

HOSPITALITY

Volume 4, No. 2

April 1985

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Providing hospitality to the homeless & to those in prison, through Christ's love
910 Ponce de Leon Ave. N.E. Atlanta, Ga. 30306 404-874-9652

Whence Comes Our Hope?

by Ed Loring

Our hope comes from the Lord! Eastertide is here and we come strong and sure out of Lent and the harshness of the tempting winter darkness into the bright light of the risen Lord. If Jesus Christ did not defeat death, then we are the biggest fools in the world! If Jesus is not found in the hopeful hearts within our friends on the streets or the vibrant faith of our sisters and brothers in prison, then our discipleship is no more than a puff of polluted smoke.

But we at The Open Door have seen the risen Lord! And so, with faith between our teeth and love in our hearts, we turn to tell you about our Easter faith. We have seen Jesus this winter and spring:

At Clifton Presbyterian Church where public sanctuary for Central Americans has become a part of the night hospitality ministry.

In a deep south prison where Terry lives by faith - sure of the things we hope for, certain of the things we cannot see.

In our soup kitchen where volunteers come from all over Atlanta every day of the week to feed hungry sisters and brothers.

On the street where people suffer, freeze and die and yet endure with courage and dignity.

Brothers under "death watch" waiting...waiting... all the while claiming a freedom in Christ that the world cannot take away -- Eldon, Ivon, Alpha, Roosevelt, Van.

Standing with my mother beside my father at the time of his death.

Singing and praying and passing Bread and Wine within this little community.

We can each fill in with our experiences and stories of signs and sounds of the resurrected Christ. So, with this hope in our hearts, let us recommit ourselves to peace and justice and to our continuing conversion to love and reconciliation. Let us listen for the Word of God in the cry of the poor. Let us serve the risen crucified Christ as we serve the least, and let us share the struggle for liberation with the oppressed as God grants us grace to act on behalf of others.



"Worship" — John

AAH Report

by Alan Harris

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There are an estimated 3000-5000 people in Atlanta who are homeless. The 29 night shelters have combined sleeping spaces for only 1450. So, less than half of the homeless have any place to sleep, to eat, to escape from the cold, the rain, the hazards and fatigue of life on the streets.

On March 31, the majority of the church shelters and the only city sponsored shelter will close until next winter leaving hundreds more homeless to suffer on the streets, alleys, in abandoned buildings, on park benches, etc. In the Spring, Summer and Fall, there are only 790 spaces in shelters and only 153 of these are free of charge. The need for more year round shelter and for volunteers is urgent!

Home is the warmth of family and friends. Home is where the heart is. But for many of our homeless brothers and sisters and children, there is no home. If home is where the heart is, what do you do with a heart that has no home? The Advocates For The Homeless feel the City of Atlanta has the responsibility to provide housing for all those who need it. Last November 28, Mayor Young said "last year we lost 17 people who froze to death in our streets. We need to find a way to get a system and put it together so that this doesn't happen." Efforts are now being made to get the city, county and state governments to fully meet their responsibility to shelter all those turned away from the churches and other private shelters. The immediate goal is to provide shelter for every man, woman, and child every night of the year.

Christians as individuals and all the churches have a biblical mandate to help the homeless. There are 1200 churches in Atlanta but 16 that have night shelters. If there were 200 church shelters each inviting 20 guests into the buildings and lives of the congregations, Atlanta's homeless would be helped and the churches greatly enriched by the experience. The more personal we become in our shared lives with the homeless, the more intolerable the pain and injustice of homeless friends.

Will you consider asking your church to open a shelter or a community kitchen? Will you consider volunteering yourself at a shelter or kitchen? If you want more information about how to begin a shelter or kitchen in your church or where you can volunteer please call Elizabeth Eve at Christian Council of Metropolitan Atlanta at 622-2235.



HOSPITALITY is published 11 times a year by The Open Door Community (P.C.U.S.), Inc., an Atlanta community of Christians called to ministry with the homeless poor and with 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. For more information about the life and work of the Open Door and about others involved in ministry to Atlanta's homeless, please contact any of the Resident Partners, listed below with their current administrative functions

Murphy Davis - Southern Prison Ministry Director
Carolyn Johnson - Volunteer Co-ordinator
Rob Johnson - Treasurer
Ed Loring - Correspondence & Resident Volunteer Co-ordinator

Newspaper:

Editor - Rob Johnson; Associate Editor - Ed Loring
Manuscript Preparation - Barbara Gifford, Jon Harshbarger, John Pickens; Graphics & Art - Marvin Hamm, Donna Pickens, Rob Johnson; Layout - Rob Johnson; Circulation - Norman Gale and a multitude of earthly hosts and guests

Dear Editor

Blight Fence

Dear Open Door Folk:

As you have undoubtedly noticed, Braden-Fellman has erected between the building at 904 Ponce de Leon and your worthy establishment a wooden fence which runs the length of the driveway. Given that this structure reflects in part their continued objection to the very existence of the Open Door, and that it assumes as well the pervasive tendency of the well-established in our society to deal with human needs by hiding them, you cannot feel very good about the fence. Of course, it occurs to us that you all probably have your hands full without worrying about such things.

Nonetheless, as residents of the 904 building and your neighbors, we want you to know that we opposed the construction of the fence and that we support you in your efforts to help Atlanta's homeless. Please know that we consider it no spite fence--just a blight fence. It turns an open, well-lighted place into two dark alleys, and doesn't improve the lot of anyone on either side.

You folks, on the other hand, are appreciated on both sides of the fence. Let us know if there is any way we can help you.

Truly yours,

(Two of our neighbors
next door--names withheld)

News / Views

Active, effective citizenship requires knowledge of current issues, yet none of us has the time nor the funds to subscribe to many publications which tell us what we need to know. Seventeen volunteers, members of the Atlanta Friends National Legislative Committee, have been working for five years to provide a solution.

We subscribe to and clip the most thoughtful, informed articles from The Atlanta Constitution, Bulletin of Atomic Scientists, Christian Science Monitor, Des Moines Register, Lincoln (Nebraska) Journal, Los Angeles Times, Washington Post, Manchester Guardian, and others.

The articles are mailed, 21 times yearly, to our subscribers. Because we are volunteers, we have been able to hold the cost down to twelve dollars per year for a subscription.

With no advertising other than word of mouth from our satisfied readers, the subscription list has grown to include readers in forty states.

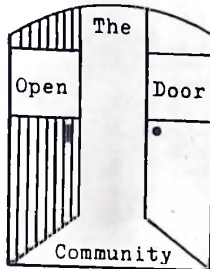
We would be most appreciative if you would print this information in your publication, including an offer to send a sample copy to any of your readers who will write requesting one to: NEWS/IEWS, Quaker House, 1384 Fairview Road, Atlanta, GA 30306.

Thanks very much.

Editor's note: The Open Door Community is a subscriber, and enthusiastically encourages our readers to support our Friends in this fine ministry.

Peace,

Nan Pendergrast, Editor



Lent, 1985

Dear Friends,

Palm Sunday night will be the last night of hospitality ministry at many churches. Between March 31 and April 15 fifteen church shelters will shut their doors. Men and women, boys and girls will lose their refuge from the stormy blast of springtime weather and their sanctuary from the mean and hostile street existence in Atlanta. Only 160 free beds/mats will be available for 5,000 homeless brothers and sisters. The crisis of homelessness in our city deepens as Easter approaches. The search for shelter becomes an even more bitter and discouraging task as the homeless are left wandering to nowhere.

Thus it is that we, The Atlanta Advocates for the Homeless, lift our voices in behalf of those who suffer the greatest abandonment in our city. Please, please help those churches involved in hospitality ministry to keep their sanctuaries open year-round. Please, please volunteer to be a host in one of the churches which closes for lack of warm weather support. Please, please ask the churches which have not yet heard the cry of God's homeless poor to open their doors this spring to the least of these our brothers and sisters. Please, please pray that God will make a way out of no way, for surely the Lord has not led us this far--with so much goodness, grace, and charity--to let us close the doors because the weather is warm.

As a way to witness to the suffering and injustice of homelessness, as a way to bring attention to the abandonment of our sisters and brothers, and as a way to express solidarity with God's homeless poor, The Atlanta Advocates for the Homeless plan a "Week of Witness" during Holy Week. Beginning Palm Sunday night we will spend the week out on the streets. Like our friends, we shall sleep wherever we are able, we shall eat in soup kitchens, and rest in labor pools. We shall be on the street for 24-hour periods. Each evening at 8:00 P.M. we shall gather for song, scripture and prayer, as we receive those who are returning and send out those who are beginning the street experience. We shall end our witness early Easter morning when we celebrate the power and victory of the resurrection of our Lord with worship and a steak and eggs breakfast.

We need you to join us and our homeless friends!! Please spend a day and a night on the streets sharing life with the homeless. Please join us for worship in the evenings and on Easter morning. Please pray for us and those men and women, boys and girls who are homeless and hungry.

Through faith and discipleship, we believe that God wills the hungry to be fed, the homeless to be housed. Let us travel together seeking to do God's will on earth as it is done in heaven.

Peace and thanks,

Ed Loring

Ed Loring
for The Atlanta Advocates for the Homeless

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Holy Week Schedule



Palm Sunday March 31

7:30 P.M. Worship at The Open Door Community
910 Ponce de Leon Avenue, N.E.

Monday April 1

8:00 P.M. Worship at Central Presbyterian Church
Courtyard 201 Washington Street, S.E.

Tuesday April 2

8:00 P.M. Worship at Central City Park
Five Points

Wednesday April 3

8:00 P.M. Worship at First Methodist Church
Front steps 360 Peachtree Street, N.E.

Maundy Thursday April 4

8:00 P.M. Worship at St. Luke's Episcopal Church
Front gate 435 Peachtree Street, N.E.

Friday April 5

8:00 P.M. Worship at Atlanta City Hall
Front steps 68 Mitchell Street, S.E.

Saturday April 6

8:00 P.M. Worship at Plaza Park
Peachtree Street side - Across from 5 Points MARTA Station

Easter Sunday Morning !!

7:30 A.M. Worship at Butler Street CME Church
23 Butler Street, S.E.

8:30 A.M. Steak and Eggs
Breakfast



graphic - Donna Pickens

A Night at Pryor Street

by Marvin Hamm

It was a warm night in late February when David Hovestol, a fellow member of the Open Door Community, and I made our way up the hill to the old Pryor Street School. Through the winter we had been giving homeless people rides up to the city emergency shelter at Pryor St. Now we were trying to pass as homeless people, to see for ourselves the conditions inside.

Pryor St. was opened as an overflow shelter for those people who had no room in the church shelters in the City. The shelter is funded by the city of Atlanta and operated by Economic Opportunity Atlanta (EOA). It opened for the winter back in November, and from the beginning there were problems. Almost every day we heard a new horror story: some days the van drivers didn't report to work, so no one got rides to and from downtown; the security guards were abusive and beat on people; the building was cold at night; people were getting robbed; the bathrooms were filthy; there were outbreaks of crabs and lice; the shelter was understaffed. Conditions degenerated to the point that even on cold nights people were refusing our offer of a ride to Pryor St. Some would sooner take their chances in a cold cathole than risk a night in Pryor St.

My stomach was tight with anxiety as we walked up the hill. I was entering into strange and frightening territory. Every day people tell me stories of life on the streets. I like to think I have some understanding of the trauma of their lives. But now I was walking into the world of the street, and I knew I was a stranger.

The security guard who frisked us at the door was friendly, unlike others I had seen earlier in the winter. I wondered if the situation had improved. Or maybe it was because our middle-classness showed through our raggedy clothes that we were spared the abusive treatment given to the street people.

We arrived too late to get a bowl of soup, so we made our way back to the sleeping rooms. In the coldest part of the winter the shelter had been terribly overcrowded - up to 450 people a night. Then all the classrooms and hallways of the old school building had been packed. Now, with warmer weather, there was plenty of room. Some of the men were already lying down, others were sitting around smoking and talking. We found a pile of army stretcher beds and blankets in the corner. Most of the stretchers were torn up, so we settled for a blanket on the carpeted floor.

I was relieved to see some familiar faces around the room - friends who come to the Open Door. They passed the word to others - we were from "910"; we were okay. For the next hour, David and I sat and talked with folks around us. The security guard came by once to break up a noisy gathering nearby. He was the only staff person we saw. I wondered how he maintained order in the place all by himself.

I soon saw that he didn't maintain order. By midnight most everyone was settling down for the night. The lights were out. I was exhausted and ready to get some rest - until a man across the room discovered that his money had been stolen. He recruited a friend - both were intoxicated - and they began rousing others, demanding to know who had stolen the money. Thoughts of sleep vanished as the lights flashed on and the room filled with drowsy curses and angry accusations. The investigation continued until the two men concluded that the group of transvestites in the opposite corner of the room must be the thieves (I suppose on the assumption that deviance implies guilt). Another argument ensued. Someone went off to get a police officer. During all this, the security guard was nowhere in sight. After 20 minutes of uproar, a police officer arrived and the robbed man was taken away. Things began to settle down again, until the man returned to begin the search once more. But by now his search was half-hearted, and he was persuaded to shut up and leave.

The rest of the night is a blur in my mind. I slipped in and out of sleep. Conversations continued late into the night and were picked up early in the morning (maybe they never stopped). People were coming and going all night. The lights came on and off through the night. One time I woke up and the room was totally dark. A voice from a cot nearby was describing how crabs burrow into your skin and suck your blood. Another man punctuated the description with complaints of feeling something on his skin. I felt itchy all over. Somewhere I got a few hours of sleep.

On most mornings folks are awakened by 5:00 AM to catch the van back downtown. This morning the driver hadn't showed up, so we were spared a rude awakening. We woke up at 6:00. By then many of the men were gone. Someone had brewed a pot of coffee, but there were no cups, so we went without. The security guard was asleep in his chair as we walked out the front door. I was eager to get home to get some real sleep. I wondered where the others would find rest that day.

PRYOR STREET (Cont. on p. 15)

James Brown Is My Brother

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by Ed Loring

Amid the foothills of the Appalachian mountains stretching east into the Piedmont area of the Carolinas marched the hungry textile mills. The mill owners were hungry and thirsty for profits. The Piedmont had lots of cotton, picked by black hands, and lots of mill laborers - mostly white folk. So from the north came the looms, shuttles, and spools hungry to make cloth and ever higher profits.

My grandfather, an immigrant from what today is East Germany, came to Greenville, SC at the turn of the century and began work in a cotton mill. Some ten miles away in Easley, James Brown's grandfather worked in a cotton mill. My grandfather had a basic German education, married a land-owner, invented a machine to count cloth as it was wound upon the bolt, and slowly and painfully rose to a bookkeeper in the mill. My mother remembers the fear and suffering the family went through during W.W.I when people rode by their house and yelled epithets at the German family. Some folks threw rocks and occasionally a brick went through the window.

James Brown's grandfather did not advance through the mill structure. His son followed his father to the mill and after marriage lived in the mill village - houses, stores, churches, all provided by the management. James Brown was born into the economic and cultural poverty of the mill village - where both parents worked.

In 1940, at the age of 16, James dropped out of the 10th grade to go to work in the same mill in which his parents labored. Living in a very poor family put pressure on James to become a wage earner. In 1943, James joined the Navy and "learned what I wish I had not learned," he told me - seeing death and destruction in the South Pacific.

Before he left the Navy in 1946, James learned something else that he wishes he had not learned. He learned to drink beer, wine and whisky, and he was set onto a path of loneliness and destruction.

From the Pacific Ocean he returned to Easley, SC - to the mill village and mill work. Pay was very low; work was exceedingly hard; and hope seemed especially dim in the dark and dusty mill.

How does one break out of a life of poverty and the dead-end existence of a SC textile mill worker? Ten years earlier unions had been rejected. What was the hope of higher wages? Overtime work, perhaps. Many folk, men and women, husband, wife and children would work and work and end the month just a little bit deeper in debt to the company store. If one cannot get out of a situation, what about a drink of hard liquor? That



James Brown - leaving for visit to family (beardless!)



James Brown - leaving for Butler St. CME

can soften the din of textile machinery and the desolate despair of a life in poverty. Change...change...for a better life, a new hope, for a new way...how do we accomplish it?

One day in 1947, James Brown walked out of the textile mill never to return. He hoped, as we all hope, for a better life. James began to drive trucks and buses. He traveled across the nation in tractor trailers and drove Trailway buses between New York City and Washington, DC and later over the two Carolinas. There was hope on the horizon and new life in his heart. But there was also the thirst that he had discovered in the war zone. A thirst for ease and comfort, a thirst to forget the poverty and despair of mill village life: a thirst for alcohol. So James drank his way through many jobs and down many highways. He drank himself through two marriages and lots of friendships and, though the anxiety and pain were dulled for a few days, he found himself deeper and deeper into alcoholism.

In 1967, James returned to Easley and got a job through his brother-in-law in the shipping department at Stay-on Manufacturing Company, a factory making baby clothes. He worked there until his mother's death and his dad's move into a mobile home (after retirement from the mill, his father became the custodian of Bushy Creek Baptist Church). Homeless and often drunk, James did not know which way to turn. Hoping now to survive rather than find a better life, he felt lost.

James Brown turned - as so many desperate people in the south, southwest and Mexico - to migrant labor. He joined a crew heading to south Georgia to pick sweet potatoes. As he told me, "Oh, they painted a pretty picture of the farm and work, but by the time you got there, you were in debt. They furnished you with wine and cigarettes every day and just wrote it down in the books." Each week everyone was given \$2.00 in cash and reminded of their debts to the farmer. "You never saw a pay day in a place like that," James remembered while slowly shaking his head.

After two seasons on the farm, James was told one morning to go pack his belongings; he was being shipped to Atlanta in 30 minutes.

Between 1973 and 1980, James lived on and off the streets of Atlanta. Sometimes he got day work from a labor pool; other times he got yard work and odd jobs from people who would pick him out of the St. Luke's soup kitchen line. He often slept in the "weed patches" in downtown Atlanta. For a long while, he lived in a dilapidated barn near one of the labor pools. Once in a while James would get a truck driving job and live in the cab of the truck between trips. "The life on the streets was dangerous," he told me. "Sometimes I got drunk to deal with the fear, no home, no place to live. But it was my fault," he believes.

One cold night during the winter of 1980 James Brown, bent, chilled, dirty, and hungry, walked through the side door of Clifton Presbyterian Church - a place of sanctuary for God's good friends. He lived with us for six months. At first he was silent and sullen, but slowly he began to talk and relate to those of us in the church. Murphy Davis and James developed a particular friendship of warmth and sharing.

JAMES (Cont. on p. 7)

On another night, a warmer evening, James did not return. Where he went we did not know. What had happened to him we did not hear. Earlier that day, while standing in the line at St. Luke's soup kitchen, a man offered James a job with a carnival, and he took it. For \$100.00 per week (raised to \$120.00 after a few months), he ran the Ferris wheel or the merry-go-round. With seven other men he lived in the back of a truck. He ate his meals at restaurants and continued to remember his dream of a better life even as he obeyed his thirst for alcohol and its moments of relief.

After two years, James left the carnival and returned to the mean streets of Atlanta. One afternoon I ran into him in front of Peak Load labor pool. I was so happy to see him!! "James Brown, I'll be damned," I yelled, feeling like the Apostle Thomas when Jesus appeared. James looked more like death than life. Filthy and ragged and a bit shakey, he seemed embarrassed as I jumped up and down with songs of gladness in front of the labor pool. I immediately invited James to come and live with us forever (praying there was an empty bed at the house). He said, "Yes, I'll come," so off we went to 910 Ponce de Leon, where we have lived - sometimes happily, sometimes angrily, but always together - ever since.

James Brown is my brother. He feeds folks every morning at Butler Street CME Church, and he feeds each of us with love and friendship every day at The Open

Door. Before a serious stroke a year ago, he often kept Hannah and Christina during common life meetings. Only once during the last three years has James had a drink. We put him out for the night and he stayed on the back porch until 6:00 PM the next day, when he could re-enter. He resolved never to drink again, and he has not. Susan, my older daughter, calls him "Grandpa," and he and Murphy banter back and forth as "Sir James" and "The Lady."

I asked James if he was a person of faith. "No, I'm not a Christian," he said. "I grew up in the church, but I've never been baptized." Then he went on to say that he believed in Jesus Christ and he respected the church. "Well, what do you mean, 'I'm not a Christian'?" I responded. "I'm not good enough," he said, "you've got to be good to be a Christian."

How my heart aches for James. How I wish I could share my life more fully with this man I love so deeply. How I hope...for a better life for us all.

Out of the mill village, across the concrete highways of this country, bent over in the sweet potato field, from the catholes beneath high hotels, from the jingle-jangle music of merry-go-rounds, up off the street with an empty wine bottle in his hand comes this man into our lives. He walks through the door and he is an ambassador of Jesus Christ. We have learned from his poverty and suffering, from his drunkenness and pain, from his joy and love and work that God loves each of us. And you don't have to be good to be a Christian. Thank you, Lord, for James Brown. *

A Death In The Family

by Rob Johnson

A dear friend of our community, Andrew (Jack) Kilgore, has just died. We first learned of his critical health when his neighbor, Wayne Robertson, called to say that Jack had been admitted to Grady Hospital with a serious intestinal disorder. Both Wayne and Jack had lived with us here at 910 and later moved to our "annex" - the public housing Juniper Street High Rise for elderly. Wayne called to encourage us to visit Jack--which several of us eagerly did. But much too soon Wayne called again from the hospital to share the tearful news that cancer had quickly claimed our friend's life.

Andrew Kilgore was typical...yet unique among those who have come to live with us at the Open Door Community. A long-time Atlantan, he first became a special supper guest at our table. He was in his late 50's and having a hard time getting enough regular work to keep living in the neighborhood boarding houses. Along with a few others, we invited him to eat the evening meal with us as a way of making ends meet. But eventually the ends still got too far apart; he came to live as a full-time guest. Quick of intellect and wit, he soon became a favorite. Thus with mixed feelings we both rejoiced and grieved when a year later he became eligible to draw a small pension and moved up the street to the high rise.

Fortunately our joy, not grief, was sustained: Andrew continued to visit us. Regularly, if not consistently, he joined us for meals, Bible study, and worship. Once, when another of our guests with whom he was close went through an emotional crisis, Jack came back to the house to help. More than we, he was able to persuade his friend to go to a local mental health facility. Later Jack stretched the rules of the high rise to help his institutionally released friend by offering him hospitality. And then he brought us money. At least twice, he walked into the building and handed one of us an envelope with \$200 in cash. "I got some extra work and just wanted to share this with you...for all the good things you do here."



The day after his death, Andrew's brother from Florida and a nephew (and his wife) from here in Atlanta came by to visit. As Ed and I shared what we knew about Andrew's recent past, his family told us about some of the distant past. It seems that his mother's untimely death when he was about seven had permanently changed the direction of Andrew's life...loading him unexpectably away from his biological family. It had literally been years since he had been heard from. Deep within him lay all the reasons for turning to us at the Open Door rather than to his extended family when he became needy.

Yet not so hidden is the glorious truth that our shared life with Andrew Kilgore did reveal: despite past brokenness and present injustice, God can bring together unconnected people and create new families. Andrew became part of our family. Even in his death he now strengthens us for our continuing task of building family life. As part of our family, we invite you to join his family in giving God glory for this brother's life in our midst. *

This is the text of a meditation presented at a Lenten worship service at The Open Door Community 3/10/85

We're On Our Way

We're on our way to Jerusalem,
Following Jesus... following Jesus.
We're midway through our Lenten walk,
Following Jesus... following Jesus.

At times there's been joy...our step's been alive,
Following Jesus... following Jesus.
And beyond the Cross is eternal life,
Following Jesus... following Jesus.

But now, in this unnamed town of Atlanta where we join our Lord
in driving out demons (giving showers and such to our homeless
friends) there intrudes the cold-hearted presence of the Church:

"You must get out of here!
You must get out of here!
Herod wants to kill you!
Herod wants to kill you!"

Oh, Lord, Jesus! What is this message?
Is it to help us...is it to hurt us?
Oh, Lord, Jesus! What shall we do?
Where shall we do it? Where are we going?

We're on our way to Jerusalem,
Following you, Jesus...following you, Jesus.

"Go and tell that fox, 'I am driving out
demons and performing cures today and
tomorrow and on the third day I shall
finish my work.'

Yet I must be on my way today, tomorrow
and the next day: it is not right for a
prophet to be killed anywhere except in
Jerusalem."

Killed in Jerusalem! Killed in Jerusalem!
Following Jesus...following Jesus.
Fasting is helpful. My struggle is wholesome
But Killed in Jerusalem! Killed in Jerusalem!

When must we leave here? How shall we leave here?
Following you, Jesus...following you, Jesus.
Three days to work here, yet leaving here each day.
How can we work here...and leave here...
And live near this Jesus...who's walking so stead'ly
Taking us with him ...to...Die... In Jerusalem?
Following you, Jesus...following you, Jesus.

Work here, yet leave here.
What do you mean, Jesus Christ, our Lord, dear?

Can I perform these cures each day in this unnamed town of
Atlanta? I'm ready now to get out of town! Let's play a game of
chess with fox-sly Herod. Maybe we could just beat him. Jesus,
our Queen; we your many (and growing pawns). We could beat a
pompous King and his major pieces. Power to the Pawns! Power to
the Pawns...

But today we stay here; Today we smile here,
Casting out demons, and sharing God's hope here.
At the end we'll invite some to follow beyond here,
Following Jesus...following Jesus.

"Jerusalem, Jerusalem! You kill the prophets,
you stone the messengers God has sent you!
How many times I wanted to put my arms around
all your people; just as a hen gathers her
chicks under her wings, but you would not let me!
And so your Temple will be abandoned. I assure
you that you will not see me until the time
comes when you say, "God bless the one who
comes in the name of the Lord."



Rev. John Storey, pastor of
leads the procession of Peo
as they begin a demonstrati
March 20th execution in Geor

****** The preceeding paragraph is
read from the balcony of the
tives on the eve of Van Sol
sons were arrested (includi
Trial is pending.

ay To Jerusalem

by Rob Johnson



photo - Beverly Crawford
Atlanta Constitution 3/20/85

Clifton Presbyterian Church
ple Against Executions (PAX)
on prior to John Young's
rgia.

the text of a proclamation
Georgia House of Representa-
mon's execution. Eight per-
g Rob) during this action.

America, America.

We slaughtered the Cherokees;
Napalmed the Viet Nameese;
Now from El Salvador
We lock out the least of these.

American, America.

When will we ever see
That our foreign policy
Now has one destiny:
To keep us from seeing Thee.

How many times I've wished to elect an entire slate of Democrats...Hoped that the political process would find a domestic policy that would at least legislate compassion and usher in justice. But Roosevelt...Kennedy...Johnson couldn't do it. Jesse Jackson seems like a footnote...Yes, I will keep on with these petitions to Pharaoh to let your people go. I won't buy Reagan's advertising-packed happiness...Yet I don't understand. I don't understand. This time around the plagues strike us and the Egyptians sit around watching their magicians on cable TV.

America, America.

We don't call them "niggers,"
We now call them "killers,"
Each month in our 'lectric chair
We lynch us a murderer.

Mr. Speaker! Mr. Speaker! Van Roosevelt Solomon is scheduled to die in the electric chair just after midnight tonight. Please do something! For the first time in over 20 years, you are meeting as our legislators while an execution is being prepared. Please stop this execution. Please intervene with the Board of Pardon and Parole and ask them to grant clemency or a stay for Mr. Solomon. Please pass legislation today that will show America that Georgia no longer discriminates against blacks and poor people. Justice and mercy may not be popular today, but history and God will reward you for choosing life.**

America, America.

Our multinational corporations will collapse.
Our churches will be abandoned...even while filled...
We won't see Jesus until we bless the
Stranger who comes to us as our Hungry, Hanging
Lord.

We're on our way to Jerusalem...to Jerusalem
Following you, Jesus...following you, Jesus.
We're midway through our Lenten walk,
Following you, Jesus...following you, Jesus.
Give us the strength to play in this game Lord.
Working and healing yet leaving away, Lord.

We're on our way to Jerusalem...to Jerusalem.
Take our fears and our doubts on the cross, Lord.
Make us gather together in awe, Lord.
Gathered in awe as you Rise and defeat Death.

Let us shout in the streets when It comes, Lord.
The Spirit of Love, of empowering strength, Lord.
Stay with us always...stay in our hearts, Lord.
We want to be with you...We want to go with you.

We're on our way to Jerusalem.
Following Jesus...following Jesus.

The Ministry In Asheville

by Carol Latharus*

10

Editor's note: In February, 1985, Ed Loring went to Asheville, North Carolina to join with others there to prepare for the opening of new space for God's good friends. The following article is a report of the good news going on among those faithful people.

I knew them well. These homeless people would come to ABCCM (Asheville Buncombe Community Christian Ministry) where I had been counseling for only a few months. They came hungry, to be fed; dirty, to get clean clothes; lonely, seeking company. And they came homeless, but they didn't ask for a home because there was none. I was frustrated by this. We could help many people but not the ones who had the least, perhaps because they needed the most.

When I decided we needed a place for these people, and that I would find one, ABCCM supported my idea. I knew the churches were the best way to go about doing this type of ministry. Yet, because I was not an active member of the Christian community and fairly new to Asheville, I was confused as to what my approach should be. I went to Atlanta to see shelters and how they operated. I found myself very inspired and ready to get every person in Asheville equally excited.

It seemed so clear and simple to me, until I started learning about the politics that exist in so many churches. I persistently approached various churches for three months. In this time I learned how these politics were protecting people from what their Christian faith should have led them to do. Then, in the middle of January, we had record-low temperatures, and very quickly St. Lawrence Catholic Church decided to give us the space. Rejoice! The work really began.

In three very busy weeks, the Laurentine Shelter opened. Created to give a home to 15 women and men, within three weeks more than 25 different people had stayed with us. Most of these people are residents of Asheville and stay at the shelter on a regular basis. Clearly, this contradicts the belief held by most of the Asheville community: there are no homeless people. (The idea of starting a shelter had been brought up two years prior and was rejected for lack of community support.)

Getting a space was our first need for this ministry. There were two other essentials: volunteers and money. Ed Loring was invited to come and share his experiences.

After visiting The Open Door Community in Atlanta, I knew there was something special that we needed to bring out in people in order to do this. And Ed did, indeed, bring out that "something special." After struggling so much to get the space, I just watched in amazement as over 80 people poured in the room to hear Ed speak. After he spoke, people signed up for three-month periods to volunteer at the shelter. In the next few weeks we were showered with checks, money, and donations of all kinds, including a brand new washer and dryer.

The shelter is in the basement of an old brick church. It has a 20-foot high vaulted brick ceiling and brick walls. The kitchen has rock walls and there are two small bathrooms. It is not the coziest place, but there is an incredible warmth in the atmosphere. Because we have kept it small, there is a sense of community which is a very necessary part of homeless people's lives.

Ironically, the first night we opened there was a recreational vehicle show across the street in the civic center. I wondered what the homeless people must have thought about such a decadent American event. And, although I was glad to invite them into the shelter, I found myself angry at this society for valuing things more than people. I understood what Ed meant about the disgust of having to open a shelter. When people ask me how the shelter is going and I tell them it's always full, they say "great." I have to tell them it makes me sad.

The support for the shelter has increased at a constant pace. Our guests are well taken care of by many people. In addition to overnight volunteers, someone brings dinner each night. It seems that everyone who comes in the shelter is touched deeply. I'm not sure what it is, but almost every volunteer has said they want to come back.

Of course, the essence of the shelter is the guests. They are mostly men and mostly young. They are appreciative, helpful and supportive. It is a real home because the guests have made it that way. Most of them have been there for a long time, and some have moved on. But they are all remembered, and, through their specialness, we have learned much about ourselves and our lives.

I wonder so much about these people. How have they got to this point in their lives and how can we gently lift them up? We'd like to keep the shelter going and try to have it open all year 'round; yet, there is so much more we must do.

Last week a former guest came to the door, drunk and crying. This surprised me because he was sober the entire time he had stayed with us (he had left because Social Services had found him an apartment). As I led him to a cot, he told me he'd been doing very badly since he left the shelter. It was then I realized how deeply the volunteers and guests have shared. It's been such a blessing to us all.

*Carol Latharus of Asheville, NC is the volunteer coordinator and one of the founders of this Kingdom work.



graphic - Ade Bethune

PILLOW TORTURE

by Paul Magno

On Easter morning last year seven friends and I - the Pershing Plowshares - entered Martin Marietta's weapons factory in Orlando, FL., used hammers to symbolically disarm Pershing II and Patriot missile system equipment and poured our own blood as a reminder of the consequences of the use of such weapons. After a week-long trial we were convicted on two felony counts in federal court and sentenced to three years in prison. These, then, are the bare facts of our case. What I hope to share is the meaning and value of our act.

I wish to convey, after all, how right our disarmament action felt and continues to feel. How much it seemed for me a sharing in both the Crucifixion and Resurrection of Jesus. The crucifixion because we had struggled over several months of discussion and prayer to come to that point, to the willingness to offer our liberty, and possibly our lives (we worried about getting shot by security) for love of our neighbors and in order to chose life. The resurrection because of the enduring sense of victory which has carried us through our jailing, trial and sentencing and nourishes me still in this prison camp. That sense was present in the yard of Martin's war plant when we were discovered on Easter morning. We had spent a relatively short time actually hammering on the weapons system components and had been singing and praying for nearly an hour when we were confronted by a security guard. Imagine our delighted surprise when the growing number of police arriving on the scene seemed to treat the circle in which we sat with a kind of reverence, interrupting us almost apologetically between prayers or songs. This ensued for another two hours! Again and again over the summer, instances of remarkable grace confirmed the presence of a special Spirit that went with us and permitted us to bear witness to the truth about the mortal sinfulness of the nuclear arms race.

We had felt it necessary to carry out such an action because the arms race had become undeniably more treacherous than ever. Specifically, we chose to confront the Pershing II missile, for which Martin is the sole manufacturer. Pershing II is a key weapon in the U.S. first strike arsenal. Its deployment in Germany in late 1983 had precipitated the Soviets' departure from arms control talks in Europe, and increased deployment of Soviet missile-carrying submarines near the U.S. coast. In addition, the well-respected "Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists," had assessed the implications of the 1983 deployment of Pershing II and cruise missile and moved their "doomsday clock" to three minutes to midnight, closer to disaster than it has ever been since 1953. (I might add that recently it has become clear that the situation is worse still; the U.S. deploys a

new Pershing II every week; the Soviets are apparently adding even more SS-20's and new SS-22's to the European Scene and have announced submarine and bomber deployment of long range cruise missiles.) We, for our part, felt deeply our responsibility to respond seriously to such a threat to our world.

We found our most adequate response in the prophet Isaiah's injunction to "beat swords into plowshares." Indeed the struggle against nuclear weapons is more than political, though peace politics must be learned, it is more than moral, though we should hope that people understand their urgent responsibility to banish such weapons. It is for me and, I believe, for humanity, a struggle of faith: do we believe in the biblical God of life or in these idolatrous gods of Death? We cannot serve two masters.

I have also spoken of our sense of victory, which may seem peculiar to folks. After all, what is victorious about being arrested, branded "FELON" and sentenced to three years in prison? Yet I maintain that we do participate, here, in the "folly of the cross" wherein "the foolishness of God is wiser than human wisdom." Despite its seeming futility, I would call our act precisely constructive.

We were frequently confronted with a question during the period of our witness in Orlando. We had quite obviously "beaten swords," but where, folks inquired, was the "plowshare?" Tim Latzke of our group was the first to perceive that our plowshare consisted of the community spawned by our action and presence. What became apparent was an emerging community of local supporters in whom the spirit of peace had come to life. It is in the disarmed hearts of such people that the plowshare - an implement for preparing the soil in which the seeds of life are sown - is constructed.

With such a consolation, then - with such a true victory - the eight of us presently sit in federal prison along with the seven folks of the Griffen Plowshares (11/24/83), the Sperry Software Pair (8/10/84) from Minnesota, the five Trident II Plowshares (12/1/84) from Rhode Island and many other peacemakers.

And yet I cannot help but think that our sacrifices for peace are, in the broader perspective, small ones. Christin Schmidt of our group refers to our situation as "pillow torture" for its relative easiness compared to the barbarity others must endure for justice's sake, in such places as Central America, Russia, and Southern Africa. Before our trial, we had the opportunity to visit the grave of Jean Donovan in Sarasota, FL. When compared with such a witness as hers, what is our small offering but pillow torture indeed. *



"they shall beat
their subs into
soup pots"

(Open Door's paraphrase of a well known passage from Isaiah)

Double Transformation

A Gift of God's Grace

by John Pickens

The story I am about to tell illustrates once again the bestowing of God's amazin' grace on ordinary people like all of us and the transformative power such divine grace imparts to our human existence on this planet. Undoubtedly, countless stories like this one can and have been told before - yet, because of our human frailties we need to hear such stories over and over again. This story is being told also because it is especially meaningful and important to our community and it is a story which is ongoing and is still being lived out right in front of us. It seems most appropriate to be telling this story at Easter as it essentially is a story, like the Easter story, that is filled with hope - as evidenced by the fact that lives can be and have been changed and as evidenced by our constant prayer and belief that one day a brother of ours in Christ will be free from the prison bars and shackles that now bind him. This story also offers us hope in the form of confirmation that our ministry to the homeless poor on the streets of Atlanta, who society has walled out of existence, and to the homeless poor in prison and on death row, who society has walled in out of sight, is one and the same in many significant ways.

This story is about our brother Terry, a young black man who came to Atlanta from a small town in the deep South along the banks of the mighty Mississippi River. He came into the house off the streets as a house guest. He entered our lives very shortly after we moved into the house when we were sorely in need of help. Terry is now back in his home state serving a long prison term for a crime he allegedly committed before he came to Atlanta - if Terry continues to be a model prisoner, he will be released from prison sometime well into the 21st century. We have kept in touch with Terry through letters, phone calls and visits, and Ed and I have visited with his family and friends and other people who have known Terry since he was a boy. I have also started another round of appeals in the courts for Terry which we hope will one day result in the overturning of his conviction and his freedom.

A few facts about Terry's background, I think, are helpful in fully understanding this story. Terry grew up in the South in several small towns along the Mississippi River. These towns lie just over the levy of the river along a road I will simply call the River Road. Black folks mostly live along the River Road, subject to the ever-present risk of flooding, and as you drive away from the river, the further you go into the town the more white folks you see. These small towns where Terry grew up are squeezed between huge and unsightly industrial plants spouting smoke of many colors which sting one's eyes and offend one's senses of sight, smell and taste. These plants line the river like smoking giants, with neon lights flashing the names of America's corporate giants, like Texaco, Union Carbide, Georgia Pacific and Shell, just to mention a few. Nestled among beautiful live oaks and huge magnolia trees, co-existing with America's smoldering industrial pits, are the well-kept and neatly manicured plantations of a bygone time. Tourists flock to these plantation manors to see the splendor of the Old South. It is clear that the land now occupied by America's corporate giants was once the cotton fields plowed by the slaves of the plantation owners. One gets the real sense in viewing life along the River Road and the plants lining the river that slavery in the fields has simply been replaced by slavery in the plants. It is equally as clear that the black folks living along the River Road are the descendants of the slaves who worked the fields of the river plantations. Although some people's lives along the River Road are surely better than in years gone by, it is clear that life there is exceedingly difficult and one is lucky indeed if they are able to break out of the hopelessness and cycle of violence and oppression created by poverty, racism, substandard housing, drugs, alcohol, and unemployment.



One day as Ed and I drove through one of these towns we both wondered outloud if there was any chance to break out of this cycle for the young black men standing on the corner drinking beer and wine, or for the grade school kids break dancing in the yard on an old cardboard box, or for the young black women peering at us from the doors of project apartments with swarms of small children at their feet. Ed and I said to each other that we felt as if we were in a Third- World country, not the happy, affluent America touted by President Reagan and run by the barons of the corporate giants lining the Mississippi River. The great sadness in all of this is that our brother Terry did not break out of this vicious cycle of violence until it was too late. By the time he reached eighteen, he had a fairly substantial juvenile record and his early adult years were spent in prison for two separate criminal offenses. He is now back in prison - the white folks of his hometown are rejoicing and his family is mourning and praying for his freedom.

TERRY (Cont. on page 13)

Against that backdrop, let me tell of the first period of transformation in this story I have entitled "Double Transformation" - the second part of this on-going transformation will immediately follow. Terry came to live with us within two months of our moving into the house here at 910 Ponce de Leon. There was a lot of work to be done and few of us to do it. Terry quickly and energetically pitched in, doing such things as cooking, cleaning, washing, and taking care of our young children. I can vividly remember Terry and myself on our knees in the mud under the house trying to fix a broken pipe - we did not get it fixed but we tried awfully hard. Terry was great with all our children. Our two young girls, Hannah and Christina, were really fond of Terry, especially when he would tease them with a small rubber mouse he got from some place. Our two boys, Ryan and Neal, used to love to play basketball with him out back, which he fondly named "Loopville". Terry also took part regularly in a program up the street with disadvantaged children and really felt good about being of help to them. Terry also had some rough times here with us, but all in all it was nothing less than miraculous. By God's grace of putting us all together in this house, Terry was able to see, probably for the first time, that he was a good person capable of doing good works, not just a bad, rebellious person like those from his past had labelled him. Transformation by God's mysterious grace is truly inspiring and uplifting to see. That this transformation had become a reality for Terry can be seen in the following statement which he made to the judge who then sentenced him to life without parole in prison:

"I'm sorry for escaping from jail, but like I don't know, my patience had wore out and I felt like I had wanted to be free like everybody else. If even though I did had committed a crime, accused of committing a crime, like doing my exa[1] you know, and by me escape, I lived in Atlanta for four months. And all the work I did in Atlanta was Christian work, working with needy people and uh, working with the Open Door Community in the Presbyterian Center, working at the food bank, and working at Jude Methodist with slow learning kids, you know. That is the life, you know, I had supposed to living but I never had to, well, the people in my life to help me acknowledge this, to help me to recognize this, this thing by myself, that these things was in me. And I thank God for the experience now, you know. You know what my purpose, I know what my purposes are in life, you know. Praise God. Thanks."

Terry was not the only one transformed by God placing us all together. He came to us as our guest; we were his host. Yet, God turned the tables on this scenario. As he lived and worked and played among and with us he truly became our host teaching and showing us the joy of the life and work that God and Christ Jesus had called us to. He became a host among us and he showed us that our house guests were not just here to receive our sympathy and compassion, but themselves were able and willing to show and give to us love, encouragement and compassion for who we were. Thus, through our relatedness, we were all mutually transformed out of our old ways, thoughts and stereotyping and molded together as brothers and sisters in Christ. I know that this transformation also touched our children. Our two boys, ages 12 and 10, have been deeply affected by Terry. Ryan, the oldest, regularly writes to him and has visited with him in jail. What I think they have seen and learned is the destruction of an awful stereotype - the stereotype of the tough, violent criminal. Even though Terry has been convicted of a serious crime, an armed robbery involving some shooting, our boys knew him as a kind, loving, secure and gentle person. Having known Terry, I do not believe that either of them will simply discard or look down on someone simply because they have a criminal record. I feel sure that Christina and Hannah, as they get older and visit more with Terry, will have similar perceptions and will fondly remember the times with him.

The transformation process continues in all of us as we continue to relate and see each other. Who knows what God will create from all this. The hope and promise of God is that something good will come from all of it.

13 This continuing transformation going on in our relationship is the second part of what I have called a "Double Transformation." For Terry, what appear to be subtle changes have gone on. His letters over the years have alternately been filled with hope that God will someday free him to an acceptance that he may never get out of prison. He constantly reads and studies his Bible and prays and attends worship regularly. Recently, he has helped start an organization among his fellow inmates to raise money for the starving millions in Africa. He seems intent on serving God wherever he is. As we start a new round of appeals, it is my hope that Terry will remember and again incorporate into his prayer life two beliefs he has expressed to me in his letters over the years: "I've made a lot of bad turns in life, but this one has had the greatest impact on me. Never no more, I promise. I just ask God to give me one more chance at life." and "John, I would truly like to be free from behind bars, but I don't let my sentence or these bars worry me, because I know that the Lord have a time appointed for everything and through my faith in Christ Jesus I know that God is going to help me, so I spend my time reading and studying my Bible, praying and praising the Lord, something good will happen one day." I know my prayer life for Terry will be focused on these themes and I join him in his faith that one day he will be free.

For us here at the Open Door, the transformation process also continues as we learn from Terry some of the realities of prison life and through these insights are able to see more clearly the close relationship between our work with people on the streets and people in prison and on death row. What we are seeing - not that we did not know this before, but now more clearly - is that life on the streets and life in prison are essentially the same reality. Both environments include walled and barred barriers erected by society to keep the poor oppressed and the prisoners in chains, while slowly sucking the life blood out of them and yet at the same time planting the seeds of further oppression for the lucky few who survive with any measure of sanity and dignity.

These are some of the things we have heard from Terry about prison life during the course of our conversations with him. He related these to us in response to our questioning, and not out of any sense of anger he had:

1. Prison is an evil place. Upon arriving in the state-run prison from the county jail, Terry said this in an early letter to me: "I got here yesterday about noon and as I sit waiting to be processed a very strange feeling came over me, one that I've never before felt,

TERRY (Cont. on page 14)

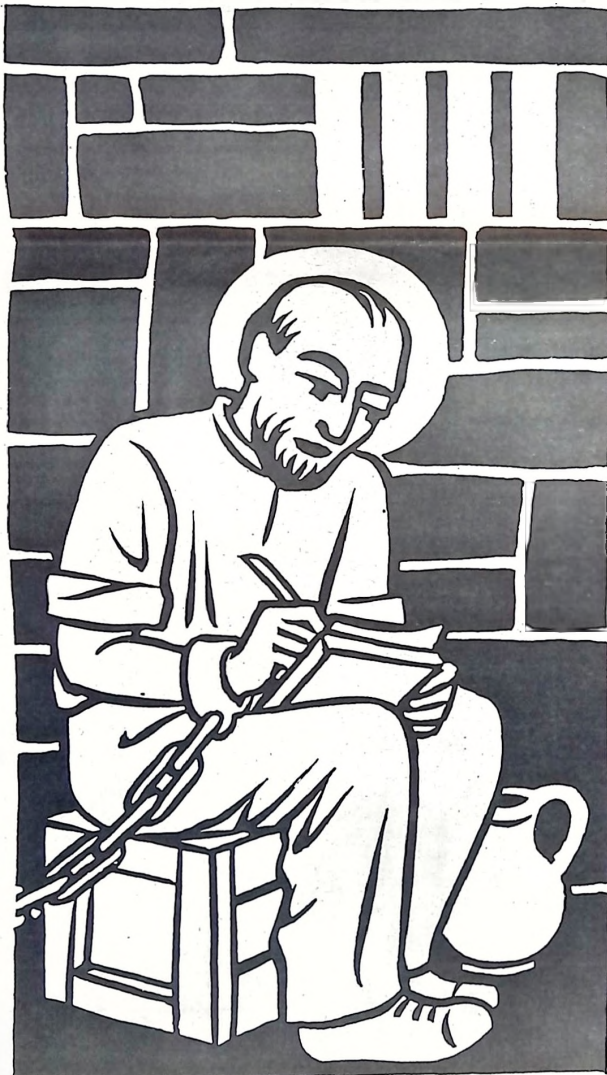


Terry (Cont. from page 13)

this is a very evil place. But I'm not afraid of or worried about anything because God is my God and my full trust is in God alone. "We know that the streets of Atlanta at 3:00 A.M., be you in a cathole or on a park bench, is an evil place. Add to such a night biting cold weather or a stranger next to you who is intoxicated and the evilness is multiplied.

2. I have taped to a lamp shade on my desk at the office a picture of Terry with a shovel in his hands at the head of a long line of mostly black men out in a big field. The long line moves from left to right in a diagonal across the picture and the men at the end of the line seem to disappear into the horizon. Prison guards stand close by with shotguns. These men are digging a ditch - moving dirt from one place to another. There is no apparent reason for the ditch. Slavery rampant again, this time for no purpose really, and backbreaking work for the poor. Seeing this picture reminds me of the stories I have heard from our friends on the streets about the type jobs they get out of the labor pools - dirty and dangerous jobs, like cleaning the chicken manure out of chicken coups and moving mud from behind cracked retaining walls.

3. One of Terry's jobs in the prison has been work in the kitchen - from 3:30 A.M. until 3:30 P.M. On hearing these hours the first time, naive me asked what he did for the rest of the day after he got off work at 6:50, thinking he meant 5:30 in the morning. For any of us, 15 straight hours of work is more than a day's work. Then I learned that Terry was paid the exceedingly generous wage of 2 cents an hour. Outrageous!!! Such



SAINT PAUL

14 slave labor is rivalled though by the labor pools here in Atlanta who charge their customers anywhere from \$5.50 - \$9.00 or higher per hour per man/woman and then turn around and pay the day laborers only the minimum wage, with deductions for transportation to and from the job site, use of work gloves and a hard hat, and a sack lunch. By the time all these deductions are taken out, the day laborer is left with a mere pittance for a full day of backbreaking and often dangerous work. The owners of the labor pools are the modern day slave masters, exacting the same toll from their slaves as the prison masters do from their prison labor force.

4. The way that the men in the prison whose families are too poor to send them any money make money for necessities and snacks is perhaps the most symbolic depiction of what life in prison is really like. Each week these men can go to the infirmary and sell their blood (plasma) for \$7.75 per pint. Terry had holes all over his arms. Unfortunately, this is no different than the hundreds of men and women who each week go to the blood banks here in Atlanta and sell their blood so they will have a little something to get by on. To me, there is something demonic about the running of blood banks which pay poor, hungry and desperate people for their blood. Then, it makes it even worse when we know, as I read not too long ago in the Atlanta paper, that this blood is not even used here in our hospitals to save lives but instead is shipped overseas for the production of chemicals. Blood banks in our prisons seem even more demonic and inhumane.

5. Lastly, and tragically, in Terry's jailhouse and unfortunately in practically every prison where hundreds of young people are housed the number one agenda for many people is who makes it sexually with whom. Never mind that most persons entering prison are heterosexual and have never even thought of or been engaged in a forced sexual encounter. The reality of prison life is that forced sexual encounters are common place and the weak are abused. No different really than what we see on the streets of Atlanta. Women on the streets are lucky if they escape being beaten and raped. Last winter here in Atlanta several sexual assaults were reported in the municipal shelter, which was overcrowded and understaffed and was not offering hospitality to the homeless poor. Whatever one's sexual orientation, one's sex life should not be a matter of force and violence, yet such is often the case on the streets and in prison.

And so we all wait in faith for the working out of an even greater transformation in our lives. Terry in prison and we on the streets and in the prisons here in Georgia. Although we visit with Terry, write letters, go to court, join actions of protest and live lives of resistance to our culture, we nevertheless wait in hope and great expectation, knowing that God's grace works in amazing and mysterious ways. Moreover, it feels right and appropriate to be telling this story publicly in our Easter issue inasmuch as Easter brings to mind the resurrection of our Lord and the enormous transformative impact that had on his disciples and the world. The resurrection of Jesus probably transformed more lives than any other event in recorded history. The transformations recorded in this article are a meaningful part of the larger transformation over the centuries in the church worldwide, and the substance of the events are the same and it has all come about for a sinful world through the grace of a merciful God. What has happened between us and Terry somehow reminds me of the feeling the apostle Paul described in 1 Corinthians 15 when he speaks about the resurrection of Christ and Christ's appearance to him and the transformative impact that had on him. Paul says: "Last of all he [Christ] appeared to me - even though I am like someone whose birth was abnormal. For I am the least of all the apostles - I do not even deserve to be called an apostle, because I persecuted God's church. But by God's grace I am what I am, and the grace that God gave me was not without effect. On the contrary, I have worked harder than any of the other apostles, although it was not really my own doing, but God's grace working with me. So then, whether it came from me or from them, this is what we all preach, and this is what you believe." Like Paul, I believe we can all say that we are who we are by God's grace and our hope for the future is the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ through which the chains of death and imprisonment were broken and the promise proclaimed that the captives will be set free. Thus, let it be said in conclusion that our lives and Terry's have become intertwined by the grace of God, and through our mutual trust and faith in God new life will come and the light of freedom will again shine on our brother Terry. *

Help!

I am thankful that the Pryor St. shelter was open this winter. It saved some homeless people from losing fingers and feet and lives to the cold. The previous winter they had no place to go. I also recognize that housing 400 street people in one building is a very difficult job. Nonetheless, what happened at Pryor St. this winter is not acceptable. It is not acceptable that people be subjected to the dehumanization and violence and chaos of Pryor St. It is not acceptable that EOA bungle and mismanage the shelter as they did this year. It is not acceptable that the City doesn't provide enough funds for adequate staffing.

The Atlanta Advocates for the Homeless monitored the situation at Pryor St. through the winter. When homeless friends began telling us of problems at the shelter back in November, members of AAH met with EOA officials to offer advice and suggestions for changes. At that point AAH made a decision to step back and let EOA and the City straighten out the problems. But we continued to hear stories of bungling and abusive threatment by staff at the shelter. In early February the situation deteriorated to the point that a leader of a self-help group organizing in the shelter was roughed up by an EOA staff member. We responded by calling a news conference at Pryor St. to publicize the conditions there. EOA gave assurances that the problems would be corrected. But conditions improved only minimally in the time before the shelter closed down full-time operation on March 1.

Members of AAH are currently involved in an effort to establish a year-round emergency shelter, operated with city funding and staffed by volunteers from the church community. *

Marvin Hamm is a Resident Volunteer at the Open Door.

Our Clothes Closet continues to need your support.

UNDERWEAR SOCKS SLACKS JEANS
SHIRTS are needed immediately.

The money required to provide adequate food, water, education, health and housing for everyone in the world has been estimated at \$17 billion a year. It is a huge sum of money ...about as much as the world spends on arms every two weeks.



photo - Rob Johnson



A 1st One-Person Show

Necessity has been the mother of Rob's regularly using a camera for our newspaper and around the house. Now, thanks to our friends and photo dealers, Bill and Gay Culp, Rob's inventiveness will be featured in a storefront exhibition at their downtown Mitchell Street shop.

During the week of April 15 - 20 the Culp's will be displaying a selection of Rob Johnson's photography related to the ministry of the Open Door Community.

This will be his FIRST one-person show! (Guess who's writing this announcement!). For that reason and to take advantage of the occasion to keep dramatising the plight of the homeless and prisoners, the Open Door is promoting a STREET RECEPTION for STREET PHOTOGRAPHY

Please join us on THURSDAY APRIL 18

3 - 5

at 138 Mitchell St. S.W.
(two blocks west of City Hall)

for some fellowship and light refreshments...and some photography. If you can't come then, drop into the Culp's shop any time that week. They do great development work too!

The Doubt of Life

by Malcome Landry *

I doubt if I shall ever possess
A life of wealth or fame
Or enjoy a prestige to such a degree
As all the world acknowledging my name.

I doubt if I shall ever reign
As prince or king of folk
And have my powers benevolent or cruel
Upon all the world descend.

I doubt if I shall possess a love
Of which ere this I often sing
For the bells of love I've longed for so
Have yet to swing...to ring.

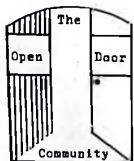
For the doubt that I doubt is so strong a doubt
And I doubt to such a degree
That I doubt the doubt of doubting this doubt
That so doubtously infects me.

Pessimistic is this, my way of life
Strange to others might it seem
That one so optimistic as I once was
Could now devoid it from dreams.

But the doubt with which I doubt all things
I doubt will last or stay
For the doubt with which I doubt I hope
Must surely pass away.

Thus is my way of life to doubt
Of life and life's own way
'Till God alone in heaven above
Finds time to deliver me...someday.

*Malcome Landry is a Guest at The Open Door



24 March 1985

ATLANTA FRIENDS MEETING
CLIFTON PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
Atlanta, Georgia

Dear Friends:

The Open Door Community endorses both Clifton Presbyterian Church and Atlanta Friends Meeting in their proclamation of establishing sanctuary for refugees from Central America.

We believe that the only Christian response to the homeless and those sojourning in our country is to offer them protection from the suffering and repression from which they are fleeing. We, too, look forward to more faithful witness among ourselves to welcome the strangers "within thy gates," as God would have all of us to do.

We also consider the action of these Christian bodies to be legal under the terms of the U. S. Refugee Act of 1980, and, even more importantly, to be faithful expressions of God's will and the biblical mandate for us all.

For these reasons, we agree to stand in partnership with them in their declaration, and we accept full responsibility of what that means.

Joined with you through Jesus,

The Open Door Community

910 Ponce de Leon Ave. N.E. Atlanta, Ga. 30306 404-874-9652

Newspaper Requests If you or a friend would like to receive **HOSPITALITY**, please fill in this form and return to Ed Loring at the Open Door 910 Ponce de Leon Ave. Atlanta, Georgia 30306

Name

Street Address

City, State, Zip