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April 1996

HUNGER on Butler Street

The Butler Street Breakfast, part 3

by Ed Loring

Editor's note: The following piece is a transcription of a meditation Ed Loring gave at the Open Door Community worship on November 26, 1995. It is the third in a series of sermons on the Butler Street Breakfast.

Butler Street is a road, and we are on a journey. Butler Street is Black, and we are a community which has been empowered to see Jesus in Blackness. It is important to be on a road that is Black as we encounter Blackness in our lives. Encountering Jesus in Blackness is a very important part of our journey together.

Our God is a God who despises hunger. Several weeks ago we were out on a street tour. Early in the morning we left the Open Door and went to a labor pool near Jefferson Street. Then we went to Joe Miller's and Ralph Dennis' home in the hut community and visited them. After that we rushed as fast as we could to make it to the Butler Street Breakfast.

We had a wonderful time. We were cold, and we were already tired, although we had only been out on the streets for three hours. How wonderful it was to go down those steps into the basement to share that meal.

When the group that I was a part of had finished eating, we went outside and sat up on the steps of the Butler Street CME Church, and we were relating to other hungry and homeless people. We had a great blessing that just descended and appeared to us, like the dove of the Holy Spirit coming down on Jesus at baptism. We looked up, and lo and behold, right there in front of us, already on the second or third point of a sermon that had begun years and years before, Sye Pressley was preaching to us. It was a wonderful experience.

At the conclusion of his meditation there on Butler Street, Sye called on each one of us, and he made each one of us, looking each in the eye, to say what it is that we hate.

We were caught off guard at such a call so early in the morning. It was not exactly something that fits into mainline American manners to name what we hate. Yet everyone in that group spoke, and we spoke from our hearts.

I have been deeply moved and continue to reflect on that experience. It is one that I bring to share because I think that my hatred of hunger is a gift, a gift from the Holy Spirit, from the resurrected



Open Door Resident Volunteer, Evergene Ivey-Allen, joyfully serves at the Butler St. Breakfast.

Jesus, a gift from Yahweh, the Lord our God, who leads us out of Egypt and out of the house of slavery. We despise hunger, and we live our lives on an edge, particularly in this place and in this time. We cannot understand why any human being in the United States, in the city of Atlanta, on Butler Street or Ponce de Leon, should be hungry against their will.

According to the scriptures there is plenty. The biblical witness is very clear: there is enough. The second part of the first verse of Psalm 23 says, "We shall not want." Often at the Open Door Community we use Today's English Version: "We have everything we need." There is enough.

Plenty begins with creation. On the sixth day God creates food enough for all of us. God creates human beings and food for all, provides all kinds of grain and all kinds of fruit. That is not a simple scientific fact; it is an article of faith; it is a question of trust: do you really believe that there is enough for everybody? The difficulty with God's gift to us is it sets us against capitalism; it sets us against the American way of life; it brings us into a community of faith that sees the world in a different way. There is enough is a primary and fundamental confession. There is plenty. My cup overflows.

Not only do the scriptures teach us about creation, they also tell us about liberation. You remember Exodus 16, where the people are in the wilderness, complaining that they don't have enough to eat. When we come out of Egypt land, on the journey of liberation, we have a different food. God comes to the complaining, the hunger and the hope of this community being formed in the desert (just like the Open Door Community). We cannot get out of the desert if we're complaining to God to feed us with Pharaoh's food, the diet of mainline America. We face the same kind of complaining here from time to time: "Why is the rice brown? Howcome there's so many beans, when all I wanted was a little bit of beef? Don't give me that

whole grain bread again! I like white. What do you mean no baloney? You know I love baloney. What do you mean no sweets? . . ."

When we move from Egypt and the house of slavery into the wilderness and desert, there is a different food given to us by God. It does not lead us to such slavery as life in Pharaoh's house. We know that God leads us out

(HUNGER, continued on page 2)

HOSPITALITY



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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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(HUNGER, continued from page 1)

Pharaoh's house. We know that God leads us out of slavery by the food we eat and with whom we eat. The food of bondage, like the mainline American diet, is a diet of death.

We're not only talking about healthy foods, we're talking about the food that God gives us: there is enough for everyone, everywhere on the earth. God did not create a world in which there is hunger. Jesus comes to us again in faith, charging us only our lives, giving us nothing more than everything we want. In Mark 6, Jesus tells his disciples, even as he tells us, "You, yourselves give them something to eat." With five loaves and a couple of fish, Jesus thanks God, the creator of enough for everyone, and sends his disciples out to feed the people. Everyone ate and there was enough. There were 12 baskets of fish and bread left over. There is enough for everyone: it's the miracle of the presence of Christ; it's the goodness of the creator; it is the movement into liberation that leads us to a life in the wilderness rooted in faith and struggle against oppression. There is enough! There is no reason for hunger in this land. We will never accept it because those who do are blind and have not seen by the glorious light that lets us see in darkness. Let us be filled in our hunger! Let us be nourished and strengthened on our journey.

Oppression and greed are the causes of hunger in our land. Power and affluence lead to oppression and greed. Hunger is not a class issue. One thing about rich people is they get hungry. Poor people get hungry. The issue is who gets to eat. This world that God loves so much is filled with

some people who have too much and others who have not enough. Some people are consumed by overeating, while others starve.

In Ezekiel 34, God tells the shepherds, the leaders, the policy-makers, that God is their enemy because they have not cared for the sheep. They have eaten the best grass and trampled what remained. A couple of weeks ago we went out on a Saturday night to check the dumpsters for cardboard because we were spending the night in the back yard. Cardboard is such a good insulation against the cold ground. We checked the stores in this neighborhood. Dumpster after dumpster was padlocked. "You even trample down what you don't eat. You drink the clear water and muddy what you don't drink. My other sheep have to eat the grass you trample down and drink the water that you muddy."

Our liberating God says, "When I break my people's chains and set them free from those who have made them slaves, then they will know that I am the Lord their God. I will give them fertile fields and put an end to hunger in the land."

A primary source of hunger that we are faced with in this land, in this city, in this community is the disproportion of power that allows some people to have so much money and influence that they have too much. Their excess comes from the backs and the bellies of the poor and the hungry.

A second source of hunger is found in the book of Isaiah, chapter 55: "Why do you spend money on what does not satisfy?" What is it at the heart of America that is driving us to exploit the natural resources of the world? We eat and eat and eat, and we are not satisfied. God says, "Listen to me and do what I say. You will enjoy the best food of all." Come to me and you will have life. Each of us in our journey must continue to choose life, abundant life, that satisfies as we pour out our lives in servanthood, in solidarity with the oppressed.

Throughout the Bible God feeds the hungry. Jesus calls us in Matthew 25 to be about that work: it is a mark of the gathering of Christian people. Christians eat and invite all sorts of folk to join them. Fundamentally, the biblical response to the hunger on Butler Street, and in our own lives, is to feed the hungry, to share the food that we have, and to be happy, even when it's only five loaves and two fishes.

Tomorrow morning this community will go to Butler Street, and we will feed the hungry. We do that in the name of Jesus. We are sent to feed. We have been graced. Though we are still deaf, we can hear little bits, and we have heard: "Go to Butler Street, feed the hungry. "For when you have fed the least of these my sisters and brothers," says Jesus, "you've fed me."

We are taught by Jesus, commanded by God, in joyful obedience, day after day, to pray for food: "Give us this day our daily bread." The prayer that we must pray for the world is that the plenty will be shared with everyone. We cannot stop praying for our daily bread, believing that there is enough for everyone. It must be shared, distributed, harvested, good, healthy, joy for everyone.

God teaches us all the way through the scriptures that we are God's chosen people, who must demand that the hungry be fed. It won't do us any good just to go down to Butler Street and serve 250 people every morning, then come and pray, "Give us this day our daily bread," and then go on about our usual lives. We must be those people who demand that the hungry be fed in the name of God.

You remember the story in Luke when Jesus teaches the disciples how to pray. After he teaches them the words of the Lord's Prayer, Jesus suggests prayer is like having a guest come late at night. You find that you're out of bread, so you go to your neighbor's house to ask for bread. The neighbor won't come to the door because it's too late. You persist in your knocking. Jesus teaches us, in the midst of our going to Butler Street, to join the prophetic community. We become those who won't quit knocking on the doors of City Hall, on the streets of Atlanta, in the state legislature, on the doors of those running this Congress, who won't feed the hungry but take their food stamps and their medical care, who suck the life out of the poor.

If we don't feed the sheep at Butler Street, God will be our enemy. But God is not our enemy; God is our Beloved Friend. God empowers us, invites us, and loves us into being those people who understand that there's enough for everyone. We understand that hunger in the land is rooted in oppression and even in the personal choices of what we do with our lives. We know that this God calls us and sends us to feed the hungry, to pray for food, and to demand that the despicable and hated hunger of so many women and men, boys and girls come to an end in this land. ❖

Ed Loring is a Partner at the Open Door Community.

Remarks to the Georgia State House of Representatives

by Nibs Stroupe

Editor's note: Nibs Stroupe is pastor of Oakhurst Presbyterian Church in Decatur, Georgia, and co-author of the book While We Run This Race. He was invited by Rep. Henrietta Canty to be the Chaplain of the Day of the Georgia House of Representatives on March 6, 1996. She issued this invitation after reading the book. Part of the duties of being Chaplain of the Day is to give a short devotion and a prayer to the House as it opens its daily session. The following are the remarks and prayer that Nibs shared with the Georgia House of Representatives. Please read Micah 6:6-14.

Ladies and Gentlemen, it is my privilege to stand before you as the Chaplain of the Day. I am grateful to Representative Henrietta Canty and to Speaker Murphy for inviting me. I am privileged to be here because I believe that one of the highest callings that we have as citizens of this country is to be a public servant, to be called to serve as a representative of the people in a nation whose fundamental value is the idea that all are created with equal dignity.

It may come as a surprise to you that not many of us think that way any more about politicians—most of us are accustomed to think of public servants as those who are cynical, as those who serve only their own interest and those of the rich and powerful people who finance their campaigns and who provide perks during their terms in office. Indeed, I have worked in the legislative process in another state, and at points I came to understand what one of my seminary professors meant when he said that there were two things that you should not watch while they were being made: one is sausage, and the other is law.

Yet, I refuse to join with those who believe that people in public service are just self-seeking. I prefer the idea of the higher calling—that you are called to serve the people in this state, that your duty and your purpose is to serve the common good of all the people of the state of Georgia, not just white people, not just rich people, not just powerful people and institutions, but all the people.

And, I want to take a moment this morning to speak to you of that duty and that purpose. We are in a dangerous time in this country and in this state, because we have come to believe that money and power are the gods around which life is centered. Because of this belief, much of the time and energy in public service is being used to meet the desires of the rich and powerful. We seem to prefer the 10,000 rivers of oil instead of seeking to do justice and to love mercy. In all this public activity to serve the rich and the powerful, we not only neglect those who are poor—we actively seek to crush them, to do them great harm, to do them injustice. And we refuse to open the circle of power to include those who have traditionally been excluded in this state—black people and women. We continue to seek to shape our policy around those of us who are white and male and affluent.

An example—removing the sales tax on food sounded good to those who are comfortable, and it sailed through the legislature. But, now the state budget for the poor and needy is being slashed so that those of us who are comfortable can pay less taxes and can worship money and power even more. Let us remember that we are the second least taxed people in the industrialized world. While we congratulate ourselves on cutting taxes, and while all of our candidates jockey to see who can promise the most outlandish tax cuts, let us remember the cost of such cuts: no justice, no mercy, no humility. The cuts in this year's budget for those in need are a disgrace. It is beneath your high calling into public service to make such cuts. If the proposed cuts in human services go through this year without restoration to at least the prior level, we ought all to fall on our knees before God and ask for forgiveness, because we are making ourselves feel better at the expense of the very people that we are called to protect—the neediest and most vulnerable of our people.

But, we should also know that there is a high cost to serving only the rich and the powerful. Because of this, we are turning into a mean, disconnected people, distrustful not only of those whose skin color is different, but distrustful of everyone. We are drifting into madness, in which everyone becomes enemy. We are distrustful, afraid, hostile, violent. This is the kind of meanness and madness which Micah prophesied when there is no justice, no mercy, no humility. We shall eat and not be satisfied. We will have a gnawing hunger within us that cannot be fed.

We live in dangerous times, and in times such as these, I ask you to remember God's call through the prophet Micah: do justice, love mercy, walk humbly with God. And, I ask you to remember your high calling, your call to serve the people of Georgia, all the people. And I ask you to look again inside yourselves as individuals and as a collective body, so that you can lead us out of the meanness and this madness into which we have drifted, in which we worship money and power. This morning I am asking you to chart a different

course, to remember your calling, to lead us back to that American vision that is great within us as a people—the truth that our foreparents declared was self-evident: that all people are created with equal dignity. Let that guide our public policy. Let us shape our public policy by following what Micah told us: do justice, love mercy, walk humbly with God. Let us pray:

O God, we call You by different names, but in our hearts, we know Your truth—that You are the center of all of life, that You are the center of our lives, that You have called us as Your children, that we belong to You, that we belong to one another. We thank You for these public servants—for their time and energy and sacrifice, for their vision, for their hopes and dreams, for their willingness to serve You and us. We ask now that You give them hope in You that justice is possible, that You give them ears to hear Your voice and hearts to respond to Your call. We ask this in Your holy name. Amen. ❖

Nibs Stroupe

and

Inez Fleming

*Confronting the
Power of Racism in
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Nibs Stroupe



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Give Mercy A Kiss

by Elizabeth Dede

Sometimes God's Word is so alive it startles me. The lectionary this week offered Micah 6:8 for my meditation. Long a favorite of mine, I especially love it in the King James Version: "What does the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" Often during noontime prayers at the Open Door Community, Horace Tribble will quote this verse and add his own imagery to the words: "Take ahold of mercy; hug her to you; give mercy a kiss!" What a mental picture of what it means to love mercy! How good it is that God makes this requirement! How difficult it is in our vengeful society to be a lover of mercy!

Ten years ago, when I first moved to the Open Door Community, a young man named Craig lived in our yard and came inside to eat with us, to take a shower, and to get clean clothes. He spent the night that winter in the Druid Hills Presbyterian Church Night Shelter, and his name was called out every evening in the backyard of the Open Door Community, where he got his ticket for the shelter.

Craig was a beautiful man. He had very dark, flawless skin. His features were proud and strong. He must have been an African prince. I was so new and inexperienced. It's hard for me to remember the fresh enthusiasm I brought to everything I did. When I began to do house duty at the Open Door, Craig came to me one day and said, "I need a pair of shoes. These ones I got hurt my feet, and I can't find nothing in the shoe closet." So Craig was the first person I took to the Payless Shoe Store to buy a pair of shoes.

On the way there I reminded Craig of our policy: "Now, Craig, I've got to take your old shoes after we've bought the new ones. And you know we only buy shoes for people we know really well. So I need to see you around the house, wearing your new shoes." I must have sounded so superior, talking to this grown man about how and where and why he should dress himself.

But Craig was gracious and said that he understood. And he was good to his word: everyday Craig wore his new shoes, and standing on one foot, extending the other in the air and pointing to it, he would tease me, saying, "Look, Elizabeth, new shoes!" I loved the childlike joy I felt, and I remember going back to my church in Massachusetts and telling the congregation there that story—God is such a great provider.

(MERCY, continued from page 3)

The summer of 1986 was long and very hot. I went through the sadness of an execution for the first time, and I helped one of our community members die of cancer. Perhaps the extreme heat made the summer particularly difficult and hard to bear for our homeless friends. There seemed to be wave after wave of violence. Folks showed up at the door battered, bruised, and bleeding.

And then we got word that Craig had been murdered. That summer he often spent the night at a labor pool up the street. On the night of his death, Craig was asleep in a van that was parked at the labor pool. Enraged over some old argument, and high on drugs and alcohol, another one of our homeless friends poured gasoline all over Craig and the van and started a fire. Craig lived long enough to identify the man who set him on fire, and then he died a very agonizing death.

I felt such sadness for this man who was one of my first friends in Atlanta, who taught me about homelessness and dignity and joy. I could not understand how another homeless person could do this. Wasn't there already enough harm and pain without adding to it ourselves?

The man who started the fire was found, arrested, and brought to trial. Bill was found guilty and sentenced to life in prison. Several years ago, he and I began a correspondence. Bill also writes to Ed Loring, and Ed and I try to visit him at least once a year. We hope some day that he will be able to parole out to come live at the Open Door Community. He is a new creation, a transformed person, who cares deeply about his homeless brothers and sisters on the streets, and he hopes for another chance to be a witness to reconciliation.

On the very same day that I read the words of the prophet Micah, we got a horrifying letter from Bill. Very early one morning in the previous week, the men in the prison were roughly forced from their beds, and in the predawn cold of a winter morning, were made to stand outside without their jackets, or any other winter wear. While they shivered, the guards went through the cell blocks, conducting a massive shake down, turning the cells upside down, and throwing all the men's belongings on the floor. Then four at a time, the prisoners were called back in. When they were in front of their cells, the guards forced the prisoners to strip off all their clothes. Standing naked in front of their violated cells, the men were berated, threatened, and subjected to all manner of loud verbal abuse by the guards. After every prisoner had gone through this humiliation, they were ordered to get dressed and lie face down on the floor. In this vulnerable and powerless position they endured further indignities and abuse. When it was over, Bill learned that the new commissioner of the Department of Corrections was coming for an inspection, and he was going to find one tough prison, where men were punished severely.

I believe every word that Bill wrote to us because I don't believe he had any reason to lie, and because I've heard so many similar stories. Bill did a terrible thing when he burned Craig to death, but the state did an equally terrible thing when they heaped scorn, abuse, and humiliation on Bill and everyone else in that prison.

I mourn for Bill and my heart hurts. How can the torture of a man be any form of justice? I'm sure that fun-loving Craig, who suffered in an awful way at his death, grieves now for Bill. Somehow I can't picture Craig's beautiful smile twisted into the hateful, raging grimace of the vengeful torturer.

I understand anger; it burns in my heart. When I read Bill's letter, a part of me wished that I had the power and authority to imprison the

commissioner, the warden, and the guards and subject them to the same humiliation and abuse. But my best self, the compassionate one inside me, cries out in the ache of mourning: "No one deserves to be treated that way. No matter how awful their crime, each person must be given respect and dignity. Life is sacred and should be protected, not violated. The soul is fragile and must be treated gently."

The heart can be turned to stone by too much hate and rage. Its warmth can be frozen by too much humiliation and abuse.

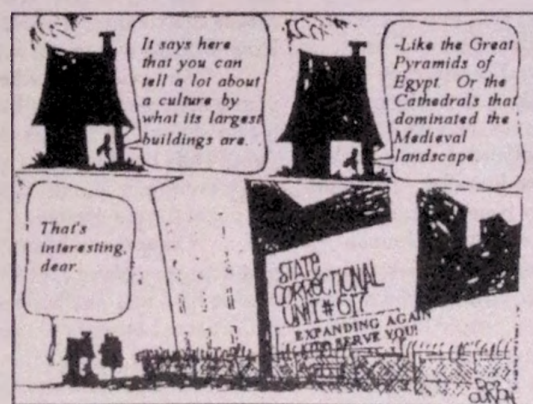
What does the Lord require? To do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with God. Love mercy. Throw your arms around her and kiss her! My heart of stone becomes a heart that is warm and beats. It hurts for the pain of those men in prison. It aches for the cold rage of the commissioner. His life must be joyless. How could you treat a person the way those prisoners were treated and have any love or respect for yourself? What could you say, "Today I humiliated 300 men?"

But to love mercy, now that is something to live for. Mercy transforms and brings new hope. Mercy gives us the strength and desire to imagine a new way. Mercy lets us go on living even when we've sinned. Mercy is life-giving. Throw your arms around mercy and kiss her. But turn your back on vengeance. Walk away from hate. What does the Lord require? Love mercy.

On the same day that I read Micah 6 and received the letter from Bill, we had Bible Study here at the Open Door Community. One of the texts was that invitation in Hebrews 13 to welcome strangers and meet angels, and to "remember those who are in prison, as though you were in prison with them. Remember those who are suffering, as though you were suffering as they are."

Love mercy. Remember Bill. He is suffering. We are suffering. Love mercy. Stop the madness of prison violence and abuse. Learn new ways to transform people who have committed crimes. Understand that a state that behaves in a criminal way will never have the moral authority to require people who commit crimes to behave in a noncriminal way. Forgive. Love mercy. Vote for a governor who will support children, protect the poor, and seek the care and redemption of people in prison. Love mercy. ❖

Elizabeth Dede is a Partner at the Open Door.



Georgia's prisons and jails are filled with the young, people of color, the poor, the addicted, the mentally ill, the uneducated and the unemployed. More than 70% of those in Georgia's prisons are African American. 60% of those in Georgia's prisons never made it into 12th grade. 46% read on a level lower than grade six. Another 23% have reading levels in the 6th through 8th grade range. 85% of prisoners were unemployed at the time of their arrest. The average age of a Georgia prisoner is 32. The majority of Georgia prisoners are nonviolent offenders.

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The Way the World Ends, Part 3

by Charles W. Swain

Editor's note: Bill Swain is a long-time friend and supporter of the Open Door Community. He lives in Tallahassee, Florida, where he is Service Professor of Religion at Florida State University. Part 3 concludes our series based on lectures Bill gave at the Open Door on the evenings of October 15 - 17, 1995.

There are those among us for whom the end of 'this world' is surely 'good news,' just as Jesus said. There are the wretched of the earth, for whom any change, it seems, would have to be for the better. Perhaps if we become convinced that our world is indeed coming to an end, we will open our eyes to see, and our ears to hear the poor, the hungry, the powerless, the oppressed. Perhaps we can learn to *feel* the waste, the abuse, the injustice, and the violence, upon which our world rests. Perhaps we can come to realize how far we have gone down the road that leads to destruction.

But what shall we do? How shall WE respond to the coming crisis? First, we must not expect that anything we do will avert the coming crisis. We cannot save ourselves from the consequences of our complicity in what is going on. We can only confess, before God and our neighbors, that we have done what we ought not to have done, and we have left undone what we ought to have done. However terrible the coming crisis may be for ourselves and our society, what is coming will be nothing more than what we deserve.

We in the post-industrial world find ourselves in the position of the abusive parent who checks into a rehabilitation program, or the alcoholic who throws away the key to the liquor cabinet. We are about consumption, not saving; we are about indulgence, not preservation; we are about today, not tomorrow. We are responding to Jesus's call to repent. We are called to change our lives in ways that reflect our acceptance of "the end of our world" as a decisive act of God, and thus as 'good news.' But whatever we do concretely, whatever changes we make in our way of living, these will be *acts of contrition* in response to God's call for repentance, and not a strategy for saving ourselves. Let us think of whatever we do as a *symbol*, however small and token, however inadequate, that points to true repentance, *whatever the result may or may not be for the future of humanity and our planet*. Let us make a repentant and dignified commitment to do right by our descendants, even if it is too little, too late. We are not talking glory here. There is no call to nobility, nothing particularly valiant. Jesus calls us to repent.

Second, these concrete, symbolic acts will be acts of *renunciation*. Our accepted way of living is not globally viable, and probably not even sustainable. It rests upon a terribly unjust allocation of the earth's resources, both human and natural. Our so-called 'standard of living' embodies greed and self-indulgence. Clinging to these evils separates us from God, and prevents

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(WORLD ENDS, continued from 4)

us from hearing God's call for justice on behalf of the poor, the powerless, and the oppressed as good news. The more clearly we see this, the more we are compelled to choose LIFE, for our descendants and our fragile, lovely planet. When we hear God's call, the decision to change our way of living comes 'naturally,' however difficult our choices.

If you hear what I'm saying, you will feel a weight of sadness. That is appropriate, but it is not the last word. Here is a quote which I have found a great help in my thinking about what's going on in our world today. It comes from T.H. White's *The Once and Future King*. Camelot, Arthur's dream for an ideal kingdom, has crumbled. Lancelot has fled to the enemy camp, Guinevere has taken the veil, and opposing armies clash on the field of battle. Merlin, Arthur's mentor and faithful court magician, offers a word of advice:

"The best thing for being sad," replied Merlin, beginning to puff and blow, "is to learn something. This is the only thing that never fails. You may grow old in your anatomies, you may lie awake at night listening to the disorder of your veins, you may miss your only love, you may see the world about you devastated by evil lunatics, know your honor trampled in the sewers of baser minds. There is only one thing for it then...to LEARN. Learn why the world wags and what wags it. This is the only thing that the mind can never exhaust, never alienate, never be tortured by, never fear and distrust, and never dream of regretting..."

Our renunciation, the changes in our way of living, can bring us to new (or perhaps better, VERY old) wisdom about ourselves and our place in the world. We can indeed learn "why the world wags and what wags it."

If we practice renunciation, we can recover the age-old understanding of ourselves as a part of nature. Here is a test: sit down with a sheet of paper and write a list of brand names and corporate logos you can recognize on sight. Then turn the paper over and write down a list of plants native to where you live that you can recognize and name on sight. It is likely that you can recognize hundreds of commercial symbols, and unlikely that you can recognize more than a dozen native plants. We need to shift the focus of our wisdom from economic to biological literacy. We do not know how many species live on our planet within a factor of ten, that is, there may be ten times as many plants and animals living on our planet than we know anything about! And there may be less than two thousand people on our planet who have the necessary training to undertake the cataloguing. There is SO much we do not know about what a sustainable human life-style on the planet would look like. "We need to find out what's there, who has it, and what we can or can't do with it" (Paul Hawken).

We can also learn "why the world wags and what wags it" in the political and economic spheres. It becomes more and more obvious that we live in a plutocracy—government by the wealthy. Multinational corporations—huge, anonymous economic cooperatives—accumulate more and more power to achieve their economic ends at whatever cost to the planet. Globally, the economic 'inner circle'—the number of those whose great wealth translates into political influence—grows smaller and smaller. We need

wisdom about how to use both economics and politics to resist the forces which have led us so far down the path of self-destruction.

Through renunciation, wisdom may teach us deep and liberating truths about who we are and where our greatest happiness lies in this world. We human beings are finite creatures, and our real needs are also finite. If these finite needs are met, we can be as happy as it's possible for human beings to be. On the other hand, our desires are potentially infinite—however much we have, we can want more. And our economic system, based as it is on the idea of endless growth and consumption, has spawned a demonic array of advertising which invests billions of dollars each year in a shockingly effective effort to awaken in us desire for more and more things that we do NOT need in order to be happy. We are not supposed to reflect on what's going on; we are not supposed to grow wise. But hear this: unless we can learn the difference between our true needs and our desires, and unless we can discipline ourselves to live our lives on the basis of our true needs, we will never be happy. This is a hard lesson, but a crucial one.

Unless human life is integrated into the natural world, we are very likely to do irreparable damage to our home planet. But if we will only listen to our experience we will come to FEEL, subjectively, the wrongness of things as they are, the injustice, the violence needed to support our way of life, the unsustainability of what's going on now, and we will find the resolution and the means to act politically and economically to bring about changes in the direction of sustainability. Human beings alive today face no greater challenge. Let us abandon the self-destructive quest for happiness based on a competitive accumulation of 'things,' ("The one who dies with the most toys wins."). Let us turn around, and find our way back from the brink of destruction.

I cannot believe that human life will disappear from our planet. But it is quite possible that urban civilization, as it has developed over three millennia, may be destroyed. If that happens, there will be many, many human beings alive who understand how to live under subsistence conditions. It is a great lesson to consider who will survive if we in the post-industrial societies persist in following our self-destructive way to its end. The survivors will be—for the most part—peasant and tribal folk, who will perhaps be wise enough not to listen to the privileged few, and will refuse to rebuild a way of life which has proved so bitterly flawed. How sad to think we human beings could not learn wisdom in any other way. And how sad to lose the cumulative achievements of millennia of human civilization. Yet I have hope that, if we repent, if we seek wisdom, then our acts of renunciation may create incremental changes that POINT toward a future when our children's children will find renewed strength to build God's Kingdom in a new age of human history.

What IS the human story? Is it the story of wealth, of commerce, of all-consuming economic growth? Is the deepest truth about us the increasingly desperate struggle for survival; "the war of all against all" (Hobbes) in which only the most ruthless survive, and these in fewer and fewer numbers, until the earth's resources are exhausted and the human story ends?

We have another story to tell, the story of God's intent in creating the world and all that is in it, seen and unseen. Let us use our imagination to

offer the world another image, of a community in which the least among us are sustained and cherished. We need to envision a way of living together on our planet which, in principle, *could* be sustained for as long as 'this world' continues to revolve around its life-giving star. We do not offer this vision only for ourselves. Our repentance, renunciation, and revisioning are undertaken on behalf of our friends and neighbors, *on behalf of the world* which God loves and to which Jesus was sent. We do not expect many of our friends and neighbors to join us in this, but we are ready to welcome any who come, and celebrate together our shared living, and, if need be, dying. We offer our vision, and our lives, in God's service.

Friends, what WOULD a globally viable, sustainable human presence on our planet look like? Can you imagine it? Are you willing to change your life to reflect your own best understanding of what is demanded by the coming crisis? My hope is that those of our children's children who survive the coming crisis will be able to look back on us as a faithful band of brothers and sisters who bore witness to the good news that we are, finally and profoundly, a human family, meant to live at peace in a city within whose walls all are welcomed, the needs of all are satisfied, and God's love is celebrated. ❖



Hannah Loring Davis

Resurrection Women

by Murphy Davis

After all these years, it is no less amazing that the Biblical story tells us that the first witnesses to the Resurrection of the Executed One were, by all accounts, women. It was an inauspicious beginning, to say the least.

In first century Palestine the testimony of a woman was worth nothing: not legally admissible in court and certainly not to be counted on in any matters of importance. So Jesus, who loved irony and cherished standing cultural assumptions on their heads, this Jesus chose the women to bear the News.

They were, after all, according to the Gospel stories, his most faithful friends. The ones who did not flee. The ones who were able to hear the constant admonition, "Do not be afraid": the last at the cross; the first at the tomb. They continued, through it all, to do what needed to be done: to care for his physical needs, to listen with careful attention to all he said, to recognize him when everyone else was confused, to act out (as the menfolk stood around baffled), what Jesus taught of discipleship. These women, especially according to Mark's gospel, were the examples of true apostolic leadership.

In these, the legally and socially unreliable ones, Jesus placed his trust, and to them he revealed the amazing truth of his triumph over death. They were charged, as witnesses to this truth, with the privilege and task of running to bear the news. And thus they became the first preachers of the Gospel.

Perhaps it would seem that our social, political, and legal context is much changed. And yes, in a technical sense, it is. It has been some decades since a woman's legal testimony was inadmissible in court.

The more intransigent problem is this: our society, like most societies in the modern world, continues to balk at the acceptance of the truth of women's lives. Technically, what women say is accepted. But in a deeper sense, what women would tell of life experience is simply unacceptable. For one cannot hear the truth of women's experience (or the experience of any oppressed group) without having to look at a system of domination. As in any such system, the experience of those dominated will include stories of the violence which functions socially and politically to enforce the domination. The truth of women's experience necessarily includes the reality of rape, physical and sexual abuse, incest, and other forms of physical and emotional violence. This does not mean that every woman has had actual experiences of physical abuse. But every woman in a sexist society is subject to the threat of a particular kind of violence that enforces and reinforces the institutions and interweaving systems of gender domination. The more deeply one's identity as a woman is caught in the intermeshing systems of oppression of race and class, the more likely the experience of violent domination. In other words, sexism in its harshest form is understood in the life experience of poor women of color: poor women who are also Black, Hispanic, or Native American.

I believe that to understand the nature and function of oppression in our (or any) society, we must look at the lives and hear the life experience of those in prison. Inside the walls and systems of prisons we work out and practice our social and political biases in their most basic and brutal forms. In a racist society, racism inside prison walls is simple, straightforward, and violent. In a classist society the poor fill our prisons because their behavior is more likely to be labeled criminal in the first place, and they are less likely to be able to defend themselves against such charges in the second. The poor do the time.

In a sexist society, gender domination in prison is stark. Because the assumptions of sexism are based on devaluing the lives and experience of women, women in prison live under an ongoing threat of danger and exploitation at the hands of their keepers. Rape and sexual exploitation are basic tools. As common as prison rape is, it is tolerated and at points even condoned because it functions at the very base of our social and political system

to enforce the system's values. If we take it too seriously we would have to raise basic questions about the entire system. This becomes so complicated that we find it more efficient to maintain a blind eye and a deaf ear.

And that blind eye and deaf ear were maintained for many years at the Georgia state women's prison (the "Georgia Correctional Institution"). Guards and other prison staff regularly practiced sexual and physical abuse against many women in the prison at Hardwick, Georgia. While, in many cases, the women made reports, nothing was done to remove the staff offenders, or to stop their abuse. Finally, in 1992, nearly 200 women came forward to tell their stories of the exploitation, abuse, and even torture they suffered behind the prison walls. Some 50 staff members were implicated. Of those, 15 were indicted, and a few others were demoted, fired, suspended, transferred, or quit. Only one lieutenant actually came to trial with more than 20 women ready to testify to his abuse.

The measure of courage in carrying the cross is the measure of our love.
St. Teresa of Avila



The trial took place in Baldwin County, Georgia—a county whose political and economic base sits squarely and firmly on the enormous state prison system there. How could these women hope that a jury of this guard's peers, dependent on the same system that supported him, would hear their stories with an unbiased ear? In addition, the women were poor and had

been convicted and condemned for criminal behavior. In a justice system composed of and controlled by Good Old Boys, the women's testimony was discredited because they were "Bad Poor Women." While the Lieutenant lost his job, he was acquitted of any wrongdoing or criminal behavior. The prison staff members who had offered their testimony to corroborate the testimony of the prisoners were never called.

This guard was, has been, and is a violent and abusive man. Everybody knew it; everybody knows it. But it is one of those truths our system winks at because we know with perfect clarity that we're not going to mess with it. The Lieutenant is a necessary cog in our system: one of the "almost-poor" put and kept in place to hold down the "really-poor." He is a man of color allowed to do what he did to secure the system of gender power. Yes he had power, but it was beans in comparison to the white guys at the top of the heap: those who were never even formally accused in court or reprimanded in their professional capacity; those who were able to hear the stories, yawn and go about their business.

But the hope of the Resurrection gives the oppressed the courage to fight for their liberation, and I know I have seen that courage with my own eyes. Resurrection is practiced any time and in any place that oppressed people stand up and stand together to tell the unedited truth of their lives. I have been a privileged witness in accompanying some of the women in the Georgia prison system over a period of months and years as this massive sexual and mental health abuse and exploitation have been revealed as routine. The truth of Resurrection is this: that for however brief a time, women came together to tell the truth of their lives. One by one, they stood up and spoke it, told it, in all its raw ugliness and with all the unimaginable depth of pain. As they did this, they stood together, backing each other up because they knew it was the truth, comforting each other because giving birth to these ugly truths in the public eye was more than excruciating, and together hoping against hope, hoping against everything they had known for fact in their bitter and almost hopeless, barren lives. They hoped that their truth might be believed, and the structures of their suffering addressed and mitigated.

To call it a gamble is almost laughable since the stakes in this game were so high, and the chance for real redress was almost nil. Probably most of them knew it. Who among them had ever savored the sweet taste of any victory? And indeed, while some of the worst offenders were removed, the system based on exploitation and degradation has been very little changed. The case in Federal Court continues, but these are not good days to be seeking justice, humane treatment, and simple human decency for people in prison.

A bittersweet truth about Resurrection is this: we are rarely given the privilege, or luxury, of sitting in front of the empty tomb to bask in the glorious light of the Risen One. "Run," says the angel. "Run and tell it! Run with all your might, powered by the glorious truth of the vision! Run with the exuberance and joy of your grief suddenly and unexpectedly healed! Run, carrying this unbelievable news! Run, knowing that nothing else in the world matters anymore! This truth is the Truth that will overshadow everything else and set the course for all of life! Run!"

But that angel didn't say, "When you get there, they won't believe you. When you tell them, they will laugh. When you testify to the Great Truth, they will belittle you and your Truth. They will call it 'an idle tale.' Or maybe they will just be too busy to hear you."

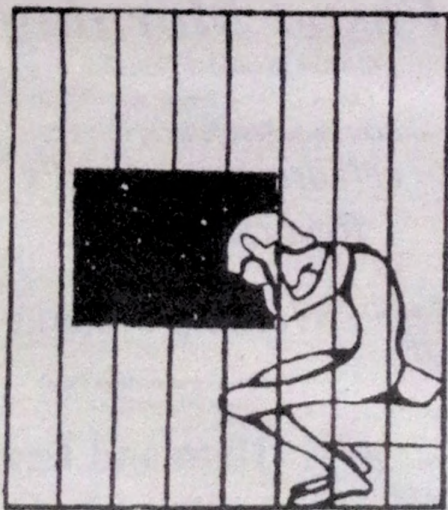
Maybe later, somebody else, an "almost unreliable witness," will run over to the tomb to check it out. You can be sure of this, though: even if the truth is accepted eventually, it will lose some of its power because again and again, the full story will be forgotten and neglected. The Truth Brokers will build a power base and co-opt the story to meet the needs of one more system of wealth and privilege.

Often, however, the story of Resurrection is lost entirely. Fault is easily found and documented against its bearers, and the substance of it is disproved. "Just a story," we mumble and toss it to the circular file. What did she say? What did she say? Oh, nothing. She's crazy.

Like the Resurrection to life and liberation, to solidarity and human dignity that the women in prison sought and fought for (and though much has been lost, the struggle continues), so the story of the Resurrection to life of the Liberator was told to women and discredited. It is amazing that four remarkable accounts got through, containing almost more detail than we can tolerate. The story of Resurrection doesn't usually survive. We rarely tell it, and we rarely hear it. We don't like to be laughed at, or easily dismissed. We hardly fancy being pushed aside as the lunatic fringe.

How amazing God's grace is, then, that Resurrection happens again and again to remind us of the hope we have for life and liberation. I know it's true. I've been privileged to see it, and I want to run with all my might to tell you

Murphy Davis is a Partner at the Open Door Community and the Director of Southern Prison Ministry.



A packet of news clippings on the Georgia Women's Prison scandal is available. Please request one from:

Elizabeth Dede
910 Ponce de Leon Ave., NE
Atlanta, GA 30306-4212
404/874-9652

Rose Island

by Terri Rachals

*TWO-THIRTY YARD CALL!
IGNORING THE RAZOR WIRE AND THE
MATRONS IN BLUE
I SPRINT TO THE YARD,
SPIRITS IN OVER-DRIVE;
SUNBATHERS PARADISE ON THE SLOPE OF THE HILL:
ROSE ISLAND!*

*GRASS, THE EARTH'S HAIR
SWAYS WITH THE BREEZE
SOFT AS GOOSE DOWN;
IT PARTS TEMPORARILY FOR MY TOWEL AND ME
AS WE NESTLE TOGETHER THERE.
MY REGULATION SHORTS AND WHITE TANK TOP
ROLLED TIGHT:*

*BIKINI STYLE.
WINTER-BORNE WHITENESS EXPOSED.
I HASTILY APPLY NECESSITY'S INVENTION
SUNBATHER'S POTION
COCONUT HAIR-GREASE AND DINING HALL TEA.
RECLINING BACK, LIMBS OUTSTRETCHED:
SCARE-CROW STYLE,
PORES OPEN, THIRSTING FOR LIQUID SUN.
CLOUDS MEANDER BY
LIGHT AS PINK SHOESTRINGS
SAVORING THEIR ETERNAL FREEDOM.
ROSE ISLAND!*

*THE SUN PERMEATES,
WARMING AS A BRICK OVEN BASKING CHOCOLATE
CHIP COOKIES GOLDEN BROWN.
MELTING THE BITTER INTO SWEET;
SURROGATE FOR WARMTH OF HOME.
THE FLYING ANTS DIVE LIKE KAMIKAZE PLANES
ONLY TO DIE.
UNNOURISHED ON MY GREASE-SOAKED LIMBS.*

*CLOSING MY EYES I'M TRANSPORTED TO THE LAND OF
SANDY-WHITE BEACHES
TURQUOISE WAVES GRASPING FOR SHORE,
EVEN HEAR THE CRY OF THE GULL.
OPENING MY EYES,
IT'S ONLY A CROW,
STALKING THE SIDEWALK:
SCAVENGER STYLE.
"YARD-CALL IS OVER!"
HARSH REALITY RINGS.
CLUTCHING MY TOWEL I STROLL SLOWLY IN,
MY IMPRINT IN THE GRASS
ERASED BY THE BREEZE.*

Editor's note: Terri Rachals is in prison at the Metro Women's Correctional Institution in Atlanta.



Rita Corbin

GLITZ AND GLUT

by Joyce Hollyday

(Editor's note: Our good friend Joyce Hollyday is a student at Candler School of Theology. She is a contributing editor of Sojourners Magazine. We are thankful for her contribution to Hospitality.)

Batman wristwatch with Luminous Night Vision Dial. Relic, Gruen, Timex, Pulsar, Seiko, Gucci watches with abalone, onyx, mother-of-pearl, diamond, or interchangeable faces, and pearl, leather, gold, or alligator bands. The Bulova 1995 World Champion Atlanta Braves wristwatch. "Melody Mickey Watch." Casio digital watch and wrist remote controller with countdown alarm, one-hundredth-second stopwatch, water resistance to 50 meters, diastolic and systolic blood pressure, pulse, and 30-memory capacity for previous blood pressures and pulse.

Elizabeth Taylor's White Diamonds perfume. Opium by Yves Saint Laurent and Poison by Christian Dior. Paul Sebastian's Casual perfume with music box. Amarige de Givenchy, in perfume, purse spray, bath gel, toilet water, satin talc, dusting powder, perfume dew, velvet cream, or deodorant. Calvin Klein's Obsession for Men. Lipstick in Outrageous Rose, Rhubarb, Soft Mink, Arrogant, Red Passion, Sun-touched Terra Cotta, Neo-classic Peach, Mauve Dreams, Pink Vibrations, and Double Matte Jelly Roll. Puccini Plum Eyeshadow and Peach Biscotti Blush.

Charles of the Ritz Timeless Difference Eye Recovery Cream. Saks Fifth Avenue Sunkissed Salt Glow Crystals and Private Reserve Aromatherapeutic Full Body Bath Oil. Garden Botanika Chamomile Moisture Mask, Desert Mud Mask, Self-tanning Creme and Spray, Color-enhancing Shampoo. Flax Seed Styling Gel, Stimulating Peppermint Treatment, Russian Silt Hair Mask. Ponds, Jergens, Swiss Formula, Vaseline Intensive Care, Kerilotion, Curel, Lubriderm, Nivea, Noxzema, Neutrogena, Estee Lauder, Oil of Olay day, night, perfumed, unperfumed, lotion, cream, for oily, normal, dry, extra-dry, sensitive skin, with aloe, cocoa butter, lipids, glycerin, rose water, alpha hydroxy in a jar, squeeze tube, pump bottle.

Calendars in desk, wall, and pocket versions, in motifs of Castles, Cows, Cats, Corvettes, Quilts, Sailboats, Saints, Swimsuits, Star Trek, Sports Trivia, Civil War, Inspirational Thoughts, Far Side Comics, Astrology, Norman Rockwell, Chippendales, Mighty Morphin Power Rangers, Dinosaurs, Magic Eye 3-D, Angels, French Impressionists, Life's Little Instructions, Blanche Knott's Truly Tasteless Jokes, Pope John Paul II, Jeopardy, Ricki Lake, Amazing Trivia Facts, Chicken Soup for the Soul, Fly Fishing, Gardening, Women Who Do Too Much, Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, Bible Verses, and Best Golf Holes.

"Frank Sinatra: The Birthday Collection" neckties. "In Memoriam: Jerry Garcia A-R-T in Neckwear." "Lord & Taylor Abstract Crepe and Sandwashed Silk Neckwear Exclusively for You." Nike, Adidas, Converse, K-Swiss, Head, Reebok, Avia, Asics, running, walking, tennis, basketball, volleyball, baseball, football, golf, soccer, aerobics, cross-training, high-top, low-cut, Velcro, lace-up, black-soled, white-soled, cushion-soled, high-impact, low-impact, with cleats, air, gel, shoes. Purple plastic platform shoes with strap and open toe. Zip-up red suede boots with 3-inch spike heels.

Chateau Chef electronic wine-bottle pepper mill with light. Left-handed stainless steel swivel peeler. Feemster's Famous Vegetable Slicer. The Jaccard Meat Tenderizing Machine. The Original Spanek Vertical Roaster for Chicken and Duck. Coily-Q Onion/Potato Cutter. Kitchen Aid Five-speed Ultra Power Blender ("The power to crush at any speed!"). Dumpling press. Acrylic frosty mug. Yogurt strainer. Coffee cream whipper. Salad spinner. Deluxe gold four-piece demitasse spoon set. Pink pig soap pad holder and spoon rest. The Original Tervis Tumbler made of unbreakable Lexan with golf, anchor, or fishing lure insignia. Tea Cattle whistling cow-shaped tea kettle. "Sound Off Magnetic Memo Clip" that barks, moos, meows, or croaks. Willett's Gourmet Chocolate-covered Coffee Beans. Olympic Games Collection Atlanta 1996 Burgundy Poppyseed Salad Dressing. Square egg press. Expanding plastic pickle picker.

Olympus Stylus Quartz Date 35MM Ultra-compact Auto-focus Camera Outfit with Soft Carrying Case, 3-volt Lithium Battery, and Strap. Kodak Funsaver Weekend 35 Disposable Camera. Radio Shack 5-in-1 Calculator/Directory/ Electronic Organizer. Mini-handheld cellular phone. See-through cordless phone. Neon Squiggle decorator phone with alarm clock, flash, mute, and redial. Barbie "Solo in the Spotlight" designer phone.

Panasonic, Sony, Technics mini-stereo systems with 5-disc changer, 30

tuner preset with sleeptime, Pulse D/A convertor 3-way Port loud speakers with 5-and-a-half-inch Woofer, Dual TD with Dolby B noise reduction, Full Logic Feather-touch auto-reverse deck with high-speed editing, memory reserve and disc rotation. ProScan, Hitachi Ultravision home theaters with auto digital convergence, Dolby Pro-logic Surround Sound, 15-jack video/ audio monitor panel, advanced PIP with strobe freeze, channel labeling, commercial skip, and illuminated universal remote.

Dishwashers, bicycles, in-line skates, Barbie dolls, riding mowers, washing machines, Joe Boxer heart-motif Valentine boxer shorts, tennis rackets, stuffed bears, pool tables, lingerie in hot pink or pale peach, crystal goblets, hologram posters, oriental rugs, matching life-size porcelain peacock candle holders, sequined dresses, Spandex running shorts, Star Trek Tricorder key chains with light and authentic sound, Pocahontas musical jewelry boxes, Gone with the Wind snow globes, blue velvet purses, Glamour Shots, USA Olympic silk boxer shorts with torch insignia, personal computers, simmering potpourri.

Remington Triple Foil Smart Shaver with Microprocessor Info Center, Sears Best Craftsman gas-operated leaf blower with finger-tip throttle control and full anti-vibration system, hairbows, earrings, dog tuxedos, faux diamond-studded cat collars, official Olympic fold-up umbrellas, neon blue aviator sunglasses, Optic Yellow Heavy-Duty tennis balls, Spotlight pepper spray in a flashlight, Victorian picture frames, designer jeans, Super Nintendo, Lion King slippers, treadmills, exercise bikes, stair steppers, rowing machines, HealthRiders, Abs of Steel Abs Machines, Cybergenics Quick Trim 14-Day Quick Weight Loss Systems.

I had ventured to the mall on a simple mission: to find baskets and ribbon for gifts I wanted to make. I didn't expect the anger that gripped me, or the tears that welled up in my eyes. I was surprised to be astounded all over again that such monuments to greed exist in stark and painful contrast to the hunger, homelessness, and hopelessness that mark the lives of so many in this city. While some of us drown in the bankruptcy of our abundance, others pay the real price for our comfort.

Out in the parking lot, I discovered a business card left on the window of my car by a local Toyota salesman. "I have a lawyer for your car," I thought I read in his scrawl. I immediately assumed that he had found my car in need of defending. But then I read more carefully: "I have a buyer for your car." I tried to imagine the person who had said to him, "If you ever come across a slightly dented and scratched, dark blue, 1988 Chevy Nova with a broken turn signal and missing hub cap (and in serious need of a washing), would you please let me know?"

I tried unsuccessfully later to reach Mr. Toyota Salesman, hoping for a good line about how embarrassing it was that I was driving such a car and wasn't it way past time for me to upgrade? But as I started up my car that day in the mall parking lot, I thought, "I guess I just don't own, wear, drive, or smell like what I need to in order to be a success in the world's eyes." I thanked God for that. And I begged for mercy and clearer vision at the points where my greed still blinds me to the truth. ❖

Easter Morning

You are invited to join the
Open Door Community
and the homeless folks of this city
to celebrate our Lord's
Resurrection!

Worship 6:30am

(daylight savings time)

Ham and Eggs
Breakfast

at the MUNICIPAL MARKET
PARKING LOT ON BUTLER STREET

April 7



A Letter from Dan Berrigan

Editor's Note: Our friend Dan Berrigan received an unexpected offer to purchase an Olympic package. He sent us this copy of his reply.

Scott Anderson
Atlanta Committee for the Olympic Games
10/30/95

Dear Mr. Anderson,

I am in receipt of your letter and info regarding the Olympic Patron Package. Quite impressive. Impressive too the cost of the kudo, discreetly placed in small type at the bottom of the delectable listing of bread & circuses. Fifty thousand good green ones. My. I felt my ego inflate just reading your day-glo prose, and thinking you thought I was rich as ol' king Croesus.

That tag of \$50,000.00 set me ruminating. If I had possession of same in my fist, and presupposing that I had grown beyond moral preadolescence, and taking into account the public misery of the city of Atlanta—well, with that sum I could house, feed and clothe quite a few homeless, hungry and tattered citizens of your Mount Olympus—or my New York City, for that matter.

Let me confess it. You and the tycoons who buy into your hype fill me with regrets—for you. What a sorry enterprise, helping Atlanta slide backward into a preadolescent feeding frenzy.

Kindly unreserve my "place in this (tawdry) version of Olympic history."

I do though, have a suggestion. Maybe you and your patrons could find a few free hours during the 'events,' hire a bus, tour the downtown, walk around and talk with the poor, maybe even fork over a dollar or two. Come down for a few hours, from the Mount of the Godlings, where there is so much to unlearn.

(Rev.) Daniel Berrigan, S.J.
West Side Jesuit Community
New York, NY



from Scrimm, Creative Loafing

*From an interview with Dan Berrigan,
printed in ODYSSEY, Spring 1992.*

If Christ lived today instead of 2,000 years ago, how do you think he would be regarded by the political establishment?

"If Christ lived today?" The question bewilders me. I thought He was living today. If not, can someone please tell me the meaning of the empty tomb? Maybe He just went out to lunch? Or the meaning of the lives of all those who have died to say He lives, from the apostles to, say, Archbishop Romero. Maybe they were all fools or charlatans? How He would be regarded by the political establishment is exactly how He is regarded in those who believe and follow through, from the apostles to Romero. Which is to say, He is in them capitally punished.

OLYMPICS NOT ON PEDESTAL

by Houston Wheeler

Editor's note: Houston Wheeler is a member of People for Urban Justice and an advocate in Atlanta for affordable housing. Taylor Letter Service does affordable printing for many of the Peace and Justice groups in Atlanta, and throughout the state. We urge you to support their business as they take on their own justice struggle.

Taylor Letter Service is right in the middle of the Olympics and doesn't intend to budge. Located on Techwood Drive in Atlanta, Taylor Printing is one of three businesses who weren't offered enough money by Coca Cola to change their location in order to make way for the Coca Cola Olympic City Pavilion.

Taylor Printing bought its building in 1970 so they would "never have to move again," says Brian Taylor.

With all the construction going on by Coca Cola and the Centennial Olympic Park next door, Brian's father Ed put up a sign asking that inconveniences be minimized—after all, they too are trying to run a business.



This photo taken by Houston Wheeler shows the sign in front of Taylor Letter Service, which reads in part: "To Coca Cola Company, I will no longer plead... to stop Olympic City Park construction crews from piling dirt to the very top of my 4-foot retaining wall. The next time mud flows over my retaining wall into my parking lot, I will take action for intentional harassment."

"The Olympics are just a money-making endeavor and an opportunity for a few people to make a whole lot of money. We've received no order specifically related to the Olympics. It doesn't matter. We have good, steady clients. We don't put the Olympics on a pedestal," asserts Brian.

The Taylors are native Atlantans. Ed Taylor has been in the printing business all his life, and has owned his own business since 1962. Once located in the Grand Loews Theatre, Taylor Printing moved out just two weeks before the big fire in 1977.

During the three weeks of the Olympics, persons and businesses who work in the Central Business District will be given passes, which will allow them access to their employment. For Brian, the Olympics will be a hassle, but they won't last forever. Taylor Printing Service will still be there when the world goes home. ❖

HOSPITALITY

NEEDS A LAYOUT EDITOR

PLEASE CALL ELIZABETH DEDE AT 404/874-9652 IF YOU, OR SOMEONE YOU KNOW, ARE FAMILIAR WITH DESKTOP PUBLISHING, OR LEARNED THE OLD CUT AND PASTE METHOD.

A Face in the Crowd, that Refuses to be Seen

by Sye Pressley

Dedicated to the Homeless

As we walk these streets night and day,
searching for food and a place to stay.
This can't be reality, it has to be a dream.
A face in the crowd that refuses to be seen.


For here we are wandering in the land of plenty,
tired and weary with our stomachs empty.
This is reality, and I see it's not a dream.
A face in the crowd that refuses to be seen.

Well, I'm getting sleepy so I guess that I'll depart,
to find some rest and comfort in 910's back yard.
And if I awake in the morning, and wash up until I am clean,
I'll still be a face in the crowd that refuses to be seen.

Sye Pressley is a member of the Open Door Community.



Rita Corbin



Holy Week

with the


Homeless

We invite you to join us for worship and/or a 24-hour period of solidarity with our friends on the street during Holy Week.

Services of Worship, March 31-April 7:

PALM SUNDAY	Open Door Community, 1 p.m.
MONDAY	Grady Hospital, Butler St., 1 p.m.
TUESDAY	City Jail, Peachtree St. SW, 1 p.m.
WEDNESDAY	Woodruff Park, Park Place, 1 p.m.
MAUNDY THURSDAY	City Hall, Drury Ave., 1 p.m.
GOOD FRIDAY	State Capitol, Washington St., 5 p.m.
HOLY SATURDAY	City Shelter, Jefferson St., 1 p.m.
EASTER MORNING	21 Butler St., 6:30 a.m.

Worship of the Resurrected Lord
Followed by a ham and egg breakfast



910 Ponce de Leon Ave., NE, Atlanta, GA 30306-4212 • 404/874-9652

PART-TIME POSITION AVAILABLE

THE OPEN DOOR COMMUNITY
NEEDS A VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR/OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR
20 HOURS/WEEK
PLEASE CONTACT ELIZABETH DEDE OR GLADYS RUSTAY
404/874-9652
FOR AN APPLICATION AND AN INTERVIEW.



Gladys Rustay

Our friend Karl Meyer, an itinerant Catholic Worker, stopped by for a visit recently, and shared his gifts and skills as a carpenter. We now have a beautiful new shed at the back of the house to store cardboard for recycling. Thank you, Karl!

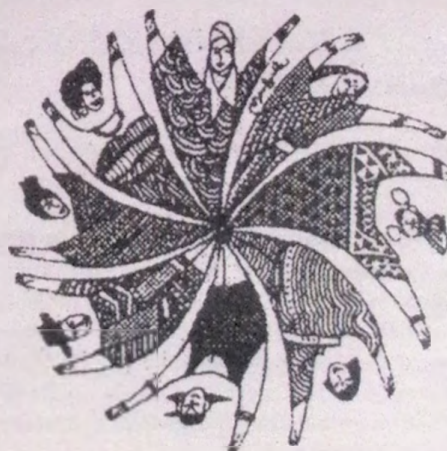
The Open Door Community Needs Resident Volunteers!

Spend 6 to 12 months as a Resident Volunteer

- Live in a residential Christian community.
- Serve Jesus Christ and the hungry, 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: Elizabeth Dede
910 Ponce de Leon Ave., NE
Atlanta, GA 30306-4212
404/874-9652; 874-7964 (fax)

Join us!



Grace and Peaces of Mail

Dear Elizabeth,

My visit to the Open Door Community was a very important part of my journey toward understanding the poor. It was an experience that will remain a part of me forever. I'd love for you to reprint my poem in Hospitality. Thank you for asking.
In love and peace,

Janice Sullivan
First Presbyterian Church
Greensboro, NC

The Rose Window
by Janice Sullivan

Often I sit in church,
stare at the round window--
it hangs over the altar
like a giant rose.
Its petals form a stained glass mandala.
In the center, sits Jesus
on his throne.

I rotate my kaleidoscope,
search for a different frame,
discover a garden
of ox-eye daisies and butterfly weeds.
Here, Jesus sits on a bench, in silence.
Later, he walks downtown,
visits with his street friends.
I choose to follow.

We enter a homeless shelter where we serve loaves of bread,
cups of soup
then join our guests at the table.
As we share stories and sing songs,
a window begins to shape--
one crafted with fragments
of broken glass and multicolored
gems
celebrating a new kind of
community.

Dear Ed,

How are you and everyone doing? I pray that all of you are doing well.
I am sorry I haven't wrote sooner, but they have me in the substance abuse program now. It's a pretty good program, too. It'll last for about a month and an half. We can't even be associated with the other inmates. I have no problem with this. As long as I am participating in something positive, I'll be alright.

Things in prison are getting pretty bad for us. They're taking everything that they can away from us. A lot of correctional officers are beginning to walk out. They now realize what is happening. Last week one inmate beat up 3 or 4 officers. One of the officers ended up with two broke arms. Guess what, Ed? They didn't want it to be printed in the newspaper either.

I spent another birthday in prison, but I'm very thankful.
Peace my brother,

J.P.

Dear Friends,

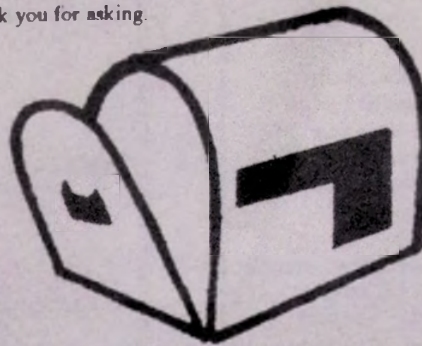
You all probably don't remember me, but I came down with a group from Presbyterian College last Winter. Our group was a class led by Greg Henley, focusing on the Third World. I must thank you all for that experience which has helped to mold my life.

After graduation last May, I accepted a position as an intern at Government Street Presbyterian Church, heading up urban missions. We not only feed, through our free breakfast program, the Coffee Club, but also try to be advocates for the homeless and poor--those victimized by our social and economic systems.

Enclosed is a small donation. I hope that it can be utilized in helping those your community serves.

Peace and grace,

Mark Hunt
Government Street Presbyterian Church
Mobile, Alabama



Dear Murphy,

I wish you healing and health.

Thank you for the account, in "Hospitality" of your Attica commemoration. I sent a copy to my friend in Atlanta. I wanted to drop them and you the idea that this year, for the 25th anniversary of the rebellion, you could work together to do a more public program. CEMIL would be happy to supply you with a video of the 81 minute documentary, "Attica."

I wanted to send you the poster we did for the 20th anniversary of Attica. Once I got going I got a little carried away. I can get you more if you'd like. The only Attica one I had was off my wall and so not in mint condition.

Take care. Stay strong.

Michael Stanek
Committee To End the Marion Lockdown
Chicago, IL

Dear Friends in Christ,

Provisionally a copy of Hospitality addressed to Al and Chic Dimmock was put in my mail box by mistake this week. I have read it from cover to cover and am inspired to be a small part of your ministry. Please find my application for subscription and a small donation enclosed.

I served Central Church as Minister of Education with Fred Stair and Ed Grider back in the 60's. That was before Open Door began its ministry, so far as I know, but the name of Ed Loring sticks in my mind. Also Dick Rustay must be the minister who was associated with Warren Wilson College and was instrumental in the development of the ministry to the homeless at Calvary Church, Asheville. In Joanna Adams' lead story in your November issue she mentions Wade Boggs who is the son of one of my very best friends in Montreal.

Somehow these names connect me in a very distant way with your ministry. I only wish I were in Atlanta to be a volunteer to work with you.

I give thanks to God for the work you do and for God's provisionally sending me Hospitality. We shall support you in our prayers.

God bless!!

James R. Crook
Presbyterian Minister, retired
Montreat, NC

Dear Ed,

I've just received my second paper and just like the first one, I'm impressed. Your articles are informative and courageous. They move me to thought and emotion while opening my eyes to truth.

Kudos to the Hospitality staff.

I will be looking forward to each issue. My prayers are with you for continued success.

Sincerely,

Dan Reeves
PO Box 399-244262
Leesburg, GA 31763

P.S. I'm also interested in regular correspondence, if available. Being raised on camping and fishing in the mountains and country, I would enjoy writing and sharing with others of the outdoor persuasion.

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 910, 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), next retreat is our spring retreat, May 10-12.

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 Needs

JEANS
T-Shirts
Men's Work Shirts
Men's Underwear
Quick Grits
Cheese
Coffee
Multi-Vitamins
MARTA Tokens
Postage Stamps
Women's Underwear
Household size Clothes Dryer
Men's Shoes (all sizes)
Disposable Razors
Toothbrushes
Vaseline
Socks
Shampoo
Men's Belts
Washcloths
Sandwiches
Vacuum Cleaner
Soup Kitchen Volunteers
Butler St. Breakfast Volunteers
Folding Chairs

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. **THANK YOU!**



Open Door Community Worship

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

Please join us!

- April 1 - 6 Holy Week Worship, 5 p.m. each day
(see Holy Week schedule for locations)
- April 7 Easter Sunrise Service and Breakfast with the Homeless; 23 Butler St.; (no evening worship at 910)
- April 14 Worship at 910
- April 21 Worship at 910
Ed Loring, preaching
- April 28 Worship at 910
Joyce Hollyday, preaching



Moving?

Bulk rate mail is not forwarded by the U.S. Postal Service. Send **Hospitality**, 910 Ponce de Leon Ave., NE, Atlanta, GA, 30306-4212, your new mailing address as soon as you know it. Please enclose the mailing label from your most recent issue. *Thank you!*

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 explore a six to twelve-month commitment as a Resident Volunteer at the Open Door. Please send more information.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____, State _____ Zip _____ + _____

Phone _____