years. Having the great blessing of her friendship over such a long period of our lives has given us something Bonnie and I treasure.

I remain hopeful for change to really come about. Thank you all for pushing forward through all the adversity over the past decades and forcing those who turn a deaf ear to be confronted with their ignorance and self-serving agenda. You have been a great "Jiminy Cricket" to those of us who might want to lie to ourselves about the reasons for not standing up for the need to change in order to help those that can not help themselves.

We have stayed in LOCK DOWN since the first of the virus hitting the U.S. and have stayed well. Trump and the leaders of states that go along with his approach are guilty of murdering thousands of people unnecessarily and unfortunately we are in a state with that kind of leadership. We look forward to being able to travel again and see friends like you and family. Stay safe.

Peace and Love,

Bill and Bonnie Neely
Greenville, South Carolina

Good morning, Ed.

I was having an e-chat with Patrick O'Neill over the last couple of days, & he mentioned you & Murphy. He did not know that we knew each other. I told him that I met Murphy, & then you later, after driving from Athens to ATL for a vigil the night before Jack Potts was scheduled to be killed. It was at Central Presbyterian Church, & after listening to Millard Farmer & Murphy talk about the evils of capital punishment, found myself in a pew nauseous that the State was going to put blood on my hands. I considered my own theology, that we were all created b'tselem Elohim, in the image of God, & that instead of completing Creation, the Almighty created us to partner in completing Creation. I met & struggled together for social justice with Patrick during my 19 years in North Carolina. I'm now in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania with the Capital Habeas Unit of the Federal Public Defender's office, & have represented those charged with or convicted of capital crimes since 1986. Thanks to Murphy & Millard. I was blessed to see & visit with Millard at the Athens Human Rights Festival last year in May, 2019. Please accept my gratitude for your lifetime of good work, & pass on my love & gratitude to Murphy in these troubling times.

With love,

Marshall Dayan
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania



Rita Corbin

Dear Murphy Davis and all staff and volunteers at the Open Door Community,

Thank you for all you do, and your inspiring articles in *Hospitality*. Foremost Murphy, wishing you get well and remain energized to fulfil your wishes and mission, and well wishes to your family. Thanks for your courage!

This succinct note also to inform you (if not already known) that my address has changed. Your *Hospitality* news is vital, important and inspiring, I don't want to miss it. In sincere appreciation, loving to know your existence and labors towards the orphans, widows, poor, destitute and imprisoned. Your words and actions uplift humanity. Those who still have it, and not pledged allegiance to close heart, eyes and ears.

Thank you. May God continue Its service to women and men, girls and boys through you.

Respectfully,

Luis "Levy" Gonzalez
Prisoner, Corcoran, California

HOSPITALITY

Dear Subscriber,
Please check your address label
to verify that the
name(s) and address are current.
If not, please send the correct information to
David Payne.
davidpayne@opendoorcommunity.org
or
PO Box 10980
Baltimore, Maryland 21234

Dear Ed and Murphy,

I have thought of you folks lots of times since I got a note off to you, but I have to tell you that your articles in *Hospitality* and your life service continue to inspire me. I feel constantly overloaded with work and different problems myself — and it may be that age is starting to have a little bit to do with it, now that I think of it. But you're an inspiration right on!

As one way of combating the racism all around us, I have volunteered many times to take undocumented mothers and children for their appointments in downtown Atlanta. As I wait for them and watch the many homeless people on the sidewalks, I can't help thinking, "If only Ed and Murphy were still here." But of course we can't be everywhere. We too are working hard to bring relief to many who are suffering from all of these problems — from the undocumented refugee neighbors to our many friends in Nicaragua, children in Lebanon, Syria, Egypt, etc.

Despite all of the opposition from Washington and all of the complications from the coronavirus pandemic, we are hosting several refugee families and staying quite busy on relief projects, working carefully out of our separate houses most of the time. Today we are welcoming our "summer volunteers," half a dozen bright young people from four different countries. I wish you could meet them. So much fun!

Murphy, I have ordered a copy of *Surely Goodness and Mercy*, and I look forward very much to reading it and sharing it with others here at Jubilee.

In closing, Ed, I gotta tell you that there is a big oak tree down at the lower edge of the field in the middle of our community, and to this day I still think of it as "Ed's tree," because I remember that day way back in the 1980s when you guys came to Jubilee for a couple of days of escape and I happened to spot you out there in the middle of the field, sitting on a folding chair and looking prayerfully up at the top of that beautiful tree. God's creation! Hope you find some good trees around you in Baltimore.

Love,

Don Mosley
Comer, Georgia

Mood: Blessed
Open Door,
Good Day God Bless

How are you all doing today? Blessed news. After twenty-six years I just received blessed news that I will be released on Monday morning. Ain't God good? So you don't have to send mail here anymore. Once I'm settled, I'll get in touch with you all.

Sincerely,

Dwayne Dykes
Menard, Illinois

My very dearest ones, Ed & Murphy,

I just finished reading *Surely Goodness and Mercy* & still wiping tears from eyes and feeling so grateful to know you both and love you as my friends. Murphy, as I've shared with you before, I see you as a woman of Light; you radiate light and your suffering seems to illuminate your own Goodness and Mercy and casts light that flows from you into all you encounter. Ed, your passion for & loyalty to Murphy inspires me. I hope to order more books to share with others. Meanwhile, here's a check for this time.

Love & More Love,

Toni Kathleen Flynn
Arroyo Grande, California