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

Vol. 31, No. 4

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

April 2012

Contrasts, Complexities, and Some Questions for Martin Luther King

By Carlton Mackey

Carlton Mackey is an Atlanta photographer and filmmaker; Assistant Director of the D. Abbott Turner Program in Ethics and Servant Leadership and Chair of the Ethics & the Arts Initiative at the Emory University Center for Ethics, and a friend of the Open Door Community. He preached this sermon at Open Door worship on Sunday, January 15, Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday.

I don't claim to be an expert on the writings and teachings of Martin Luther King Jr. I can't say that I've spent countless hours researching the King papers. I have visited the King Center. I've seen a PBS documentary or two about his life. I've heard people recite the "I Have a Dream" speech, and I've seen a black-and-white recording of it on TV. I know

What happens when a little black boy from South Georgia holds hands with a little white girl from California and they produce a little light-skinned, curly-brown-haired baby in the same city Dr. King was reared in?

the Stevie Wonder version of "Happy Birthday" dedicated to King. So I have some street cred. But, like most people, I probably offer very little to the collective American memory of Dr. King — a memory that has pretty much reduced his greatness, his challenge, his call to the world down to a few speeches and the March on Washington.

I am quite aware of this and ashamed by it. It is because of this awareness that, more than *knowledge* about Martin Luther King, I am left with *questions* — questions that if he were alive today, I wonder how he would answer. I am also left with questions that we who are among the living, and who hold him as a model for how to live, are left to try to *answer* for ourselves and *ask* of ourselves if we are to rededicate ourselves to his dream and the continuation of his work.

So, today, I want us to just briefly reflect on several questions: questions of complexity, questions of contrast and questions of contradictions, all on the road to building the Beloved Community. Complexity, contrast, contradictions and community.

Whoever said that having a child changes everything did not tell a lie. From struggling to break away from him so I could think about today's topic to thinking about him while writing it, he was part of this whole process.

I thought about how I would describe King to Isaiah. I thought about the words I would use and the stories I would tell. I wondered, "How would I avoid taming the radical



Murphy Davis
Kari, Carlton and Isaiah Mackey.

message of justice and the revolutionary approach of non-violence as a means of positive social change?" But I also thought about questions I would have of Dr. King about Isaiah — questions about Isaiah's place in his dream, a dream that, as visionary as it was, still had its roots in the ways folks understood race at that time.

To King belonged a dream that envisioned little black boys and little black girls holding hands with little white girls and little white boys. But what happens when that hand holding leads to something else? What happens when a little black boy from South Georgia holds hands with a little white girl from California and they produce a little light-skinned, curly-brown-haired baby in the same city Dr. King was reared in? What happens if the world, which sees things in black and white, just like in King's dream, causes Isaiah to start distancing himself from one aspect of his identity or another? What happens when the world — and eventually it will — forces him to choose or chooses for him which category he will exist in? Is there a safe space in which to struggle for identity in a world where duality is simply incomprehensible?

I didn't want to mention Brother Barack, but I can't help myself. The son of a white woman from Kansas and a man from Kenya. Born in Hawaii. Reared in part by an Indonesian stepfather and his maternal white grandparents. Grows up to

Contrasts, Complexities continued on page 10

The War Over Slavery 150 Years Later



What's Rotten in Savannah The Ancestors of the Killers of Troy Davis

By Eduard Loring

Prologue

Hello, I am Troy Davis.

You killed me on September 21, 2011. You wanted to kill me at 7 p.m., but it was 11:08 before your Georgia venom took me down. Now I walk your streets with the poor and homeless and haunt your gated "communities" while you drink too much wine and gorge yourselves on dead meat. I am the resurrection and the way.

I am alive in every Occupy Movement from Atlanta to Yemen. We are coming to you. We are now moving toward you. Your little needles, poisoned tipped, ain't gonna work for you much longer. Your houses will be turned into houses of hospitality and gladness, and joy shall fill your now empty rooms. We will have peace and solidarity, shalom and equality. But beware: The gospel is as bad news for non-repentant killers as it is hard news for faithful practitioners.

Come out, come out, my people.

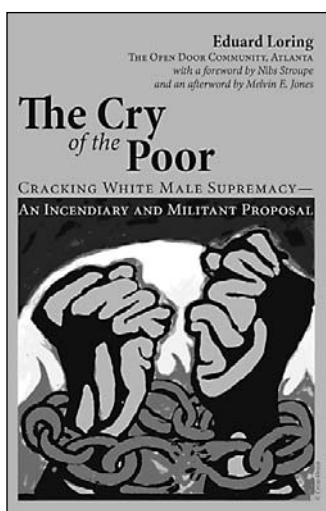
I. The Ancestors of State Killing

Charles A.L. Lamar was a 1 percenter, serving King Cotton to amass his wealth. His heart grew rotten selling cotton down near the swamps and rice lands around Savannah. He was one of too many who wanted his way to make money with plenty of honey that oozed from the brows of slaves.

We must destroy the Union so we can buy and sell those African bodies and their labor. We need them for slavery. Slaves are the base of our Southern civilization, our way of life. If a plantation system, like a political empire and capitalist markets, does not grow and expand, it dies. It must not die.

Lamar will kill and die to have things his way. He will defy the law and send his death ship, the Wanderer, from Savannah to Africa to bring back human beings to sell into slavery.

What's Rotten in Savannah continued on page 8



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The Cry of the Poor

Cracking White Male Supremacy —
An Incendiary and Militant Proposal

By **Eduard Loring**

Dr. King was a poet, a radical and an eloquent, funny and loving man. Ed Loring's "The Cry of the Poor" helps put these qualities into a radical perspective that speaks to us today. Talking about "cracking white male supremacy" — now that is really taking it on! The book also hammers us on the continuing issues of poverty, homelessness and prisons. So thank you, Ed Loring, for helping me and all of us to remember the Dr. King I knew and loved and for renewing my determination to keep fighting to make the dreams come true.
— **Connie Curry**, Civil Rights Activist and Author

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“State-Sponsored Child Abuse”

An analysis by the Georgia Alliance for Children, subtitled “Reforming Georgia’s Juvenile Justice System,” on the state of young people in Georgia jails. For more information about the Georgia Alliance for Children, see www.gac.org.

Youths detained in 2009 in Georgia

In pre-trial detention centers	17,476
In youth prisons	<u>4,358</u>
Total	21,834

Detainees by race

Black	68 percent
White	24 percent
Hispanic	7 percent
Other	1 percent

Black youths are four times more likely to be incarcerated than white youths. Only 30 percent of Georgia’s youth are black, but 68 percent of Georgia Department of Juvenile Justice detainees are black.

Detainees by offense

Only 27 percent of youths in Georgia pre-trial detention centers are accused of committing violent offenses. Contrary to federal law, which prohibits imprisoning youths for “status” offenses, 22 percent are jailed for status offenses — for example, running away from home, truancy and underage drinking. The remaining 51 percent are accused of offenses such as traffic, property, public order and drug violations. In short, 73 percent of youths in pre-trial detention centers in Georgia, or 12,757, are not charged with serious crimes and do not need to be jailed.

Incidents of harm

On average, there are 7,620 youth-on-youth and staff-on-youth sexual and physical assaults every year. A youth in detention in Georgia has more than a 1 in 3 chance of being sexually or physically abused. About 1 in every 20 youths attempts to suffocate, strangle, hang, cut, poison or otherwise harm themselves while in custody. A youth has more than a 50 percent chance of being harmed or of trying to harm himself or herself while detained.

(All yearly averages are based on data provided by the Georgia Department of Juvenile Justice for the years 2005 through 2009. The department has not provided data on sexual assaults committed in 2009 at the state’s four privately run facilities.)

Length and cost of detention

The average stay in a pre-trial detention center in Georgia lasts 21 days. At \$230.35 per day, it costs the state an average of \$4,837.35 for each detainee. Because 73 percent of the youths in pre-trial detention centers do not need to be there — 51 percent charged with minor offenses and 22 percent charged with status offenses, a total of 12,757 youths — it means the state is unnecessarily spending about \$61.7 million a year, or \$4,837.35 per detainee times 12,757.

That enormous amount of money would be better spent on community-based programs such as drug rehabilitation, parent-child counseling, parenting classes, mentoring programs and academic tutoring, at a fraction of the cost for detention and with higher probability of effectiveness and less danger to the youth.

Right to bail

Georgia law states that “all children . . . shall have the same right to bail as adults; and the judge shall admit to bail all children under the court’s jurisdiction in the same manner and under the same circumstances and procedures as are applicable to adults.” But Georgia has no bail system in place for juvenile offenders.

Detainees under 12

Last year, 573 children *under the age of 12* were detained in pre-trial detention centers in Georgia, and 37 were incarcerated in youth prisons. ✦



HOSPITALITY

Hospitality is published 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.

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Calvin Kimbrough

*The Seder Meal at Open Door Worship
on Sunday, March 18.*

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Open Door Community

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Sarah Humphrey: Coordinator for Administration, Volunteers, Hardwick Prison Trip and Resident Volunteer Applications
Murphy Davis: Southern Prison Ministry

Why Do Today's Rich No Longer Understand "Noblesse Oblige"?

By Bill Neely

Bill Neely and Ed Loring have been friends since they were classmates at Presbyterian College in Clinton, South Carolina, in the 1950s, and he and his wife Bonnie are long-time and steadfast friends of the Open Door Community. Bill lives in Paris, Texas, where he recently retired from teaching literature at Paris Junior College.

As we watch the clash in Congress over the debt crisis and the Republican Party's desire to drastically cut spending on social programs in order to balance the budget without raising taxes on the wealthiest citizens and corporations, I find myself in a state of utter disbelief, as well as aggravation, at the self-serving status quo that has permeated the minds of the "haves" of this country at the devastating expense of the "have nots."

President George W. Bush implemented a tax cut based on its being a stimulus to the economy. The biggest reduction came not for average middle-class families but for the wealthiest individuals, families and corporations. A key aspect was the lowering of the capital gains tax and the tax on "qualified dividends" to 15 percent. The majority of working middle-class families in this country derive little if any income from stock dividends or capital gains — the sale of stocks, bonds, businesses or other property at a price higher than the price paid.

Wealthy people who receive most of their income from dividends on stock, even stock in their own company, now pay income tax on that money of only 15 percent, versus the average worker, who pays up to 30 percent on earned income. The wealthy investor who sells stock at a gain also pays only 15 percent on that gain. Most middle-class working families see income from capital gains only when they sell their home for a profit, and usually that money goes back into another home, not the ordinary expenses of living. Warren Buffet, one



Ade Bethune

I find myself in a state of utter disbelief, as well as aggravation, at the self-serving status quo that has permeated the minds of the "haves" of this country at the devastating expense of the "have nots."

of America's wealthiest people, has declared that under this tax system, he paid a much lower percentage in tax than did his secretary.

Another tax advantage of the wealthy comes from setting up their own companies and corporations, which can allow them to deduct or depreciate expenses on travel, entertainment, cars, buildings and so on. Meanwhile, the average working-class person can't deduct the cost of travel to and from work or the depreciation on the car in which he or she drives to work.

The combination of the Bush tax cut, the war in Iraq and the deregulation, or failure to enforce regulation, of the investment community drained revenue to the federal government and did anything but stimulate the economy. The rich got richer, either through the tax breaks they received or from increased income from investments in the military-industrial complex as it churned out equipment and supplies for the Iraq war. As a result, the government could no longer balance the budget. This, and not the cost of social programs, brought us to the brink of economic collapse near the end of the past decade. But even in the face of that economic meltdown, conservatives and many of the wealthiest people in the country think we should continue to give tax breaks to the rich and slash social programs in order to do it.

But Buffet and others like him, who take an honest look at what is happening in the world today, know that it is necessary for those once designated as the noble class to understand and follow the ideal of "noblesse oblige." It is a medieval concept, which means, literally, "nobility obliges." It is the exercise of benevolent and honorable behavior, once considered to be the responsibility of people of high birth or rank, to generously help support and advance the opportunities of those less fortunate.

Much Given, Much Required

Growing up in Midland, Texas, in the 1950s brought me into contact with wealthy individuals and an almost "gold rush" atmosphere of people becoming rich overnight from drilling and producing oil and gas. My Sunday School teacher at First Presbyterian Church during my early teen years was future President of the United States George H.W. Bush, brought to West Texas along with many others from the Northeast to make their fortunes in the oil industry. Some of those seeking their fortunes in the oil fields wished not only to strike it rich but also to gain power and influence with their money.

When I look back at Midland during those years, I see a community that was somewhat isolated or insulated from

the real world, sitting 350 miles west of Dallas in a flat desert where oil and gas were the only reason for the city to exist, with no real compassion for the rest of the world. The per capita income in Midland during that time must have been as high as any city in the world, similar possibly to a city in Saudi Arabia today.

My father was a lawyer in Midland, with keen ability in oil and gas law, taxation and creating corporations. He came to represent many of the wealthiest individuals and companies in West Texas from the 1950s through the early 1970s. He put together and ultimately became chief executive officer of two public corporations, one on the New York Stock Exchange and one on the American Stock Exchange, and he created a Canadian company engaged in mineral exploration around the world.

My father was not only a parent to me but a mentor, always giving me insight into his work and how I should approach life and relationships with my fellow human beings. He frequently quoted the Bible verse "To whom much is given, much is required." He understood that the main purpose of any successful business is to produce something that will benefit society. And he maintained that those who are financially successful have an obligation to give back to those less fortunate. He believed this would be the greatest stimulus to any economy, because having a populace that does well increases production, jobs and salaries, giving that populace the means to buy more of the products that society produces and raising the standard of living for all.

The income tax paid by individuals during the 1950s and '60s was a progressive tax, meaning that the more money one made, the greater the percentage of tax owed. This was, as I see it, a modern-day equivalent of "noblesse oblige." During those years, the last \$10,000 of \$100,000 earned was taxed at 90 percent.

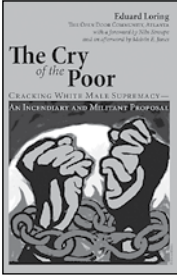
This was the time of rebuilding America after World War II. The Interstate Highway System was started and built. Government money was spent on upgrading educational systems, veterans returning to college, student loans, and grants for research and development at colleges and universities. Local and federal tax dollars helped build hospitals, medical schools and airports. And those who profited most from the economy paid a much greater percentage in taxes to improve the conditions of the country in which they did business.

The system was not perfect, and there were certainly loopholes in the tax system, but the progressive income tax was based on the idea that those who gain the most from society should contribute more in the form of taxes that help improve the economy and the well-being of all. Similarly, the concept of "noblesse oblige" is based on the idea that those in positions of wealth or power have an inherent obligation to be benevolent and honorable to those less fortunate, a concept to which all who call themselves Christian should readily adhere.

When I hear about and see the poor, homeless, uneducated and the sick without access to good medical care, and the large prison population in this country, I cannot conceive of "we the prosperous" wanting to reduce programs that help those people just so we can keep a greater percentage of our incomes. Mainly through the good fortune of my birth, I have never had to experience hunger, homelessness, illness without good medical care, imprisonment or lack of opportunity for an education. How can I or others in my position refuse to help those who do not have even a fraction of what has been given us in this life?

Why Do Today's Rich *continued on page 9*

The Open Door Community Press Books



The Cry of the Poor Cracking White Male Supremacy — An Incendiary and Militant Proposal

By Eduard Loring
foreword by Nibs Stroupe
afterword by Melvin Jones
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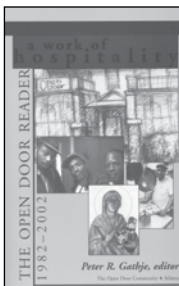
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I Hear Hope Banging at My Back Door Writings from Hospitality

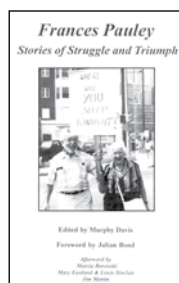
By Eduard Loring
Foreword by Rev. Timothy McDonald III

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Moving Toward Abolition

Could Georgia Become a Bright Spot in the Struggle?



By Mary Catherine Johnson

“What says the law? You will not kill. How does it say it? By killing!”

— Victor Hugo

There is every reason to be hopeful that capital punishment will become extinct in the United States over the next 20 years. At this writing, 16 states have abolished the death penalty and 12 more have abolition bills pending. The governor of Oregon recently declared a moratorium on all executions for the remainder of his term, and six states — Arkansas, California, Kentucky, Maryland, Nebraska and North Carolina — have *de facto* moratoriums, largely due to complications surrounding lethal injection. As the national map contains fewer and fewer states that practice the death penalty, the argument that executions constitute “cruel and unusual punishment” takes on greater power, leaving the holdout states with less ground on which to stand.

Over the past 35 years, Georgia has been a breeding ground for landmark cases dealing with capital punishment.

No doubt these holdout states will all be in the South, where more than 80 percent of executions currently take place. Texas is an easy bet to be the last state to abandon the death penalty, having proudly executed 480 people since capital punishment was reinstated by the U.S. Supreme Court in 1976. And, with my home state of Georgia an ongoing conservative stronghold, and its rank of No. 7 among the states in number of executions, it seems reasonable to assume that Georgia will join Texas as a holdout in abolishing the archaic and inhumane practice of murdering its own citizens.

Or is that a reasonable assumption? I’m hoping for something different in Georgia, and I’m rooting that hope in the momentum of my state’s inglorious history with the death penalty.

Over the past 35 years, Georgia has been a breeding ground for landmark cases dealing with capital punishment. It was declared unconstitutional between 1972 and 1976 based on the *Furman v. Georgia* case. Then, the 1976 *Gregg v. Georgia* case legalized it again under certain circumstances. In 1977, *Coker v. Georgia* held that the Eighth Amendment, which forbids “cruel and unusual punishments,” prohibits the death penalty when the crime does not result in a death.

In 1987, the Georgia system came back into the national spotlight with the case of death row prisoner Warren McCleskey, a black man who murdered a white police officer in Atlanta. As his defense before the U.S. Supreme Court, he presented a scientific study of 2,500 murder cases in Georgia, which showed that defendants charged with murdering white victims were more than four times as likely to be sentenced to death. In what New York University law professor Anthony G. Amsterdam called “the Dred Scott decision of our time,” the court denied McCleskey relief, declaring that general disparities in sentencing are “an inevitable part of our criminal justice system.” By 1991 McCleskey was dead in Georgia’s electric chair, but his case was far from dead in the eyes of many people, as public opinion about the death penalty reached unprecedented levels of disapproval.

Public shock and outrage also greeted Georgia’s 1986 electrocution of Jerome Bowden, whose IQ was variously measured at 59 and 65, and the primary evidence of whose guilt was a signed “confession” that he could barely read and apparently never understood. *The Atlanta Constitution* called his execution “a willful lapse of decency.” This horrifying case mobilized Georgia to outlaw executions of the mentally retarded in 1988. The U.S. Supreme Court didn’t follow until much later, ruling it unlawful in 2002.

In 2011, Georgia was once again at the center of the national death penalty debate with the execution of Troy Anthony Davis, despite compelling evidence of his innocence and the abomination of his conviction solely on eyewitness testimony. In the wake of his execution and attendant national and international outrage, Georgia is, at this writing, the only state in the Deep South with proposed legislation to abolish capital punishment. Senate Bill 342 would repeal it because it “drains vital state and county resources, has little impact on public safety, the process re-traumatizes victims’ families, and it is racially biased.”

There’s not much hope that SB 342 will go anywhere in the current legislative session, but its mere existence is significant. It is the next crucial step in the evolution of the death penalty in Georgia, raising consciousness and attacking this barbaric practice from every angle, exposing its staggering human and economic wastes and lies.

Perhaps I am being overly optimistic about the prospects for abolition in Georgia sooner rather than later, and the role our state will play in the ultimate annihilation of capital punishment in the United States. But I must believe with all my heart, for all that is good and decent in the world, that Jerome Bowden, Warren McCleskey, Troy Davis and the 49 other precious children of God whom Georgia has murdered by execution since 1983 did not die in vain. These men have paved the way for the case or the law that will finally break the cycle of premeditated state murder in Georgia. It’s coming, sooner than you think: watch for it and be ready. ♦

“Moving Toward Abolition” is a monthly column that tracks the fight to end capital punishment. Mary Catherine Johnson is on the Boards of Directors of Georgians for Alternatives to the Death Penalty and of New Hope House and is a volunteer at the Open Door Community. She can be emailed at mcjohnson78@yahoo.com.

Jesus Was a Victim of the Death Penalty



Pax Christi USA

“Feed Them All”

By Eduard Loring

One twilight last summer, a hungry black bear came into our yard at Dayspringfarm. She has been comin’ round the mountain now for several years.

Our bear loves sunflower seeds. Around our bird feeders she dances like a 100-pound goldfinch. She has smashed beyond use several of our hospitality locations for God’s birds. Dick Rustay has spent hours designing, rebuilding and praying for a “No Bears Allowed” bird feeder. So have I. There’s no way we can keep the bear from eating birdseed. (Might makes right).

Late one afternoon as the western sky, goldenrod toward blush, crawled behind the mountains toward the Lakota lands, I sat in the living room reading the important newspaper from Viva House, the Baltimore Catholic Worker House. I had just read our standard confession: “The only solution is love, and love comes with community.”

Suddenly, out of the fading sky, a boom-crash streaked through the old farmhouse. I jumped, my lap disappearing, running to the side porch to see what I had heard. There, bent over, was our bear munching the sunflower seeds. My heart beat tight. I stood at the screen door and watched.

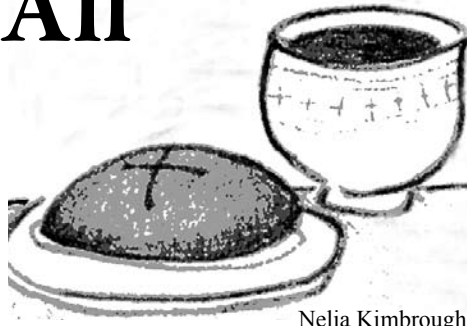
Billy Bob raced from the far side of the house, barking. The bear arose, hissed, and with stentorian blast blew Billy Bob away. Our sweet old dog, tail tucked between his legs, cried and cowered to the far side. He did not return until hours after my friend had departed.

I stood for 30 minutes and watched as the bear crunched the seeds in grinding teeth, occasionally hammering my Murphy-gifted bird feeder to paw at more supper. Braving with clock-clicks I opened the screen door and moved outside, my flashlight burning away the appearing dark as black sky overhead began to twinkle. She raised her head, sniffed the air fox-like, moved away and returned to the repast. My she, coming round the mountain, headlights leading, car clacking on gravel, drove. Bear bone fear, our she clambered up creekside into the woods: black light night. I have not seen her since our shared meal.

* * *

Old Floyd is a friend of mine. He lives in the shadowy uplands from Ellijay, Georgia, near our beloved Dayspringfarm. Floyd has worked for years at Ellijay Hardware. We have shopped there for 25 years now. Floyd showed me how to configure spigots for my rain barrels and how to let the earthward pull of water in a hose slake the thirst of our “Lauren Cogswell Blueberry Bushes,” all of whom journeyed to us in the back of a car from our sister community Jubilee Partners.

Old Floyd is also a friend of Murphy’s. He has helped Murphy with her seed purchases and taught her about the soil, shade and sun needed for her various flowers, herbs and her scraggly bushes.



Nelia Kimbrough

We all need a little help from our friends, with the possible exception of the Libertarians. So I went to Old Floyd at the hardware store after my encounter with our bear. He took me to the bird feeders. He demonstrated the “squirrel proof” feeders, in which he did not believe. He told me about concrete footings, higher steel posts and cage-like wire covers to keep paws from pawing. “Maybe,” said he, “this will keep the bears from eating your seeds.” He did not seem to be a believer.

“Floyd, what do *you* do?”

“Well, I feed them all.”

“What?!” I exclaimed, raising the head of the woman mixing paint nearby.

“I feed them all.”

“You mean the squirrels, the bears and the birds, even crows?”

“Yep, I feed them all.”

“Thank you, Floyd.”

I departed the hardware store, but I did not leave. Old Floyd gave me a new vision and insight: new wine in new wineskins, for the old wineskin would burst apart with such a vision.

Back to Dayspring I drove “Little Girl Blue,” our pickup truck. Home again, I sped to the ruined bird feeder. I built a flat board plate and fastened it to the existing post. No bird feeder at all. I put a gracious plenty of sunflower seeds on the plate. I then and now put seeds around the feet and in the arms of our St. Francis statue, who stands 15 feet from the feeder. Sometimes a squirrel and sometimes a cardinal in regal robes sits on St. Francis’ head, chewing or pecking away. I now feed them all.

We have had an open table (feed them all) at the Open Door Community since our founding, which was 2,000 years ago when Jesus called Levi the rich tax collector. We have a Eucharistic theology which links all our Works of Mercy to the Welcome Table.

For instance, a couple of Sunday morn-

ings past, Jason Ebinger and I sat with JP in the visiting room at Central State Prison. We shared vendor food and soft drinks. The unsaid words of institution echoed in our hearts from our worship the Sunday before and the anticipated Eucharist in a few hours. No one who comes through the Open Door is unhoused, though many are unhoused.

The Holy Spirit in Old Floyd revealed to me the relationship between the Eucharist and squirrels, bears and birds. Feeding God’s creatures at Dayspringfarm is now an extension of our Eucharist and the Works of Mercy. Floyd also taught me about the mercy that is at the center of the heart of our God, whom we know as Creator and Redeemer.

“Yep, I feed them all.”

We believe and practice “The only solution is love, and love comes with community.” And love feeds them all.

Thank you, Old Floyd.

This reflection was also inspired by the article “Freedom” in the November-December *Hospitality*, by Anonymous, and I thank its author. ✠

Eduard Loring is a Partner at the Open Door Community.

poetry corner



Julie Lonneman

Black Bear in the Orchard

It was a long winter.

But the bees were mostly awake
in their perfect house,
the workers whirling their wings
to make heat.

Then the bear woke,

too hungry not to remember
where the orchard was,
and the hives.

He was not a picklock.
He was a sledge that leaned
into their front wall and came out

the other side.

What could the bees do?
Their stings were as nothing.
They had planned everything
sufficiently
except for this: catastrophe.

They slumped under the bear’s breath.
They vanished into the curl of tongue.
Some had just enough time
to think of how it might have been —
the cold easing,
the smell of leaves and flowers

floating in,
then the scouts going out,
then their coming back, and their dancing —
nothing different
but what happens in our own village.
What pity for the tiny souls

who are so hopeful, and work so diligently
until time brings, as it does, the slap and the claw.
Someday, of course, the bear himself
will become a bee, a honey bee, in the general mixing.
Nature, under her long green hair,
has such unbendable rules,

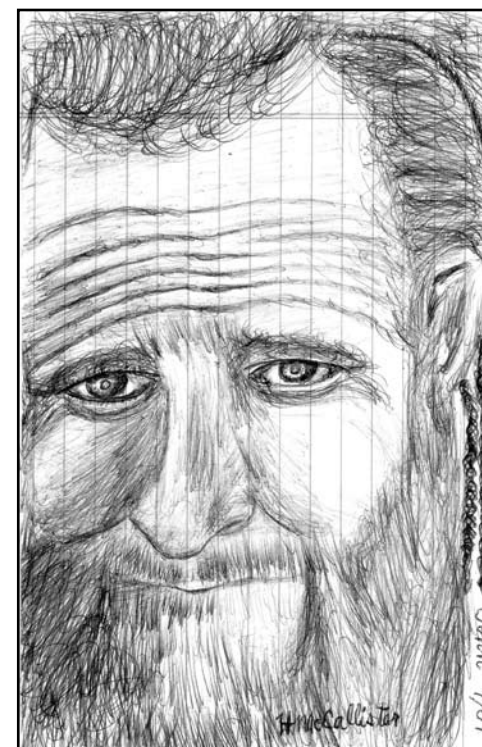
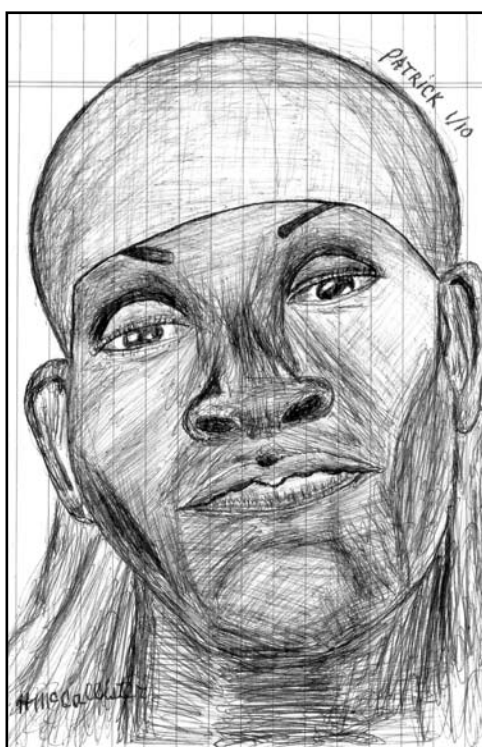
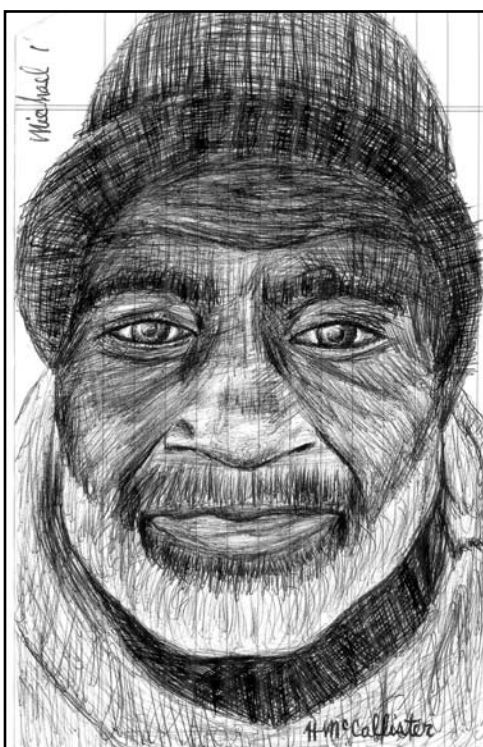
and a bee is not a powerful thing, even
when there are many,
as people, in a town or a village.
And what, moreover, is catastrophe?
Is it a sharp sword of God,
or just some other wild body, loving its life?

Not caring a whit, black bear
blinks his horrible, beautiful eyes,
licks his teeth with his fat and happy tongue,
and saunters on.

— Mary Oliver

Mary Oliver’s poetry has won the Pulitzer Prize and the National Book Award. This poem is from her “New and Selected Poems, Volume Two.”

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.



Faces of Art

Harold McCallister made these drawings at Georgia's Baldwin State Prison. He has been a friend of the Open Door for 27 years and has contributed other artwork to *Hospitality*. These drawings, in ballpoint pen on notebook paper, were inspired by Calvin Kimbrough's photographic portraits.

In, Out & Around 910

Compiled by Calvin Kimbrough

A Baptism at Dayspring

Open Door Community member **Linda Moore** was baptized at Dayspring Farm during worship there on Sunday, February 5. *Top right:* Open Door Partners **Gladys Rustay** and **Nelia Kimbrough** prepare the baptismal water using turtle shells found at the farm.

Right: Linda receives the water, poured by each of the Open Door Partners. *Below:* At the completion of the baptism, Partner **Murphy Davis** leads a prayer of consecration. *Bottom right:* **Nelia Kimbrough** shares the baptismal waters with the worship circle, calling us to remember our baptism and be grateful.



Photographs by Clive Bonner



Celebrating “Fat Tuesday”

Lent, traditionally a season of fasting, begins on Ash Wednesday, so the day before Ash Wednesday is traditionally marked by feasting and revelry — hence its name “Fat Tuesday,” or “Mardi Gras” in French. The Open Door celebrates Mardi Gras every year. *Far left:* **Ray Quinnelly, Joel Fowler and Mary Sinclair** joined us for Mardi Gras on the evening of February 21. Mary and her husband, our great friend Lewis Sinclair, prepared our annual Mardi Gras supper of thick gumbo and red beans and rice for years until his death in 2008; now Ray, Joel and Anne Nicholson (who unfortunately could not be present this year) carry on that tradition. *Middle left:* **Eduard Loring** panhandles **Barbara Schenk** and **Winston Robarts** as they strut the line. *Left:* **Dick Rustay** and **Jay Ashmear** clown for the camera. Every year, Dick leads our Mardi Gras celebration and our Ash Wednesday service the next morning. *Below:* **Eduard Loring**, ever the panhandler, propositions “**Shorty,**” a.k.a. **Marty Wyatt**.



Photographs by Murphy Davis

Calvin Kimbrough

Murphy Davis



Murphy Davis



Cherokee History Tour

On the last weekend in February, the Open Door Community visited New Echota, the Chief Vann House and the Chieftains Museum/Major Ridge Home in North Georgia. These historic sites help mark the ancestral lands inhabited by the Cherokee Nation before its forced removal during the “Trail of Tears” in 1838. *Top left:* Our group receives an introduction to the Chief Vann House, near Chatsworth. *Above:* **Emma Stitt** and **Jay Ashmear** rest on the front steps of the Cherokee Council House at New Echota, near Calhoun. *Left:* The Open Door group at the Chieftains Museum/Major Ridge Home in Rome.

Calvin Kimbrough

What's Rotten in Savannah: The Ancestors of the Killers of Troy Davis *continued from page 1*

But Lamar ultimately did not get his way, thanks be to the God of Abraham Lincoln. Lamar crumpled to the earth leading an assault on Union soldiers, whose victory became the basis of the 13th Amendment, adopted December 6, 1865: “Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, *except as a punishment for crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted*, shall exist within the United States, or any place subject to their jurisdiction.” (*Emphasis added.*)

Still, we must listen to the rivers of woe. *620,000 dead soldiers and millions more from the auction block.*

II. The Wanderer

By 1857, those who wanted to destroy the Union and build a Southern slave nation — the “secessionists” — realized that reopening the slave trade with Africa would rend our common fabric. Thus arose a double strategy. First, to purchase more slaves would expand slavery westward in the United States and southward into Cuba and Nicaragua. Second, to defy the federal law against the international slave trade would encourage the white masses to boldness and rejection of the Union. Fire-eaters and poor whites would kill our nation and citizens in order to own slaves, to pursue the international slave trade, and to conquer new lands under Southern sovereignty.

620,000 dead soldiers and millions more from the auction block.

This is the sordid tale of the last American ship to sail in the U.S. slave trade, from Savannah to the mouth of the Congo River and back. The international slave trade had been outlawed by the U.S. Congress in 1807, taking effect on January 1, 1808. In 1857, the Wanderer set out in brazen disregard for the law of the land.

Like our 21st-century drones, the Wanderer was a bitter fruit of human imagination and technological know-how. Built in 1856, she was a luxurious yacht with all the finery for sumptuous meals and lavish entertainment. A toy for the rich white elite, she became a death machine for Africans. Sold and transmogrified from heaven to hell, she became a slaver. Outfitted for human cargo, the Wanderer sailed into bondage and death.

The shared space for the captives had no toilets, and they resembled torture boxes, 12 inches wide, 18 inches high and six feet long.

On a gurney about the same size, Troy Davis was chained down and murdered, not by salt water filling his lungs but by toxins filling his blood.

This size offered less space than most slave ships, but the reduction is not surprising. Charles Lamar and his fellow slave dealers’ inner demons studied ways to minimize costs and maximize profits. Their bottom line was making money — cutting costs in buying and raising prices in selling — through the most awful of human corruption, the selling of human bodies.

The Wanderer arrived at the mouth of the Congo River in the autumn of 1858.

Slave hunters and purchasers, along with security guards, picked up Africans as young as 13 years old. In the former place of lavish entertainment, the luxury yacht turned slave ship became the scene of a battle to survive. Of the 409 slaves bought and chained, 80 died crossing the violent sea, murdered by the slave powers just like Troy Davis on September 21, 2011.

Was an ancestor of Troy Davis aboard that ship? It feels like it. Troy Davis and Charles Lamar were both from Savannah.

Charles Lamar was arrested and charged with slave trading. He awaited Georgia justice in a state where his father-in-law was the local federal district judge.

Lamar walked away freely to the battlefield. He now wanted to kill Yankees, so off to war he marched with his own cadre of Confederates. He gave what he took, a life for lives. On April 16, 1865, near Columbus, Georgia, a week after Lee had surrendered at Appomattox, Charles Augustus Lafayette Lamar sank earthward, dead.

More than 120 years later, in Savannah, Troy Davis was arrested and charged with murdering a white police officer. He awaited

**Hello, I am Troy Davis.
I live in your work to abolish the death penalty.
I live in you.**

Georgia justice. On September 21, 2011, in Jackson, Georgia, mere weeks before his 42nd birthday, Troy Anthony Davis sank into the execution gurney, dead.

III. The Emancipator

On March 4, 1865, Inauguration Day, Pennsylvania Avenue was “a sea of mud,” with water splashing everyone who gathered to hear the president’s immortal interpretation of the meaning of the Civil War and of American slavery. As John Wilkes Booth hovered hatefully in the crowd, Lincoln spoke:

Both parties deprecated war, but one of them would *make* war rather than let the nation survive, and the other would *accept* war rather than let it perish, and the war came. . . .

One-eighth of the whole population were colored slaves, not distributed generally over the Union, but localized in the southern part of it. These slaves constituted a peculiar and powerful interest. *All knew that this interest was somehow the cause of the war.* To strengthen, perpetuate, and extend this interest was the object for which the insurgents would rend the Union even by war, while the Government claimed no right to do more than to restrict the territorial enlargement of it.

Neither party expected for the war the magnitude or the duration which it has already attained. Neither anticipated that the cause of the conflict might cease with or even

before the conflict itself should cease. Each looked for an easier triumph, and a result less fundamental and astounding. Both read the same Bible and pray to the same God, and each invokes His aid against the other. It may seem strange that any men should dare to ask a just God’s assistance in wringing their bread from the sweat of other men’s faces, but let us judge not, that we be not judged. The prayers of both could not be answered. That of neither has been answered fully.

The Almighty has His own purposes. “Woe unto the world because of offenses; for it must needs be that offenses come, but woe to that man by whom the offense cometh.” If we shall suppose that American slavery is one of those offenses which, in the providence of God, must needs come, but which, having continued through His appointed time, He now wills to remove, and that He gives to both North and South this terrible war as the woe due to those by whom the

and cherish a just and lasting peace among ourselves and with all nations.” (*Emphasis added.*)

If the family of the victim murdered allegedly at the hands of Troy Davis had heard the voice of God’s offer of reconciliation through Abraham Lincoln’s words, perhaps they would not have screamed and pleaded for this man’s murder.

Who does speak and act for the pro-death penalty lobby? Are they deformed children of the pro-slavery argument? Is there one God with many contradictory voices, or are there many Gods who contradict one another? In whom do we trust? A god who kills? Or a God who gives life, mercy and justice? A God of the slaves way down in Egyptland? Or the god of the slaveholders?

IV. The Survivors

What if Charles Lamar and his minions do not receive the death penalty?

The New York Times editorialized a threat and a promise that came true in 1865: “The entire population of the North will wage upon [the South] a relentless war of extermination.”

620,000 dead soldiers and millions more from the auction block.

Oh, say, can you hear, the hoofbeats of



Mary Catherine Johnson

John McRae, “I Am Troy Davis,” September 16, 2011.

offense came, shall we discern therein any departure from those divine attributes which the believers in a living God always ascribe to Him?

Fondly do we hope, fervently do we pray, that this mighty scourge of war may speedily pass away. Yet, if God wills that it continue until all the wealth piled by the bondsman’s two hundred and fifty years of unrequited toil shall be sunk, and until every drop of blood drawn with the lash shall be paid by another drawn with the sword, as was said three thousand years ago, so still it must be said “the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether.”

With malice toward none, with charity for all, with firmness in the right as God gives us to see the right, let us strive on to finish the work we are in, to bind up the nation’s wounds, to care for him who shall have borne the battle and for his widow and his orphan, to do all which may achieve

John Brown’s horses rattling into Harpers Ferry at midnight on the cloudy, misty night of October 16, 1859? Can you feel the song of Langston Hughes to all the Blacks of the USA?

Since Harpers Ferry
Is alive with ghosts today,
Immortal raiders
Come again to town —
Perhaps,
You will recall
John Brown.

— From “October 16” by Langston Hughes

What has changed since Charles Lamar and his cronies designed a slave ship that minimized space and humanity to maximize profits? American corporations, prisons and state governments today are squeezing human beings into poverty that maximizes profits and cuts costs. Have you heard of the suicides among Chinese workers employed by

American corporations to make our toys? These wage slaves are squeezed by time, space and meaningless work, another device in the tool box of death for the oppressed.

Of course many of you, dear readers, got a bucket of cold water thrown into your faces as you awakened to the modern South when, through passion and scapegoat lust, the body of Troy Davis was finally stilled, like John Brown's at the end of the gallows rope or Baptist John's head brought in on a platter to flatter the thin one dancing.

Today the spirit of slavery and murder continues in nearby Columbus at the Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation, formerly the School of the Americas, where torture and the fine art of slaughter are taught to our helpers — death squads — who will kill to keep markets stable.

Spoke Lincoln at Gettysburg:

It is for us the living, rather, to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they who fought here have thus far so nobly advanced. It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us — that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion — that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain — that this nation, under God, *shall have a new birth of freedom — and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth.* (Emphasis added.)

Epilogue

Hello, I am Troy Davis.

I live in your work to abolish the death penalty. I live in you. You, the living legacy of the Abolitionist movement, must reach into the present, despite how you got here through the spirit of domination and slavery.

How can we redeem the past? That is the question. Let us sit together at the Welcome Table of life and love. Sit with us, Charles Lamar, with the children of the Wanderer who died on the way to Savannah.

Let us sit together and the death penalty will sink earthward, dead. ✚

Eduard Loring is a Partner at the Open Door Community. "The War Over Slavery" is a series of occasional columns.

CAPITAL PUNISHMENT IS MURDER



National Coalition Against the Death Penalty

Why Do Today's Rich *continued from page 3*

An Epiphany in Africa

I have had a wide range of opportunities and jobs throughout my nearly 70 years on this earth. At the early age of 33, I became the chief executive officer of a corporation that carried on global operations. One of the countries it operated in was Angola, where I was blessed with an epiphany.

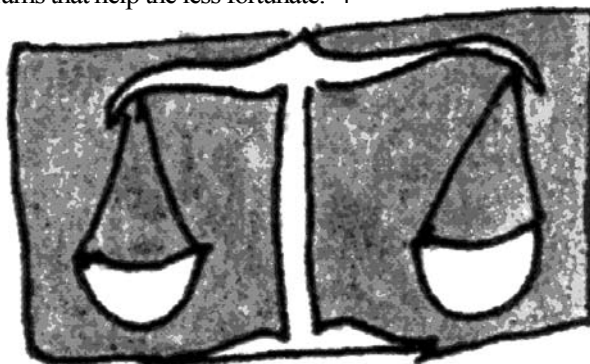
My involvement in Angola brought me face to face with the rape of an underdeveloped country by outside corporations that came in to take its rich natural resources while giving back very little in return. Around me I saw a country where the native people had a 5 percent literacy rate, poor hospitals and unsanitary living conditions. I began to not want to look at myself in the mirror. How could I profit from my company's operations while the general population received nothing in return?

Ultimately, when Portugal gave Angola its independence and civil war broke out, my company lost its rights to operate there. Some of our employees in Angola were now in danger, and as CEO, I was faced with getting them out and with paying our employees, in Angola and in Portugal, the severance pay owed them. When I went to our company directors and asked for the authority to do this, they balked, saying that because the company was closing down operations and there was no way the employees could bring lawsuits against it here in the United States, they wanted to give the money involved to the stockholders, who included themselves. Because of my epiphany, I could not stomach being part of that kind of thinking, and I resigned immediately as CEO and proceeded to do whatever I could for those employees.

My wish, hope and prayer for this country is for an epiphany that will turn it from a stance of military might and self-serving greed to one of true social consciousness.

Today I am so thankful for that epiphany. It may have been fostered by having had good parental input, having read great literature, having had good teachers, having tried to listen to what Jesus' life says to us, and having listened to a God-given conscience that I could access for guidance. When I hear the wealthy digging in their heels to hold on to their tax breaks, my mind returns to facing the directors and stockholders of my company who wanted not to help those who would be out of a job and in possibly life-threatening danger. My wish, hope and prayer for this country is for an epiphany that will turn it from a stance of military might and self-serving greed to one of true social consciousness.

A fair progressive income tax is one way of requiring those who have materially benefited the most from society to pay back to that society at a greater rate than others. Cutting government programs to balance the country's books will only weaken this nation and lead to greater poverty, which can only lead to less consumption of goods and services, which will reduce profit and bring bankruptcy for some of the very ones who oppose raising taxes and favor slashing social programs that help the less fortunate. ✚



Becca Conrad

this year give HOSPITALITY

A \$10 donation covers a one-year subscription to *Hospitality* for a prisoner, a friend, or yourself. To give the gift of *Hospitality*, please fill out, clip, and send this form to:

**Open Door Community
910 Ponce de Leon Ave., NE
Atlanta, GA 30306-4212**

____ Please add me (or my friend) to the *Hospitality* mailing list.

____ Please accept my tax deductible donation to the Open Door Community.

____ 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.)

name _____

address _____

email _____

phone _____



**volunteer
needs
at the
Open Door Community**

Volunteers for Tuesday (9:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m.) and Wednesday Soup Kitchen (9:30 a.m.-2:00 p.m.).

Volunteers to help staff our Foot Clinic on Wednesday evenings (6:00 p.m. for supper, 6:45-9:15 p.m. for the clinic).

Individuals to accompany community members to doctors' appointments.

Groups or individuals to make individually wrapped meat with 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 our household on Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday evenings.

**For more information,
contact Sarah Humphrey
at opendoorcomm@bellsouth.net
or 770.246.7618**

Contrasts, Complexities, and Some Questions for Martin Luther King *continued from page 1*

be forever heralded as the nation's first black president. You talk about complexity? About multiple layers? About the politics of race and identity? You talk about a reductionist culture that has no idea what to do with complexity other than to simplify, because who has time to understand or say the words "biracial" or "multicultural"? You can't help but wonder what King would have thought about Barack.

And what about gay folks? Forget about little black boys holding little white girls' hands. What about little black boys holding little black boys' hands? What am I to tell Isaiah that Dr. King said *or didn't say* about the lesbian and gay community?

How do we take King's message, his life, his legacy and apply it to what many call the most pressing civil rights issue of this generation? How do we grapple with the complexities of potential discrimination within a struggle against discrimination? How does one understand one's sexual identity in terms of a movement built upon the legacy of a movement that was largely silent on the issue?

We find that strength when we stand side by side with people who don't look like us, who sometimes we don't understand, who we can't figure out, who we can't label in nice categorical terms.

What about the folks in the movement who were gay? How do we deal with the seeming contradiction that arguably the most famous demonstration in American history was organized by an openly gay black man? How do we reconcile the fact that, despite his contribution to the struggle for civil rights, very few people even recognize the name of Bayard Rustin? At the March on Washington, he stood directly behind King during one of the most famous speeches in American history, but most people wouldn't recognize his photograph. In his honor, members of the gay community, mostly black, gather every year for a breakfast and screen a documentary about his life called "Brother Outsider."

Complexity. How do we come to understand ourselves, God and our neighbor in a world where there are layers such as these?

Questions for Dr. King, questions for ourselves as we reflect on his life in an attempt to rededicate ourselves to his dream. How do we make sense of it all?

The Power of Songs

I think about the role of the artist in this equation, the writers of songs and the role of music in making sense of this mess. I reflect on how, in the struggle to make sense of violence and marginalization, in the struggle to maintain a voice when the hand of oppression seeks to squeeze the sound from our mouths, James Weldon Johnson still penned "Lift Every Voice and Sing." I reflect on how, when it must have seemed impossible to imagine anything different from the ever-present reality of dogs, hoses and clubs, voices still could manage to sing "We Shall Overcome." I can't imagine how, when the numbers at marches dwindled and folks who were vigilant supporters in the beginning said they couldn't do it anymore, that they were legitimately tired, that they couldn't afford to sit in a jail cell one more night, instead of getting angry at them, instead of accepting defeat, one could muster up the chords to "Ain't Gonna Let Nobody Turn Me Round."

That's the role and power of music. That is the power of music to shed light on the truth, to put pain in plain sight but also offer the hope of transcending it. The power to point toward something more beautiful than now, so that even if you can't see it physically, you know it is there and you move toward it with renewed zeal.

But you don't get that without struggle. You can't even write that if you haven't grappled with some tough questions, if you haven't experienced some setbacks. And you dangled sure can't feel it if you haven't been through something. The

irony, the contrast that something so beautiful can come out of something so painful. Turning pain, struggle, confusion, questions, contradictions and complexity into a source of power. And so it is here, in this place today, that we sing these same songs.

What would Dr. King say about the Open Door Community? How must this place, which strives to live justly, struggle with complexity and contradiction?

We don't have to look far. Here, nestled between a bank on one end of the block and a Blockbuster video store on the other, across the street from a grocery store and restaurants, in the middle of places of food and plenty, in the middle of places of money exchange and entertainment, you find a place that serves a population that, if you weren't looking, you wouldn't even know existed. Contradiction. Contrast.

It's a place founded by white folks — smart, talented and graceful, in the case of Murphy, loud and agitating in the case of Ed — who hang a carving of a black Jesus on their wall. Contrast. Complexity. Folks who for 30 years have worked

point them out, for fear of being irreverent?

I think that it is in the midst of this contradiction, in the midst of the complexity of what it means to live in a world that forces us to think in binary terms — although the nature of life itself, the grand cosmos itself, refuses to be bound by such limitations — that we discover what it really means to be human.

And you can't be human in isolation. Although it is hard, although it presents challenges, although it forces us to struggle with issues of identity and is unsettling at times — and as my grandma would say, "though our feet get weary" and we wonder where we will find the strength to continue — I am here today to affirm that Dr. King would say that even with the questions, we find that strength in community.

We find that strength when we stand side by side with people who don't look like us, who sometimes we don't understand, who we can't figure out, who we can't label in nice categorical terms. When we stand beside people who are broken, people who have different skill sets than us, and offer ourselves in community with them, we are bound to mess up. We are bound to fall. But it is when we struggle to make sense of it all, to make sense of the contradiction within us and outside us brought to light by being in community, that we become refined. We become made whole.

We are able to see more clearly and hold in tension

the fragility of life and the promise of life evermore. We are forced to hold in tension the complexity of honoring the reality of race with the knowledge that neither ignoring it nor uplifting it as the sole platform of our existence is going to work in the Beloved Community. Being here today forces me to hold in tension my education and our personal pursuit of happiness, my/our economic well-being and the well-being of our children, with the welfare of our beloved neighbor who may not have had the privileges, opportunities and advantages of a system that places much value on the exact same things that we seek to dismantle.



Irving Amen

to be in solidarity with the least of these, people they refer to as their friends, their brothers and sisters living on the streets and in prison. Folks who have made it their life's work to, as Ed says, "reduce the distance" between themselves and the people they are called to live in community with. Folks who, no matter what their effort, no matter how long they have been doing this work, know that even in *this* community they must struggle with issues of power, with peeling back layers of conscious or unconscious racism. They have to grapple with knowing that, even though they may see themselves as one, as equal with those they serve, those they serve may never be able to pull back layers of oppression to see themselves as equal with them.

Complexity. The struggle for identity. The struggle to understand one's legacy in this world that we all go through in different ways. The struggle of knowing that after 30 years, the need, the demand, the cry of the poor is still echoing in the night. I know every now and then that they have to sing.

Rededicating Ourselves to the Dream

So what are we to do with this mess? What are we to do with this complexity, this contrast, this seeming contradiction in our lives? Are we to dismiss the questions? Are we to not

We must hold in tension our love and support of our cousins, friends, brothers and sisters who have been sent overseas to fight in wars while at the same time voicing our dissent from those unjust wars. We must hold in tension our desire for safe and clean streets, where our children can play free from crime, with the reality that the criminal justice system we rely on for this is run largely by corporations with a structural impetus to make a profit.

As we celebrate the 30th anniversary of the Open Door Community, I value the role it has played in forcing us to grapple with these tensions, forcing us to take seriously our role as children of God to seek justice, reminding us and enabling us to rededicate ourselves to the dream of Dr. King. I value its members for committing themselves and inviting us to commit ourselves to the process of self-examination, the process of struggling over complex questions, contrasting views and contradictions in our own lives. And after 30 years of seeking the Beloved Community, 30 years of victory and loss, of climbing and falling, of sickness and health, surely after times when their feet get a little weary, my goal is that we will be able to muster up the voice as a collective community to sing with renewed zeal, "Ain't Gonna Let Nobody Turn Us Round." [The community sings.] ♦

Grace and Peaces of Mail

Your newspaper has nurtured my spirit ever since I visited the Open Door during the "Journey of Hope From Violence to Healing" in the mid-1990s. I have shared some and saved most of the papers for continued reflection.

Keep up your necessary witness and work and be well, especially Murphy.

Sally Peck
Livonia, Michigan

It has been 10 years since my two-week time as a Resident Volunteer. Your community remains in my heart, your profound faith and inspiration.

Shalom,
Kristen Elmes
Ware, Massachusetts

Dear Ed,

Hospitality always brings spiritual tears to my eyes. Your essay on the Queen of Persia in the February issue was magnificent. I always wondered why the story slid over her refusal so lightly. History is written by the winners, the dominant powers, but the Bible shows that the cultural memory lingers in the feminine side.

Murphy's "Dropped at the Feet of Jesus" in the same issue was another shift in thought. Recently I was struck by the cliché "It takes a village to raise a child." And I thought, "God is a village and we are the people of that village and get much more than merely fathering or mothering or spousal servicing." The amplitude of God is greater than metaphor or imaging. Our metaphors of God, Father, Mother, Husband always leave us as children or servants. Jesus made us brothers and sisters.

[You all] have done much to expand my concept of God, you and the volunteers you have inspired to share with you. You are a global village.

I look back to the seminar in Philadelphia many years ago thinking what a weird and attractive character you were. It has made quite an addition to my life, and I thank and bless you both.

In Waldport, my nearest town, we have a princess from Tonga. Her father was a native Methodist minister. On the island she met and married a visiting paraplegic from Waldport and came here to live and inspire us all. She works in a literacy program, food and meal programs, writes poetry and paints. Her husband recently passed on. He must have been a strong spiritual presence also.

I keep your card on my dining room table to remind me to pray for you all and Murphy especially. I love her sermons.

Howard Osborne
Seal Rock, Oregon

Dear Ed,

I need more copies of "The Cry of the Poor." Please send 20 copies.

These books go away fast with my mailing list, and I am sending a cover letter with each book along with my letter that was printed in *Hospitality* in January. I hope the words of this publication stir the minds and hearts of people.

As you mentioned, I am now sending the book to the enemies. My friends have already gotten copies, and they like the book. One lady in Eufaula, Alabama, said it was the most powerful book she has read. Jeremiah Wright said it is a wonder how you have flown under the radar.

A relative of mine in Georgia read parts of the book and said that I am a pure racist. A sister-in-law who lives in Arkansas read it and said she didn't agree with it, but she was going to give it to her pastor, who believes as we do. I knew each of them would have adverse attitudes toward the book, because they cling to their notion that God put white folks on earth to rule and reign over people of color.

Vincent Ferrini, who was poet laureate of Gloucester, Massachusetts, said that slavery was the clinker in the eye of America.

Today I am mailing the 25 copies of "The Cry of the Poor," and I have a list to continue sharing this book.

God bless you EVER.

Your sincere friend,
Wendell Wentz
Rockwall, Texas

Do *not* send this to me again. I consider this pretty much a Communist newsletter.

Phillip Thomas



Rita Corbin

Ed,

I lived at 910 Ponce de Leon with you, Murphy, Hannah, Gino, Eddie Torrez, Willie Dee Wimberly and a whole bunch of other people I'll never forget about 20 years ago, when the Olympics were coming to Atlanta and they were trying to chase away the homeless before it got there. Bush Sr. was president, and the church down the street had put up signs forbidding the homeless from sleeping on their lawn at night, so we camped out in their parking lot and held a protest.

I was 23 years old, white and privileged and completely unaware of what that meant, just out of Warren Wilson College and full of good intentions and misperceptions about homelessness, racism and the root causes of poverty.

I'm still white and privileged, and probably still full of misperceptions (though hopefully also with some good intentions to help balance those out), but these days I'm a professor of political science at a small private liberal arts college in Illinois. It's a wonderful job and I love it.

It makes me super-happy to see that the Open Door still exists and that you're still living your commitment. No doubt you're just as overworked and busy now as you were back then, but I'd very much like to learn how you and the community have changed over the past 20 years. I might really like to come back and visit sometime, to share a meal and maybe help lug a ridiculously heavy pot of grits to the basement of a church at 6 in the morning.

You and your family and your community changed my life and taught me far more than I ever learned in any school. I hope you're well and still full of passion.

Paul Weissburg
Augustana College
Rock Island, Illinois

Join us as a Resident Volunteer



Calvin Kimbrough

Michelle Bach began volunteering with the Open Door Community as a student at Agnes Scott College. Since completing her degree, she has joined us as a Resident Volunteer.

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: Sarah Humphrey
at opendoorcomm@bellsouth.net
or 770.246.7618

For information and application forms visit
www.opendoorcommunity.org

Please Help!



we need **backpacks**
Thank You!

Please Help!

The Open Door needs **2,000 sandwiches** to serve each week!

We need **meat with cheese** sandwiches (no bologna, pb&j or white bread, please) individually wrapped on **whole wheat** bread.

Thank You!



Open Door Community Ministries

Soup Kitchen: Tuesday and Wednesday, 11 a.m. – 12 noon
Men’s Showers: Tuesday, 10:45 a.m.
Trusted Friends Showers & Sandwiches: Thursday, 10 a.m.
Women’s Showers: by appointment
Harriet Tubman Free Women’s Clinic:
1st and 3rd Tuesdays, 7 p.m.
Harriet Tubman Medical and Foot Care Clinics:
Wednesday, 7 p.m.
Mail Check: Tuesday – Wednesday, during Soup Kitchen
Monday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday, 1 p.m.
Use of Phone: Tuesday – Thursday, during services
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.

Sunday: We invite you to join us for **Worship** at **4 p.m.** and for
supper following worship.

We gratefully accept donations at these times.
Sunday: 9 a.m. until 3 p.m.
Monday: 8:30 a.m. until 8:30 p.m.
Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday: 8:30 until 9:30 a.m.
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 4 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.

- | | |
|----------|--|
| April 1 | 4 p.m. Worship at 910
Vincent Harding preaching |
| April 8 | 8 a.m. Easter Breakfast and Worship at 910
no worship at 4 p.m. |
| April 15 | No Worship at 910
Dayspring care week |
| April 22 | 4 p.m. Worship at 910
Eucharistic Service |
| April 29 | 4 p.m. Worship at 910
Eucharistic Service |
| May 6 | 4 p.m. Worship at 910
Eucharistic Service |
| May 13 | 4 p.m. Worship at 910
Eucharistic Service |
| May 20 | 4 p.m. Worship at 910
Eucharistic Service |
| May 27 | 4 p.m. Worship at 910
Eucharistic Service |



Lavrans Nielsen

Clarification Meetings at the Open Door

We meet for clarification
on selected Tuesday 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
770.246.7620
or visit
www.opendoorcommunity.org.

Medical Needs List

Harriet Tubman Medical Clinic

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

Foot Care Clinic

Epsom salts
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
**men’s underwear
M - XL**

Living Needs

- ☐ jeans
- ☐ work shirts
- ☐ short & long sleeve shirts with collars
- ☐ belts (34" & up)
- ☐ men’s underwear
- ☐ women’s underwear
- ☐ socks
- ☐ reading glasses
- ☐ walking shoes (especially sizes 11-15)
- ☐ T-shirts (XL through 5XL)
- ☐ baseball caps
- ☐ trash bags (30 gallon, .85 mil)

Personal Needs

- ☐ shampoo (all sizes)
- ☐ lotion (all sizes)
- ☐ toothpaste (all sizes)
- ☐ lip balm
- ☐ soap (small sizes)
- ☐ disposable razors

Food Needs

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

Special Needs

- ☐ backpacks
- ☐ MARTA cards
- ☐ postage stamps
- ☐ futon sofa
- ☐ a scale for our medical clinic
- ☐ queen size mattress & box springs or futon
- ☐ prayers for housing for all homeless people

Pill containers: Your generosity has supplied us with enough pill containers for the next several months.
We ask that you **NOT** send any more until we again request them. **Thank You!**