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

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February 2018

Words

The Twenty-Third Psalm

By **Eduard Loring**

The Twenty-Third Psalm, Adapted

Jesus,
You are our Servant-Leader
We have everything we need.
You make us sit down
In prayer and meditation.
You lead us into the streets and prisons
Of suffering and misery.
You restore our whole being.
You lead us to the margins and the seats of power
To speak the Truth
Of Love and Justice
In the name of the Beloved Community.

Yes, though we walk through
The streets of the shadow of
Death and violence
We have courage and peace
For your Word and Way comfort us.

You prepare a table for us
In the midst of Corporate Totalitarianism
And the banksters.
You bless us
Through the embrace of one another.
Our cups are bottomless!

Surely your Way, Truth and Life
Pursue us
And we live in the Beloved Community
Today, tomorrow and forever.

Amen.

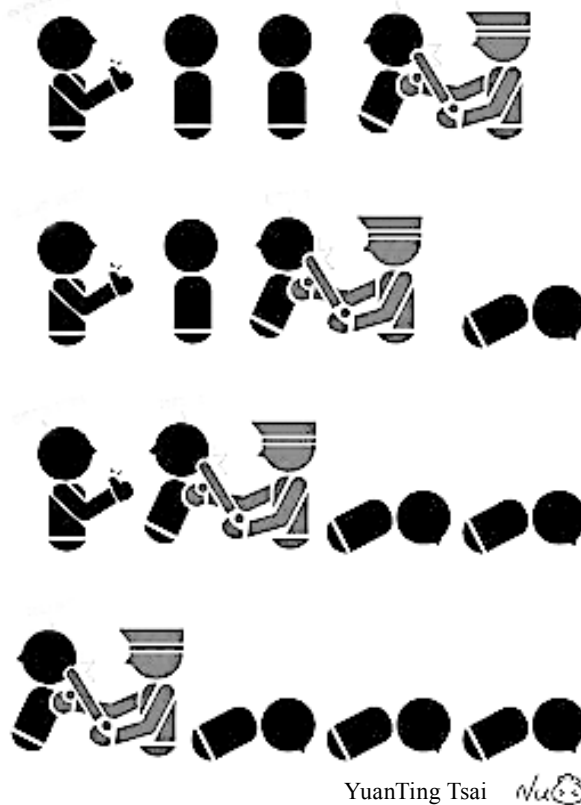
Why a Paraphrase

The holy name Israel has become a profane, yea, blasphemous name for those of us who follow the Black Jesus. Today we cannot read the word in scripture, song, liturgy or homily without pain for the Palestinians who struggle for life in their stolen land.

Wisdom teaches us to beware the demons we fight, for too easily do we become demonic in the horror of the struggle for love and justice for all peoples who on this good earth do dwell.

Modern Israel has become a demonic state, a virtual Babylon of the 6th century. A state too close to the spirit of Nazis.

Who Will Speak Up for You?



By **Murphy Davis**

First they came for the homeless,
and I did not speak out —
Because I was not homeless.
Then they came for the prisoner,
and I did not speak out —
Because I was not a prisoner.
Then they came for the battered women,
and I did not speak out —
Because I was not a battered woman.
Then they came for me —
and there was no one left to speak for me.

— *A paraphrase of Martin Niemoeller, prisoner of the Nazis*

The parable of the Last Judgment in Matthew 25:31-46 is the center of the life of the Open Door Community — the basis of all that we are and all that we do. When Jesus says, “Inasmuch as you have done it to the least of my sisters and brothers, you have done it to me . . .” we understand this to be a spirituality and faith that means that our faithfulness is always and inevitably to be judged by our treatment of the poor and marginalized. When we reach out to those who are shut out and shut down we see the face of Jesus and this is how we come to understand not only what we are doing to the oppressed, but what our values are as expressed in the suffering of the poor and excluded.

Pastor Martin Niemoeller’s famous words, paraphrased above, capture the solidarity toward which Matthew 25 urges

us. If we live in solidarity with the human family, they cannot “come for the Jews” without pushing past our bodies standing firm in resistance, or without stepping over our dead bodies.

In the paraphrase I have offered, I am suggesting that we are struggling now with a vulgar, white supremacist, authoritarian regime in the USA in large part because we have refused to live in solidarity, especially with the Great Unwashed: the homeless, the prisoner and the others who constitute the unattractive poor.

In 2011, Arianna Huffington of the *Huffington Post* wrote about middle class families losing their housing to foreclosures: “In other words, when the future is not accessible — when you can’t find a job, can’t pay your bills, can’t take on the responsibilities of adult life — you are more likely to feel that you have no stake in society and turn against it.”

Seems like something that might have been said before — perhaps about a different group of people. Sometime back in the 1980s or ‘90s, we closed off the future for a large number of people when homelessness morphed from being understood as a “temporary crisis” to being accepted as a way of life for thousands of men, women and children in this nation — the perception of homeless persons as a permanent underclass. And we accepted out-of-control growth of prisons during the same period. We accepted homelessness and mass imprisonment as permanent institutions among us, and we stopped trying to “solve” these massive societal problems.

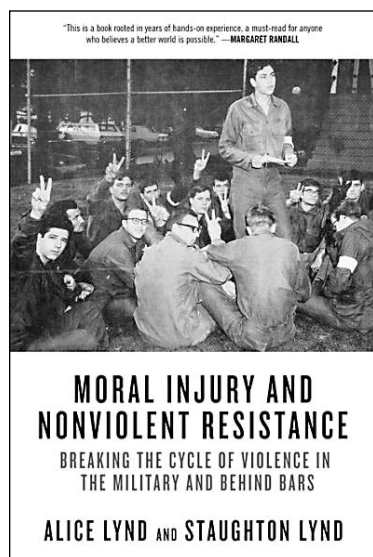
Some of this has changed more recently. A number of journalists and other writers and artists have taken on the Prison Industrial Complex at the same time that grassroots and national organizations were growing up all over the country. (Among those who have called forth that movement are Angela Davis [who in her leadership of Critical Resistance coined the term Prison Industrial Complex], Michelle Alexander [*The New Jim Crow*], Bryan Stevenson [*Just Mercy* and other writings] and Ava DuVernay with her splendid film “13th.”) This is the movement I have longed for in the 40 years that I’ve visited and agitated for people in the Georgia prison system and those on death row in the 31 states and federal jurisdictions that cling to death as punishment.

But for most of the years I’ve gone in and out of prisons and jails, it would be a stretch to say that we had a “movement” unless you count very small gatherings of hard core abolitionists. A passion for people in prison has hardly been shared by the general public. “Prisons? The death penalty? Ho-hum, let’s talk about something else.” As Dan Berrigan said for many years, “Trying to talk with people about prisons is like trying to hand them a bag of snakes. They won’t take it and they sure don’t want to look inside.” So homelessness and imprisonment, for a lack of public resistance, became part of the political landscape. While we can count the number of people executed by the states and federal government

Words continued on page 11

Who Will Speak Up continued on page 10

On the Road to Peace and Justice



Moral Injury and Nonviolent Resistance

Breaking the Cycle of Violence in the Military and Behind Bars

By Alice and Staughton Lynd

PM Press

2017

He used it to describe the condition of his patients who had done, seen, or failed to prevent an action that they knew was wrong according to their personal belief systems, and who then struggled to reconcile the action with their senses of who they were or should be. The term ultimately describes an inability to deal in the present with a grave

ments, among many other struggles.) But the Lynds refuse to think of what they do in such terms.

I had the great fortune to hear Alice and Staughton talk about their shared life in struggle and their shared career as documentarians and authors at the 2017 annual meeting of the Oral History Association, where the Lynds were plenary speakers and recipients of the OHA's Stetson Kennedy Vox Populi Award.

Alice's understanding of this concept grew from her work as an antiwar draft counselor in the 1960s. She said, "When I was counseling, I believed there were two experts in the room. I was the expert on regulations and what was required to support a particular kind of claim. But the man I was counseling was an expert on what life meant to him, what his aspirations were for his future, what family pressures he was under, and what consequences he was willing to face. We put our expertise together."

The spirit of accompaniment and "two experts in the room" certainly fills the pages of this hopeful book. The Lynds say that they are more interested in raising questions than providing answers, and the book is fairly light on prescriptions to solve the problem of

A Review by Todd Moye

Alice and Staughton Lynd are, to use the term favored by their longtime colleague Vincent Harding, long-distance runners in the movements for peace and social justice. For more than half a century they have worked and studied and listened and written to make American society more just and less hierarchical and to make the world a more peaceful place. In *Moral Injury and Nonviolent Resistance: Breaking the Cycle of Violence in the Military and Behind Bars*, they share the stories of veterans and prisoners who have suffered moral injury and have worked to remake their social worlds so that others will not have to suffer similarly. Without preaching or scolding, the Lynds make a passionate and convincing case against war and violence simply by detailing their dehumanizing effects on the psyches and souls of real, three-dimensional people.

Dr. Jonathan Shay, a Department of Veterans Affairs psychiatrist who worked with soldiers who had committed atrocities in Vietnam, coined the term "moral injury."

mistake from one's past, a "bruise on your soul," as a veteran of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan put it, which manifests in a variety of anti-social behaviors.

When people cross a "red line" in violation of their conscience, how do they return? Can they? The Lynds suggest that acts of nonviolent resistance themselves can be healing for people who have suffered moral injury. They provide dozens of testimonies from men and women who have healed their own moral injuries through nonviolent actions, drawing on their intimate relationships with what must be thousands of war resisters, labor organizers, prisoners and others.

Their methodology is fascinating; it combines documentary work with activism and what others might call organizing. (The Lynds are themselves veterans of the labor, civil rights, antiwar and prisoner rights move-

To hear them talk about the race they have run together over such a long distance and simply to be in the presence of their fierce Quaker gentleness was inspiring.

As Staughton explained then, people who think of themselves as organizers are much more likely to enter a situation with a predetermined outcome and a route to it in mind and work either to convince others that their route is best or steamroll any opposition on the way there. As he sees it, his job, he says, is not to *organize* but to *accompany*: to walk alongside and listen to the people he works with, to uncover the truth and arrive at solutions together. His understanding of "accompanying" draws from Oscar Romero, the Salvadoran Catholic priest and practitioner of liberation theology, and Dr. Paul Farmer, the co-founder of Partners in Health, an international organization devoted to health and social justice.

moral injury; it is not a how-to book. But it is a book full of testimony that readers may find helpful as they cope with their own and others' moral injuries.

I hope that readers will also seek out the Lynds' previously published oral history-based books, which include *Rank & File: Personal Histories by Working-Class Organizers*, *Homeland: Oral Histories of Palestine and Palestinians*, and *We Won't Go: Personal Accounts of War Objectors*. There is scarcely a problem in the United States or world today — military adventurism, deindustrialization, the denial of basic civil and human rights, you name it — that the Lynds haven't thought about, worked on and written about already. ♦

Todd Moye teaches U.S. history and is head of the Oral History Program at the University of North Texas in Denton.

HOSPITALITY

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Open Door Community

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Eduard Loring

David Payne and Guest enjoy breakfast on the corner of North and Greenmont Avenues in Baltimore.

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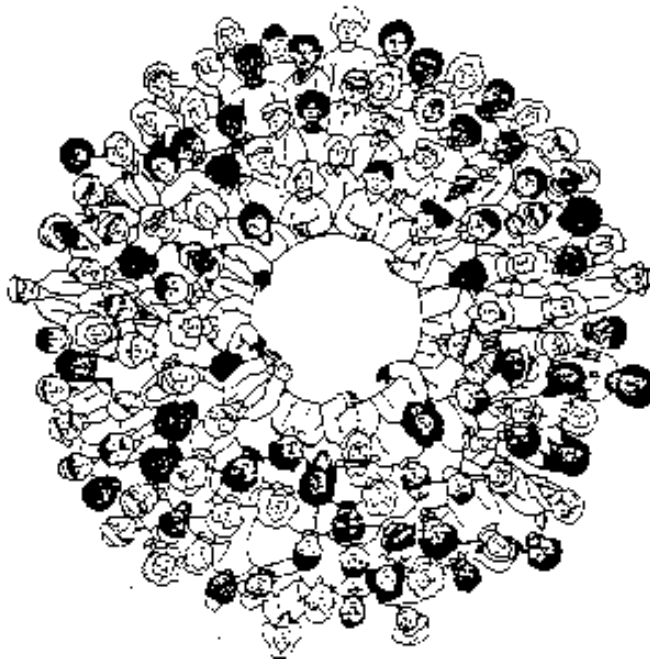
Please join us on **Facebook** for the continuing journey of the **Open Door Community in Baltimore**. Thank you, David, Eduard and Murphy.

Lions and Coyotes and Calves, Oh My!

By Joyce Hollyday

In early December, a calf was born on the 120-acre mountain farm next door. On my morning walk that day, I rounded a turn in the trail and spied him under a chestnut tree by the creek, just hours old, still wobbly on his legs, his mother licking him vigorously. The next night a coyote tried to kill that newborn calf. His mother successfully thwarted the attack, but not without injury to her ear and face. On the following morning's walk, I noticed that all the cattle were huddled together at the bottom of the mountain, the calves in the center of their protective circle.

Twenty years ago, when I was in South Africa observing the stunning work of its Truth and Reconciliation Commission, friends there who were anxious to increase tourism and stimulate the economy after the devastating apartheid years encouraged me to visit Kruger National Park. Unforgettable are the majestic elephants, the herds of trotting giraffes



Natural instinct in both animals and humans is to stick together and protect the most vulnerable among us. But we have lost our way.

and graceful gazelles, the hippos bellowing at a full orange moon rising over the Limpopo River. But what I remember most vividly is a trek into the savanna in an open-platform truck to view the lions at sunset. Before we began, our guide

gave clear instructions: "Stay in the truck. Don't separate yourself or make any movement that distinguishes you as an individual. As long as the lions think we're one huge animal, they won't attack."

Natural instinct in both animals and humans is to stick together and protect the most vulnerable among us. But we have lost our way. When we funnel massive profits toward corporations through unconscionable tax "reform," we have lost our way. When we slash educational funding and accessible healthcare and affordable housing to pay for it, we have lost our way. When we target laborers, immigrants, children, LGBTQ persons, women, persons with disabilities, the elderly and people of color, we have lost our way. When we control those who are most vulnerable through abandonment, incarceration and deportation, we have lost our way.

I'm not sure how we will find our way back. But I want to be part of the circle at the foot of the mountain, defying the predators, defending everyone in the herd. I want to live in a society where our abundant resources are committed to the common good, where no one gets left out. What do you say we work together and build that society? "As long as the lions think we're one huge animal, they won't attack." ✦

Joyce Hollyday is an author and founding co-pastor of Circle of Mercy church in Asheville, NC, where she is active with the immigrant community and the Sanctuary movement. She has been a friend of the Open Door for four decades. Her blog can be found at www.joycehollyday.com.

A Bullish Review of "Ferdinand"

A Review by Peter Gathje

When I was a child, I was blessed by parents who read stories to me and then surrounded me with good books to read once I was ready. Now my wife, Kathleen, and I have been blessed by a child in our old age (one of the perks of offering hospitality, see Genesis 18), and I have the delightful task of reading to our daughter Nevaeh each night before she goes to sleep. I am not only revisiting the classic children's books my parents read to me, but also finding new books to share.

In early December, Kathleen began to tell me about *The Story of Ferdinand*. I had not yet come across it in the stacks of books she has saved from her reading to her four now-grown children. She told me that this book was a favorite with them, and that this classic children's story (first published in 1936) has now been made into a movie.

When the movie came to Memphis, Kathleen organized a trip to see "Ferdinand" as part of our Christmas family time. Despite Kathleen's enthusiasm, I went with low expectations. I had not yet read the book, which has a simple story line. Ferdinand is a bull who would rather smell flowers than fight in bullfights. So, when he's taken to the bull ring, he does not fight, but rather smells nearby flowers. After that disappointment, he is returned to the pasture.

Entering the movie, I expected the highlight to be the popcorn and root beer I would share with Nevaeh. We had gone to a children's movie about unicorns a few months before and I was not impressed. A children's movie about bulls did not sound that promising.

I am glad Kathleen was right and I was wrong about the movie. Ferdinand is a bull who will not fight. But more, he is a bull who seeks a different world. He runs away from the school where bulls are being taught to fight. For a while, he finds a home where his love for others and the creation is

welcomed. When he is forcibly returned to the school he still refuses to fight with other bulls who are vying to get into the bull ring and become famous. Their taunts and, yes, bullying, do not provoke him to retaliate.

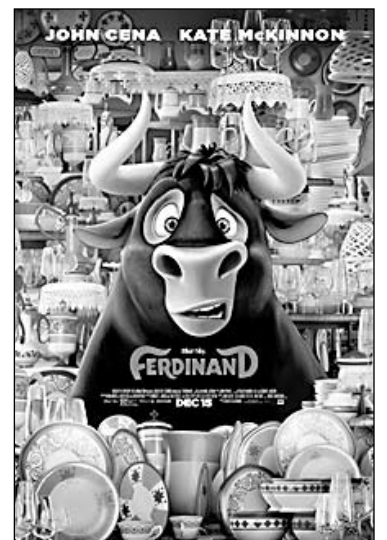
When, despite his peaceful nature, he is brought to fight in the bull ring, he continues his resistance, and even shames the matador into acknowledging that violence and killing are to be rejected. Throughout the story, Ferdinand's refusal to fight reflects his strength and not weakness. Physically, he grows up to become the largest and strongest bull among all the others. Morally, he is patient, persistent and creative in his commitment to nonviolence. Ferdinand is not simply passive; he comes to use his strength to lead a liberation movement for other bulls bound for the slaughterhouse.

In an age of bellicose bellowing by a president full of bullshit, the movie offers a compelling alternative. The flash and fame of the bull ring, including the egotistical matador, are effectively skewered by Ferdinand, who knows that life is best centered on creating lasting friendships (even with marginalized characters like a goat and three hedgehogs), appreciation for the beauty of the creation (Ferdinand loves those flowers) and openness to love even one's enemies (the bulls who mock Ferdinand are the very ones he eventually saves). The beauty and joy of the movie is that it shares this vision with a great deal of fun and an action-packed story. The animation is delightful, as are the songs.

But what about the movie as entertainment for children? Nevaeh not only stayed focused throughout (no small achievement for a two-year-old), but now continually talks about "the bull movie" and "the good bull." She also did enjoy the popcorn and root beer. ✦

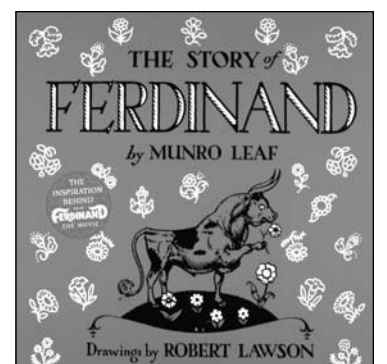
Ferdinand

film directed by Carlos Saldanha
2017



The Story of Ferdinand

book by Munro Leaf (Author)
and Robert Lawson (Illustrator)
1936



Peter Gathje is Vice President for Academic Affairs/Dean of Memphis Theological Seminary, and a founder of Manna House, a place of hospitality in Memphis. He wrote Sharing the Bread of Life: Hospitality and Resistance at the Open Door Community (2006) and edited A Work of Hospitality: The Open Door Reader 1982 – 2002. (pgathje@memphisseminary.edu)

Fragments From a Fractured Beggar's Bowl: February 2018

By Eduard Loring



Justin Norman

Above: Murphy Davis, Eduard Loring and Kathy Kelly at the White House on January 11 during the Witness Against Torture Rally to close The U.S. detention center at Guantánamo Bay, Cuba. (www.witnessagainsttorture.com)

Right: Elder C.W. Harris (seated), pastor of Newborn Community of Faith Church, has welcomed The Open Door Community to serve the Pennsylvania Avenue Breakfast at his church.

Shard One

Shall We Overcome?

Oh, come. Oh, come. We need you as never before. Sweet death holds the luscious scents of jelly rolls as the dying in streets and prisons face the maggots of racist hate. We play the final hand of cards dealt to us in the beginning of the foundation of the world, and we have no wild cards — all aces and deuces gone. Oh, come. Oh, come. See the weeping. Hold hard the hearts crushed like stone by the air hammer of the Evil One, who claims victory as the caged bird sings only of a freedom which she has never known. Oh, come. Oh, come. The shroud is at hand. The linen cloth washed in brine is whiter still. We have loved with fire for years. By whom and how will the ashes of the future be scooped and with what shovel shall the remains be scattered in the boneyard of the forgotten memory? We who just 40 years ago said in boldness and expectation: Let us tell America of the human beings sleeping out in the hot winter and the freezing summer. We will not tolerate this gentle going into the good night. How foolish is the heart and flesh in youth, who knows not the power of the powers — the glitter of gold — the stupidity of believing. Can The Good establish justice without the death of doers and the sacrifice of the poor to the glory of the market value of slaves set free for prison? Oh, Come. Oh, Come. Now. COME.



David Payne

Shard Two

Christ Crotch Cross: Where did Mr. Monson end up?

Thomas S. Monson, who as president of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints since 2008 enlarged the ranks of female missionaries, but rebuffed demands to ordain women as priests and refused to alter church opposition to same-sex marriage, died on Tuesday at his home in Salt Lake City. He was 90.

Protestants are without excuse. They follow the love ethic of Jesus Christ in the Bible. Sola Scriptura.

Catholics have some excuse because they have popes and other clerics who can enlarge revelation from sources outside the Bible.

Mormons have an excuse. They have a higher revelation found in the writings Joseph Smith found in a cave. But even they can change. Mormons now believe Black people are fully human and should become Mormons.

But White Nationalist Christians in America, Evangelicals, Fundamentalists and mean Christians the world over join the patriarchal call to control women's bodies. From the altar to the abortion clinic. Just who is their God? Well, Pat Robertson said recently that Donald Trump was the Moral SpokesMan for the Evangelicals (NPR). Just who is their Jesus? The crotch has replaced the cross in their blasphemous minds (or is it hearts?).

The Mormons oppose same-sex marriage and this faithless stance was a concern for my brother Thomas S. Monson. Last week, two Mormon brothers married two Mormon sisters. One girl was seven, and the other, eight. Thank the God of the Mormons they were girls!

What are we doing to the Christian Faith? When are we going to wake up? Listen to Naomi Klein.

Tomorrow we go to the Women's March. We hope to see you there. ✦



Vicki Klein

Eduard Loring, Hannah Murphy Buc, Michaela, Jason Buc, Murphy Davis and Vicki Klein at the Baltimore Women's March on January 20.

Eduard Nuessner Loring is an Activist/Advocate/Ally at the Open Door Community in Baltimore. (eduardloring@opendoorcommunity.org)

This Is Who We Are: Matthew 25:31-46

By Nibs Stroupe

*Nibs Stroupe preached this sermon on
November 26, 2017 at Brown Memorial Park
Avenue Presbyterian Church in Baltimore.*

We have arrived at the end of the church year, and we're now asked to get ready for the coming church year, which begins next Sunday on the first Sunday in Advent. This last Sunday in the church year is usually called "Christ the King" Sunday, and the lectionary readings generally move to the "end of time" texts, emphasizing that Jesus Christ rules over all people and all of history.

In these days when the depth of patriarchy is once again revealed to all of us, I want us to shift the idea of the masculine being the norm. When Caroline and I were pastors at Oakhurst, we changed the name of this last Sunday of the church year to “Christ the Ruler” Sunday, with Jesus being both the head of life and the measure of life, the ruling stick of life.

In Matthew's Gospel, today's parable is part of a series of the last teachings that Jesus gives to the women and men who follow him. After this he will be betrayed, arrested and executed. In the beginning of this 25th chapter of Matthew, Jesus starts with the parable of the ten bridesmaids waiting on a bridegroom who has been delayed. Five of them keep their lamps trimmed and burning, and they are ready for the bridegroom and the feast. You can hear that refrain from the great gospel song, "Keep your lamps trimmed and burnin', keep your lamps trimmed and burnin', the time is drawing nigh."

Last week's Gospel lesson was the second parable in Matthew 25: the parable of the talents — that strange and quirky story that

wants to make it clear in this third parable what these “talents” are. What are the talents to use to glorify God? Jesus indicates that the talents are not capitalism, but rather these: feeding the hungry, giving water, offering hospitality, visiting those in prison, caring for the sick. In other words, the talents to be used to glorify God are compassion and kindness and mercy and justice.

Let's look at this third and last parable to see what it has to say to us as disciples of Jesus Christ in our day. I want to note again

and communities. It is the apocalyptic hope that justice finally will prevail. In this story that Jesus tells, the Beloved of Humanity will gather the nations, gather the communities of peoples for the great reckoning of justice and love.

Jesus emphasizes the talents that he is looking for in his disciples. When the Beloved of Humanity returns in glory, he won't be looking for magnificent church buildings or fantastic family life centers. He'll be looking at how we treat those in need, how we treat

righteous.” The people who serve those in need are not doing it to rack up points with God. They are acting out of compassion, out of connection to the other, out of love. The Beloved in this parable is not looking for mighty warriors or huge bankrolls, but those who visit in prison, or provide shelter, or give food to the hungry.

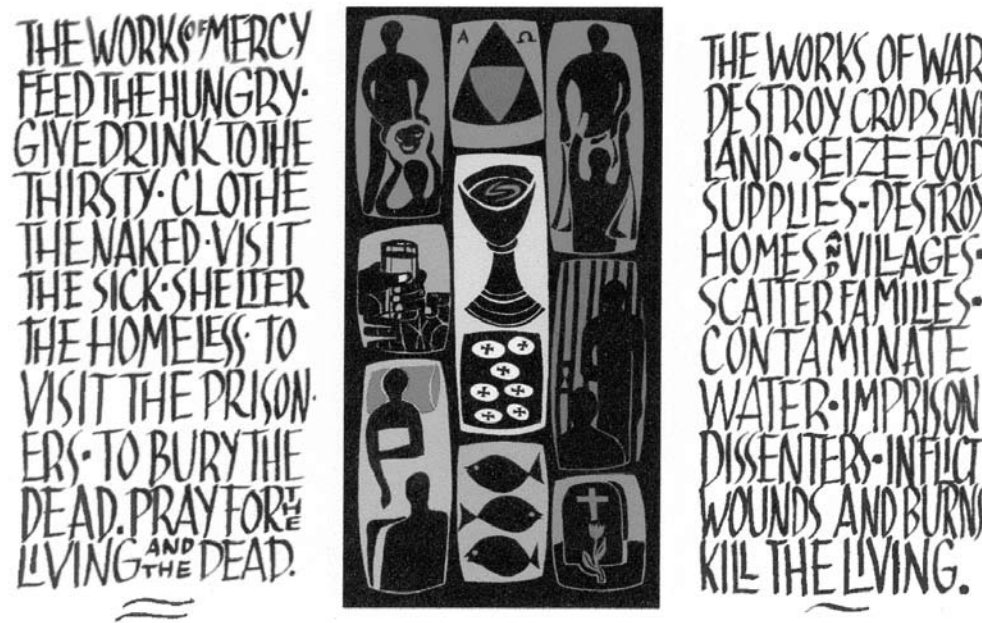
There is one other thing that we should note here. This parable has the only hint at specific guidelines from Jesus about who is in and who is out. Both the righteous and the unrighteous know who the Beloved is — they both say “Lord, Lord.” But it is those with compassionate hearts who act for love and for justice that are rewarded. Now, I know as Presbyterians, we are not supposed to worry about who’s in and who’s out — let the Baptists worry about that; for us Presbyterians, it’s up to God. But, just in case you are wondering, just in case you think about it, these are the best guidelines that we get from Jesus about getting close to the Beloved.

This parable seems to point to eternity, but it actually focuses on life here on Earth, here and now. It reminds disciples of Jesus in every age and in every place, including Brown Memorial Presbyterian Church: This is who we are. We not only believe in life after death, but we also believe in life before death. The point of the life, death and resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth is not just what happens to us when we die, but rather what happens to us when we live, when we discover and re-discover the presence of God in our lives. This parable emphasizes that at the heart of our lives, at the heart of who we are as disciples of Jesus the Beloved One, is the power of compassion. This is who we are: God's compassion for ourselves and for others. This is who we are: compassion in our hearts and in our actions, both as individuals and as communities.

The Biblical scholar Phyllis Trible reminds us about the meaning of the word “compassion.” It comes from a Hebrew word connected to the word for “womb.” She emphasizes that God’s love for us is “womb love,” like the connection that a mother has for a child whom she loves. Trible translates a verse in Jeremiah to demonstrate this meaning: “Thus says Yahweh: Is Israel my dear son? My darling child? For the more I speak of him, the more I do remember him. Therefore my womb trembles for him, I will truly show motherly-compassion upon him.” (Jer. 31:20)

This parable in Matthew 25 is futuristic, but, like all good futuristic stories, it asks us to look into the future in order to see the present more clearly, to see our lives and ourselves more clearly. God wants compassionate acts from us, acts as individuals and as communities. God also wants compassionate hearts, hearts that are faithful and trusting in God, hearts that enable us to love ourselves and to live for God and others in love. We

This Is Who *continued on page 11*



Rita Corbin

that in Matthew's Gospel, this is the last story that Jesus tells before he is arrested. It is as if Jesus wants to emphasize one more time, one more time, one last time the importance of compassion and justice in the lives of his disciples. He starts off with the image of the "Son of Man" coming back in his glory to judge the peoples. We need to notice several things about this image.

those who are vulnerable: the sick, the homeless, the hungry, the naked, the prisoner, the stranger. The treasures that this Beloved seeks are not mighty choruses or 10,000-member churches. Rather, he is looking for those who serve, and he is especially looking for those who serve with no thought of reward.

Because, as the noted American theologian Reinhold Niebuhr reminds us in his

The point of the life, death and resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth
is not just what happens to us when we die,
but rather what happens to us when we live,
when we discover and re-discover the presence of God in our lives.

many have often used to justify capitalism. The master goes away and leaves his servants in charge of the talents. Two of the servants invest the talents and make more, but the third buries and hides his talent. When the master returns, he is delighted in the talent-makers, but he is greatly irritated with the talent-hider. “Use your gifts for God, don’t bury them.” It seems to call us back to the Sermon on the Mount earlier in Matthew: “Let your light so shine before other people that they may give glory to God.”

And now in the third parable in Matthew 25, Jesus seems to want to tighten things up. He wants his disciples in every age, including us, to live in the “now” of God, to glorify God with our talents in the here and now. And it’s almost as if Jesus knows how we will twist the parable of the talents to make it about capitalism and making money. He

The idea of the Son of Man comes from the Hebrew Scriptures in Daniel 7 as an image of the end of time, when all will be judged before God. The word translated as “man” here in Matthew actually is “anthropos” in Greek. It is the origin of our word “anthropology,” so it really means “human being.” Its translation, then, should be “human,” so it should be “Son of Humanity.” And, in order to move it out of the sexist realm as much as possible, I’m going to change “Son” to “Beloved.” Now we’ll see all the people gather before the “Beloved of Humanity” in a last judgment.

The impetus behind the idea of the last judgment is that we don't see a lot of justice in this life here on earth, so in order for there to be integrity in God and in the universe, the church has believed that there must be some sort of reckoning for both individuals

fine commentary on these verses, there is a great surprise for everybody in this parable. Those on the left who are sent to punishment are stunned when they hear that they are being punished because they did not serve the Beloved. They ask: “Lord, when did we see You hungry and did not feed You? When did we see You naked and not clothe You? Lord, please, if we had only known that it was You, we would have certainly served You!” And the Beloved replies, “When you did not serve those in need, you were refusing to serve me.”

But those whom the Beloved calls “righteous,” those on his right — they too are surprised. They say just about the same thing that the others say: “Lord, when did we see You hungry and feed You? We don’t remember serving You.” The Beloved replies, “When you served those in need, you served me.” Niebuhr calls it the “surprise of the

Bread Not Bombs

By Frits ter Kuile

Christians from the Netherlands, Germany and the U.S., coming from six houses of hospitality, witnessed for peace in the spirit of Dorothy Day and Ammon Hennecy at Büchel Air Force Base in Germany, 72 years after the first atomic bomb exploded on July 16, 1945 at Alamogordo, New Mexico.

At Büchel AFB, American nuclear bombs are waiting in vaults to be mounted on the German Tornado fighter bombers parked above them and dropped on their designated targets elsewhere in Europe. All factions in the German Parliament voted on March 26, 2010 to end this nuclear madness and get nuclear weapons out of Germany. The German peace movement is engaged to get this realized — to get the old bombs out and prevent a new generation of nuclear bombs from being built up.

The more of us who take to the street and refuse to run the country for the benefit of the bosses, and the more we stop obeying their unjust laws, the more we side with God, who passionately sides with terrorized, bombed, starved and violated people, and the less choice the mighty will have but to step down.

New bombs are now being researched and tested in the U.S. Development will begin by 2020 and we strive to build up enough awareness and resistance by 2024 to prevent the new nuclear bombs from being installed and to get the old ones out. Every year, from March 26 for twenty weeks (one week for each bomb at this Air Force base), until Nagasaki Day, August 9, the German peace movement organizes a presence at Büchel AFB by local peace groups, the German branches of the Fellowship of Reconciliation, War Resisters International, International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War, youth sections of political parties, church groups and others, all who come to witness for peace.

Demanding that American weapons be taken out of Germany is a touchy issue because German right-wing nationalists who desire a strong and independent Germany ("Make Germany great again!") make the same demand. So the Peace Campaign invited American and European citizens from formerly Nazi-occupied countries to come and join them in their witness, making the witness unequivocally not anti-U.S. and not for the rise of a powerful Germany, but for a nuclear-free world.

We had heeded the invitation and gathered at the Peace Camp near the main gate to prepare ourselves for action. During the Sunday liturgy at the main gate we listened to a homily by the late Phil Berrigan. Phil reminded us that "if we only picket, speak, write or vote against nuclear weapons, we still cooperate with their legality and hence their existence. By breaking the unjust laws protecting them, we actually begin to knock out the underpinnings of an empire that spreads terror, war and poverty worldwide, and to create Pax Christi here and now. . . . The more of us who take to the street and refuse to run the country for the benefit of the bosses, and the more we stop obeying their unjust laws, the more we side with God, who passionately sides with terrorized, bombed, starved and violated people, and the less choice the mighty will have but to step down. Then human creativity, skill and energy can be freed up to fulfill the rightful purpose of creation. Weapons can be dismantled and melted down and ways found to share the world's bread."

After blessing and sharing bread and wine, we took loaves of bread and, to our own and the soldiers' astonishment, we opened a sequence of three closed main gates and walked right onto the base. Phil's first miracle?! We offered bread to the soldiers and put bread onto three fighter jets stationed near the front gate. BREAD NOT BOMBS!



Photographs from Bread Not Bombs

That night, four American Catholic Workers and a German orchestra conductor entered the base and prayed on top of a nuclear bomb bunker. When they wrote DISARM NOW! on the bunker door, sensors went off and soldiers appeared. The American and German soldiers wanted the German police to arrest the peace folks, but the German prosecution does not want the publicity that comes with trials, and so they were released at dawn.

The new American nuclear bombs that are now being researched and developed are more accurate and cause much more death and destruction. The other nuclear nations are also developing new nuclear weapons in response. This

Peace Campaign is part of a world-wide movement to prevent a new generation of nuclear weapons from threatening life on earth, and to create a nuclear-free future. ✚

Frits ter Kuile resided from 1983-87 in a peace camp to keep cruise missiles from entering the Netherlands. He helped organize and

walked a European Peace Pilgrimage in 1992 from the Trident base at St Mary's, via the Savannah River Plant, the Red Stone Arsenal, Pantex and Los Alamos to the Nevada Test Site on Columbus Day. En route, the group apologised to Native Americans for what Europeans have done to them and their once-pristine continent, and called on Euro-Americans to stop nuclear testing

Americans Susan Crane and John La Forge lowered the U.S. flag and proclaimed it time the U.S. soldiers go home. Had Germans or other Europeans done this, it might have been tricky, but now it was Americans themselves who gave this sign, and loud cheers went up as the flag came down.



Dominican Sisters Ardeth Platte and Carol Gilbert read to the soldiers amassing around us the text of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons passed on July 5, 2017 by an overwhelming majority at the United Nations. After some time, the German police arrived and took our names for trespassing and escorted us off the base.

At dawn on July 17, we blocked traffic at all gates entering the base. The American delegation told police that they would leave if they could speak with the commander and present him with the treaty text. The police thereupon pressed the commander of the guards to come out, which he grudgingly did. After receiving the treaty text declaring nuclear weapons soon to be illegal, he returned to the base and the Americans left the blockade. Police moved in and removed the others and took their names.



Top of page: Blocking the gate at Büchel Air Force Base in Germany.

Above, top: John LaForge and Susan Crane lowering the U.S. flag.

Above: Bread placed on one of the fighter jets.

on Shoshone lands in Nevada. Preventing war erupting in Kosovo proved a bit too much, and in 1996 he happily joined the Amsterdam Catholic Worker (www.noelhuis.nl), offering hospitality to illegal immigrants, vigiling at the deportation prison, guerilla gardening and raising a family. More info at buechel-atombombenfrei.jimdo.com, or write to noelhuis@antenna.nl Also see https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Treaty_on_the_Prohibition_of_Nuclear_Weapons.

Jerusalem Is Spiritual Geography

By Weldon D. Nisly

The world unfolds in and through our choices and actions.

— Ilia Delio, *Making All Things New*

The spiritual geography of *place* holds real and mystical meaning for personal and communal identity. Many people identify a place with a spiritual sense of belonging. Spiritual geography gives deeper meaning than political power.

What happens when differing peoples identify with the same *place* of spiritual geography?

What happens is world-making choices and actions that harm or heal. Choices are made for ourselves against the other. Or choices are made in collaboration with and concern for each other. Choices are selfish or selfless. Choices hoard our perceived good or seek the common good. Choices are often asymmetrical, made by a dominant force with an imbalance of power. Choice is action. Choice matters.

Imbalanced Choice, Ignorant Action

President Trump's choice to move the U.S. Embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem is an asymmetrical choice that harms and hoards. It is a selfish choice made from an imbalance of power. It is a dominant choice consistent with his penchant for dominating action over diplomatic statecraft. It is a choice foisted on Palestinians and the world from the hubris of American exceptionalism and entitlement. It is ignorant of and insensitive to competing claims over the spiritual geography of *place* called Jerusalem.

In over a half century of political engagement and observation, I have not known anything like it. I have been drawn to presidential personalities, practices and politics since the election of John F. Kennedy in 1960. Ten previous U.S. presidents have championed American exceptionalism and entitlement. But none so brazenly as the current one, who takes it to a new low, crushing anyone deemed disloyal and trashing anything in the way of imbalanced choices and ignorant actions.

Trump occupies the Oval Office as a bull in a china shop, trampling people and trashing dishes. Except it is not dishes being shattered without caution or care. It is anyone labeled *other*: people from other places, people of color, people who are poor, people in prison, people scorned as losers and mocked as weak, people seeking peace.

His bellicose announcement to move the United States Embassy in Israel from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem is more bull-in-a-china-shop belligerence. In this trumped worldview, the winners are Israelis, the losers are Palestinians. The winner is America, the loser is the world.

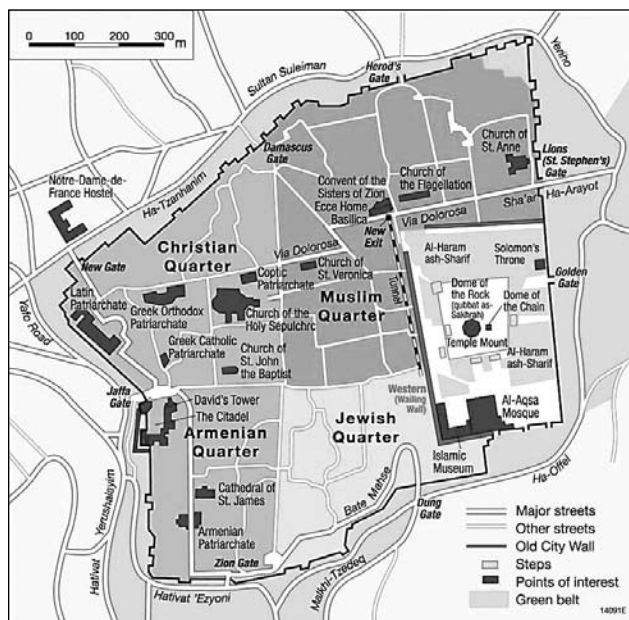
What is lost on too many Americans is all too real for Palestinians who suffer the consequences of this imbalanced choice and ignorant action.

During September and October 2017, I served with the Christian Peacemaker Team in the West Bank. CPT works at the invitation of and in collaboration with local people committed to human rights and just peace in solidarity with those being harmed by choices and actions of powerful people.

After Trump's Jerusalem announcement, I contacted Palestinian friends to express my sorrow and ask how they felt. They shared what it is like to be treated with scornful disdain and bear the brunt of this imbalanced decision and ignorant action.



www.nationsonline.org



www.diercke.com



Weldon Nisly

A typical street in Old City Jerusalem where Muslims, Jews and Christians all shop with countless visitors from all over the world.

A Palestinian Muslim friend shared the same feelings of distress "as my grandfather's [over] the Balfour declaration 100 years ago giving legitimacy for the occupation of Palestine." He added, "My grandfather owned a shop in the old city of Jerusalem. He was a spice maker, the handcraft he inherited from his father. This spice-making shop is older than the United States of America. Trump has no right to change the identity of that place. It's heartbreaking to see that it took 100 years, and still no justice has been given to the Palestinians, the indigenous people who lived there even before the creation of the state of Israel. It's very sad that the ignorance of one nation who voted for Trump has led to more misery for another nation living under occupation."

A hundred years ago, in late 1917, British Foreign Secretary Balfour wrote to Lord Rothschild, President of the Jewish Zionist Federation, pledging Britain's support for "the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people."

A Palestinian Christian friend lamented, "How sad a day it is when a selfish man wields such power and can do as he wants. Many people feel that he only wants to defeat weak people."

Palestinians cry out, "Jerusalem is the eternal capital of Palestine." Their cries fall on closed ears and cold hearts in Israel and America. Their voices will not be silenced, and their voice is heard around the world. Voices across the Middle East and around the world decry Trump's dominant decision. Muslim and Christian leaders condemn moving the U.S. Embassy to Jerusalem.

Theologian Drew Christiansen wrote, "Trump's decision on Jerusalem is a Middle East deal-breaker. [He] fancies himself a dealmaker . . . able to broker the ultimate deal: an Israeli-Palestinian peace agreement. [It] threatens to destroy any hope of resuscitating moribund peace talks. . . . The international community has long recognized the unique political and religious status of Jerusalem. The 1947 U.N. Partition Plan for Palestine envisaged a special status for the Holy City as a *corpus separatum* under international governance. . . . [Trump is] signaling approval for Israel's seizure of the city by force and eroding what has been united international opposition to the idea that the Holy City could be claimed through Israel's military victory. Furthermore, Israel's physical control of the city has been accompanied by the seizure of Palestinian homes and neighborhoods by ultra-Zionist settlers."

A tragic world unfolds in and through this choice. Palestinian rights and Jerusalem's spiritual geography are undermined by capital claims of an American-Israeli collusion.

Martin Luther King Jr. gave us much spiritual wisdom, including the reminder that "before you can come up with a cure, you first have to know the disease." Albert Einstein warned, "We can't solve problems by using the same kind of thinking we used when we created them."

Oblivious to this spiritual wisdom, Trump's obsessive-compulsive same old thinking ignores the creation of and cure for the Jerusalem problem.

Spiritual guides across the ages teach us to see our false self. Our ego-driven false self refuses deep listening for spiritual wisdom, asks no real questions, and spews dominating answers onto others. The false self is trapped in a rigid world of mindless choices and heartless actions that further oppress the most vulnerable people.

Spiritual guides also help us live into our True Self that is the image and likeness of the Creator incarnate in the Black Jesus of JustPeace. The True Self hears the cries of Palestinians and recognizes *Jerusalem is spiritual geography*. ☩

After 40 years of Mennonite Church ministry that included community, pastoral and peace ministries, Weldon Nisly currently devotes himself in "retirement" to Contemplative Just-Peace building and work with Christian Peacemaker Teams. He is a Benedictine Oblate. His life is devoted to the abolition of war. (nislyweldon@gmail.com)

In Memoriam: Margo Santoni (1932-2017)

By Eduard Loring

Our Shared Story

A long time ago now, I was invited to Denison University to be the Religious Emphasis Week speaker. This event turned me toward a deeper formation of love and commitment. I am thankful. I met and continue to have a friendship with Dr. David Woodyard, head of the Religion Department and close friend of James Cone and Rev. Ashley Goff of D.C. I will be reviewing Dr. Woodyard's latest book, *Liberating Privilege*, in these pages in the future. I had heard of George and Carolyn Williamson, but had not met them. In their home one evening, we became companions on the journey. So much love and grace, and then Margo and Ron Santoni put an indelible mark upon my soul, Murphy's soul and the faith and practices of the Open Door Community.

Margo was cursed by the disease of polio as a little girl of ten. Was this the root of her suffering? Our wounds' roots are a mystery. Though we may not know the root, the glorious fruits of those gifted by the mystery find empathy and maturity, yea, a life for others, nourished by their own suffering and wound. How strange that a not-large woman, crippled as a follower of the first-century Jesus the Jew, could walk on the waters of our souls and nourish us like the living sacrament of our crucified, risen Jesus Christ that she was.

A first memory of Margo. We are in the hollowed basement of the Open Door Community Atlanta. In the St. Benedict Room, readying for a Clarification of Thought meeting. Beside her chair, leaning toward her like a friend, were Margo's crutches. "Wow! Look," I exclaimed to the group. The crutches were painted bright yellow with flowers waving to us all. Irony I suppose. The crutches were signs of Welcome. Those very crutches which banged her legs as she walked down the narrow steps to our basement were the bright spot in the room: colorful, so different from the bland institutional crutches upon which the homeless poor limp along the mean streets of Atlanta, and hospitable. That is right: hospitable. Her crutches, her outward mark of suffering, welcomed us into the room and discussion.

A second memory of Margo. The season is Holy Week, the special time of Ron and Margo's visit until Margo was unable to travel to us. She is in a wheelchair. We are on the streets for 24 hours. Margo did eight hours. We are in Troy Davis (Woodruff) Park. Homeless sisters and brothers gather round. They are amazed at Margo. "You out here with these folks from 910?!" "Good God almighty, you got guts. Thank you. Thank you." Variations on this theme resounded in our ears all day long as we pushed and rolled Margo along to see and feel the other Atlanta. Strange how our suffering and wounds, particularly those of an outward symbol of an inward grace, open

the door to love and solidarity with those wounded by white Christian supremacy, evangelical fundamentalism, economic and social inequality. Those who live in poverty amidst the glitter of the greedy. Margo, my friend and mentor, like the homeless in Atlanta that holy day of Holy Week, I thank you. And I thank God for you.

Ron and Margo burned with love, flipped, flopped and flew into each other's arms 64 years ago. Married 62 years. Lots of love making: lots of children. Internationally known Jean Paul Sartre interpreter, Ron's vocation was to stand, sometimes to kneel, as he accompanied Margo on her peacemaking and health challenges. She fought like a female tiger when cancer invaded her body. She won, amazingly, many of the battles. She lost the war (Do not go gentle into that good night.) as we all will. Her spirit is indomitable. She lives. Her fierce life force is in me and available to you.

Over the years, Ron and Margo became increasingly involved with the Open Door Community. Though they lived in Granville, Ohio, Ron and Margo visited the Open Door Community, worked in the soup kitchen and participated in our Common Life. They spent time at Dayspring Farm with Murphy and me. You may know Ron from his writings in *Hospitality*. Or his many books, like *Sartre on Violence*. Ron and Margo became "non-residential partners" of our community. A name to designate the close relationship not bound by place.

For those of you who know Murphy Davis, you likely already see similarities in Murphy and Margo's walk with cancer. Ron and I became increasingly a resource for each other as our partners fought cancer. In the last few years, as Margo's cancer and suffering grew, I came to know Margo through Ron's sharing. We would share the vocation of accompaniment. We cried about the pain we could only stand and watch. We shared joy in each small and large move at the killing of cancer cells. In fact, I came to know Ron's Margo at a deeper level than the Margo I knew in person. Oh, I love her and thank her. She is the love of God incarnate. Like Jesus. She was a witness to us all that God does not put more on us than we can bear, as Bonhoeffer learned in prison and at his execution.

The Grief

We all know grief. Like sin, we are bound together by our suffering and grief. Some come out of their suffering and call for war, others for peace. Herein lies the terrible mystery of life. Why the difference? What can we do? Oh, my God, what can we do?

The deeper our dialogue with grief and love, the higher our joy and service to others. Margo gave her life away for others. A servant-disciple of Jesus. A committed member of St. Luke's Episcopal Church in Granville. Ron is giving his life away, too. Of course. "Nobody knows the trouble I've seen. Nobody knows but Jesus," sang the slaves

in misery and pain as they hoped to overthrow the white Christian master and missus. Nobody knows the grief over the death of Margo like Ron. She is gone. Soon the house will be empty as the last child departs. His primary vocation is sunk like the Titanic. He prays, he shares, he loves, he listens, he writes. But, oh God, his grief. Like the mothers in Lamentations crying for their children. Like Rachel in Ramah.

Ron, we thank you for your love and life with Margo. May your pain be transformed by little and by little into the Light and Joy that Margo continues to be for so many of us. And believe. She waits for you without crutches or wheelchair to come to the land for sojourners. ✦



Calvin Kimbrough

Margo and Ron Santoni at the Open Door Community during Holy Week 2009.

Eduard Nuessner Loring is an Activist/Advocate/Ally at the Open Door Community in Baltimore. (eduardloring@opendoorcommunity.org)

The First Reading at Margo Santoni's funeral

From Martin Luther King Jr., Letter from Birmingham Jail, April 16, 1963

Though I was initially disappointed at being categorized as an extremist, as I continued to think about the matter I gradually gained a measure of satisfaction from the label. Was not Jesus an extremist for love: "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you." Was not Amos an extremist for justice: "Let justice roll down like waters and righteousness like an ever flowing stream." Was not Paul an extremist for the Christian gospel: "I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus." Was not Martin Luther an extremist: "Here I stand; I cannot do otherwise, so help me God." And John Bunyan: "I will stay in jail to the end of my days before I make a butchery of my conscience." And Abraham Lincoln: "This nation cannot survive half slave and half free." And Thomas Jefferson: "We hold these truths to be self evident, that all men are created equal." So the question is not whether we will be extremists, but what kind of extremists we will be. Will we be extremists for hate or for love? Will we be extremists for the preservation of injustice or for the extension of justice? ✦

St. Margo

Upon return from the land of Saints and Scholars
I hear the news,
the news of St. Margo's passing.

And I realize that our village will never be the same
without the light of her eyes,
the wide-brimmed hat and smile cocked bright with love
as she glided effortlessly
up and down hills
and brick streets
to the white and gold steeple,
the coffee shop,
and the front yard of many friends.

And we all know she is immortal,
blessing us with her spirit
surmounting any difficulties of physical form.

A thousand angels welcome St. Margo,
loved beyond words and measure.

— Robin Young

Robin Young said the words flowed to her immediately on getting the news of Margo's death as she waited to board a train at Penn Station in New York City. The poem was read at the celebration of Margo's life at Swasey Chapel, Denison University, held there because the celebrators and mourners were so many.

Larry Was Lynched

By Catherine Meeks

On March 12, 1969, I witnessed a lynching. Larry Donnell Kimmons, age 15, was shot and killed by the security guard at George Pepperdine University. Larry was a neighborhood child who came to campus with his friends to play basketball from time to time. His mother had come to the campus to meet the security guard and make sure that it was alright for him to come to the campus. The security guard was an elderly white man who should not have had that job.

Larry was killed by a close-range shotgun blast to his belly while trying to explain to his assassin that he was the same kid whose mom had come to campus to speak to him. The response to his effort to explain was the shotgun blast from a man filled with fear.

I have carried the memory of this murder for 48 years in a very intentional way. The ways that I became involved in the struggle for justice for Larry and in trying to make a compassionate response to his mother and other family members helped to shape the person that I have come to be. I was a 23-year-old senior and Larry felt like my little brother. I did not really know what to do, but I, along with many others on the campus, tried to do the best we could.

There were student protests that resulted in the administration calling in the local police, though we never did anything violent. There were endless meetings between the mostly Black student organization members and the white administration, who were making every effort to settle the issue as quickly and conveniently as possible. But we were determined for them to understand that a boy had been murdered and there was never going to be any getting back to normal. One should never get back to normal after witnessing a lynching.

And to add insult to the great injury that had been done, the court decided to fine the killer \$500 for some reason that we never understood. In many ways, it seemed that was the value placed on Larry's life.

This year, I was invited to be the speaker for the Martin Luther King Jr. Chapel service at Pepperdine's Malibu campus, and while I was there I realized more clearly than ever before that Larry Kimmons was lynched and that I am a current participant in making sure that he receives a proper memorial. Two years after Larry's death, the university moved from the South Central Los Angeles location where his killing occurred. His murder was used to bolster the university's case regarding the dangers of that area, and so helped the university raise money to purchase its prime Malibu real estate, which is bordered by the Pacific Ocean and a magnificent range of mountains and that currently has fewer than two hundred African American students. The move was mostly about getting away from the inner city to a "safer place."

At the time of his murder, we insisted that a portrait of Larry be hung at Pepperdine. It was misplaced in the move to Malibu, and has only recently been found, rededicated and



Catherine Meeks
Larry Donnell Kimmons

installed in the main library of the Malibu campus. But that is far from being an adequate memorial for this child. So several of us asked the president to support the establishment of an ongoing memorial that will bring the entire campus community together on a yearly basis to remember Larry and to help keep that part of the Pepperdine history alive as they move forward. Thankfully, the president consented and a major lecture series, the Larry Donnell Kimmons Memorial Lecture will begin this fall and be continued each year.

Nothing can atone for what happened. But remembering can help us all move forward toward healing and wholeness better than trying to live as if it never happened. It was good to be back at Pepperdine and to allow myself to remember the grief and the grace, and how my life has been forged in that crucible of pain. ✦

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 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)

Come All You Who Are Thirsty

By Peter Gathje

I occasionally like to paraphrase Scripture. The word for the day was Isaiah 55:1, "Come all you who are thirsty, come to the waters for coffee and showers; and you who have no money come, enjoy the free coffee! Come buy showers, clothes, socks, and hygiene items without money and without cost!" Or as a very young volunteer shouted from our front porch twelve years ago when we first opened, "Free coffee for sale!"

This is God's economy, where there is more than enough for everybody, if we share. It runs completely counter to most, if not all, human economies, where there is not enough for everybody. And since there is not enough for everybody, we must incessantly compete with one another and hoard against shortages in order to survive.

It is hard for guests and volunteers, and for me, to believe in God's economy, even as we share hospitality premised upon that economy. Manna House could not exist without people sharing their presence and their goods. Without donors who give from their abundance, we could not offer hospitality to the hundred-plus people who show up every day that we are open. And although Manna House did not participate in "Giving Tuesday," we certainly do rely completely upon donations to stay open, and to freely share coffee, showers and clothing, and on Monday nights, a meal.

Yet, that freedom in God's economy, that free giving, is challenged by the gods of not enough. These gods of not

enough urge us to prioritize control over compassion, and domination over the dignity of each person. I see the worship of the gods of not enough in the current tax bill being proposed by the ruling party in Washington, D.C. I see this worship of the gods of not enough in the fear and even loathing of immigrants and any who are defined as "other" — Muslims, African Americans, Native Americans, LGBTQ people and

These gods of not enough urge us to prioritize control over compassion, and domination over the dignity of each person.

people in poverty. The gods of not enough encourage a vision of scarcity, of fighting over a shrinking pie. These gods love when we get possessed by possessiveness and we become more concerned about what is mine, rather than recognizing the divine call to share what we have been given by God: life and every good gift we have.

So it was that a guest at Manna House erupted in anger and a volley of foul language, accusing two other guests of stealing her cigarettes. Years of not having enough, of being denied the basic necessities of life, of scraping and struggling to survive, burst forth in a cry from the heart of betrayal and loss and grief. There was no consoling her, no reasoning that could reach her, no words of comfort that could pierce her sense of loss. Not even another guest's offering to her of some cigarettes could calm her. She finally left, vowing revenge upon those whom she accused of the theft, both of whom denied any role in the matter.

So it is when, as a volunteer, I fear being taken advantage of by a guest who comes in asking for a coat or shoes (two of the more desired items these days). So it is when I fear I am being too soft in adding a fifty-second person to the "socks and hygiene" list when we normally are to take only fifty-one.

So it is when twenty people are arrested at a Memphis business and taken away because of the Trump administration's crackdown on "illegals" — that is, undocumented immigrants. So it is when fake videos of "evil Muslims" are spread by a president who plays upon fears and divisions.

The gods of not enough are gathering more adherents, and the God of Jesus Christ, who urges us to see God in "the least of these," is mocked, denied, crucified. I have to hold to the Word of that God, a Word that affirms there is plenty, that God is a God of abundance and not scarcity, of grace and not harsh judgment. Better yet, I have to be held by that Word, transformed, and gifted to see that I am invited, that we are invited, to a feast, free and without charge. "Come all you who are thirsty." ✦

Peter Gathje is Academic Dean and professor of Christian Ethics at Memphis Theological Seminary, and a founder of Manna House, a place of hospitality in Memphis. He wrote Sharing the Bread of Life: Hospitality and Resistance at the Open Door Community (2006) and edited A Work of Hospitality: The Open Door Reader 1982 – 2002. (pgathje@memphisseminary.edu)

Who Will Speak Up for You? *continued from page 1*

since the 1970s, we will never be able to count the deaths during this period from homelessness, exposure, hunger, lack of medical care, the effects of imprisonment and prison and jail murders and suicides. If you believe, as we do, that in the suffering of the poor and oppressed we meet the suffering of Jesus, the suffering of God, then these deaths by neglect and by design are a spiritual matter. But the Homeland Church does not adhere to such a spirituality.

The American people, including most faith communities, have, for the most part, stood by in passive silence while the poorest of the poor were lopped off from the body politic. When homelessness began to emerge as a systemic reality, many people of good will were shocked that this could happen “in America!” But we can get used to just about anything. And we did. Very few people ever spoke up for the homeless poor, and now you never even hear local, state or national politicians even *mention* homelessness. Perhaps it was only a few people who said aloud, “Oh, to hell with *them!*” But all of us who have been silent are complicit.

When we went over the years to the Atlanta City Council or the mayor’s office to discuss or advocate for the homeless in the city, the issues were (perhaps without exception) referred to the Public Safety Committee. In other words, the discussion of homelessness has been seen as an issue of police control. That makes it clear that no one has any intention of trying to *house* the homeless; the concern is pretty much just to keep the wandering “vagrants” out of certain neighborhoods and generally out of sight.

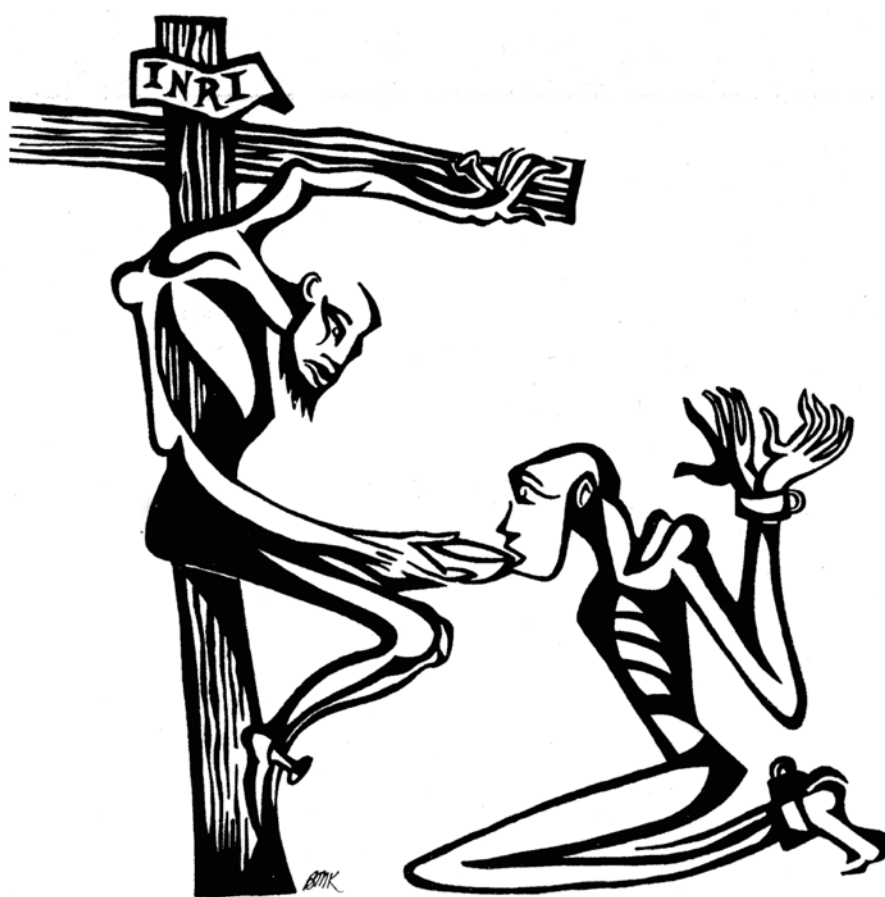
Funny how systemic homelessness and mass imprisonment grew into institutional realities over the same span of years that wealth and power were concentrated in the U.S. and the world in ways unprecedented. Accidents? The ethicists of the Middle Ages classically asked, “Qui bono?” Who benefits? The suffering of some is for the advantage of others: slavery, a minimum wage that is not a living wage, human bondage that creates billions of dollars of profit for the private prison industry and countless corporate vendors who make out like bandits on contracts for telephone calls, health care, commissaries, package services, and on and on. . . .

**Solidarity is the only safe way to live.
If we cut ourselves off from each other,
there might be no one to help when *we* need help.**

But the poorest of the poor and the imprisoned are just the first line. They try things out on the poor, and when things work, they move the line. Prisons are not only part of a punishment industry, they are laboratories. In prisons and jails — the perfectly controlled environment for the oppressors — they experiment with policies and practices of control, domination and extraction of resources. If the practices and policies work in prisons and jails, we bring them out to inflict on the rest of us. One of the major times I saw this at work was when the Georgia Department of Corrections started to contract with for-profit companies to provide medical care. It seemed horrific — health care for *profit*? Unthinkable. But not for long. It wasn’t long before we were sold a bill of goods called the HMO and corporate entities that were building for-profit hospitals. Since prisoners have few advocates and live in environments hidden away from public scrutiny, it is very easy to cut corners on health care. After all, if the medical staff works for a corporation whose main purpose is to produce a profit for the stockholders, how hard is it to understand that staff *will* cut corners? If you are in prison and diagnosed with a disease that requires a very expensive treatment, will the medical staff deal with you honestly? Or

would the temptation be to substitute a cheaper but inferior treatment? Or perhaps the corporate employees could just say they could not find a definite diagnosis.

Our friend “JP” Norris was in the Georgia prison system for many years. Every year he hoped to make parole. Finally, in 2015, we received notice that JP would be released to us the very next month. It seemed like a very strange process until we learned that he had just been diagnosed with lung cancer. They dumped him into the community because he was in need of extensive treatment for his cancer. The cost of that treatment was borne by Grady Hospital rather than the Georgia Department of Corrections and their predatory “health care” corporate staff. JP lived with us while he endured surgery and chemotherapy. When he recovered sufficiently, he joyfully realized his goal to have his own apartment. He was so happy, and he continued to return to volunteer with us at the Open Door. But his joy was cut short when his doctors informed him that the cancer had reappeared in his liver. He



Brian Kavanagh

oners had been designated as disposable. That is to say, our culture had shown a willingness to let these groups of human beings die of neglect and specific public policy without complaint. Perhaps it was “too bad,” but these were not matters that we would take so seriously as to demand change.

But as Pastor Niemoeller would remind us, once we’ve declared *any* human being disposable, we are likely to move the line and include more — refugees trying to cross the desert at our southern border and dying of thirst? Ho-hum.

And as journalist Chris Hedges has pointed out, we have now designated large areas and populations that are disposable. He calls them Sacrifice Zones. “There are forgotten corners of this country where Americans are trapped in endless cycles of poverty, powerlessness, and despair as a direct result of capitalistic greed.” He explores how areas like Camden, New Jersey; Immokalee, Florida and parts of West Virginia suffer while the corporations that plundered them thrive. “These are areas that have been destroyed for quarterly

profit. We’re talking about environmentally destroyed, communities destroyed, human beings destroyed, families destroyed. . . . It’s the willingness on the part of people who seek personal enrichment to destroy other human beings. . . . And because the mechanisms of governance can no longer control them, there is nothing now within the formal mechanisms of power to stop them from creating essentially a corporate oligarchic state.”

The late 1970s and the 1980s brought us systemic homelessness and mass imprisonment. The early 2000s brought us the housing bubble, and then between 2004, when homeownership rates peaked, to 2015, about seven million homes were foreclosed by the bankers and other vulture capitalists. That is seven million families who lost their homes, and most lost their economic footing. I do not mean for one minute to disparage the pain and crushed hopes and dreams of the thousands of families whose homes have been and are being stolen by the banks. It’s simply to point out that when we don’t pay attention to what is happening to our neighbors, we make the same stupid mistakes over and

over again and then find that “they’ve come for us.”

Solidarity is the only safe way to live. If we cut ourselves off from each other, there might be no one to help when *we* need help.

For far too long, we didn’t care for those most vulnerable — who will care for the hurting and increasingly hopeless formerly middle class? The line has moved, and the same forces that destroyed the lives of the poor are working on the middle class, who are increasingly discouraged and angry.

It is not too late to care — to love our neighbors who are being displaced and whose lives are at risk. But our solidarity must be urgent and persistent. The very structures and safeguards of democracy are being sacrificed along with the people who have been marked for disposability. To resist this death machine (which is much larger, of course, than the current vulgar occupant of the White House) requires people of faith and courage who are willing to take great risks on behalf of all of us. We can think of it as reparations. We didn’t care enough when there was time to change what was being done to the poor. But the attacks are ongoing, and it’s never too late to start. ✠

*Murphy Davis is an Activist Pastor and writer with the Open Door Community in Baltimore.
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endured more chemo. When we saw him just before Christmas he said he felt weak and terrible all the time. He died in early January — death by prison. His diagnosis was late and his treatment delayed, and then he was dumped. But not to worry, the profits of the prison health care executives were well tended.

We had another community member who came out of prison years before he was to have been paroled. As he left, the prison medical staff said to him, “You need surgery. Go to Grady Hospital.”

Now we are all plagued with a system of for-profit medical care. I believe that those who seek to profit from the suffering of others are vultures. We live in a sick, market-driven system and we live as if this is perfectly “normal.” And as far as I can tell, it started in prisons. God help us. “Inasmuch as you have refused [to provide health care] to the least of these, my sisters and brothers, you have refused to help me,” said Jesus.

Beginning in 1991, Ed Loring and I taught a course over a period of years at Warren Wilson College that we entitled “The Streets and Prisons: Disposable People in a Culture of Abundance.” We were clear that homeless persons and pris-

Words *continued from page 1*

Palestinians are the “new Jews” and the modern state of Israel is a client state of the American Empire, and a Machiavellian power: any means justify the ends — precisely the opposite message of the Hebrew Prophets to the kings and one queen of Israel, the Northern Kingdom and Judah.

**Wisdom teaches us to beware
the demons we fight, for too easily
do we become demonic
in the horror of the struggle for love
and justice for all peoples
who on this good earth do dwell.**

Jesus is a Jew. Was a Jew. Always will be a Jew! Amen. Paul is faithful when he teaches Gentiles that “salvation comes from the Jews.”

Since 1917 (Balfour) or 1947 (United Nations), every Christmas, Jesus is born a pro-Palestinian Jew. An anti-settlement, anti-Nazi drift, pro-Palestinian Jew.

The corruption of Israel, the Israeli state, lies across the land (this land is our land/this land is your land) here in the land of Native Americans (our Palestinians). We the people, the United States of America government (even the “late” Obama), the bankers, the Military Industrial Complex and weapon sales and the Zionist Evangelical “Christians” who take the Word of God and twist the Logos, making a mockery of Jesus Christ and the discipleship message of peace, liberation and reconciliation, are responsible (though we are not all guilty).

The Israelis are the number one recipients of U.S. tax money spent abroad. The blood of the Palestinians is on our hands. Incarnadine. Can we? Shall we? Wash our hands and help restore the love and justice of the Hebrew Prophets to our client state? The destiny (or fate) of the Middle East and the USA depends upon it.

Let us love one another. ✠

Eduard Nuessner Loring is an Activist/Advocate/Ally at the Open Door Community in Baltimore. (eduardloring@opendoorcommunity.org)

This Is Who We Are: Matthew 25:31-46 *continued from page 5*

are asked to work on the practices of our lives so that we can develop compassionate hearts, so that our wombs tremble for one another, because this is who we are, and this is how we should live.

We’re about to enter the Advent season, when we’ll hear all about wombs and compassion and caring and risking and courage in hard times with great dangers, with many frustrations and difficult decisions to make — just about where we are now. In this last story that Jesus gives before his arrest and execution, he reminds his disciples of who we are and how we should live. He reminds us what those talents are that we should be sharing and not burying and hiding.

If you’re wondering about all of this, here’s a story about how to live it out. I give thanks that Ed Loring and Murphy Davis are with us in worship today. I’ve known Ed for almost 50 years. Ed and Murphy were the co-founders of the church shelter movement in the Atlanta area in 1979 at Clifton Presbyterian Church. It is a shelter that has provided hospitality for homeless men every night of the year since 1979 — that’s every night, 365 nights a year since 1979. Indeed, tonight it will provide shelter for men in Atlanta. One of the Elders of Clifton Church who helped to found the shelter was Ed Knight. In the late 1970s and early ‘80s, Ed Knight and I were privileged to be among those who wrote weekly meditations for the Clifton congregation. Every night, Clifton sent a van to downtown Atlanta to pick up men and bring them to the shelter. They had only 30 places: Clifton had taken the pews out of their sanctuary to make room for mats in that small space. On cold nights there was a lot of pushing and shoving by the men to get on the van. Ed Knight was one of the drivers, and I want to share a short meditation that he wrote on Matthew 25:

“As I sit here thinking about making the van trip tonight, thoughts pass through my mind of men pushing and shoving, striving to get one of the 30 places available for the night. I wonder why I do it. It really hurts to have three people grab your hand in the effort to get a ticket. As . . . I abhor all the pushing and shoving that these people engage in because they all need a place to stay, I wonder if it’s worth it. But then I remember the Scriptures, and I know that if I am going to find Christ, it’s going to be among the same people that he mingled with 2000 years ago: the poor, the homeless, the rejects of society. Then I remember the third van trip last

week. As we were about to pull out for the last trip to the church, a man on the van pleaded, ‘Please, let that man on, he doesn’t know the city, he won’t be able to find a place to stay.’ Then he said, ‘Let him take my place,’ jumped from the van and said, ‘Here, take my place.’ He helped the man onto the van and then turned and walked into the night. Then I know you are here, Lord, present with us.”

This is who we are; this is how we should live as disciples of Jesus. The goal is not just to *say* Jesus is Lord, but also to *live* Jesus is Lord. This is who we are. This is how we should live: God’s compassion for us, our compassion for ourselves and for others. This is who we are. Amen. ✠

Nibs Stroupe is a longtime friend of the Open Door; retired pastor and author of the recently published Deeper Waters: Sermons for a New Vision. He writes a weekly blog at www.nibsnote.blogspot.com. (nibs.stroupe@gmail.com.)

**VIGIL TO COMMEMORATE
MY LAI MASSACRE
50TH ANNIVERSARY**



**Lafayette Square across from the White House
Friday, March 16, 2018
12 Noon to 1 PM**

The My Lai Massacre on March 16, 1968, was among the most painful of all the tragedies and disgraceful actions by the US military during the Vietnam War. US soldiers slaughtered 504 innocent women and children, and our government tried to cover it up.

Join us to acknowledge our war crimes and express penitence for our nation's inhumanity. Stand with us as we call for an end to all military strategies that target civilians, such as drone strikes. Speak up for demanding that the US government provide resources to clean up Agent Orange, dioxides, defoliation and military mines and other weapons still buried in Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia. Support our call to acquire all official military documents that contain evidence of other massacres and war crimes committed by the United States in Indochina and elsewhere.

FOR MORE INFORMATION
Vietnam Peace Commemoration Committee
www.vietnampeace.org • 202-986-7483

John “JP” Norris, ¡Presente!

By Mary Catherine Johnson

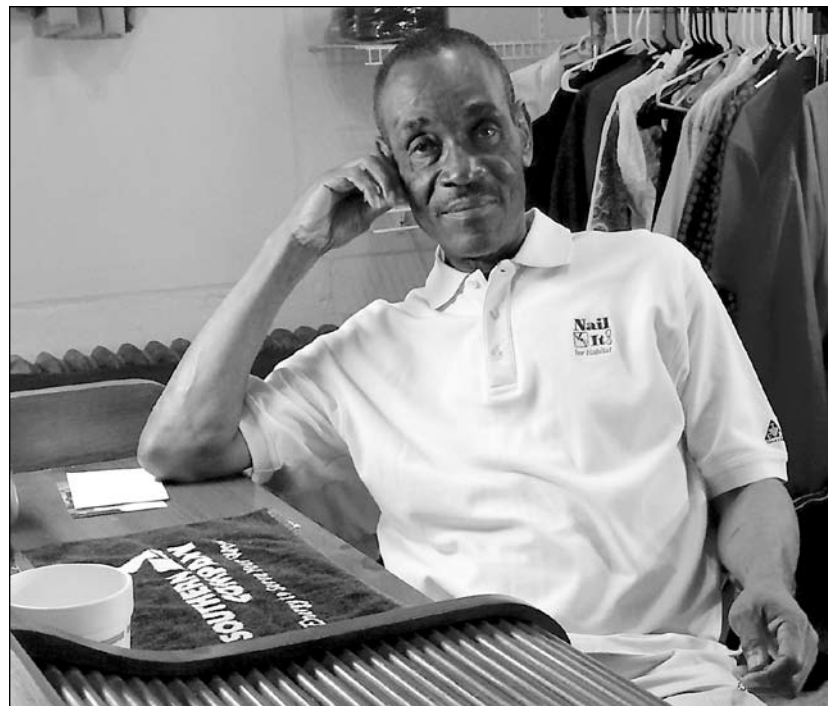
It is with great sadness that we share the news that John Norris, affectionately known as “JP” or “Norris” by his friends, died on January 9, 2018 from complications related to lung cancer. JP will be remembered by those who love him as a quiet man of deep faith who overcame tremendous adversity to live out his life as a disciple of Jesus. He was 69 years old.

JP grew up in Louisiana and always loved his Cajun roots. After spending 28 years in prison in Georgia, JP came to live at the Open Door Community in 2015. What a glorious day that was for the whole community when JP finally walked out of prison a free man! Fiercely determined not to allow his years in prison to define him or hold him back, JP led an active life that included weekly worship and Bible study, serving his homeless friends and working with other former prisoners in Georgia to assist those coming out of prison with re-entry into society. It was one of JP’s biggest dreams to return to the prisons that once held him captive

to bear witness to those still inside, giving them hope and inspiration about what is possible for life beyond prison. He got to fulfill his dream most recently when he spoke to the Lifers Group at Central State Prison in Macon, Georgia just before Christmas. Those who heard him speak that day said that he appeared to be struggling physically, but that his spirit was on fire with a powerful testimony of hope and redemption that reached far beyond the prison walls. ✠

Mary Catherine Johnson is the director of New Hope House, a ministry that serves Georgia’s death row prisoners and their families. (mcjohnson78@yahoo.com)

JP in his room at the Open Door Community.



Mary Catherine Johnson

Grace and Peaces of Mail

Dear Ed and Murphy,

We reprinted the article of Pete Gathje on 10 advices on how to deal with panhandling people in our latest issue of “Brot & Rosen.” We took it from the newsletter of “Kana Soupkitchen” in Dortmund (Bernd Büscher, Christiane Danowski). Very helpful — and as homeless folks and lots of people from Eastern Europe are on our streets, it’s at least a helpful contribution not to look the other way.

Scott and Claire Schaeffer-Duffy will join us for our next Euro-CW Gathering in May in Dülmen. Maybe we can also have them here in Hamburg for a talk.

Dietrich Gerstner
Hamburg, Germany

Ed,

I was deeply touched by your poem yesterday [“Thank You, President Donald Trump,” *Hospitality*, September 2017] and have cut it out and saved it on paper.

And that was heartening to also read “Murphy is living her life again.”

Blessings,
Ed Crouch
Seattle, Washington

Dear Friends,

Hope y’all are doing well in your move. Thanks so much for the *Hospitality*. It has been a great help in my walk with Christ. I myself am a Catholic.

So take care and God bless y’all,
A prisoner

My dear friend Eduard and beautiful Murphy,

I appreciate the update and join you in my thoughts and prayers.

There is a nimbus of consciousness that surrounds us all, at every moment, in which thoughts and prayers circulate. It surrounds surgeons and nurses, and Murphy, who needs their healing help. My hope is that their dedicated work will arrest the disease process before it reaches a point of no return.

Murphy, you have been a model of faith and stamina for me and many others. As St. Paul said, “Faith is the substance of things hoped for.” One more trial, one more bridge to cross.

Love,
Roger Cooper
The Villages, Florida

When the Rubber Hits the Road

In an exchange of emails in August 2016 about the Open Door’s impending departure from 910 and details about the publication and release of my book, *Raising Our Voices, Breaking the Chain: The Imperial Hotel Occupation as Prophetic Politics* (Open Door Community Press, 2016), Ed put in the subject line of one of his messages: When the Rubber Hits the Road.

It was a catchy phrase, and it stuck with me.

Over time, a melody arrived in my head and words for the chorus began unfolding. The more I worked with the lyrics and melody, the more I realized it was a song about relationships framed within a road song.

I teach literature, so I’m comfortable traversing literal and figurative spaces. “Rubber” is a song seemingly about a big rig on a long haul, but it is about many things, among them the lasting friendship and love shared between Ed and Murphy. It is also a song about Ed, Murphy and all those wonderful volunteers and leaders who worked alongside them in large ways and small to create and sustain the Open Door Community for 35-plus years in Atlanta. Aside from the metaphorical textures of the song, on a more personal note, my brother, Tim, is a truck driver, and I wanted to recognize his daily grind.

“Rubber” comes from the heart, and maybe that’s why the driving beat, the pulsing desire, leads us toward the title line. Sing it, recite it, add verses, alter lyrics — “zipper” in what you want for your particular needs and spirit. Keep singin’ and movin’.

When the Rubber Hits the Road

By Terry Easton
Performed by Hot Tamale Ringwald on YouTube: Rubber Hits the Road OPF2017

Chorus
When the rubber hits the road
We got a heavy load
We gotta get across that line
Wheels are a rollin’ words are a turnin’
Gotta get across that line

Verse 1
Engines worn out and the shocks jumpin’ round
Tires plumb shot and the radiator’s drowned
Twenty-five years too much to lose
Ain’t nothin’ lately but the burned-out blues

Verse 2
Can’t see ahead, the windows cracked
Ain’t gonna fix it with a bottle of Jack
A little too stubborn a little too mean
Drop that load when the light is green

Chorus

Verse 3
Carburetor’s clogged and the fuel won’t flow
Gas tanks empty and the brakes lettin’ go
Exit 29 if we wanna veer off
Road behind has gotten us lost

Verse 4
Rig’s loaded up we’re gonna move on
Drive all night ‘til the mornin’ sun
Shiftin’ lanes we ain’t a turnin’ back
Road behind there’s blood on the track

Chorus

Bridge
Huh, huh, huh, huh, huh
Don’t wanna drive you away
Come on baby, come on baby stay
Don’t wanna drive you away
Huh, huh, huh, huh, huh

Verse 5
Pedal to the metal we’re pushin’ on through
Nights comin’ on and I’m holdin’ you
Just a bit more, ten miles to make
Strap on in we ain’t a gonna break

Chorus

Outro
Wheels are a rollin’ words are a turnin’
Gotta get across that line
Gotta get across that line
Gotta get across that line

poetry corner



Julie Lonneman

Another Eulogy

I was sad to see you living as you did
..... as so many do, me too
Because it is a drive-by life style
Little comes from the frantic pace
The race to get that one-more swing —
to catch the Cp-Man
and evade the Police
Yet you climbed the great ROCKY
Mountain
Without complaining
About the Fare, although the
Climb is exceedingly steep,
and the air is painfully rare
We met, touched briefly and moved on
I’m glad we did
And I’ll remember you

@3.30.04
I.T.S.

— Delbert L. Tibbs

Poet’s Note: For the one known on the streets as “Snakedog.”

From *Selected Poems and Other Word/Works* by Delbert Tibbs, 2007

Delbert Tibbs, an accomplished poet and ardent anti-death penalty activist, was a longtime friend of the Open Door Community until his death on November 23, 2013 at the age of 74. Just three weeks prior, Delbert had spent several days with us at the Open Door Community with Ron Keine and Shujaa Graham (see photographs in Hospitality, November-December 2013), and we will forever be grateful for those last moments of solidarity and love with our dear friend.

In 1974, Delbert was sentenced to death in Florida for a rape and a murder that he had nothing to do with, and he spent nearly three years in prison before his death sentence was overturned and he was released. Delbert then devoted his life to tutoring at-risk young Black men and to the abolition of capital punishment, and he became one of six people whose stories of wrongful conviction and near execution were told in “The Exonerated,” a play by Jessica Blank and Erik Jensen.

Delbert Tibbs, iPresente!