

HOSPITALITY

Volume 8 No. 7

August 1989

Non-Profit Org.
U. S. POSTAGE
PAID
Atlanta, Georgia
Permit No. 1264

Address
Correction
Requested

Providing hospitality to the homeless & to those in prison, through Christ's love.
910 Ponce de Leon Ave. N.E. Atlanta GA 30306-4212 (404) 874-9652

Becoming Blind Beggars

by Murphy Davis

They came to Jericho, and as Jesus was leaving with his disciples and a large crowd, a blind beggar named Bartimaeus son of Timaeus was sitting by the road. When he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to shout, "Jesus! Son of David! Have mercy on me!"

Many of the people scolded him and told him to be quiet. But he shouted even more loudly, "Son of David, have mercy on me!"

Jesus stopped and said, "Call him."

So they called the blind man. "Cheer up!" they said. "Get up, he is calling you."

So he threw off his cloak, jumped up, and came to Jesus.

"What do you want me to do for you?" Jesus asked him.

"Teacher," the blind man answered, "I want to see again."

"Go," Jesus told him, "your faith has made you well."

At once he was able to see and followed Jesus on the road.

--Mark 10:46-52.



Editor's note: This sermon was preached by Murphy Davis as Moderator of the Presbytery of Greater Atlanta at the Presbytery's June meeting.

I'd like to tell you about a man named Roosevelt Green--a convicted murderer and my good friend--who died in Georgia's electric chair on January 9, 1985.

Roosevelt was one of the Blind Bartimaeus' in my life, and when he was killed by his captors, he was probably one of the most self-aware, politically-astute human beings I have ever known.

At ten minutes after midnight on that cold winter's night he walked calmly into the execution chamber and made the following statement:

"The night I was arrested and taken into the Monroe County Jail one of the jailers said to me, 'Boy, the lives of two niggers still ain't enough to make up for one white life.'

"I didn't believe him on that night, said Roosevelt. I thought he was wrong. Tonight I know he was right. He spoke for this society which is racist from top to bottom. I will die before you tonight because I am Black--and because I was associated with another Black man who killed a white woman. But my life will not be enough to satisfy you. You will kill me and still be hungry for revenge.

"The one thing you cannot do is to make me hate you. I will not hate you even though you kill me. I forgive you for you are blind. I will die with peace in my heart."

It was not always so with Roosevelt. He was born in Minter, Alabama and grew up expecting nothing but stoop labor in the cotton fields or driving pulpwood: life was brutal and violent to him. Even what little he seemed to be due was stolen by the greed and racism of Alabama plantation life. So ending up on death row was not such an illogical twist of history for Roosevelt Green.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

CONTINUED FROM PRECEDING PAGE

When I first knew him he was bursting with rage and bitterness (and I would say it was not without some real justification). He was a sitting duck for white guards who could taunt him and watch him run wild, and so it became a cell block sport. His life became an endless round of fights, weeks in the hole, attacks, beatings, mace, stun guns. Many were the visits when he came out in leg irons, waist chains and his hands cuffed behind his back. And other times he was not allowed to come out at all.

But Roosevelt was not still. He formed deep and lasting friendships with a number of people in the free world (or as another friend on the row often said, "out there in minimum security"). And he nurtured a profound and beautiful friendship with a strong, bright man named Billy Mitchell, who has also since been executed.

Together with his friends Roosevelt sought the life of mercy. He and Billy would for hours on end meditate and contemplate life and then write to friends on the outside--and contemplate again.

And I shall never forget the day that Roosevelt said to me, "You see, I've got it figured out now. One of the ways this system keeps itself going is by depending on me to respond in certain violent ways. So you know what I can do? I can NOT respond."

What a moment of healing and liberation! Amazing grace!

Somehow this man managed to take a step back, to observe his own broken life, to confess his sin and then freely choose another way to live.

Now Roosevelt was no angel, and maybe his life wasn't exactly what I'd call straightened out. But he was breaking a cycle of violence, bitterness, and mercilessness by refusing to hold up his end of the process any longer. He was being healed by God's patient and loving mercy.

The state of Georgia told us they executed a monster that night--a sub-human. The Klan gathered outside the prison in full regalia screaming, "Kill the nigger!" A bar in Macon threw a Roosevelt Green party with free drinks for everybody at the time of death and happy hour thereafter.

The truth is that they killed a human being: a child of God, a seeker of mercy, who had found real healing and new life because he had learned that the anguished cry for mercy is the beginning of new life. And he had gained new depths of hope for the human family in spite of his own cruel death. There was no happy ending to this story, but we celebrate new life and good news where we find it.

Roosevelt was one of the blind beggars who has taught me of the journey of faith. Blind, begging Bartimaeus was, like Roosevelt Green and like most of the people who hung around with Jesus, an outcast. A beggar with no pride, no claim to dignity because he was dependent on the mercy, the alms of others.

Perhaps it was because he had so little to lose that he so rudely pursued our Lord. "Son of David!" he shrieked. "Have mercy on me!" It was an embarrassment. There was a big crowd and Jesus was in demand and very busy. And so, Mark tells us, the people scolded Bartimaeus and told him to be quiet (Be polite!).

But his rudeness was irrepressible, and he shouted even more loudly, "Have mercy on me!"

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE



HOSPITALITY is published 10 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 and about others involved in ministry to Atlanta's homeless, please contact any of the following:

Murphy Davis--Southern Prison Ministry
Director

Ed Loring--Correspondence & Resident Volunteer
Co-ordinator

Joanne Solomon--Administrative Assistant
(Volunteer Co-ordination, Hardwick
Prison Trip)

Newspaper:

Editorial Staff--Ruth Allison, Murphy Davis,
Elizabeth Dede, Ed Loring

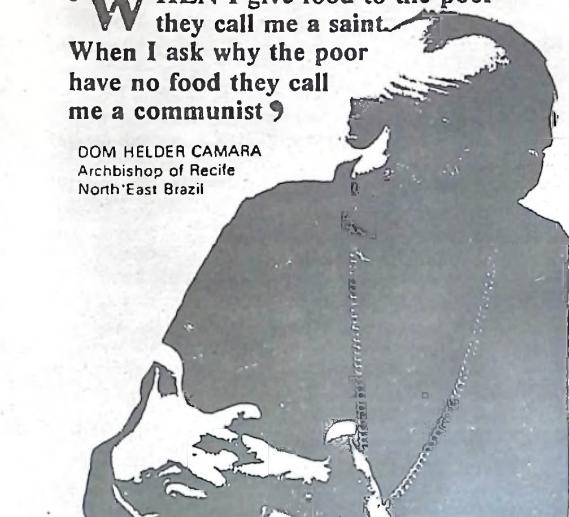
Layout--Ruth Allison and Dana Kish

Circulation--Tim Wyse and a multitude of
earthly hosts and guests

Subscriptions or change of address--Willie
London

**WHEN I give food to the poor
they call me a saint.
When I ask why the poor
have no food they call
me a communist 9**

DOM HELDER CAMARA
Archbishop of Recife
North-East Brazil



CONTINUED FROM PRECEDING PAGE

And Jesus heard that cry. Of course, Jesus listened to that cry. It would not surprise you to know, too, that Jesus responded to that cry with mercy, with healing love. "Oh, you want to see? You cry out, in scorn of the consequences, for mercy? Brother, you are healed because your faith has made you well." Jesus didn't say I will make you well, but the faith that led you to cry out so persistently for mercy--that faith is what has healed you. And Bartimaeus saw, and Bartimaeus followed Jesus.

The cry of the poor--the cry of the blind beggars--is always strident, always rude, always at an inopportune moment. It is never convenient, never appropriate to the standards of etiquette.

But it is to the shameless beggars that Jesus says, "Your faith has made you well." You, shrieking from the side of the road; you, bleeding, unclean woman sneaking up on me in the crowds; you, hookers and tramps, criminal tax collectors and smelly fisherfolk; you, demon-possessed women and lepers with decayed flesh and sick and dying children; you who cry out for mercy: your faith has made you well.

We who follow Jesus in the crowd are mandated to hear this cry. For in the cry for mercy of the blind beggars we hear the cry of the suffering Vagrant, Jesus the Christ.

In the cry for mercy of the condemned we come to know the suffering of Jesus who was condemned and executed as a common criminal. In the cry for mercy of the broken victims, the forgotten ones, we meditate on the suffering of the Christ as one scorned and misunderstood, known as an undesirable, run out of town, threatened, and pursued. In the cry of the poor we hear a prophetic word that calls us to change: to give up our selfishness and greed; to give up our righteous front; to learn our own deep need for the ever-flowing mercy of a loving God. That word calls us to give up our Pharisaical prayer, "I thank you God that I am not like them," and to turn toward the real prayer of the humble tax collector, "O God, have mercy on me, a sinner."

And so we must listen and learn; we must be taught to plead for mercy. For the only way to come to God is as a beggar, which is why God comes to us as a beggar to show us the way. We are blind, but most of us don't know it. We are in need, but we consume at a frantic pace to try to cover it up. We know that Jesus walks around with a bad crowd, and we're embarrassed to be seen with him.

But those who have no need of mercy, find no need to share mercy. Those who have no awareness of their own blindness do not cry, "I want to see again." Those who live comfortably and in security need not ever beg for daily bread or relief from oppression. Those who are never condemned and live carefully enough to avoid criticism know nothing of the agonizing ache of those for whom mercy means life over death.

To follow Jesus we must listen for the cry of the poor, the blind beggars. But for an upper class church to hear the cry of the poor requires discipline. The poor in our day are not, like Lazarus at the door of Dives, right under our noses. The poor are, by specific design, out of our sight and hearing. And like the new Underground Atlanta and downtown Atlanta as a Vagrant-Free Zone, the hope is that you will not have to see, hear, touch, smell, or otherwise encounter anyone you wouldn't run into in the most antiseptic suburban mall. For anyone perceived to be a derelict already is arrested and charged with criminal trespass

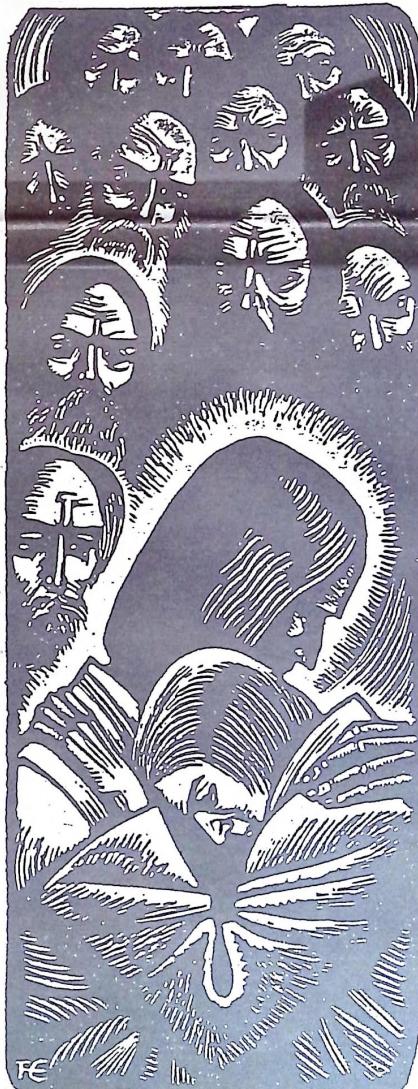
3

in Underground. And though "the fun's back in town," the fun is not for everybody when some people have to live from hour to hour struggling with the real issues of survival: food, shelter, and safe passage.

Begging, of course, is illegal in the city of Atlanta. It's called panhandling. And if you go to Municipal Court on Monday morning down on Decatur Street you will see more people going to jail for doing what Bartimaeus did. In our city Bartimaeus would have been arrested before he could have gotten a hearing from Jesus.

But if we hear the Blind Bartimaeuses, we know that when we cry out to God, "Have mercy on me," our lives are transformed. When we live dependent on God's mercy, then our hearts can be set on God's amazing grace. When we live dependent on God's mercy, then planted in our hearts can be the fervent hope, planted in our lives can be the daily struggle for the day that justice will roll down like waters and righteousness like a river that never runs dry.

And Jesus will gather the blind beggars, the bleeding women, the halt, the lame, the leper, the lost, and the least and say to them, "Come unto me; your faith has made you well." □



Fritz Elchenberg

The Marks of the True Church of Jesus Christ

by Ed Loring

How does a person or a society know where the church of Jesus Christ is? Where does the body of Christ reside? Who belongs? How can we discern false prophets and phony preachers in a world filled with electronic media, cold cash, hot flesh and a ubiquitous emptiness?

If the gospel has no historical and sociological flesh then the Word of God is no word at all. If there is no church wherein God is making new history and building a new social order of peace and justice, then preaching, Bible Study, and missionary work are in vain and an illusion (Unless, of course, they benefit the old order of oppression, poverty and death. Then to the Evil One the Gospel-less church and the churchless Gospel would be effective instruments of control for the status-quo.).

As people of love and justice, we are embarrassed to raise the question of the "place" of the Body of Jesus Christ--the church--because we have such a sorry history of violence, persecuting, murder, self-righteousness and war regarding this question and its faithless answers. We Presbyterians come with special laments for forgiveness for it was Ulrich Zwingli, and later John Calvin, who (when the Reformed Tradition began) drowned believers and sanctioned the burning of fellow Protestants with varying views.

Yet as the Christian church in the U.S.A. has become so embedded in the consumer culture of affluence, comfort and emptiness we must, for the sake of God's own integrity and the honor of the name of Jesus, ask the old, haunting and often divisive question: where is the true church of Jesus Christ?

The most traditional answer points to the priesthood. Where a priest is ordained by the laying on of hands through apostolic succession, there is the church. During the Reformation two marks of the church were formulated among Protestants: first, the Word of God is preached in the church; second, the sacraments of the Lord's Supper and Baptism are performed in the church. There was a short flurry of activity around the idea of a disciplined life within the congregation as well. However, the prohibitions against charging interest on money and owning fellow Christians as slaves turned the investment community against any such standards.

Today, however, we must add another mark for the True Church of Jesus Christ: diversity among the believers. The church is God's primary vehicle in history to break down the old order of violence and oppression and to build a new social order of freedom, equality and justice. At the birth of the church on Pentecost the fundamental mark of the gathered believers was diversity; so must it be today to be this same church of New Testament times.

For the church to be the church of Jesus Christ the membership must reflect the diversity of God's creation and include the victims and helpless ones of the old (present) social order which crushes some that others might have more than they need. A church should be suspect if it lacks integration among various racial groups, for the very purpose of the church is to break down dividing walls between Jews and Gentiles (African-Americans and whites, etc.) so that one new community might emerge in the city and throughout the land. We have admitted and even celebrated forming Taiwanese congregations here in Atlanta--churches based solely on race and ethnic origin. We know, too, of the purpose

and power of the mostly African-American congregations in our city. But what is not spoken from the pulpits and in the urban planning meetings is that we majority white Christians spend most of our time and energy on forming "caucasian churches"--the Buckhead Presbyterian Church. Whether we celebrate the Taiwanese church or "understand" the African-American congregations or hide beneath the double-speak of technocratic investments in caucasian churches it really matters not: the presence of Jesus Christ is amid the diversity of people who are marching across the stage of history tearing down dividing walls and building new houses and office space for peace, justice, and unity among God's daughters and sons.



Race and segregation are marks of the false church. So, too, are congregations of only one class. A basic mark of Christian life is an inclusive sharing of economic goods in which everyone has what they need but none suffer the emptiness, despair and death of having too much. Poor, middle class and rich together--learning to strip away the forces of oppression and poverty--constitute the true church. The God of the rich, who are not learning through word, deed and sacrament to share their wealth and restructure the economy, is a dead God. The concept of a rich church is an oxymoron (like cruel kindness). Test it: where is the true church of Jesus Christ? Where rich and poor are together in congregational life. African-American and white, affluent and poor TOGETHER represent a mark of the true church.

We have fallen short of the glory of God. We have allowed ourselves to be duped by the segregations of our society and the insecurities of our psyches: we have turned that most radical group--the Christian Household of Faith--into a bulwark of our social oppression. If you are in an all white church, please join another community that refuses to mirror the death of our society's structures. If you are in a church of the rich, go and join Lazarus because only as we worship and live with the ones covered with sores may we be healed. And God wills it so for each of us and all of us: a congregational life of servanthood and joy as we become ever more faithful people heralds a new day coming soon! □

Through Suffering to Clearer sight

by Edgar M. Grider

Editor's note: Ed Grider died in May of this year after a long and courageous battle with cancer. For many years Ed was a leader in calling the church to serve the oppressed of Atlanta. He was Associate Presbyter for Mission for Atlanta Presbytery, and in that capacity helped the Open Door Community to get started and to make it over many troubled waters. We have lost a friend and we will miss him very much.

This article was originally published in The Presbyterian Survey, March 1983.

Squealing tires pierced my sleep as the car skidded at high speed. Then a thud: one car--careening into something solid.

I snatched at startled thoughts, trying to get oriented. I saw daylight but no sunlight. A heavy silence followed the crash; no cries for help, no slamming doors. The neighbors had not heard it. No whirring traffic hummed in my ears. The expressway must be deserted.

Somebody's injured! That frantic realization energized my body and pulled my brain to decision and action. I shook Evelyn and reached for my pants. "Call the police!" I yelled as I ran out the front door.

I saw the crashed car crumpled against the guardrail on my side of the interstate. I ran toward it.

The smell of concrete mixed with oil and gas fumes assailed me as I jumped the guardrail onto the highway. Still no other cars in sight. I felt terribly alone as I approached the crash. My emotions had slipped out of gear, preparing for a shock.

To my amazement the car was empty.

After a confused second, it struck me: The driver's been thrown from the car! I spun around. Up the road I saw not one but two bodies. They were very still, lying against the guardrail, soaked by the morning rain. They looked like garbage bags discarded by the roadside.

A man on the other side of the highway caught my attention. He was motioning that he had a CB. "Get an ambulance!" I yelled, racing across to him. "No, get two ambulances!" I screamed as though we were a mile apart.

I ran back toward the bodies, and a police car with flashing blue lights eased past me, stopping near the prostrate forms as if to protect them from further harm.

One of the bodies turned out to be a woman, lying on her side facing out toward the expressway with her back to the man. She had a stout frame, and I saw that her hair was salt-and-pepper. A policeman knelt to examine her. Briefly. He grabbed a gray blanket from the patrol car and covered her. As the blanket lowered over her head, I glimpsed the tight curls of a permanent wave. "Grandmother" flashed through my mind.

I didn't even know her name, yet I identified with her tragedy.

The man was sprawled in a grotesque position against the guardrail. I looked into his chalky blank face, but couldn't tell how old he was--maybe 50. Then I heard his lungs rattle.

"This one's still alive," someone said. Medics moved in quickly, loosening his belt, opening his shirt, straightening his arms. I noticed how gentle they were.

The man made subdued noises, gurgling sounds over a low moan, like the sounds of a battered animal.

I clinched my fists, remembering that people in trauma mostly experience it in silence. They don't talk or yell about it; they undergo it.

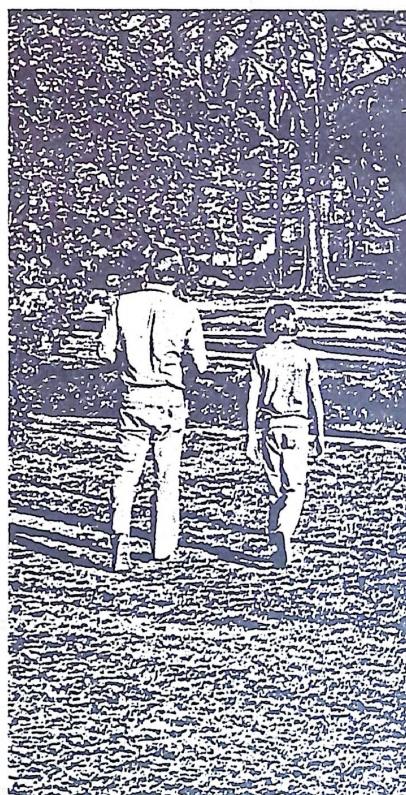
Two men loaded the draped body of the woman into an ambulance. The vehicle moved off slowly toward town. No lights. No siren. No need for speed.

For the first time I noticed the youth of the medics. They were about 20--no older than my son would have been, I thought. One monitored the male victim's vital signs while the other tried to slide a rod slowly up next to his backbone.

Unexplainably I felt ashamed. Then I began to get nauseous. The queasiness dredged up bad memories. Suddenly I remembered it was Sunday, just like the other time. I turned away and started toward the house.

I pushed back my rage when I saw Evelyn waiting at the front door. "They didn't have a chance," I said flatly.

We went back to bed, trying to rest until the alarm sounded. I wanted to sleep, but my mind kept dragging me back to that other Sunday morning 22 years earlier. The day my son died. **CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE**



CONTINUED FROM PRECEDING PAGE

That too happened rapidly. One Saturday he was healthy, happily playing in the yard. That night, a high fever. By Sunday morning he was struggling: rapid breathing, a fever that wouldn't subside, bluish lips. Yet he remained conscious. He smiled at me just minutes before he went into convulsions.

Later we were to learn that even then fulminating meningococci were disintegrating his organs.

The next night I moved his clothes and toys down to the basement through an outside door. On one trip I stopped like a clock that had run down. I couldn't take another step, feel another blow. I couldn't think anymore. The well had dried up inside me. I didn't feel any warmth anywhere. I was emptied out. So I just stood there looking up into the night sky.

I gazed at the cold stars so far away. How far? My bones were naked, exposed to infinite nothing, searching for union with life.



I felt my soul give way, cut loose from the moorings. The bottom opened up into a vast nothing underneath. Very slowly, out of the emptiness, a strange yet friendly vitality entered me. Warm energy rushed in. Almost in surprise, I gazed at the trees and bushes, then back at the stars with renewed interest. I sensed the presence of life everywhere. I almost smiled through my grief.

That was the first time I realized that all living things are one.

The alarm sounded. I sighed as I sat up, for I felt the old pain again. Sometimes it stabs as sharply as the day he died. But I have learned over the years, as the pain comes and goes, to suffer it.

Everyone knows pain and suffering and learns something from the experience. Life makes pupils of us all; and no one has a corner on the knowledge gained. Yet any knowledge born of suffering is precious indeed! I offer the following learnings of mine in the hope that they will enrich others' ability to face hardship, and to learn from it.

Pain assaults not only our senses but our minds and emotions. Pain is curiously like pleasure in that we experience it first with our senses, then with our minds and emotions. When the awful sensations first hit, we instinctively react in defense. Escape! Make it stop! Our bodies constrict under the assault. Severe hurt shrivels us like bacon in a hot skillet.

6

Persistent pain calls our minds and emotions to respond. We try to rise above the torment sufficiently to find some way to endure the affliction.

Pain and suffering are different. Just as joy is different from pleasure, so suffering can be distinguished from pain.

Suffering arises from being hurt, but is not the pain itself. Suffering is created by what we do with the hurt, how we decide to experience it, whether or not and how we learn to live with it. We suffer when we respond to pain.

In order to suffer, we need to have a certain distance from the raw hurt. Suffering requires a surplus of energy beyond that level required to feel the searing or aching or throbbing or crushing sensations. We struggle to get enough distance to find some meaning in the fact that we have pain, or in spite of it. We resolve to bear the hurt in one way or another, if we must and if we can.

We can find meaning in suffering. Hardships call our values into play, for the pain forces us to develop some kind of appreciation in order to make the experience worth our while. Suffering forces the question of the meaning of our lives, ready or not.

To love others, for instance, automatically opens us up to suffering. Sooner or later, death will end the relationship. And that realization, however subconscious, causes us grief. Yet the sense of impending death, however remote, also serves to intensify our love and love's meaning. Love and sorrow are bound together, and life challenges us to find meaning and value in relation to both.

Loving persons thus tend to have some ability to transcend the consuming power of pain. Their love enables them to discover some significance in their suffering. The greater the love, the greater the ability to find meaning in suffering. Although perhaps painful, the sufferer discovers that each day is precious.

We learn from those we love. We usually get schooled in vicarious suffering by learning from the pains of our loved ones, before it is our time. And we learn best from those we love the most. This schooling is the hardest of all. No one willingly enrolls; it is compulsory.

We all protest, or should. It is costly to find meaning in the afflictions of those we love. The meaning comes, if at all, only after our minds have been stunned and our spirits scarred. To cross that boundary is to walk in the valley of the shadow. At the boundary it seems like a place of never-ending desolation. That is why hope is essential.

Hopelessness kills the spirit but hope leads to growth. Suffering does not kill the human spirit, hopelessness does. Jurgen Moltmann says to be without hope is to be listless, depressed, bored, timid about life's possibilities, so weary that you become negligent. Whatever its form, hopelessness amounts to despair, a premature conviction of non-fulfillment.

Suffering, then, can lead me in one of two directions: either I resign myself to the pain and eventual defeat, or I struggle to grow. Retreat leads me spiraling back into the isolated dumb silence of intense pain. Growth leads to deeper meaning and appreciation.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

CONTINUED FROM PRECEDING PAGE

Resignation reflects a dying spirit, an underlying sense that nothing matters anymore, or not enough to cause us to hope. The driving force in resignation is horrifying: a desire for deadness. How ironic that we see resignation most often not in those who suffer great pain, but among those who are relatively free from pain, who are healthy and have ample reason to hope.

On the other hand, I know people who live with intense pain daily. They manage to transcend severe pain even while experiencing it. Their perseverance amazes me. Some do finally succumb, but only after they have lived for years with disease or unjust cruelty or oppression. When I'm with them I find myself reflecting on their courage in preparation for that time when I may have to undergo a similar ordeal. Again, I learn vicariously how to bear great pain. In this way those who suffer greatly are sacraments to the rest of us.

They survive because they have hope, and that gives me hope for the future.

Suffering can lead to insight, fellowship and joy. It is ironic that suffering can prompt us to grow. We live with the paradox that while pain signals destruction, it also occasions creativity--if we are willing to combat it.



Suffering expands our consciousness and deepens our insight. Martin Luther, for example, was plagued by despondency most of his life. After his daughter's death his despondency intensified, but so did the keenness of his insight. In the year of his deepest depression he composed the lines of the hymn "A Mighty Fortress Is Our God."

There is a sense in which suffering purifies, and

the eyes of the pure in heart can pierce heaven and hell.

I may hurt alone, but I need not suffer alone. Like others I have discovered a rich communion with those who somehow find meaning amidst pain and still determine that life is worth living. We weep more, for we are part of the world's distress. But we weep together.

And such weeping is neither hopeless nor fearful; indeed, it leads us to seek justice as never before, for we learn that justice is the backbone of love. Such discoveries have always led men and women into the world to join with others who, though broken, are one. They gladly join in the works of justice and love that Thomas Merton calls "the resetting of a Body of broken bones."

We also laugh more. For every good thing tends to be appreciated to the fullest. We laugh with the intensity that makes the most of suffering. We see more reason to celebrate than ever before.

This deep sense of laughter, so surprising to our logical minds, leads to a basic disposition for playfulness. Those who suffer don't take themselves too seriously. They discover a source of playfulness in the darkness of suffering. Along with the groaning in travail, they hear the chuckle of the universe, occasionally a great booming laughter from beyond.

So our vision gets sharpened and tuned to the heights and depths of life. Our deepened souls can spot the beauty, truth and goodness that our natural eyes might otherwise overlook.

Such insight doesn't exhibit presumption or pride. Sufferers simply see light better in the darkness, just as they see darkness on the edge of light. They see the deadliness of death, but they also see the joy of life.

As we get older we suffer more, perhaps, but we also have the opportunity to enjoy more.

Like many others I sense things from time to time--things from the future breaking in on my present. I hope for those things. I believe in them and work for them. A place where there will be no more crying and pain. A time when every tear will be wiped from our eyes. When death will be no more. A joyous new beginning for us all. □



Life is Beautiful and so Rich

by Elizabeth Dede

During the past few weeks I have read the diary of Etty Hillesum called An Interrupted Life. For some reason, the book had a profound influence on me. Perhaps it was that Etty Hillesum was a young woman--my age when she kept her diary, and her struggles to become a mature adult seemed similar to mine. For whatever reason, I found a sister in Etty Hillesum, a Jewish woman, who died in a Nazi concentration camp in 1943. I also found a teacher.

In the beginning of her diary, Etty seemed caught up in herself, to the point that she was not much aware of the world around her. But very quickly her world view broadened as she became more and more involved in the suffering and sorrow of the people with whom she was associated every day. For such a young person, she was exceedingly wise, possessing a universal wisdom, I believe, that can teach us much today, even though the suffering and sorrow we know now is different from that which she experienced.

One night, as bombing went on right outside her window, Etty wrote:

We human beings cause monstrous conditions, but precisely because we cause them we soon learn to adapt ourselves to them. Only if we become such that we can no longer adapt ourselves, only if, deep inside, we rebel against every kind of evil, will we be able to put a stop to it. . . . While everything within us does not yet scream out in protest, so long will we find ways of adapting ourselves, and the horrors will continue.



While I read those words, I thought about the monstrous conditions that we have created and the horrors to which we have adapted ourselves. In Atlanta that day it was pouring down rain, as it has on so many days this summer. 12,000 people had no homes, and most of them had no place to go to get out of the rain. 150 people lined up in our front yard to eat lunch. In a nation that has so much wealth and abundance, I believe homelessness and hunger are monstrous conditions. Yet on that day, as I read those words, thousands of people drove by on Ponce de Leon. They saw the homeless and the hungry, but nobody stopped to scream out in protest; they all continued on their way, adapted to the horrors.

In fact, rather than screaming out in protest, the way many of us adapt is to be angry with the homeless, to blame them for the monstrous conditions we have caused, to call them lazy, worthless bums. Sometimes when I am on house duty at the Open Door and stand out in the yard during the soup kitchen, I will hear screams from the people in cars passing by: "Get a job!" they yell. That is not a scream of protest. That is an angry yell, full of hatred, and it is irresponsible and immature. You see, we do not protest the conditions that bring people to the yard at 910: the lack of affordable housing, the lack of a living minimum wage, the lack of good work for everybody. And so we adapt, and rather than being stricken with horror when we see the terrible suffering we have created, we are filled with anger and hatred. Thus, the suffering and horror in the world continues and increases.

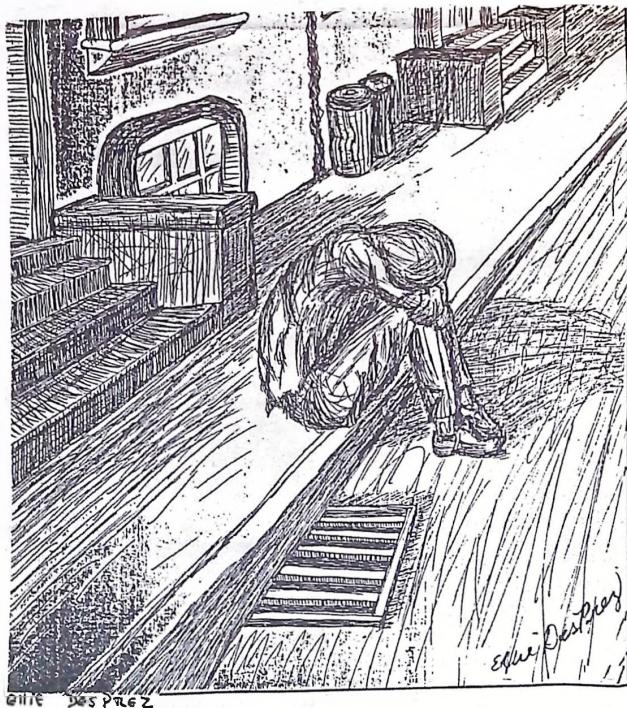
I read on in Etty's diary:

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

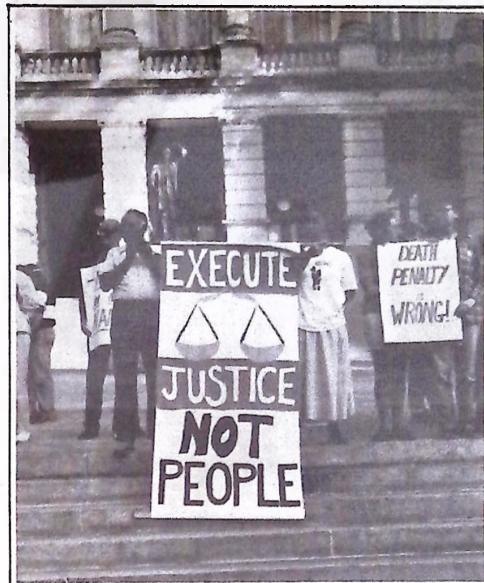
CONTINUED FROM PRECEDING PAGE

... You must be able to bear your sorrow; even if it seems to crush you, you will be able to stand up again, for human beings are so strong, and your sorrow must become an integral part of yourself, part of your body and your soul; you mustn't run away from it, but bear it like an adult. Do not relieve your feelings through hatred, do not seek to be avenged. . . . Give your sorrow all the space and shelter in yourself that is its due, for if everyone bears their grief honestly and courageously, the sorrow that now fills the world will abate. But if you do not clear a decent shelter for your sorrow, and instead reserve most of the space inside you for hatred and thoughts of revenge—from which new sorrows will be born for others—then sorrow will never cease in this world and will multiply. And if you have given sorrow the space its gentle origins demand, then you may truly say: life is beautiful and so rich. So beautiful and so rich that it makes you want to believe in God."

I read those words on the day the state of Georgia planned to execute one of our friends. The passage seemed particularly appropriate as I met members of his family and listened to news reports and interviews with the family of the victim. None of us can dispute the wisdom and truth of Etty's words. She knew from her own experience the sorrow and grief of separation and death; she experienced the horrible sufferings human beings can inflict on each other as they torture, destroy, and kill each other. Thus, from her own intimate knowledge, Etty could teach us about bearing suffering and sorrow, about how to bring an end to sorrow, about celebrating life even in sadness.



The death penalty only increases sorrow and suffering because it does not allow grief; it only encourages hatred and revenge. In interviews with the family of the victim, I heard words of revenge: "We will never be able to rest until that murderer is killed." And the state encourages that bitter hatred by killing and creating more sorrow and death.



When there is a death penalty, it seems to me there is no chance to bear grief honestly and courageously. Victims and people in favor of the death penalty often complain about the long time between the crime and the execution—time that is spent for the prisoner on appeals; but for the victim's family and friends, it seems that time is spent, not in grieving, but in harboring hatred and thoughts of revenge, and in waiting for the day when another killing will occur. I believe that we can read and take to heart with conviction the words of Etty Hillesum: such hatred and revenge is cowardly because we can use it to escape what may be the most essential part, and yet the most painful and fearful part, of the human condition—suffering. We know that murder and death cause sadness; but if we evade that sadness by causing more sadness through hatred and revenge and more murder and death, then we remain immature and we crawl through life like babies. If we were mature adults, we would be willing to face our sorrow: we would shelter our grief, and give it a special place in our hearts. We would be able to remember the dead with love, and our energies would be focussed towards life and joy, and not towards ways of creating more sorrow for others. If we bear our sorrows in a life-seeking way, by searching for reconciliation with our enemies, then we will find that we can stand up under suffering, and not be crushed by the burden. That is, in fact, the promise of Jesus—the man of sorrows, acquainted with grief, whose yoke is easy and whose burden is light.

We all want to affirm that life is beautiful and rich; it is a gift given to us by Jesus. Therefore, we all must give up our childish, cowardly ways. To be faithful to our God and to Jesus, we need to answer the call to new and changed lives. First, we must acknowledge and accept our responsibility for the horrible conditions we have created: everything from polluted water and air, to wars, to nuclear weapons, to hunger, to homelessness, to murder and crime. And as we become responsible adults, then we will work for change; we will no longer merely comply because we will want to stop the destructiveness of our actions. So as we cry out in protest and act out for a change in conditions, we will also grieve and support each other as we recognize the sufferings and sorrows we have created for each other. We will help each one to stand up and find wholeness. Then we will all know the fullness and beauty of life that brings us to affirmation of the presence of God in our lives.

Mr. Pete

by William Neal Moore

Editor's note: William Neal Moore is a friend on death row in Jackson, Georgia.

When I was a young boy around six years old there was a man that was a good male role model for me since my father was gone. I really needed such a strong figure at that time. His name was Mr. Pete; I never knew his last name. I guess he was in his early 40's. He was a very powerfully built man, who had worked for the city of Columbus as a garbage man.

Mr. Pete was married and lived on Donaldson Street. It was across the alley from our house. To get to his place all I needed to do was go out the back door and head down the alley that ran along the side of his house and yard.

My first encounter with Mr. Pete was near his backyard. Directly behind his house was the Pepsi Cola Bottling Company. It was common among the kids to steal Pepsi Colas from the trucks that were parked by the drivers who had returned from their routes and had gone inside to pay what they had collected that day.

Mr. Pete saw Donald and me waiting to make our move on one of the trucks, so he called us over to his yard and told us that we should not steal from the trucks.

Donald and I were very close friends, but now I can see how Mr. Pete's advice began to divide us. In the end I stayed and worked with Mr. Pete in his yard to earn some money to buy the sodas. Donald wouldn't have anything to do with that; work just wasn't his thing.

Mr. Pete's backyard was like a real junk yard. There were all sorts of things--almost anything you could imagine. There were several paths in the yard to the back door of his house.

I really liked Mr. Pete. Being with him was very exciting for me because there was always something new and adventurous to do in his yard. At first he would only let me do the straightening up of a lot of small things in the yard. Then he taught me how to use and clean his tools.

Soon I began to spend all of my free time at his house. When I got home from school I could tell if Mr. Pete was home by looking down the alley to see if his yellow Chevrolet pick-up truck was in the yard. It had gray panels on three sides of the truck. If the truck was there, I knew he was home.

I do not recall when I ever told Mama that I had been working with Mr. Pete. It just seems that I had always worked there, and as I would head out the back door, I would say, "Mama, I'm going over to Mr. Pete's house." She must've known him because once she asked me where he lived, and when I pointed to his house, she never said anything else about it.

It was at least a year before Mr. Pete took me anywhere with him. Everytime he had to go someplace and would be gone for some time he would send me home or drop me off at home before he left. The first trip he took me on was to the deep south side, to his mother's house. He had built an extra room onto her house and wanted me to help him clean up around the

area so that his mother wouldn't try to do the work herself and get hurt.

I really liked being trusted to go with him and work in his mother's house. When I think of his mother, I remember a very short lady--hardly taller than me at that time, and she dipped snuff. She was always losing her money, at least the change. It was all over the house and in the yard; every place she went there would be some change in the area.

I guess it was a test to see if I would keep the change. When I would find all of those dimes, nickles, quarters, and pennies I would try to give them to her, but she always claimed that they were not hers. So I would give them to Mr. Pete. Most of the time he would just put the change in his pocket and say, "I'll take care of it; don't worry about it."

She lived alone, so I knew that the money was hers. She carried her change around in one of those large blue and white handkerchiefs--we called them railroad handkerchiefs; it was all tied up and easy for the change to fall out. She was a very nice lady and sure loved her son. I don't know if Mr. Pete had brothers or sisters, but she always called him to stop working and come and sit down with her to eat or just talk.

I learned my way around the city of Columbus while sitting on the front seat of his truck. We would travel all over the city picking up junk--stuff that was too big for the regular garbage men to take, so people would pay Mr. Pete to haul it away.

I can still remember the long winter weekends that we worked together in his backyard. Quite often I found myself standing next to one of the large fire barrels. Mr. Pete would put big logs into the blaze to keep the fire going.

One time I actually watched him make one of these fire barrels. He got the pick ax and put the barrel on its side against a large brick. With his foot on the barrel, he swung the ax and power seemed to explode from his arms as the ax cut through the metal of the can.

He explained that the fire needed more air and would burn better with the small holes around the bottom of the can.

It seemed that he never discarded anything, and I learned that there is value to everything. It just has its own time when it will be needed. I began to understand why he collected wood and coal and stacks of old papers in the summer time. Now in the winter we really needed those things.

Mr. Pete was the only man whom I ever allowed myself to get close to in friendship--one in whom I really trusted and for whom I had great respect. He was like a father to me. He was the father I didn't have at home. I learned a great deal from him.

Because I didn't have a real father and didn't have the love and trust of a father-son relationship, it was very hard for me to learn to trust in a God, whom I could not see and feel, as my "Heavenly Father".



Grace and peaces of mail

Hello to Ed and Murphy and all of you at the Open Door!

Special salutation to Bro. Steve Clemens of Koinonia and right on for the open letter to Mayor Young; the Holy Spirit prompted me to write this little note because I think that the advocacy of the Open Door on the part of the homeless and the prisoners is so laudable and worthy of praise and encouragement. It is so beautiful to see a group of people so attuned to the problems of the oppressed and the powerless.

Before I went to prison, I was a homeless person in Atlanta. I lived and slept on the streets and worked in labor pools. At that time the Open Door wasn't there. I'm glad that you are there now. I was homeless in many of the great cities of our great America and there were few "Open Doors" anywhere.

I'm sure Andy Young will thank you all someday for reminding him of the great vision that he helped create of a just and compassionate society for all people.

Peace,

Delbert Tibbs
Chicago, IL

Editor's note: Delbert Tibbs spent several years on Florida's death row before his innocence was proved.

Dear Open Door,

I just read the July Hospitality. God knows it pierced my heart. The articles are great, and Ruth you keep doing a wonderful job of laying it out. I am hungry to come back, even if for only one month, to see you all, to work with and encourage you all, to worship with you all. I need the "real-ness" of the Open Door--in August heat or not.

Christ is working with me still on being honest and vulnerable but not crushed, not despairing. I tend to give up and stop moving when the narrow way becomes thread-like. But I have to ask, "Who put me on this path anyway? And who promised to get me down it--in one piece, finally integrated?" Come on, you know who.

I pray for you all. It's all I can do at this distance. And God is good and eager to save and redeem.

Say hello to everyone for me. And congratulations on the Underground Atlanta protest. Praise God. That was beautiful.

Peace and Love of Christ,

Rod Adams
Bartlesville, OK

Dear Ed,

I just got your newsletter on the opening of Underground Atlanta. I was struck by the incongruity of the two ways to view this event: through the eyes of businesses and visitors and through the eyes of the homeless and those who see the injustice of the fruits of the earth held in so few hands. Many thanks for exploring the side of the poor. This is a perspective that should be given by the media more. Away from the Atlanta area, we hear little of life from the view of the oppressed in Atlanta or in El Salvador. The responsibility for finding the truth rests with all of us. We can't just watch news at six or eleven and accept what is offered as truth.

Helen O'Brien tells me that she saw you a few months ago. I'm sure she told you that I spent a year in Washington, D.C., studying at Washington Theological Union. What an experience! I felt it was an honor. I lived in the women's volunteer house of So Others Might Eat which is a multi-service ecumenical agency for the homeless. My two housemates were Benedictine sisters who were also nurses. One worked for a hospice and the other for a Health Care for Homeless out of Church of the Saviour. So I got some inside info on the homeless situation in Washington. It is the same as Savannah and Atlanta only on a larger scale. City government corruption only makes bad matters worse. I miss my new friends in Washington, but it is wonderful to be back home down South.

I enjoy hearing via Hospitality what is happening with you and Murphy. It is like catching up with family. Please keep exposing the truth about the plight of the homeless and imprisoned. I hope to move to the Raleigh, NC area soon. My husband has been given a fellowship to do graduate study at East Carolina U. I hope to return to the homeless. It seems like years since I have been with them.

Take care,
Love and peace,

Paddy Kennington
Savannah, GA

Dear Friends,

My name is Dorothy Budd. I am the service chairperson of Kappa Alpha Theta Sorority at Emory University. Earlier this year we received a letter from you expressing your need. During the spring we had an aluminum can drive in which we raised \$30.00 from recycling two car-loads of cans. We decided to give the money to you and the wonderful service you provide. I only wish that we could have given more. Please keep in touch with us of your needs and hopefully once school starts we can be of more assistance.

Sincerely,

Dorothy Budd
Emory University
Atlanta, GA

God and the Homeless Poor

by Donald Beisswenger

Editor's note: Don Beisswenger is a friend of the Open Door Community who spent the month of September last year with us while on sabbatical from the Vanderbilt Divinity School. What follows are his reflections on the time he spent with the community and the ministry to the homeless poor he witnessed.

This article was first printed in *The Spire*, Winter 1989.

Anyone arriving at 910 Ponce de Leon Avenue in Atlanta sees an ordinary two-story apartment house, except for the sign hanging on a second-floor railing that reads "The Open Door Community." There are people coming out of a basement bathroom, and others sitting on the backyard benches. At eleven o'clock a long line forms at the door as folk wait for the noon meal.

After taking a day to get settled, I helped with the soup kitchen that is offered every day. But there is much more. The Butler Street breakfast is one such event. My journal for September 16 records the following:

Two African-American men were sitting along the wall at Butler Street C.M.E. Church in the inner city of Atlanta after a breakfast of cheese grits, one egg, sliced oranges, a vitamin, and coffee brought by a van from the Open Door. It was about eight o'clock and most of the 170 men and women served that morning had already left since they had to get over to the labor pool. One fellow had an open Bible on his lap. He said to his friend: "Listen to this: 'Now the dwelling of God is with people and God will be with them. They will be God's people and God will be with them and be their God.' That's heavy stuff," he said to his friend. The friend nodded. After a brief pause he continued, "God will wipe away every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order has passed away!" Both men looked up in silent amazement. "This is good news," the reader said to his friend. After several minutes, a fellow at a nearby table shouted, "Who wrote that? I bet it was a white man." The reader looked up and responded, "The devil comes in all colors, my friend." His colleague said, "Yes, brother, we fight not against flesh and blood but against principalities and powers." This early morning theological discussion by two of the homeless poor ended as the men left. They found hope in an ancient word. An ethic of suspicion was there, too.

Hospitality defines the major purpose of the work at the Open Door. Hospitality reminds people that they are sisters and brothers, children of God, dependent on others, and capable of being depended upon by others. . . .



Three or four mornings each week men and women come to get a shower and clean clothes. From my journal entry of September 16:

I recall revival time over in Arkansas. There was preaching and stormy preaching at that. There was singing and raising hands, and walking up the aisle and kneeling in prayer. Revival occurred here at the Open Door on Wednesday. But in a different way. After his shower Thomas combed his hair and changed his clothes. His six-foot frame looked fresh and he acted energized.

He looked revived. It seemed like a miracle, baptism. Religious conversion has its place. Putting one's trust in Jesus as the agent of reconciliation stands at the center of life for Christians around the world. In Jesus a Christian sees God's work of healing, empowering, or calling. But this revival time was potent, too. Thomas looked harried when he came into the clothes closet. His eyes were down. His body bedraggled. His clothes were unkempt and dirty. Now after a shower and a clean set of clothes, he looked alive, energized, empowered. His eyes were bright and his countenance inviting. He briskly left, but with a smile said "thanks." After Thomas another fellow came into the clothes closet and asked James for a special kind of shirt, a dress shirt. "I'm going out job hunting today so I want to look good," he said. Divine power in water and clothing? The revival of the human life was never more clear. Revival time comes in many ways. Praise God from whom such blessings flow. . . .

At the center of the work is a remarkable community of men and women who seek to live together as a people of God. The community of some twenty-five persons gives expression to the calling to do justice, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with God. Every day at the noon meal the work of the day is reviewed and celebrated. How did the breakfast go? Any difficulty at the showers? What about the soup kitchen? Personal concerns are shared. Then scripture is read and prayers become the time to hold the homeless poor and one another before God in solidarity and intercession. Day by day a people of God takes form and is reformed.

Almost daily we see and hear reports of homelessness. The Coalition for the Homeless states: "Homelessness in America has reached epidemic proportions over the past six years. An estimated two to three million Americans are now homeless. Children are the most rapidly growing group of homeless people, comprising the majority of homeless Americans in some sections of the country." . . .

The need for low-income housing is urgent, and it is clear. The need is so vast it will require resources only we as a nation can address. But affordable housing will not provide the whole answer. Most of the homeless need not only a place to live but also communities of hospitality, places where giving and sharing of love and care can occur. They need communities where both responsibilities and the joys of friendship are possible. This is the kind of community I found at the Open Door, where people who were once homeless became both friends and co-workers, sharing in a ministry of hospitality and becoming equipped for the ministry by their common life.

To enter a different and unique social world creates dissonance and discomfort. It also creates openness, cracks in one's understanding. I learned much at the Open Door about myself, about community, about cat holes and weed patches, labor pools, our society. But most of all I learned that God was present there in the streets. As people suffered, God suffered with them. God was present as people cared for each other and gave hope to each other. God was present in a community of people who made grits, provided showers, sang, waited tables, and broke bread together.

GOOD NEWS!

Maryland has abolished the death penalty for the mentally retarded. In 1987, Maryland abolished the death penalty for capital crimes committed before age 18.

When some agitation for reinstating the death penalty in Minnesota was initiated this year, some prison wardens and county prosecutors publicly announced they would resign their offices if the death penalty was returned.

Kansas and West Virginia again turned back efforts to restore the death penalty. The New York legislature did not override Governor Mario Cuomo's veto of a bill to restore the death penalty.

Some members of the Norwegian and Swedish parliaments have called for an economic boycott of those states of the U.S. which are executing prisoners. In a public statement on May 25th, they called upon Europeans to avoid visiting the "killing states", and also asked European businesses not to locate plants, stores or outlets in these states. A monthly list of killing states is to be announced.

In Stockholm, a Swedish woman who was leasing a home to a member of the U.S. Embassy in Sweden has declined to renew the lease, informing the occupants that she is doing so because the United States imposes the death penalty.

Fact Sheet

- Prevalent estimates place the number of homeless Americans at 3 million.
- Families with children represent the fastest growing sector of the homeless population.
- A recently-released, Congressionally-funded study predicts that another nearly 19 million people will face the prospect of homelessness in America in the next 15 years.
- Since 1980, Budget Authority for all federal housing assistance programs has been cut by more than 75 percent—from 32 billion to \$7.5 billion a year.
- At the start of Reagan's first term, the U.S. spent \$7 on defense for every \$1 spent on housing. Today, the ratio is \$44 to \$1.
- Only one-third of all American families who meet the government's own test of need are receiving federal housing subsidies.
- In 1983, nearly 10 million households occupied housing that did not meet minimum quality standards.
- From 1970-1985, the number of units with gross rents below \$125 per month dropped from 15 million to 2 million.
- Nearly three-quarters of low income renters receive no housing subsidies.
- Sixteen million households pay more than 35 percent of its income for rent today. Eight million families pay more than 60 percent of its income for rent.
- In 1985, nearly 10 percent of all renter households (3 million) annually spent more than 70 percent of their living income for housing.
- Rent burdens among single female householders have skyrocketed from an average of 38 percent in 1974 to 58 percent in 1980.
- Housing needs are so great and housing assistance so scarce that families wait an average of 24 months for a Section 8 Certificate, with families in some cities facing a wait of nearly 30 years at the present rate.
- In the past eight years, federal support for low income housing programs has fallen 77 percent to less than \$8 billion a year, while government subsidies for upper-income homeowners, in the form of mortgage tax-exemptions has grown to the \$46 billion a year.

"Those who wait in the Lord, they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint" (Isaiah 40:31).

RUN FOR SHALOM 1989 PORTLAND TO BOSTON



Editor's note: Mike Stoltzfus, a former resident volunteer at the Open Door, and his friend Jon Peachey are running from Lincoln City, Oregon to the Boston Harbor to raise money for the Open Door and the Mennonite Central Committee. From time to time, we will publish an update on the Run for Shalom.

We last left you in Viento State Park in Oregon. Since then we have travelled 800 miles to Havre, Montana.

In Ritzville, WA, 60 miles south of Spokane, a minor adjustment was in order. Due to a partially torn posterolateral tibialis muscle in Jon's right calf, which rest would not heal, we opted for the use of a friend's car so that Mike could keep running and Jon could continue to rest his leg.

When we reached Sandpoint, Idaho, we were forced to return to Spokane for four days of sports therapy and treatment for Jon's calf.

Returning to Sandpoint, we made a bee-line through the valleys of Idaho to enter the big-sky country of Montana.

While in Libby, Montana, we rested and recuperated in a back woods cabin.

Jon's first cousin, Steve Gale, joined the Run for Shalom in Libby. Steve will serve as support crew, public relations manager and anything else for the months of June and July. Steve is a welcome addition to the run.

Mike is going to take a three-week break from the run in order to heal tendonitis in his left Achilles tendon. Steve and Jon will continue onward toward Boston in Mike's absence.

For more information about the Run for Shalom—a cross country run by Jon Peachey, Mike Stoltzfus and Steve Gale to benefit the Open Door Community and Mennonite Central Committee—or to make a contribution, please contact:

Run for Shalom
c/o Janelle Nofziger
Goshen College
Goshen, IN 46526
219/535-7562



NATIONAL MARCH FOR HOUSING NOW!

OCTOBER 7, 1989

U.S. CAPITOL

IT IS TIME TO:

- END HOMELESSNESS
- FUND THE CREATION OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING
- RESTORE FUNDS FOR FEDERAL HOUSING PROGRAMS

HOUSING NOW!

425 SECOND STREET, NW,

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20001

202-347-240



The Open Door still needs a reliable used car. If you have one to donate, please call 874-9652 or 876-6977.



Many people fear nothing more terribly than to take a position which stands out sharply and clearly from the prevailing opinion. The tendency of most is to adopt a view that is so ambiguous that it will include everything and so popular that it will include everybody.

Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr.

MOVING?

WHEN YOU CHANGE YOUR ADDRESS, PLEASE LET US KNOW AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. SIMPLY PRINT YOUR COMPLETE OLD AND NEW ADDRESSES ON A CARD AND ATTACH A COPY OF YOUR MAILING LABEL. IT TAKES LONGER TO MAKE THE CORRECT CHANGE WITHOUT THIS INFORMATION. WE APPRECIATE THE OPPORTUNITY TO SERVE YOU. THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION AND UNDERSTANDING.

WALK TO RESIST TRIDENT: RECLAIM THE EARTH

Sept. 16 - Oct. 8, 1989

Join us as we call for an end to the Trident nuclear missile program

As Gandhi walked to the sea to make salt, a substance for life, we walk to the sea to reclaim the Earth for life. The Trident missile system, with its first-strike capability, threatens to destroy life itself and divert money from critical human needs.

Our 200-mile walk begins at Cape Canaveral where missiles are tested and continues to Kings Bay, Georgia where the submarines are stationed. Every step we take is an act of resistance to evil - every step we take is a statement of hope.

We will stop for a vigil at the Mayport Naval Station in Jacksonville to celebrate Gandhi's birthday on October 2.

On October 6-8 the Fellowship of Reconciliation will hold their national conference in Jacksonville. The peace walk will join the conference and on October 8 the entire conference will conclude the walk by going the last couple of miles to the gates of Kings Bay.

A special effort is being made to include children in the peace walk. Already a number of kids are registered so feel free to plan on bringing yours along. Walkers should be in good condition and be prepared to go 10-15 miles per day. Good tennis shoes are best for walking on sidewalks and roads.

Our route will be U.S. 1 and Highway A1A from the Cape to Kings Bay. All highway authorities will be notified in advance. Walkers should plan on \$5 per day for food. All meals will be prepared by the walkers and supporters. Vegetarian meals will be prepared to maximize on nutrition and simplicity.

As we pass through major cities supporters will house walkers in churches, homes, etc. Camping in remote areas will also be arranged (camping fees will be required in some areas). While in the urban centers supporters will join the walk as it passes through their communities.

Sign me up! I want to help.

Yes, I'll walk. Send me the Walker's Sign-Up Form.

I'd like to help with logistics. Send me more information.

I can't walk but here is some money to help cover expenses.

Name _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Phone () _____

WHY DO THEY CALL IT “DEFENSE”?

Ever since 1947, when the *“War Department”* was renamed the *“Department of Defense”*, military budgets have sailed through Congress with almost no questions asked.

After all, what politician wants to be accused of pinching pennies when the defense of the United States is on the line?

But, the truth today is that our military budget has little to do with defense.

Instead, it supports a foreign and economic policy based on military force with vast numbers of troops and weapons deployed all over the world. The goal is not our country’s defense, but to protect the global markets and assets of multinational corporations, promote a conservative ideology of fear of “communist” and Third World nations, and boost profits of military corporations.

Here is where the 300 billion dollar military budget goes every year, according to a detailed study released by the Coalition for a New Foreign Policy.

% BREAKDOWN OF PENTAGON BUDGET

- 45% for interventionary forces aimed at Third World and Non-Aligned nations in the Middle East, Central and South America, Africa and Asia.
- 27% to prepare to fight a World War III in Europe. More than \$80 billion is spent annually in a single country—West Germany.
- 13% for First Strike capability, to build weapons systems like Star Wars designed to allow the U.S. to strike first in a nuclear war.
- 5% for miscellaneous expenditures, including all NASA military-related spending and the CIA.
- 13% for defense of the United States. *That’s all.*

HOUSING NOW!

New Exodus March

from
Roanoke, Virginia to Washington, D.C.

A CALL TO ACTION

As a prelude to the massive HOUSING NOW! Rally in Washington, D.C. on October 7th, folks from all across the South will come to Roanoke, Virginia in mid-September to march en masse to Washington, D.C. to demand an end to homelessness and the creation of decent, affordable housing for all people.

Meaningful change always comes from the periphery. It always has and it always will. Therefore, we invite you to join us as we march from the periphery to the center of power and demand HOUSING NOW! It is a NEW EXODUS...people in search of a home.

The NEW EXODUS march will leave Roanoke, Virginia on September 15th and arrive on the outskirts of Washington, D.C. on October 5th. On October 7th, the NEW EXODUS marchers will march into Washington, D.C. and participate in the massive HOUSING NOW! Rally at the U.S. Capitol.

Make history! Join us for the NEW EXODUS march.

NEW EXODUS • 720 1ST STREET SW • ROANOKE, VIRGINIA 24016 • (703) 343-3691

LET'S BUILD A NEW PARK

To replace our loss of Plaza Park

THE AL SMITH PARK

A HOMELESS BROTHER



AL SMITH DIED OCTOBER 17, 1986

FIVE POINTS

1. A new park in the downtown area
2. A memorial for Atlanta's Homeless
3. A place for all who share Atlanta's streets
4. Water fountains
5. Public toilets

SAY YES!

PLEASE CALL AND WRITE TODAY:

AARON TURPEAU DEPT. OF ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES - 260 CENTRAL AVE., S.W. - ATLANTA, GA 30335 (658-7880)

ANDREW YOUNG CITY HALL - 68 MITCHELL ST., S.W. - ATLANTA, GA 30335 (527-7015)

MARVIN ARRINGTON 300 CITY HALL - 68 MITCHELL ST., S.W. - ATLANTA, GA 30335 (658-6100)

ATLANTA ADVOCATES FOR THE HOMELESS
876-6977

WE ARE OPEN. . .

Monday through Saturday, telephones are answered from 9:00am until noon, from 1:30 until 6:00pm, and from 7:30 until 8:30pm. The building is open from 9:00am until 8:30pm those days. (Both phone & door are not answered during our lunch break from noon until 1:30.) Please call in advance if you need to arrange to come at other times. On Sunday we are closed until 1:00pm. Please do not make unscheduled drop-offs of clothing, food, etc. on Sunday mornings. Sunday afternoon our phones and door are answered from 1:00 until 5:00pm.

OUR MINISTRY. . .

SOUP KITCHEN--Monday-Saturday, 11am-12 noon; Sunday 2-4pm

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

SHOWERS & CHANGE OF CLOTHES--Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday, 9-11am
(Be sure to call; schedule varies)

USE OF PHONE--Monday-Saturday, 9am-noon, 1:30pm-5pm.

SHELTER REQUESTS--Monday-Saturday, 9am-noon.

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

WEEKEND RETREATS--Four times each year (for our household & volunteers/supporters)

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.

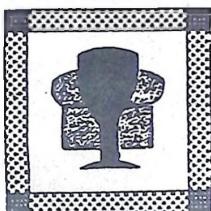
Coming in October: Festival of Shelters !

Open Door Community Worship

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

Child care available.

Join us!



During the month of August, worship will be at 910.

Four times each year the Community has a weekend retreat outside the city. This replaces our evening worship at 910 Ponce de Leon Ave.

Needs

CHEESE
MAYONNAISE
VITAMIN C
MARTA TOKENS
POSTAGE STAMPS
MEN'S LARGE SHOES (12-14)
COFFEE
DEODORANT
HAMS AND TURKEYS
POSTAL MONEY ORDERS
RAZORS
SHAMPOO
FOOT POWDER
BATH POWDER
VOLUNTEERS ON MONDAYS AND TUESDAYS TO HELP PREPARE SACK LUNCHES BETWEEN 9AM AND 12:30PM.

WE NEED VASELINE FOR HAIR CARE!

From 11am - 1pm Monday- 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 11:00 or after 1:00, it would be helpful. Thanks.

Newspaper Requests - If you or a friend would like to receive HOSPITALITY, please fill in this form and return to Willie London at the Open Door Community, 910 Ponce de Leon Ave. NE, Atlanta, Georgia 30306-4212.

Name _____

Street _____

City, State, Zip _____