

Providing hospitality to the homeless and to those in prison, through Christ's love.  
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# Desperate Times, Desperate Measures:

## The U.S. Economy In Chains, Part 1

by Marc Worthington

*Editor's note: Marc Worthington is a friend and former Resident Volunteer of the Open Door. He now lives in New Mexico and is a labor organizer and editor of the magazine, Beyond Borders. The following piece is the first in a three-part series on prison labor.*

When I was in grade school, I remember learning about the debtors' prisons of the past. In my youthful innocence I asked not a few questions: Where and what was the crime? Why was it a crime to be poor? How would imprisonment enable someone to either repay their debts or avoid debt in the future?

I was probing cause and effect using my developing rational faculties to ask questions and look for answers, less encumbered perhaps than the older and supposedly wiser around me, who along with years had also grown in emotional predisposition and prejudice that obscures rather than clarifies observation and conclusion.

Right now, we as a country, society and culture could use some of a child's fearlessness and ability to deeply question. With that grid, some challenges and actions could be undertaken to steer away from history's oft-repeated course of systemic savagery that only finds majority criticism decades later in some history course wedged between finger painting and recess.

Let's not wait 50 years for the benefits of hindsight open to us presently.

The U.S. now imprisons more of its population than any other country in the world. What does that say about us? With 455 of every 100,000 people behind bars in 1990, we took the lead in the world—not in education, housing, employment or health care, but in incarceration. We are ahead of South Africa, ahead of the former Soviet Union, ahead of Venezuela and China, and however advanced one might think civil rights are in this country, the imprisonment rate for Black males is five times higher than that of South Africa. And few who have come near to housing projects and ghetto life in this United States of America would speak very loudly of its freedoms or rights either.

The percentage of our population imprisoned has risen, and the numbers of human beings held by "corrections" grow, while we not only allow it to happen, we promote it. Entire companies and towns base their economic survival on the existence of the convicted. Do you see the cycle? Lawlessness increases and companies profit from it. GM lays off

70,000 people and some of those unemployed will commit crimes of robbery, public drunkenness, assault, etc. that would not have arisen under better circumstances. Rather than using state and federal funds to retrain and create new industry, monies are used to 1) build new prisons to house the new criminals (producing construction jobs), 2) hire some of the unemployed to be guards (more jobs!) and 3) contract with Campbell's to provide food (still more jobs).

The economic boon jails provide is even prompting several counties in the central U.S. to consider building ones larger than needed so they can rent out excess space to Washington, D.C. and other overcrowded jurisdictions. So, rather than focusing on the senselessness of this cycle and channeling efforts into stopping it, *government agencies are wooing companies to come in and share the spoils of this expanding non-mobile workforce.*

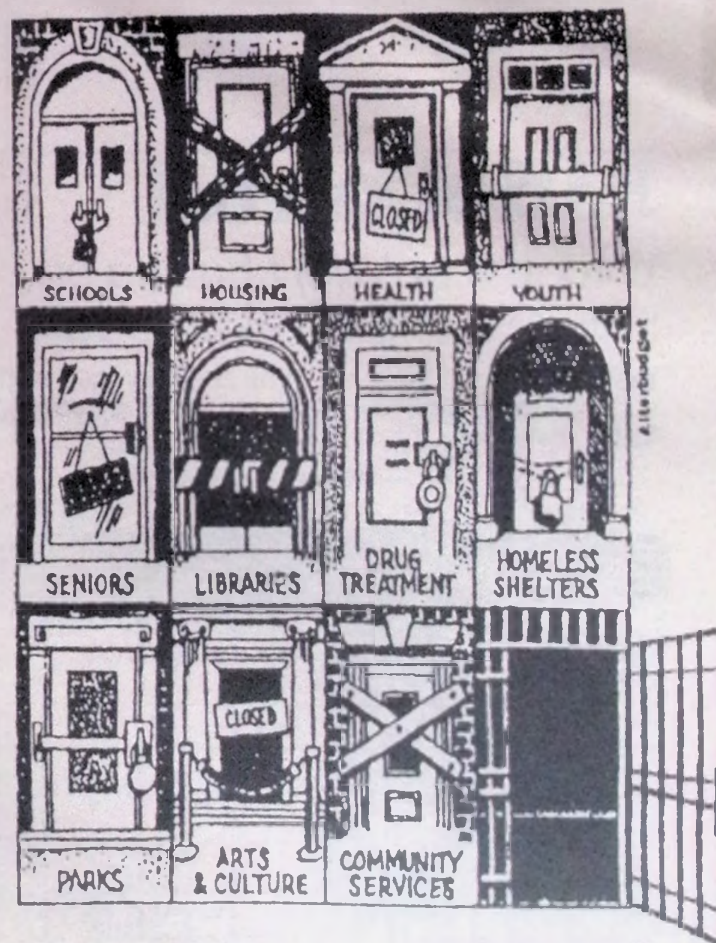
## Prison Labor = Private Profit

Today the jailed can be found as TWA reservation agents, subassembly workers for Honda, air force base groundskeepers and insurance claims processors in addition to doing the long-standing farming, road maintenance and small manufacturing jobs for the government. The number of people working for "up to" 90 cents per hour at government-run prison jobs may have grown from 50 to 65,000 in the last few years, *but the number working for private businesses has doubled or tripled to 5,000.* With new tax credits and other incentives in California and elsewhere this number is expected to multiply.

\$20 billion of our tax money was spent in 1990 for federal and state prison programs, stripping monies away from other social needs. The amounts increase every year with no end in sight. Meanwhile, tutoring and after-school programs are not being funded, but you can get a G.E.D. in prison. The auto plant and its middle income wages, benefits and hopes are gone, but when you visit the county health clinic for the uninsured (if it is still funded) you can pick up a job application to work at the new prison.

While more are thrown into prison and the costs rise to fund the growing prison industry, the cry goes out for the prisoners to work to pay off those costs. This demand appears reasonable when it is isolated from the realities of the economic opportunism that, among other things, encourages towns to compete for prison construction, and from the related question of how and why some people are imprisoned while others are not.

The thievery within the S&I and leveraged buyout arenas, to cite two relevant examples, involves looting and social devastation on a scale far exceeding that of 100,000 car break-ins. But many of the former are done within the law and the methods taught in business schools. For the latter, you get jail time.



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## HOSPITALITY



910 Ponce de Leon

*Hospitality* is published 11 times a year by the Open Door Community (PCUS), 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, please contact any of the following:

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### Riptides of Economic Growth and Decline

In the March 1992 issue of *Hospitality* Michael Kroll compared the building of more prisons when crime rises to building more commodes during an epidemic of diarrhea. He satirically attacked the lack of understanding and vision of alleged leaders who plan more prisons while failing to seek out and reduce the causes of crime.

Unfortunately building more prisons to solve our social problems is both historically precedent and currently predictable, as is the present rise in employing prisoners in jobs that are seldom available at a living wage for those outside prison walls during a recession or depression.

But shouldn't those convicted of crimes pay the costs of their incarceration? Why shouldn't businesses put to work an otherwise idle group, perhaps even improving job skills and employability? In a time of tight money, why not have "them" do work that is not being done and is most likely not going to be done due to a shortage of public funds?

These are all questions posed as argument for the increased use of prison labor which pull at both our emotion and reason.

All that's missing is context and criteria for asking and answering the questions, exposition of the underlying assumptions and evaluation of consequences.

One of the assumptions is that money is scarce. It isn't. We live with S&L profiteering, the Michael Milikens and Carl Icahns, off-shore banking and maquiladora border factories that pay \$4/day and dump raw sewage into the Rio Grande.

*It is a time of Roman gluttonous orgy, of flaunted wealth and violent exploitation, not scarcity.*



## hidebound

*\'hīd-ībaʊnd\ adj: having an inflexible or illiberal attitude*

The *hidebound* inhabitants of the neighborhood were opposed to turning the abandoned building into a shelter for the homeless.

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Another assumption is that there is something defective in the individual that may be fixed by confinement and labor without fighting the cancers the person lived with and will face again.

This assumption has been repeatedly refuted, particularly in this century, but even the most complete arguments that consider the many causes of crime will not aid effective action unless our society makes a complete break with the human history of use and reliance upon prison and other cheap labor. The economic momentum is great and spans from Greece to Nazi Germany to present; its present and past contributions must be identified and countered.

*This series will continue in the next issue of *Hospitality* when we will look at the economic history of prisons.*





# I Ain't Scared Of Your Jail

by Elizabeth Dede

Last Fall, friends of homeless folks in Atlanta staged a few protests, and we were able to overturn one of the Vagrant Free Zone laws, which made it illegal for a person to lie down on a park bench. During these actions, we had some spirited rallies in Woodruff Park downtown, with lots of singing, chanting, and picketing. While all this was going on, there were some arrests for the crime of lying on a park bench, and so I got the chance to go to jail a couple of times.

To prepare for these actions, we reflected on a scripture passage from the 61st chapter of Isaiah, where the prophet is sent to bring good news to the poor. I found myself focusing especially on parts of the second and third verses:

God has sent me to comfort all who mourn,  
To give to those who mourn in Zion  
Joy and gladness instead of grief,  
A song of praise instead of sorrow.

I wonder, surrounded by so much oppression, where are we supposed to find joy and gladness?

I'm not sure that I gave much joy and gladness to anybody, but for sure the women we met in jail gave us much happiness. They welcomed us, shared their blankets, encouraged us, listened to our stories and told us theirs, sang and prayed, and laughed with us.

Since most everyone in the jail was poor and African American, they were really curious to know what these middle-class white women were doing there. When Gladys told them that she had been picked up for prostitution, they roared with laughter. In response, Gladys did a little provocative dance and asked, "Don't you think I've got what it takes?" The jail was filled with giggles and belly laughs and shouts: "Mama's in for prostitution!" Over and over again they repeated this story to each other and laughed and laughed.

And so I was filled with a song of praise because of the many wonderful women we met in jail:

There was Tawanda who was arrested basically for being in the wrong place at the wrong time. She went into labor on the way to jail, gave birth to her baby boy at Grady Hospital, spent 24 hours with him, and then was sent back to jail, where she waited a week for her hearing, which had been continued so that the arresting police officer could come to court on some day other than his day off. Tawanda was quiet and patient, wanting nothing other than to be home with her baby.

In contrast, Joyce was boisterous, acting out her defense before the judge for us, singing, dancing, and keeping us entertained. But in a rare quiet, vulnerable moment she told us about the horror and hell of being addicted to crack, the danger, the violence, her agonizingly painful loneliness. She had such a dim dream, such a slim hope of getting clean. Yet she held on

to the hope and dream that she would become a counselor and live in a safe house, helping other women get off drugs.

Rita had sickle cell anemia and was not getting the medical care she needed. Like Tawanda, Rita had been in the wrong place at the wrong time. She was ironing in a friend's kitchen when the police came in and arrested everyone because they suspected there was crack in the house. What I liked most about Rita was that she kept asking us to pray with her, or to sing another song.

She especially liked the Freedom Song, "I Ain't Scared Of Your Jail," and in the morning when we were brought down to the holding cell for our hearing in court, Rita kept asking us to sing:

I ain't scared of your jail  
'Cause I want my freedom.  
I want my freedom. I want my freedom!  
I ain't scared of your jail  
'Cause I want my freedom.  
I want my freedom now!

We were singing and dancing and clapping and the guards had a hard time figuring us out.

I told Rita the story that Pete Seeger told about the song at his Carnegie Hall Concert in June, 1963:

*Dr. Martin Luther King would gather all the young people together as they were preparing to march for freedom, and he'd say: "Now, we're going to have a non-violent march today. It will be quiet and peaceful. If people shout ugly things at you, don't respond. And don't sing or dance. . . until you're arrested." So they would file out of the church, solemnly and quietly, hundreds marching for freedom. And then the police would say, "O.K. You're all under arrest!" And everyone would break out into dance, and sing, "I ain't scared of your jail 'cause I want my freedom; I want my freedom; I want my freedom! I ain't scared of your jail 'cause I want my freedom. I want my freedom now!"*

Rita loved that story and wanted to sing the song again. And so we sang. At first I wondered how she could sing that song, identifying so strongly with the non-violent freedom fighters, who were struggling for the right to vote, or to use public facilities. After all, Rita hadn't gone to meetings to plan for her stay in jail; she wasn't a non-violent protester.

Obviously, the song can give joy and comfort to anyone in jail. It goes to the "Old Gray Mare," and just that silly tune helps you laugh at the powers that are oppressing you, treating you like an animal at the zoo. Everybody knows that jails are scary places. During African American History Month, we heard again the story of Mrs. Fannie Lou Hamer, who was jailed many times as she struggled for freedom and her right to vote. Once she was beaten so badly that she suffered kidney damage, couldn't walk, and her eye sight was permanently impaired. Rita had all kinds of good reasons to be scared of jail.

Jail can ruin your life. As we so painfully experienced with Tawanda, jail separates you from your family. Over and over again we hear of people who lose their jobs, their cars, their apartments, and all their belongings because they were locked up. Jails are scary places, and it is encouraging to be able to laugh at that fear and to tell everyone, "I want my freedom—now!"

But the more I thought about it, the more I realized that Rita and most of the other women in jail were non-violent freedom fighters. And I am not just romanticizing the poor and imprisoned. I've been to jail three times now, and I've never yet met a woman who was arrested for violence. In fact in the Georgia State Prisons, in 1992 only 14% of the total admissions for that year were for violent crimes. Looking at state statistics throughout our nation, 68% of those sentenced to state prisons in 1990 were convicted of non-violent crimes, including 32% for drug offenses, and 31% for property offenses. Two women I met were doing time in jail because at a routine police road block they were found to have improper proof of insurance in their cars. Would you be arrested and go to jail on that charge?

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(Ain't Scared, continued from page 3)

Some women really were locked up for prostitution, but the vast majority were in jail on some drug charge. And of those three times in the disgustingly overcrowded jail, I can count on one hand the number all together of white women, other than those in our group.

And so the more I thought about it, the more I realized that while Rita's mama may have won the right to vote, and sit in the front of the bus, and eat at the lunch counter, Rita was still doing time in jail because new laws had come along to take her freedom from her. And they are laws that are every bit as racist and oppressive as the old Jim Crow laws.

In October 1993, the Campaign For An Effective Crime Policy gave the following report in "Evaluating Mandatory Minimum Sentences":

*Mandatory minimums are disproportionately applied to minorities.* The Federal Judicial Center reported in 1992 that in cases where a mandatory minimum could apply, black offenders were 21 percent more likely and Hispanic offenders 28 percent more likely than whites to receive at least the mandatory minimum prison term. Similarly, the U.S. Sentencing Commission found in its 1991 report that the disparate application of mandatory minimum sentences "appears to be related to the race of the defendant." The differing penalties for possession of crack cocaine and cocaine powder have also contributed to racial disparities. Mandatory 5-year prison terms are imposed for possession of 5 grams of crack cocaine; for powder cocaine, the 5-year term is only imposed for possession of 500 grams, a *hundredfold difference*. Since African-Americans are more likely to use crack cocaine than powder cocaine—92 percent of offenders sentenced for federal crack offenses in 1992 were African-American—the mandatory laws have an adverse impact on minorities.

Packed into that overcrowded jail, we met the women who suffer from these harsh, racist, unjust laws. None of them needed to be separated from their families and society. The chaos and despair of poverty are the roots of their drug use, and time in jail and prison will not bring hope to their devastated lives. I'm so proud and joyful that I met Rita and all the other Freedom Fighters in the Atlanta City Jail. With Rita, we all need to sing and dance and clap. We need to stop building jails. The world will continue to be violent and scary until we begin to sing with and for each other: "We want our freedom now!" Really, I won't be free until Rita is free.

Elizabeth Dede is a partner at the Open Door Community.



Gladys Rustay being taken to jail for lying on a park bench.

DICK RUSTAY

## I Was Hungry

by Elaine Brewer

*Editor's note: Elaine Brewer is a Methodist pastor and a student at Memphis Theological Seminary. She lived and worked with us last summer and shared these reflections with us.*

I was hungry when I walked through the doors at 910 Ponce de Leon in Atlanta, Georgia. I had left my mother's home at six o'clock that morning, intending to have plenty of time for finding a neat place to eat in the big city before I entered the shelter for the homeless where I was expected at 12:30. But in Chattanooga, one of my hours was swallowed up in a flash as I sailed through a time-zone change. There went my lunch hour! I knocked on the huge brown door and stared up at cob webs over my head. African American men lounged around the yard. The temperature was over one hundred degrees and I needed to find a ladies room in the worst way as I waited. Phillip responded to my knock and I walked quickly through the Open Door. I will never be hungry again in the same way as I was hungry before I entered that place.

After being directed to the large upstairs bathroom, that is not just for ladies but for any person who needs personal relief, I was led by Phillip into the dining room where he introduced me to those gathered and eating. I was very happy to see the salad, pasta, bread, and ice water on the table. "Go ahead," Phillip urged, wiping sweat from his forehead. "Eat, and then I'll show you your room." I filled my plate and self-consciously looked around for a means of payment. No one had informed me regarding how much money I would need for my three week stay at the Open Door. So I simply emptied my bank account of the \$150 I had and came in hopes that I could make that amount stretch. Seeing no one who looked like they played the role of cashier, I sat down at the first table and met three other

resident volunteers: Amy, Melissa, and Bill. They calmed my worst fear. I was very worried about whether or not a person could get a cup of coffee here when they awoke early in the morning. "Not to fear," Bill grinned. "See those three huge urns over there against the wall? Well, Ralph gets up at 4:30 every morning, just like he's done for the last ten years, and he sees to it that all three of those things are full of the strongest coffee east of the Mississippi." I relaxed and settled in.

Nobody ever asked me for money at the Open Door. I was given money by the house duty person one afternoon when I took a member of the community to the hospital in my car. But I was not charged for food, personal toiletries, laundry, transportation in the community vehicles, or for my room. Everything at the Open Door was a gift to me. Everything at the Open Door is given by the disciples of Christ. Those persons who live at 910 Ponce de Leon in a relatively "long term" way own no possessions. What they depend upon is the donations for their beds, food, and clothing. The clothes closet is filled by concerned and caring persons in the area. The refrigerator is filled by concerned and caring persons. The house is deeply blessed by caring and concerned persons. And any person who passes through the house, whether to donate items or to find shelter for a decade, is tremendously enriched by having been there.

While no one asked me for money while I lived as a member of the Open Door Community, no one apologized to me for the way I had to work and sweat while I was there! Work, over time, took on a new dimension for me. And I also learned many things about the channels that profuse sweat can take as it courses all over the crevices and valleys of the body. I learned that sweat can pour over the tops of the eyebrows, meet above the nose and cascade down the bridge and fall into whatever a person is looking at! I washed dishes, cooked for the masses, cleaned toilets, mopped floors, washed jeans and t-shirts for people I did not know, made

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*(Hungry, continued from page 4)*

sandwiches, served grits, and helped people select clean clothes following their shower in the afternoon.

All of this work was done in a three storey house that had no air-conditioning during a period of time when Atlanta's temperature rose above 100 every day! The community's refusal to close its windows and turn on the air conditioning, as most of the culture is accustomed to doing in the summer, is a means of maintaining its solidarity with the poor. The homeless have no respite from the sun's merciless heat. So the Open Door Community participates in a type of "fasting" as it manages in the midst of the weather's forces. Work, while sweating, is made more manageable by singing, by grinning, and by seeing the faces of brothers and sisters around you who are also engaged in an effort to do justice in this world. Work, for me, became a gift from God, a privilege in the Kingdom.

For the most part, I am a cheerful person. But I can be ruffled—especially before having my coffee in the morning. Dick, one of the community leaders, came to me in the dining room on my first morning and he asked, "Are you free this morning?" I had not had my coffee yet and I had already learned how quickly a body can be roped into more work than they feel they can manage! "Isn't everything around here free?" I tried to smile with my guarded remark. Dick explained that some of the volunteers for the soup kitchen that day had cancelled. He needed kitchen help. I swallowed some caffeine. "Sure."

Dick, a white man in his sixties, asked me to "watch the sausage." This meant keeping an eye on tremendous amounts of pork in two very large and very hot ovens. I had never baked sausage before in my life and I had never in my wildest dreams, imagined preparing enough greasy stuff for an army! Immediately I burned my leg and heard the skin sizzle as I flipped a patty and stood too close to the pan with my bare legs. I'm terrified of hot ovens, having been burned so many times by them. I'm awkward in the kitchen because of my basic fears. All of this was compounded by my lack of familiarity with the place. Finally, sausage adequately cooked and only a few hundred pieces looking burned, I was told to "cut it up in bite-sized pieces." In my usual enthusiastic gusto, I immediately seized a shining knife and set to slicing my thumb nearly off! Added to the soup de jour was human flesh! Band-Aid in place, I kept cutting, but with a new technique. Sweat was pouring down my neck and my bra became heavy. I began to question the point of ever taking a shower in that place. Why had I bothered to put on clean clothes only minutes earlier?

Then, voices humming around me and busy persons passing by, I remembered. I recalled for whom I was cooking all this sausage, cutting up these bite-sized pieces. I remembered their faces in the yard and on the street. Mostly they were African American men but some of the men were white. There were some women I had served grits to in the mornings. One woman had brought her children with her. Her own legs looked like broom sticks and one of her two sons was obviously handicapped in his mental abilities. It was such a painful thing to watch that family eating together. I remembered the Asian man and the young white man who was young enough to be my son. I remembered their faces and the way I felt when I handed them a bowl of grits. . . This soup was holy soup; this work was special. Not because of the one who worked, or the ones who made the soup, but because of the One for whom we worked. This soup would be eaten by the homeless, by the poor. It would be eaten by people who would go hungry without it. Somebody would feel full instead of empty because of that soup. I cut the sausage with a new attitude.

Then I went on to reflect, if this soup is a blessing to me in its being prepared, and this soup is a blessing to the ones who eat it, then perhaps the pain of my burn and the sting of my cut could be means by which to bless another. I found myself praying: "Friend Jesus, who has done so much more than suffer a little salty sweat for me, please allow my burn, my cut, my sweat to be redemptive for my close friends back home. Use my discomfort to increase their comfort. Strengthen and encourage me that I might be a strength and an encouragement for them. I pray for all persons everywhere who struggle for peace with justice. Amen."

There is a poem and a picture of a bread line on the wall in the dining room. The picture is called "The Christ of the Breadline."

I saw a stranger yestreen,  
I put food in the eating place,  
Music in the listening place,  
And in the name of the blessed Triune,  
He blessed my house and myself,  
My cattle and my dear ones.  
And the lark said in her song:  
Often, often, often,  
The Christ comes in the stranger's guise,  
Often, often, often,  
The Christ comes in the stranger's guise.

The first morning that I rode with my community friends to Butler St. C.M.E. Church to serve breakfast to about 250 people, I served the oranges. Each morning we give a big bowl of buttered grits, a cup of coffee with milk and sugar added, a boiled egg, a multiple vitamin, three orange wedges, and a napkin and spoon. Each person receives a ticket before entering the church's basement. There is no charge but there needs to be a means of controlling the traffic flow. I watched the faces of those who allowed us to serve them. Some of them are very angry about how the system has betrayed and cheated them. Some of them look to be beaten. Some of them are very amusing. Some of them seem to have lost contact with reality. I recalled hearing the socially secure people commenting on the homeless: "They could do better for themselves if they weren't so lazy." And "It doesn't do any good to feed them; they just get dependent on you." And "They choose to be homeless; you can't help them." And I gave sections of juicy oranges to hand after hand outstretched. One man said to me from behind his soft brown eyes, "Thank you, sister." And the tears that were pushing, pushing behind my green eyes fell out on my cheeks. Shedding tears became a part of my work, and I learned not to feel any shame because of them. They had to flow if I was going to keep giving. And what did it matter whether this man could find a means of payment or not? Who cared? I only knew that this man and all those persons in line with him were hungry that morning and they needed a little food. I only knew how deeply grateful I felt for the privilege of being there to hand them some fresh orange.

Worship in the Open Door Community is unforgettable. After six days of hard work, unrelenting effort, and back breaking tasks, we rest! ! ! It is an incredible surprise! No joke! After breakfast is served at the house, (Sunday being the only day we serve breakfast at 910 Ponce de Leon), the dining room floor is polished with a buffer and the chairs are arranged in a huge circle. Then the work is over. We sat in the living room and we read. I fell asleep in a Lazy Boy for hours. The fan blew as I snored. There is no television to distract members of the Open Door Community so we engaged in conversations that excelled all conversations of my past life. We took walks together and bonded quickly as we walked around the Atlanta streets. Sunday is the Sabbath at the Open Door; it is radically different than the other days of the week.

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Bill, Ute, Melissa, and Elaine Brewer





GLADYS RUSTAY

Tandi Gcabashe at the Open Door in October, 1993

# Tandi Gcabashe Freedom's Friend

by Murphy Davis

Tandi Gcabashe is a treasured friend. Exiled from her home in South Africa, she has lived in Atlanta since 1970. She heads the Southern Africa Project for the Southeastern Regional Office of the American Friends Service Committee. Over the years Tandi has visited the Open Door many times to update us on the struggle in South Africa and to encourage the struggle against government policy of apartheid and hatred wherever it exists.

This month Tandi travels once again to her homeland in response to the African National Congress' call for international observers for the first universal elections in the history of South Africa. As she leaves for this important work we want to share something of Tandi's story and the story of her father. Much of this is gleaned from Tandi's most recent talk at the Open Door in October, 1993.

Tandi Gcabashe's father was Chief Albert Luthuli, Zulu Chief, Christian leader, President of the African National Congress, and winner of the 1960 Nobel Peace Prize.

Luthuli was educated and trained as a teacher in the American Congregational Mission. In 1948 he visited the United States as a guest of the Congregational Board of Missions. As he travelled and spoke he warned that Christianity faced its most crucial test in Africa because of racial injustice.

In 1952, he was elected President General of the African National Congress. For forty years, since it was founded in 1912, the ANC had employed nonviolent tactics to protest the violent system of racial hatred. Luthuli continued in this work and travelled the country, visiting the people and speaking at mass rallies. His travels were soon interrupted by repeated bans, trumped up charges and a serious illness. At one point the government demanded that he relinquish either his chieftanship or his relationship with the ANC. He refused, saying, "The road to freedom is via the cross." The government stripped him of the title chief, but he was reverently called "Chief" by the people for the rest of his life.

Through his bannings and persecution Chief Luthuli gained an increasing reputation and respect inside South Africa and around the world. Under his leadership the nonviolent mass meetings and strikes grew; a growing number of white South Africans joined the ANC during this time, and the South African government grew increasingly fearful of Luthuli's power among the people. In 1959 he was given a five-year ban that kept him from any gathering and confined him to his rural neighborhood for "promoting feelings of hostility between the races."

In 1960 a peaceful demonstration was organized at Sharpeville to defy the pass law. The pass was a document that every African had to carry at all times. It was to be presented on demand and had always

to be kept up to date. It determined where people lived, worked, visited, etc. The pass law was at the heart of the oppression of Blacks and it was a detested document.

When the demonstrators met at Sharpeville to burn their pass books they were ruthlessly attacked by the authorities; 69 people were killed and thousands injured. The government blamed it on the protestors and moved to outlaw the ANC and PAC (Pan-African Congress). From that time on these organizations were forbidden to organize, protest or speak out.

After Sharpeville Chief Luthuli called for a national period of mourning and he burned his own pass book. Because he was ill, and already banned, he was allowed to pay a fine rather than go to prison.

In December 1960, Luthuli and his wife, Tandi's mother, Nokukhanya Bhengu (which means "Bringer of Light") were allowed to leave their home in Groutville long enough to fly to Oslo, Norway to receive the Nobel Peace Prize. In his acceptance speech, Luthuli gave honor to the long nonviolent struggle of his people and their rejection of racial hatred in spite of unceasing violence and harsh treatment. Though the struggle had been long, he said, the people were still a very long way from freedom.

As government violence against the resistance movement grew, the consensus for a strict adherence to nonviolent tactics dissipated. While the ANC remained committed to nonviolence, Luthuli refused to condemn acts of violence when human life was not endangered.

Nelson Mandela was a young associate of Chief Luthuli and a close friend of the family. In 1961, Mandela went underground, travelled to meet leaders and supporters in other countries and received military training in Ethiopia and Algeria. He returned to South Africa in 1962 and went to visit Chief Luthuli in his home, disguised as a chauffeur. Leaving the Luthuli home on August 5, 1962, Mandela was arrested and kept in prison until the world watched his release on February 11, 1990.

Chief Luthuli lived the remainder of his life in near isolation. Though honored and revered as the elder statesman, he could visit only with individuals approved by the police. He was struck and killed by a train near his home in 1967.

As the resistance struggle was handed on to another generation of the family, they were young people who had been deeply formed by the Christian family life of Albert Luthuli and Nokukhanya Bhengu. Throughout their life as a family they prayed together morning and evening. The evening gathering was a worship service with prayers, Bible reading, and the singing of hymns led by Luthuli. The children were given homework to memorize scripture, which Tandi has come to value very much. She remembers during her father's banning how on Sunday morning the whole family would dress for worship. Mother and seven children would leave for the church and Chief Luthuli, dressed in his Sunday suit, would sit down by the radio to listen to the service and worship with his family.

In the hardship of exile Tandi said she has always relied on the Christian values and discipline taught to her as a child.

After Sharpeville and the banning of the ANC and the banning or imprisonment of many ANC leaders, members of the resistance faced the difficult questions of whether to go into exile, go underground, and/or face possible imprisonment, torture, and death.

Tandi and her husband and siblings stayed to continue the struggle but had to go underground. Another member of her group was taken into detention. (Detention was used frequently to intimidate and control people. The authorities could pick anyone up at any time and hold them indefinitely without formal arrest or charges.) The man from Tandi's group was tortured in detention and forced to confess and give names of others. He gave Tandi Gcabashe's name. "I cannot blame him," says Tandi, 23 years later. "No one knows ahead of time how they will respond to torture. How could I hold a grudge?"



It was 1970, and the choice was immediate for Tandi and her family: prison or exile. Her husband was a lawyer defending political offenders. He had been banned but the banning had been relaxed. Their friends recommended that they leave. So they gathered their four children (ages 6, 4, 2, and six months) and prepared to leave. Many relatives and friends gathered to see them off, and as they prepared to leave, Tandi's mother stepped forward and—all alone—sang "God Be With You 'Til We Meet Again." It would be 23 years before Tandi would see her mother, the "Bringer of Light," again.

Tandi and her family came to Atlanta in 1970 because of the city's place in the Civil Rights Movement. Chief Luthuli and Martin Luther King Jr. had been friends, though with government censorship their communication was limited (any mail was likely to be opened and any phone conversation tapped).

After the ANC ban was lifted, Tandi's sister, who had lived in exile in England, returned to South Africa. But though Tandi has visited several times, she has remained in Atlanta to continue her work in the U.S. for the liberation of African people and an end to the system of apartheid.

As Tandi returns to South Africa to observe these first elections based on universal suffrage, there is much to celebrate, but violence continues to devastate South Africa. Much of what the media glibly dismisses as "black on black" violence is violence sponsored and encouraged by the government. There are clearly Black people who have received benefits from apartheid and would like to preserve the status quo. A recent survey indicates that 38% of the people intend not to go to the polls out of fear of violence.

Tandi Gcabashe and her family represent well over a half century of struggle for freedom in South Africa. They have courageously faced bans, imprisonment, exile and threat of torture and death, and they have done so with the understanding that "the road to freedom is via the cross."

May we wait and pray together for the Resurrection Dawn of liberation for all the people of South Africa.

*Murphy Davis is a partner at the Open Door Community.*



## South Africa '94 \* Election Watch

*The legacy of apartheid runs deep, creating many obstacles to achieving full electoral participation to create South Africa's new democracy. Consider the following:*

- + 18 million people have never voted in an election before; they have no knowledge of voting laws or procedures.
- + 9 million future voters—50% of the new electorate—are illiterate, and many speak only their indigenous language.
- + Independent, non-partisan information about registration\*, voting procedures or even political parties is scarce or non-existent.
- + A large percentage of the new electorate live in isolated rural areas; many others are transient with no permanent address under which to register\*.
- + A poor public transportation system, and the paucity of private transportation, may severely inhibit voters' actual access to polling places.
- + Increased incidences of violence in the country only exacerbate fear of voting among the electorate—especially those who are first-time voters.
- + Perhaps most daunting is the legacy of apartheid's repression which has spawned massive disenfranchisement: unemployment, the near collapse of the education system for the majority of South African children, discrimination and exploitation of African women in the socio-economic and political institutions, and extreme poverty and disease. This election is the first opportunity in generations for the vast majority of South Africans to participate in determining the future for themselves, their family and their community.

(excerpted from the SAFE Fact Sheet prepared by the South Africa Free Elections Fund, New York.)

*\* The negotiators in South Africa have since decided that there will be no voter registration for this election. However identity documents will still be required.*



# Steinhardt Benefit Concert for the Open Door Community



Victor and Arnold Steinhardt

DOROTHEA VON HAEFTEN

**Saturday, April 23, 1994**

**8:00pm**

**Trinity Presbyterian Church  
3003 Howell Mill Road, Atlanta  
Corner of Howell Mill and Moores Mill**

Victor Steinhardt began performing as a pianist at age 15, with the Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra. He has achieved nationwide recognition for his own compositions as well as being a featured artist in concert halls and recordings. He holds a Master of Arts in composition from the University of California at Los Angeles and currently is on the faculty of the University of Oregon School of Music.

Arnold Steinhardt is first violinist and a founder of the Guarneri String Quartet which made its debut in 1964. Acclaimed as the world's premier Quartet, they have appeared internationally in concert halls, recordings, television, movies and have been the subject of several books. Mr. Steinhardt made his debut at the age of 11, playing the violin with the Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra.

The Boston-based Petra Foundation was established in 1988 as a living memorial to Petra Shattuck who was a lawyer, teacher and human rights activist. In 1991, Murphy Davis of the Open Door Community was a recipient of one of the foundation's annual awards for her years of work for social justice and human rights in Georgia. Through the work of the Petra Foundation, Arnold Steinhardt and his wife, Dorothea von Haeften, became friends of Murphy Davis, Ed Loring and the Open Door Community.

Seeking ways to support the work of the Open Door, Arnold has invited members of the community to attend Atlanta performances of the Guarneri String Quartet and offered with his brother Victor to perform in a concert to benefit the work of the Open Door. The Open Door Community and its Advisory Board have happily and enthusiastically accepted this generous offer.

Last October an interview with Arnold Steinhardt by WABE columnist Boyd Lewis for Performance Today articulated the task of "bringing two worlds together": the world of those who have typically become the audience for classical music by being able to afford it, and the poor who typically have little access to such music. The music becomes the vehicle for this bringing-together.

The hope for the benefit concert is to have a capacity audience for this stellar concert to support the Open Door Community's programs and to promote a greater understanding of the homeless and prisoners as members of the Atlanta community.

The Open Door Community is deeply grateful to Arnold and Victor Steinhardt for the gift of their talents, to Trinity Presbyterian Church for the gift of its space and to all those who are giving their time, money and talents to make this "bringing two worlds together" a reality.

## TICKET DONATIONS:

Concert in advance	\$25.00
at door	\$30.00
Reception	\$35.00

Tickets purchased after April 14 may be picked up at door.

I would like to order:

concert tickets at \$25 each

reception tickets at \$35 each

I would like to make an additional contribution of

I cannot attend but would like to contribute

Enclosed is a check payable to the Open Door Community for

Please have someone contact me or my organization about volunteer opportunities at the Open Door

NAME

ADDRESS

CITY

STATE

ZIP

PHONE

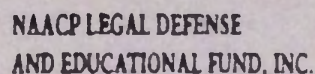
TOTAL

Return ticket order to:  
Steinhardt Benefit Concert  
PO Box 77006  
Atlanta, GA 30357

934-2673

\* Contributions to the Open Door Community are tax-deductible to the extent of the law.





Total number of executions since the 1976 reinstatement of capital punishment (there were no executions in 1976):

227

'77	'78	'79	'80	'81	'82	'83	'84	'85	'86	'87
1	0	2	0	1	2	5	21	18	18	25
		'88	'89	'90	'91	'92	'93	'94		
		11	16	23	14	31	38	1		

total number 227

Female..... 1 ( 44%)  
Male.....226 (99.56%)

White. . . . . 124 (54.62%)  
Black. . . . . 88 (38.77%)  
Latino. . . . . 14 (6.17%)  
Native American. . . . . 1 (.44%)

total number 302

Female. . . . . 142 (47.02%)  
Male. . . . . 160 (52.98%)

White.....	255	(84.44%)
Black.....	35	(11.59%)
Latino.....	8	(2.65%)
Asian.....	4	(1.32%)

### White Defendant and

White Victim. . . . .	170 (56.29%)
Black Victim. . . . .	1 ( .33%)
Asian Victim. . . . .	1 ( .33%)

## Black Defendant and

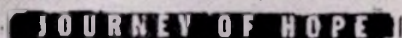
White Victim. . . . .	78	(25.83%)
Black Victim. . . . .	34	(11.26%)
Asian Victim. . . . .	2	(.66%)
Latino Victim. . . . .	1	(.33%)

### Latino Defendant and

White Victim.....	7 ( 2.32%)
Latino Victim.....	6 ( 1.99%)
Asian Victim.....	1 ( .33%)

## Native American Defendant and

White Victim..... 1 ( .33%)



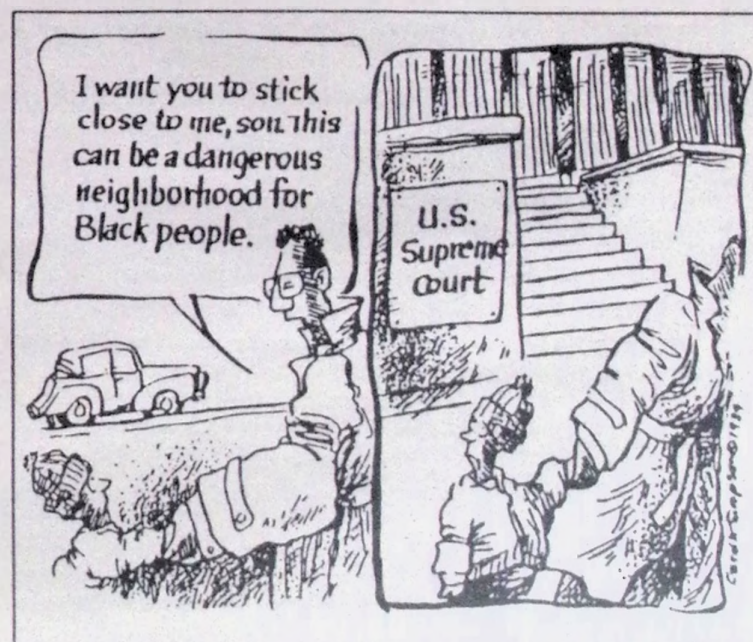
*Two Weeks of Action  
Against the Death Penalty*  
October 1-16, 1994

*Sponsored by*

*Murder Victims Families For Reconciliation*

The Journey of Hope in Georgia is a two-week public education tour of eight major cities and their surrounding towns. This event is led by Murder Victims Families for Reconciliation (MVFR). A core group of MVFR members and other interested people from around the country (and world) will spend time in each area at churches, rallies, classrooms, radio and television shows, and other interviews. They will describe the experience of losing a loved one through murder and their eventual recognition, unique to each one, of how hatred and a desire for revenge is destructive. They share their struggles to let go of their vindictive feelings in order to move on and up to a healthier, more humane way of responding to the offender and dealing with their grief.

*For more information, contact Elizabeth at 874-9652.*





*(Hungry, continued from page 5)*

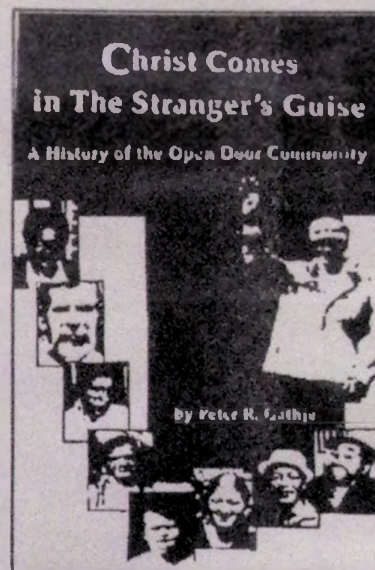
At 5:00 the guests start arriving. We get close together as we all try to fit into the dining room for worship. It is only natural to worship when the holy work is done. It is only natural that those who have donated food, money, and clothing, as well as time would gather together to worship the One in whose name the gifts were given. It is only natural that the folks from the yard would enter the house for worship as well. This is their home, too. In the yard around the Open Door house, there are about fifty persons who claim space and a piece of cardboard on which to sleep at night. They come in, no ticket necessary, to worship the God who has loved them and provided for them all week long. It is a glorious thing! And we sing! And it is not dull. It is a wonderful thing to sing together at the Open Door. It is a wonderful thing when the Holy Spirit moves during the time of testimony and sharing of personal concerns. Prisoners on death row are named as people in need of prayer. People who were knifed on the streets are named as people in need of prayer. People who have had their cardboard and their space invaded by law enforcement officers are named as people in need of prayer. People who have been harassed by public officials as Atlanta "cleans up" for the Olympics are named as people in need of prayer. Women in prison who have been courageous enough to confront their guards for sexual abuses and have subsequently been silenced by the system are named as persons in need of prayer. People from the yard give thanks for what has been done for and with them. People in the house give thanks for the gifts they can share. People from the city give thanks for those who live in the house and maintain the ministry. People who maintain the house give thanks to those who send money. And all give thanks to God.

There is Eucharist with worship at the Open Door. Gino stands at the table and holds a cup for intinction for those who are uncomfortable with the common cup. Gino has lived in the community for three years, and he will tell you that it beats the street. More, he will tell you that in the Open Door Community, "I've found God." Yes. Yes. Gino, I did too.

Leaving the Open Door was a difficult and painful event. It would have been more awful if I did not know I could and would return next summer. I hugged and laughed. I carried so much more with me to the car than I had brought. I carried a sense of who I am in the Kingdom. The people at the Open Door gave me that gift, the great gift of claiming my place at the table. I am the encourager. I am the messenger of hope. I put my sleeping bag and pillow in the trunk. I figured all the "Good-byes" had been said. When I came to the Open Door, ministry was moving round and round like a mighty wheel. No work ceased because I arrived. When I went out the back door, ministry was moving like a mighty wheel. The ministry moves on, no matter which individual comes or goes. And yet, I have never felt any more valued than I did during my time at the Open Door. The community itself is a holy body and I feel so much a part of it.

I opened the car door. Time to drive back to Tennessee. But my hugging and my flowing tears were not finished. The people of the yard saw me going. They lined up. They gathered together and stood to hug me, saying, "You're o.k." And "You take care of yourself until you can come back." And "I want to tell you that you have meant a lot to me." One woman just wanted a quarter! And I gave her one as I drove away. Why not? I was rich! I am rich and so very full. I thank God for the Open Door and for all open doors into the Kingdom. It won't be long now and Christ will return!

*Your donation  
will assist us in  
feeding the hungry  
and visiting the prisoner.*



Our cost to produce this book is \$3.  
Please send a donation to:

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

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_, State \_\_\_\_\_

Zip \_\_\_\_\_ + \_\_\_\_\_

### ***Join the Open Door Community***

***Spend 6 to 12 months as a Resident Volunteer  
Or join us for the summer***

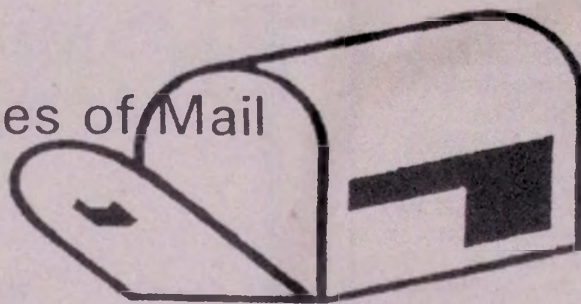
***Live in a residential Christian community. Serve  
Jesus Christ and the hungry, the homeless and  
prisoners. Bible study and theological reflections  
from the Base. Street actions and peaceful  
demonstrations. Regular retreats and meditation  
time at Dayspring Farm.***

Contact: Ed Loring  
910 Ponce de Leon Ave., NE  
Atlanta, GA 30306-4212  
404/874-9652; 874-7964 (FAX)





## Grace and Peaces of Mail



Dear Open Door Community:

Enclosed are two checks, totalling \$71.56 which we would like to donate to your organization. This money is from a recycling program we recently started at our store. Through this program we receive money for recycling paper and aluminum cans, which would normally be considered trash at other retail stores.

Although the amount is small, we hope it will help to benefit the homeless of Atlanta. We hope to continue sending your organization all money received from this program, either monthly or bi-monthly. God bless your organization and all the best from The Home Depot, Store #0121, located in Vinnings.

Yours sincerely,

Ota Groves and Jack Norton  
The Home Depot  
Store #0121  
3905 Cumberland Pkwy  
Atlanta, GA 30339



"... Let's face it. What's hurtin' the Black folks that's without, is hurtin' the white folks that's without. If the white folk fight for thyself, and the Black folk for thyself, we gonna crumble apart. These are things that we gonna have to fight together. We got to fight in America for ALL the people . . . and I'm perfectly willing to make this country what it have to be."

- Fannie Lou Hamer

Dear Friends,

I feel sure that the recent days of brutally cold weather imposed an extra burden on your resources. Therefore, I want to make this small extra gift.

Except for burst pipes and no water for a couple of days, anxiety over my boss and friend who was shot while out running, concern for the devastation in Los Angeles, I was very fortunate last week, and continue to count my blessings each day. One of the blessings I am aware of is the work you all do in our city toward a world of peace and justice. Thank you.

Love,

Eleanor Brownfield  
Atlanta, GA

Dear Open Door,

Your calendars are suitable for framing. Mine are framed and displayed in my living room. When people ask me about them, I speak of you and your work.

Thank you—

Susan Weissinger  
Wilmington, DE

Dear Murphy,

Thanks so much for the very well written article on "A Bag of Snakes." You sure told it the way it really is. Thank you. The title sure describes all of the oppression. Thanks for speaking out for all people. I know exactly what you mean when you say the prisons are racist from top to bottom, and it always have been. Please continue to keep the good work up. I'm glad the criticism of others stops no one from saying what's true. Some people doesn't like the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth. I myself experience racism sometimes because of being African American. I've always said, "prejudice is ignorance" and it is. Thanks for all that you do for so many people. May God bless you, your family and everyone there.

Sincerely,

V.L.  
Columbus, GA



### WE ARE OPEN...

Monday through Saturday, telephones are answered from 9:00am until noon, from 2:00 until 6:00pm, and from 7:00 until 8:30pm. The building is open from 9:00am until 8:30pm those days (Both phone and door are not answered during our lunch break from noon until 2:00.). Please call in advance if you need to arrange to come at other times. **On Sunday we are open from 7:00am until noon.** Sunday afternoon our door is answered until 5:00pm.

### OUR MINISTRY...

SOUP KITCHEN—Wednesday-Saturday, 11am-12 noon

SUNDAY BREAKFAST—Sunday morning at 9:10, 7:15am

BUTLER ST. CME BREAKFAST—Monday-Friday, 7:15am

SHOWERS & CHANGE OF CLOTHES—Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday,

2-4pm (Be sure to call; schedule varies)

USE OF PHONE—Monday-Saturday, 9am-noon, 2:00pm-5pm

BIBLE STUDY—Alternate Tuesdays, 7:30-9pm.

WEEKEND RETREATS—Four times each year (for our household and volunteers/supporters), April 15, 16, 17.

*Our Hospitality Ministries include: visitation and letter-writing to prisoners, anti-death penalty advocacy, advocacy for the homeless, medical services, and daily worship and weekly Eucharist.*

### Open Door Community Worship

*We gather for worship and Eucharist at  
5:00pm on Sunday evenings  
followed by supper together.*

*Please join us!*

April 3           Worship at 23 Butler Street  
Easter Sunday  
6:30am (daylight savings time)

April 10          Worship at 910  
5:00pm Eucharist  
5:30pm Music Night

April 17          Spring Retreat at Dayspring Farm  
No Worship at 910

April 24          Worship at 910  
Nelia Kimbrough, preaching



### Open Door Community Needs

#### JEANS

Men's Work Shirts

Men's Underwear

#### COATS AND SWEATERS

Quick Grits

Cheese

Mayonnaise

Multi-Vitamins

MARTA Tokens

Postage Stamps

Men's Large Shoes (12-14)

Coffee

Non-Aerosol Deodorant

Toothbrushes

Toothpaste

Disposable Razors

Shampoo

Silverware

Socks

Washcloths

#### WORK GLOVES

Sandwiches

Porch/Yard Furniture

Rugs/Carpet

Chests of Drawers

3 Pottery Communion Chalice

Card Table

Good News Bibles

Double Bed Mattress/Futon

Single Bed Frames, Box Springs, Mattresses

Shrubs for Backyard Plantings

*From 11am til 1:30pm, Monday through Saturday, our attention is focused on serving the soup kitchen and household lunch. As much as we appreciate your coming, this is a difficult time for us to receive donations. When you can come before 11 or after 1:30, it would be helpful.*

If you have found Hospitality helpful and would like to know more about the Open Door Community, please fill out, clip and send this coupon to The Open Door Community • 910 Ponce de Leon Ave., NE • Atlanta, GA 30306-4212.

☐ Please ADD to the Hospitality mailing list.

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

☐ I'm interested in volunteering. Please give me more information.

☐ I would like to make a six to twelve-month commitment as a Resident Volunteer at the Open Door. Please send more information.

Name

Address

City , State  Zip  +

Phone