

HOSPITALITY

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vol. 15, no. 8

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

August 1996

Following Jesus: Clamoring for Public Toilets

by Ed Loring

On Monday, June 17, 1996, forty of us went to City Hall to stage a demonstration. We called on the Mayor and City Council to build permanent public toilets for the citizens of Atlanta. We began with 10 of us sitting on old toilets in front of City Hall. The remaining 30 of us either leafleted or carried placards proclaiming the need for toilets and proclaiming the experiences of injustice among the homeless and hungry in our city. Of course, the slogan for the day, as it is the slogan for the movement, was "Pee for free with dignity" with the occasional addition "as Jesus did in Galilee."

After we had been on the sidewalk for a half an hour or more, it was clear that the police and the officials of City Hall were paying little attention. We had good press response and we are thankful for the good work Houston Wheeler did in organizing the press work. We decided to move the toilets several feet closer to the front doors of City Hall. Chuck Campbell was very helpful as he took the information and responses to each of us as we 10 attempted to make consensus decisions while on toilets in the midst of a demonstration. We all agreed and moved the toilets closer to the door.

Shortly thereafter we decided to take the toilets inside City Hall. We had no idea that we could actually get them inside. We rather believed that we could get them to the metal detector and be stopped. (In that event, we considered sitting there on the toilets to block the passageway.) So we picked up our toilets and followed the one who comes into town on a donkey. I led the line and when I got to the metal detector the police officer said that I could go no further. "Oh," I responded, "there will be no problem getting this through the detector. There is no metal here!" "Where are you going?" he queried. "To see the Mayor," I said. With that I plunged on through the line into the atrium of City Hall. In the meantime a

line of folk were behind me. Murphy was on the bullhorn encouraging people to come on, and the dumbstruck police let our whole group into City Hall. I, too, was dumbstruck and filled with exceeding joy. What a great life to follow Jesus and how great of our sister the Holy Spirit to get us inside!



Inside, Murphy led us in singing as we sat again on the toilets which were placed near the fountain. We also yelled as loud as we could, claiming the pain and needs of those who are arrested and rejected by the elites and power brokers of the city. After a few minutes, with lots of employees gawking at us, I suggested that we go up to the Mayor's office. Elizabeth Dede, who had done such loving and excellent service in organizing this action and keeping all the details and shifts of plans before all of us, went to check out the best route for us. An amazing part of this action was the continual unity throughout, even as we escalated and moved closer to arrest. There was a sweet, sweet spirit among us that is the gift and grace of God among people of faith in the midst of obedience and witness and risk. We are all so thankful for the way that Yahweh, in the name of Jesus the Jew and in solidarity with the homeless and hungry, poured out her spirit upon us.

Elizabeth came back in a minute with a simple route for us to follow. Although we had to climb marble stairs which would be a bit risky with

the porcelain toilets, once again we were being led. Up the steps we went, singing and yelling and having a wonderful time. We got into the hallway leading to the Mayor's office before his staff and the police stopped us. We sat again on our toilets and sang songs and tried to tell the police we would not leave until we could see the Mayor.

Officer LaSalle Smith came out to deal with us. He was an arresting officer years ago when we did a somewhat similar action and Will

Coleman, Dick Stewart and I were arrested for taking a toilet into Andy Young's office. Smith did not last long. The Mayor then sent out one more of his people to reason with us. The urbane Mr. Marshall assured us that the Mayor is in favor of public toilets. He just has to get a contract, that's all, Mr. Marshall proclaimed with certainty.

He wanted us to be reasonable and to move from the hall to a table for dialogue. Mr. Marshall is new in Atlanta. He did not know about us, nor was he aware that we have been carrying on a Public Toilets Campaign for 13 years in this Olympic city. We said, No, that the floor of this hall was where we wanted to articulate the agony and despair of those who are harassed by the police, hassled by the courts and jails, and despised by the likes of Mr. Samuel ("Was that you calling me Eli? No son, go and listen for the LORD.") Williams of Central Atlanta Progress. We then looked to Murphy, who led us in a song, while the police decided to try to move us. All this while we were surrounded by the 30 others of our group who were listening, yelling, singing and generally and joyfully being obedient to the One who calls us to have a good time in the struggle for justice. The police told us not to block the hallway after it became clear that we would not leave until we saw the Mayor, the city stopped arresting people for public urination, or until there were functional public toilets available to the

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HOSPITALITY



MICHAEL SCHWARZ

910 Ponce de Leon

Hospitality is published 11 times a year by the Open Door Community (PCUS), Inc., an Atlanta community of Christians called to ministry with the homeless poor and with prisoners, particularly those on death row. Subscriptions are free. A newspaper request form is included in each issue. Manuscripts and letters are welcomed. Inclusive language editing is standard. For more information about the life and work of the Open Door, please contact any of the following:

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Circulation--Phillip Williams and a multitude of earthly hosts and guests

Subscriptions or change of address--Gladys Rustay

(A \$7 donation to the Open Door would help to cover the costs of printing and mailing *Hospitality*.)

(Following Jesus, continued from page 1)

homeless, hungry and all of us in Atlanta. (This is what our request would have been had Mr. Bill Campbell been willing to peer out from behind the heavy and beautiful walnut doors).

We blocked the hallway with our toilets and bodies. Once an office worker came by with a cart of mail. We, like Moses at the Red Sea, parted and let her through with no particular attention to her. She smiled and thanked us. Shortly thereafter Major Woodard, the head of Zone 5 of the Atlanta Police Department, arrived. He was courteous and friendly. He simply said that we must move, and I told him we would not do so until the Mayor met with us, or until the city stopped arresting people for peeing until public toilets are available. The politics and justice issues were not of interest to this nice white man. His officers began to carry us off (and gave me quite the wedgy). They carried me to the back of our group and then began moving the rest of us. Adolphus pretended he was deaf and kept asking them what they wanted him to do. It wasn't long until all 10 of us with toilets were moved to the back and the hall was usable. Then the police took us downstairs and let us go!!!

This was another surprise for us. The Holy Spirit was having a great day at City Hall. Don't you know how tired she must get listening to all the palaver in those horrid meetings about how to get richer? At any rate, when we realized we were free, we sprinted from the basement parking lot around to the front door of City Hall. On the way we lost Ed Potts and Tommy Davis, whom the police brought downstairs in another elevator. Murphy, Todd, Alycia, Jennifer (who had been ordained the day before at the Open Door), Ron, Phillip, Adolphus and I returned to the Mayor's office, yelling and carrying on

like prophets of old on fire for the Word of God and brimming with passion for those who are being abused by folk who sleep on king-sized beds and play golf on green grass by pools of cool water. Many others of our group were still in City Hall and they were as stunned to see us free as we were to be running around let loose by the police. We got to the Mayor's reception desk, not blocking the hallway, asking to see the Mayor. The police returned, unbelief on their faces that we were back in the Mayor's office and this time they took us, saying we were under arrest and on our way to jail.



Protesters carrying toilets through the hallways of Atlanta City Hall.

After a night in jail and a long wait before court, we came before Judge Deborah Green. The charges we are facing are: 1) Disorderly Conduct. Our defense is that it was not us but the cry of Christ in the cry of the poor in us. One possible exception is Rev. Jennifer Lee who has been with us only since June 1. She probably was being disorderly on her own, especially since she was just ordained the day before by Cherokee Presbytery. However, no one in our group wants to be judgmental. And 2) Criminal Trespass. This charge, a state charge, is particularly odious to us. The Mayor had just said on the radio the week before (so we've been told) for the citizens of Atlanta to come and see him if he could be helpful with the issues that need addressing in our city. Mayor Bill Campbell can certainly be helpful regarding public toilets!! So we came to him. What will happen to the democratic system if visits to the Mayor's office become criminalized? Certainly the Mayor's office is not part of the Vagrant Free Zone, is it? And anyway, Jesus was the only vagrant among us; and no one, no one, will take responsibility for his presence (Why, he was just seen in Buckhead the other day, jogging with Dave Higgins along Peachtree Street!).

Due to the failure of one of the witnesses from the Mayor's office to appear at the Municipal Court, the City Solicitor did not want to proceed with only 4 arresting police officers and one of the Mayor's aides to testify against the practice of resurrection. So the case was continued until Thursday, August 22, at 9:30 a.m. (that is, after the Olympics). The Open Door and several friends were at court that Tuesday morning. Joyce Hollyday missed the session because she was on a talk radio program trying to tell the Far Right that it is not simply a question of personal choice that people need to pee. The Right in Atlanta seems to believe that if one does not have access to a toilet they ought not to drink until they get them a good job at \$4.25 per hour. Joyce was foolish enough to talk about caring and compassion: themes that leave the Right in paroxysms of delirium.

We need help and support. Please write Mayor Campbell and Council President Marvin Arrington, Atlanta City Hall, 55 Trinity Ave., Atlanta, Georgia, 30335, asking for permanent public toilets for the city of Atlanta. Please send copies of your letters to *Hospitality*. Please come to our court hearing on Thursday, August 22, at 9:30 a.m. Please follow our case. It is possible that we will be bound over to the state court and have to go to trial. Please pray for us each day and for the homeless and hungry among us who are rejected and pushed aside daily with increasing violence and disdain.

Thank you!!

Ed Loring is a partner at the Open Door Community.

Press Release

from the Task Force for the Homeless

Judge Grants Partial Injunction in Federal Homeless Lawsuit

ATLANTA (July 17, 1996) - A federal judge's ruling today will change the way homeless people in Atlanta are treated. Advocates for the homeless received the judgment with hope for permanent relief.

Seven homeless men filed a federal lawsuit against the City, on June 10, citing unconstitutional harassment and arrests [The plaintiffs are represented by lead counsel Ropes and Gray, a Boston firm with a reputation for doing *pro bono* work. Local co-counsel is from the firm of Carter and Ansley.]. The lawsuit challenged two city ordinances as overbroad and unconstitutional: aggressive panhandling and a parked vehicle ordinance. The suit also alleged a custom of harassing and arresting homeless people without probable cause.

Federal Judge J. Owen Forrester granted a preliminary injunction against part of the aggressive panhandling ordinance.

In June, Judge Forrester granted a temporary restraining order against a key provision of the parked vehicle ordinance, which made it illegal to "act in a manner not usual for a law-abiding individual."

The Task Force for the Homeless [joined by People for Urban Justice, the Open Door Community, the American Civil Liberties Union, and others] opposed the ordinance as deliberately vague and has since gathered evidence that the police used this ordinance to target homeless people for arrest.

Because of a legal technicality, the courts denied a request for a preliminary injunction on this language.

However, the court made it clear that if anyone is arrested in the future under this ordinance, the measure would be held unconstitutional. Specifically, the judge ruled, "the court would hold (the above referenced language) unconstitutionally vague."

Over the past year, police have arrested more than 9,000 homeless individuals, in many cases without probable cause. The offenses range from cutting across parking lots to sleeping in public to asking for change.

The judge acknowledged police officers "exceeded their authority in a manner with constitutional implications while dealing with the homeless."

The ruling on July 17, 1996, is only the beginning of a long legal process, which should result in further protection for homeless individuals.

In the decision handed down, it was noted, "Based upon the record developed, including over 100 declarations of the homeless and the unrebutted incidents outlined in plaintiffs' affidavits, it is clear that city officials have received sufficient notice of these events in order to establish a custom in the future."

Other quotes from the Judge's decision worth noting:

"The facts and allegations found within a number of the sworn declarations submitted from 161 homeless men in Atlanta, shed further light upon the nature of the alleged Fourth Amendment violations and the potential evidence available to demonstrate widespread violations of the constitutional rights of persons living on the streets."

"...the mayor and police chief were on general notice that the homeless feared police misconduct and sweeps, and have been largely indifferent to managing the law enforcement response."

"The record developed before the court thus far reveals a disconcerting pattern in which Atlanta police officers have arrested and detained individuals engaged in lawful activity..."

Did You Know?

- To afford the two bedroom rent of \$604 (fair market rent), the median hourly wage needed is \$10.44, far in excess of the current federal minimum wage of \$4.25 and twice the proposed minimum wage of \$5.10.
- The leading cause of homelessness in the United States is the inability of poor people to afford housing.
- Overall, 24% of Atlanta's homeless population works, but is still homeless.
- For two decades wages for nonsupervisory positions has decreased, while CEO compensation has risen 18% in salary and bonuses.

Information provided by the Atlanta Task Force for the Homeless, and the "Out of Reach" report by the National Low Income Housing Coalition.

*Thanks for your
support during the
Olympics!*

*A great big thanks to all of you who
have given your time and gifts in
support with us during the Olympics.*

Marvin Arrington
President
Atlanta City Council
55 Trinity Avenue, SW
Atlanta, GA 30335

June 3, 1996

Dear Mr. Arrington:

I am a urologist in practice in the Atlanta area. My specialty is voiding dysfunction. Many of the men, women and children who are patients in my practice have problems with bladder control. In addition to promoting bladder health for my patients from a medical standpoint, I also want to promote bladder health from a social point of view as well.

I am aware of the work that you have done in the past regarding the placement of public toilets in public areas in the Atlanta area, and I am interested to promote your efforts. For many of my patients, access to public toilets is not only a convenience, it is a health necessity. As I write notes for my patients for their work and school environments to allow them access to toilets, I am concerned, when they venture away from home into the public areas, that their access to toilets may be limited.

In addition, I counsel patients with voiding dysfunction at Shepherd Spinal Center. Many of my patients are paraplegic and quadriplegic and desire handicapped access for their bladder care. Therefore, I feel that public toilets should be wheelchair accessible.

I am interested to correspond with you regarding this subject. You may contact me by phone, mail or fax.

Sincerely,

Jenelle E. Foote, M.D.
Midtown Urology Clinic
Atlanta, GA



Clarence¹

by Ed Loring

I

Harold Amasa Loring and Mary Alice Nuessner finished the third set before 8:00 a.m. Bouncing on the balls of their feet, Buster, as he was known affectionately in the South Carolina low country, and Mary turned from the court and headed home. While she scrambled eggs and fried fat back, Harold picked up his trumpet and began to play a love song. Later, Mary washed the dishes, Harold dried. A little later still, they made

me, and I am thankful. All day long the calendars silently proclaimed that June 15, 1939, was taking place ("Today is the day the LORD has made. Let us rejoice and be glad in it.").

Twenty-seven years later, Mom and Dad, at personal sacrifice, made it possible for me to spend a year in Europe. My parents were very good to me! Among the many sites I saw and stories I learned, none have had the impact of my visit (with Pat, Joe and Carlisle and Nan) to Dachau. The museum and bones, the ovens and compounds were horrible and reside intertwined in my tissues today, but, yes, but... The stories about the good people of Dachau, Christians and lovers of life, who did not know, were ignorant of the ovens, the final solution, the white ash from gray bone falling on the red tiled roofs of their houses troubled me deeply (I hoped below the bottom of my heart to become a professor, I believed that education, knowledge and truth were the powers of love and justice. Many years and many deaths of homeless friends would pass before I grasped the shadow side of our fierce commitment to ignorance about the suffering of the poor and outcast.). So I remembered Mom and Dad with thanksgiving; and I remembered Dachau with fear and frustration as I walked onto the grounds of the Cobb County Adult Detention Center recently to visit Clarence.

I had never put foot to soil on the earth set aside by the county citizens to cage their brothers and sisters, their daughters and sons, so Adolphus² dialed the dungeon for directions. I was horrified when I stepped out of the car Todd gave us. Construction was flaming up on all sides. "Is this an Olympic venue?" I muttered to Jesus, who was somewhere to my left. The jail is being doubled at least, and, of course, this is not the Olympics; it's America. Since 1980 the prison population in the U.S.A. has doubled. New jails, new prisons (as in Atlanta, which quadrupled its caging capacity), renovations and additions are going on everywhere. Homes for the homeless? Certainly. But much, much more. This prison sickness is a blocked valve in the heart of our nation. We are afraid. We are angry at each other. And, unfortunately they are coming for us, too. But we have some time left. Presently almost no one in the Georgia jails and prisons is affluent, or has power and influence. But the shade on the window has been pulled and the thumb and fore finger squeeze the rough, round lamp switch. ... click.

The citizens of Dachau were not the first; the taxpayers of Smyrna and Marietta will not be the last. In fact, the Bible is full of moral death, political blindness and merciless deafness. Jeremiah, for one, giving voice to Yahweh's analysis and providence concerning the affluent, church leaders, and the laity says:

Evildoers live among my people; they lie in wait like deer hunters on a stand, but they have built jails and prisons to catch the poor and homeless, the Black and Brown and Red human beings among us. Just as a deer hunter fills the back of his truck with the carcass of doe

and buck, they have filled their houses with loot. That is why they are powerful and rich, why they are fat and well fed. There is no limit to their evil deeds. They do not give orphans hot lunches at school or show justice to the oppressed. They condemn the forsaken who sit on park benches and make war on teenage mothers.

But I, the LORD (i.e., Yahweh, the God of Exodus who was hell on the oppressor), will punish them for these things; I will take revenge on this nation" (Jeremiah 5:26-29, TEV with adaptations).

II

Clarence has lived for periods in our backyard, banging with hope on our back door. He has often come in for lunch, showers, worship and supper. I hadn't seen him in a while. Then one day a letter arrives and the story begins to unfold: work with too little pay, crack, police, jail, halfway house, relapse on crack, jail and probably he is on the way to prison. This solution, dear friends, will cost us \$24,000 per year. Although Zell Miller and Guy Milner will be happy, what about you? Isn't there a better way to spend our public money and to help Clarence in the meantime? He is a good man, though oppressed and abandoned. He needs help. He will come out of prison someday more disabled, angry, alienated, and brutalized. Surely, as Peter Maurin would say, there is an easier way to be good than to send our friends and enemies to prison for such as this.

With our faces a few inches from the thick glass separating us, we spoke to each other over the telephone. I told him the jail would not accept the clothes Elizabeth and Ralph had put together for his court appearance. He must go in prison digs—another little nick for those who cannot afford bail; another little note to judge and jury that they are dealing with a dollarless human being. So what could his time and life be worth anyway?

Clarence has never been to prison. He is afraid. He says so with mouth and tongue, and he tells me again and again with his eyes and the twitch of his left hand holding the black receiver. He wants one thing: to locate his mama. He last heard from her more than a year ago. She was living in Columbia, S.C. I told him that I would try 803/555-1212. I did. She is gone.

To cut taxes, the authorities have cut services and supplies in the jails and prisons across the land. Clarence told me that he stank bad, and his hair was matted until the contribution from supporters of the Open Door became a small money order that Elizabeth mailed to him. "Ed, I sure feel better now!" he exclaimed. "Tell 'em thanks."

No one nodded for me to leave, but the leaving time came anyway. We put our hands together like we do at our worship, except for the glass between us ("The only chain we can stand, is the chain of a hand in hand," we sing sometimes.). "Lord, God Almighty, hold Clarence's troubled hand during this troubled time in this troubled land," we beseech you. "Help him out of this trouble, please most merciful God. Trouble the waters, Lord!! And bring him home to 910. And help me find his mama, Lord. In Jesus' name, amen."

I left, stepping back into the free world. Glare hit me hard. The bulldozers were running wild like fire, like randy, bellowing beasts. The jail was alive and growing like a mud slide, oozing down a mountain slope. Machines were lopping trees the way an ignoble wolf swills the blood of prey. "Call me Cassandra," I cried to myself as I hopped into the car Todd gave us. "Dachau, Dachau, Dachau," I moaned, turning the tape to blind Ray's "Hit the Road Jack," and I drove away.

Ed Loring is a partner at the Open Door.

¹ **Clarence:** The name derives from the town *Clare* in Suffolk, which gave its name to the English dukedom of Clarence. The Duke of Clarence, who later became King William IV (1765-1837), monarch of Great Britain and Ireland, 1830-37, rode in a special carriage (a forerunner to the sad and secretive limousine), which was closed with four seats on the inside and a seat for the driver on the outside. This style carriage took his name: *clarence*.

² **Adolph, Adolphus, Adolphe, Adolf:** comes from Old High German (700-1100 A.D.), means noble wolf. *Adal* is noble, plus wolf. Adolphus is now a novice, and we are praising and thanking the Holy Spirit for this call and period of discernment. A few months ago I erroneously told Adolphus his name was Greek for brother. He was washing clothes and nodded approvingly as he stuffed his clothes into the dryer. I had mistaken *adelphos* for *adolphus*. But this is even better! Now I have a noble wolf for a brother.

Discipleship of the Body

by Chuck Campbell

(Editor's note: Chuck Campbell teaches preaching and worship at Columbia Theological Seminary in Decatur, Georgia. This article is the fourth part in a six-part series in which he reflects on experiences he had while working with the Open Door Community during his recent sabbatical.)

In his book, *The Identity of Jesus Christ*, the theologian Hans Frei wrote the following: "... the embodiment of the Easter story's pattern in our lives means ... a new way of governing our *bodies*. That is how we are in touch with the story" (italics mine). I have cited Frei's words many times. However, I never fully grasped their importance until my recent sabbatical. As the sabbatical progressed, I realized that my teachers at Urban Training Organization and the Open Door Community were repeatedly telling me simply to place my *body* in new and different locations.

"Take your body out of the air-conditioned calm and comfort of Columbia Seminary," the people at Urban Training told me. "Put your body instead in a couple of Atlanta's housing projects. Go and sweat in the stifling heat of the Herndon Homes Community Center and become dizzy amidst the chaotic lives of the young men who meet there. Go sit in the apartment of a teenage mother at Perry Homes [where an infant recently choked to death on a cockroach]. Place your body in these locations, and learn there about the privilege of your 'white' flesh."

"Move your body out of your large home and your warm bed," folks at the Open Door told me, "and place it on the streets of Atlanta for twenty-four hours. Sleep (or try to) on the cold concrete and wake up shivering. Look unsuccessfully for a toilet to use — and don't forget you can be arrested for relieving yourself elsewhere. Stand in line for hours for your meals, stomach growling. Walk the streets all day. Experience, in a small way, the urgency and exhaustion of the homeless — in your body."

And there was more. "Put your body in the waiting room at the Grady Infectious Disease Clinic. Sit with people who have AIDS as they wait to have their bodies pricked and poked and prodded. And don't miss, sitting next to you, the sick prisoner, his body clothed in an orange jumpsuit, his ankles in shackles, his wrists in handcuffs. Then go down to the pharmacy and wait for medicine — over an hour for a bottle of aspirin. In your tense muscles, feel how the poor pay with their time if not their money."

"Take your body into the Fulton County Jail. Visit with prisoners through a pane of glass, unable even to shake hands. Notice the lipstick marks on the glass, the residue of kisses which fell short of human lips — each one a cry for physical contact with a husband or lover. And take your body to Death Row in Jackson. Pass through a barred, electronic gate, a metal detector, another set of bars, and another, and another. Then, finally inside, hug death row inmates — and receive their hugs. Experience in your body the isolation and humanity of people scheduled for electrocution."

"Walk your body into a labor pool, under the suspicious gaze of the job assignment clerk because you're too white and too clean and too rested. Sit on the hard, wooden benches and feel your back begin to ache. Breathe the smoke-filled air, and smell the hardworking men who have no place to shower. Wonder what it's like to be treated as little more than a body — as a mere physical, human tool in the service of Atlanta's corporate greed."

At a time when the church seems obsessed with "spirituality" and seminaries offer degrees in "spiritual formation," my mentors at Urban Training and the Open Door taught me the deep truth of Hans Frei's words: "... the embodiment of the Easter story's pattern in our lives means ... a new way of governing our *bodies*. That is how we are in touch with the story." When someone recently asked me to share some ways I nurture my spiritual life, my immediate response surprised me: "Over the past year," I replied, "my spiritual life has been shaped most by what I've been doing with my *body*." At first, that reply seemed like a paradox: spiritual formation is directly related to the discipleship of the body. But then I remembered that the story of Jesus begins with the incarnation and moves toward the resurrection of the *body*, and the surprise and paradox disappeared. As Hans Frei and Urban Training and the Open Door have taught me, we get in touch with *this* story through our bodies.

See the next issue of *Hospitality* for part 5 in this 6 part series from Chuck Campbell.

VOICES FROM THE STREETS

"On Our Journey Toward Women's Liberation"

by Ron Jackson

I grew up believing that men were much more right about things than women. Being one of ten children raised by my mother, I never did feel the suffering or pain that my mother was going through. I only felt that it was her job to see we made it. But now as I look back on my past, I cannot only see what my mother went through, but I can also somewhat feel it.

There were days in my childhood that were very difficult. Some days we barely had food to eat, even though my mother worked each and every day, often late into the night. I remember how my two older sisters always took care of us. My mother had eight boys and two girls. Five of us boys were younger than my sisters, so they had their hands full. Even my sisters must have had such a hard time growing up being women — and extremely poor, black women at that! But they were very strong in heart and full of love. Yes, I love my two sisters. My sisters have come a long way from our childhood, and each has two kids. So the parenting still hasn't stopped for them.

My mother is getting to be an old woman now. But she still sees us as her little boys and girls who need a mother. And I must say thanks to the Lord for my mother. I know there are many people whose mothers have gone home to the Lord, but yet they are still their mother's children.

It was years later in my life that I found out why my father left my mother and all his children. After hearing why he left, I felt very sorry for him because I know my father loved us all. But also I am very mad at him for leaving us. I keep asking myself, why couldn't he be a man? Why did he run out on us? Why couldn't my mother and father work things out? I will never know why, at least not from my father. He's dead now, and we never did get a chance to talk about why he left. We all were just so happy to see him again after not seeing him for about twelve or thirteen years. His leaving had something to do with him beating my mother. Maybe she just got tired of it. My mother and father never did get a divorce. So I do believe they love each other a whole lot.

As I grew up I saw many women go through spousal abuse. Most cases led to the break up of the marriage and families; sometimes it led to death. Men always feel that their families are subject to them, and whatever they say or do, the rest must go with it. And if the women disagree, the men always seem to react with violence. Perhaps they hate to have their ego hurt. And if they don't respond violently, they just run out, leaving the women carrying the burdens. And how heavy those burdens can be for them. It's not only hard but it is also a form of suffering that no human should have to go through. I do know that poor women suffer more than any other group of women. But all women suffer from this wrong: a male dominated society. I believe that God created all people as equals. There are neither male nor female. We should be all one in our Lord Jesus Christ. If any man or woman can hear this saying, let them hear and believe. We must remember: God is the Ruler of all things. No human being should oppress another human being. Let us men start treating women as equals. They are the ones who carry us nine whole months. Amen.

Ron Jackson is a Novice at the Open Door.

Labor Day Cajun Picnic

This Labor Day, we plan to serve a Cajun picnic of ham, red beans, rice, and other good things cooked up by Elizabeth, Adolphus and their volunteer staff. We'll need donations of hams and money to make this meal special to all our homeless friends who partake of it.

Please contact Brenda Smith, our Volunteer Coordinator, for further information (404-874-9652).

WEALTH, FAITH, AND POVERTY: A PERSONAL TESTIMONY

- conclusion -

(Editor's note: To protect the author's privacy, we are running this 3-part series anonymously.)

I began making a series of sizable gifts to organizations that were trying to help the poor. Making such gifts could be relatively quick and simple or quite complicated and time consuming. What I learned was that my personal satisfaction with a particular gift was directly related to how intimately I could connect with the organization I wanted to help. The better the feel I had for an organization's way of life and spirit, the better I felt about making a gift when I chose to do so. I also learned that giving money away can be quite challenging in a number of ways.

First, to give away a sizable portion of your assets is to put your family's future at risk. It means surrendering control over a degree of economic security and trusting God's promise to help those who give up their life in order to find it in Christ. Faith moves from being just talk to banking your life on what the author of the Hebrews calls "things unseen." It is hard to give up a bird in hand for the more beautiful bird that you hope and pray is waiting for you in the bush, especially when you know good Christian folk who seem to have come up empty handed!

Second, I found that while I was often willing to put my own future at risk, I was far more troubled about putting my family's future at risk—particularly my children's. This was doubly distressing to me because I have often heard people who seemingly use their children's security or safety as an excuse to avoid giving tangible expression to their concern for the poor. But I have also known parents whose radical discipleship has contributed to enormous suffering and rage in their children. I did not want to use my children as an excuse not to obey Christ's call to care for the poor on one hand, but neither did I want to force my children to carry the cross that I am called to bear.

Third, I found myself wondering if it makes any difference whether or not I give money to the poor or to the organizations that serve them. Was it not true that the poor, like the rest of us, often misused what was entrusted to them? Did not charitable organizations often spend too much on themselves and not enough on the people that they claimed to serve? Was it not true that many charitable organizations employed strategies that were ineffective, outdated, or that only dealt with symptoms and not the basic causes of poverty?

A fourth challenge was like the third. As one counselor put it, money does not change people's lives, people do. Did I not have an exaggerated sense of what money could do in solving people's problems? Did the war on poverty not show me how "throwing money at problems" doesn't solve anything? Moreover, my own experience as a minister had been that many church people would far prefer to give their own

money to solve human problems rather than give their time and hearts in human relationships with people in need.

A fifth and final challenge came with the knowledge that my motives for giving could often be far from noble. Was I giving to alleviate my guilt about being wealthy? Should I give only if I could do so with a "cheerful heart," as the Bible says? Was I trying to feel powerful or important? Was I too interested in getting people to like me and not interested enough in the real needs of the poor? On and on I could go.

Regarding the first challenge—putting your economic security at risk—I do not think that I have stepped very far out of the boat full of timid disciples and onto the roiling waters of economic risk. Even though I have given very large sums of money away, it is far less than the widow who put all of the little she had in the temple treasury box. Nevertheless, I have come to appreciate the significance of partial victories and "baby-steps" in my discipleship. At an early age I came to have a special love for Zaccheus, an unpopular rich man who hovered at the edge of the crowd trying to get a glimpse of Jesus. The love of Jesus set Zaccheus free to give up half of his wealth. I have tried to follow the steps of Zaccheus for fifteen or so years, sometimes coming closer than others.

My tax advisors and accountants have always frowned on my giving philosophy, and have encouraged me to keep my assets but give away my income. However, my conscience presses me to give far more away. The advice of Jesus has been of comfort as I lie in the gap between the two poles: "Be gentle as doves but wise as serpents." Somehow I have tried to live in the nether region between what my worldly wisdom suggests and what my conscience advises. In the end, I am grateful to God that I have not had to solve the riddle of security versus risk quickly and finally. I take comfort in Peter's words, "Our Lord's patience with us is our salvation." (II Peter 3:15)

My solution to the second puzzle of being a responsible parent has been similar to the first. My wife and I have decided against living in the numbing sameness and supposed security of wealthy suburbs, but we have also chosen to find places to live where our children could encounter economic and social diversity without excessive risk.

Between home, neighborhood, church and school, our children have learned about the diversity of God's people, rich and poor, black and white, and about the enormous social and economic inequities that exist in our country and around the world. I particularly feel good about the opportunities that we have given them to get to know and serve the homeless, but I regret not giving them opportunities more often. Even though we have not done all we could, to this point our children

have very well-developed social consciences and are unafraid to go against the crowd to stand up for unpopular causes and outcasts.

The third challenge is whether or not it really makes a difference when we give money to serve the poor. I have felt for a long time that giving money to people who need support is an art. One temptation is to dismiss a legitimate request or opportunity without considering it;

another temptation is to give indiscriminately, that is, without really examining all the implications of a gift. Some poor people—like their wealthy counterparts—are clever manipulators, and some are not. Some organizations spend far too much on themselves or are too comfortable with oppressive systems. By contrast, some organizations are very good stewards for people in need and also ask

Hot food in the belly after a cold night on the streets, a cataract operation in a culture where blindness often means death, an encouraging conversation with a lonely teenager in a housing project—these are all signs of the Kingdom of God to me, and all are events which my money has helped to bring about.

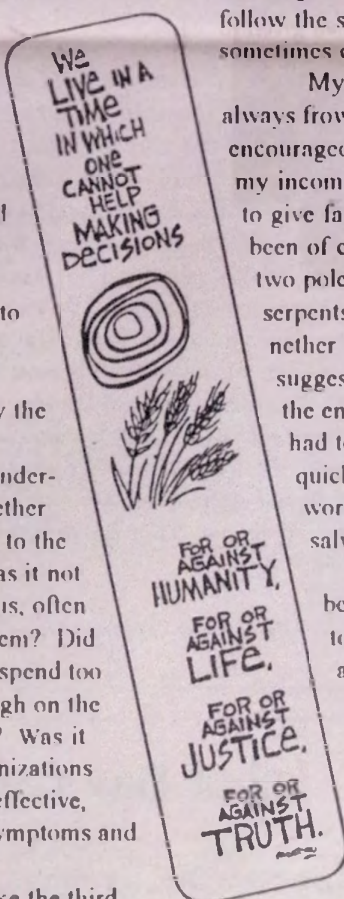
tough questions about the current economic system. The Open Door is one of the better examples of this latter kind of organization.

Giving gifts to people or causes who need support requires time, prayer, and patience. My own experience has been that when I have invested these energies into giving, my satisfaction has been high, as has been my sense of connection to God and those I am attempting to help. However, I have had to learn (and re-learn!) that I cannot support every organization or cause or person that I come into contact with, any more than Jesus could heal everyone in first-century Judea! So, following the advice of a wise friend years ago, I have tended to focus my major giving on two or three organizations that I feel directed towards. But I always try to leave open the option that the Spirit may be leading me in a new direction.

While it does take work, patience and prayer to discern where God is calling you to give, I remain convinced that appropriately given gifts can make a real difference in peoples' lives. Hot food in the belly after a cold night on the streets, a cataract operation in a culture where blindness often means death, an encouraging conversation with a lonely teenager in a housing project—these are all signs of the Kingdom of God to me, and all are events which my money has helped to bring about.

The fourth challenge argues that what the world needs is caring people, not money "thrown at problems." However, this is a false dichotomy. We do not have to choose between giving our money or ourselves. In fact, of course, God wants us to give both. As I said in response to the third challenge, my own sense of satisfaction in giving money has been inseparable from giving my time and myself.

Sometimes I am in a better position to give my money, and sometimes I am more able to give my time. Whichever is the case, I have



found it hard to do one without the other. Moreover, as I think about it at this moment, this makes sense because whether it is done in terms of time or money, all of our living is done in relation to other people and creation. This relationship may be good or bad, but we never live alone. In fact, money is fundamentally relational. It is a basic way in which we interact with one another. It is about "give and take." So if someone argues that money is fundamentally an obstacle to human caring and interacting, he or she does not understand what money is really about.

However, many of us middle-class and wealthy people have used money in ways that cut us off from people in need, or even keep people in need. Indeed, I suspect that a lot of giving that goes on in this country falls into this category. People want to salve their guilty consciences or look like they are caring for the poor or creation. Or, as some have argued, charity has been a means for keeping the pain of poverty minimal enough to avoid a social revolution.

But the most important thing to remember is that money is a fundamental way that people relate to one another and, for those of us who claim to follow Christ, we will want to use it to "build up" basic human relationships and not to tear them down.

To be truthful, the fifth challenge has been a very difficult one for me. Have I had the right motives for giving? Has my heart been in the right place?

Over the years I have had to learn over and over again that my heart, like all people's, is extremely complex. Sometimes I have been tempted to think that I only want to give my money to people in need because I feel guilty. Other times I fear it is because I need to feel like I am really making a difference in the world. Still other times I worry that I need people's approval too much, even though I usually try to give as anonymously as possible. More often than not, at least several of these descriptions of my heart have been true, along with others. In my better moments, I believe that I have given out of gratitude for what God has given me and for the faith and courage of those people I have been privileged to collaborate with. But my motives have always been mixed.

The most important thing I have learned is not to wait to give until my heart is in the right place. This is important first of all because in this life, my heart will never get it "just right." But perhaps more important, once I have made a gift and splashed around in the water of the giving experience, I have learned that giving has softened my heart as well as helping me become a bit wiser about when and where it is appropriate to give.

People as diverse as C.S. Lewis, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, and some good Jewish friends have taught me that while good deeds do not necessarily reflect a good heart, we cannot "grow a good

heart" in God's mercy without good deeds. My own experience has been that it is only when I risk making mistakes and doing things for the wrong reasons that I put myself in the place where God and other people can help me grow in faith, hope, and love—the three central virtues of a graced heart.

I suppose that my responses to these five challenges give a fairly current picture of how I view the role of my own wealth in relation to

poverty and the other needs of creation. I realize that there is a great deal that I have not said. I also know that there are so many ways that I need to grow in grace and faithfulness regarding this life-long puzzle.

I have not really known quite why I have written all of this, but I think that I am beginning to catch some glimpses. This has been something of a conversation with

myself and any interested reader. I have been trying to make some sense out of my life—something someone reaching 50 is inclined to do! I have also hoped that maybe someone might read this and find some hope, particularly someone for whom wealth has been morally perplexing.

Finally, however, I think it is fair to say that what I have been up to is praying. I have been praying that God would help me see more clearly how to be a good steward of what has been given to me. I have also been praying that more people with wealth, particularly Christians, would take the risk of building bridges with each other and with the poor in order to make our society and our church more just and compassionate. Please pray for me and for other wealthy people in this country, that we may build friendships with the poor and all of creation and thereby become better friends with God.

This concludes this three-part series on Wealth, Faith, and Poverty.

But the most important thing to remember is that money is a fundamental way that people relate to one another and, for those of us who claim to follow Christ, we will want to use it to "build up" basic human relationships and not to tear them down.

Photography Exhibit

Doors of the Soul

Photographs from the Open Door
by Calvin Kimbrough

On four occasions in 1992, 1993, and 1994, I spent a week in Atlanta, Georgia at the Open Door Community enjoying the companionship of long time friends Murphy Davis, Ed Loring, and their daughter Hannah Loring Davis, and meeting the rest of the household there at 910 Ponce de Leon—partners, guests, volunteers, and other visitors. One of my tasks each week was to make pictures. These photographs are from those images.

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- through mid-October -**

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**Ed Loring
910 Ponce de Leon Ave., NE
Atlanta, GA 30306-4212**



A Preference for Vengeance: A Report on the Death Penalty and Prisons in Georgia

part 2

by Stephen Bright

(Editor's note: Stephen Bright is the Director of the Southern Center for Human Rights located in Atlanta, Georgia, a non profit, public interest human rights organization which focuses on the human rights of prisoners and those facing the death penalty in the South. We run here the (slightly condensed) second of three parts of this report by Stephen Bright.)

- Atlanta, June 1996 -

GEORGIA'S DEATH PENALTY: VIOLATIONS OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS OF RACIAL MINORITIES, THE POOR, AND THE DISADVANTAGED, part 2

Racial discrimination

Racial discrimination remains a prominent feature of capital punishment in Georgia, as it has been throughout the state's history. Twelve of the twenty people executed by Georgia have been African Americans. Six of the African Americans executed were convicted and sentenced to death by all-white juries.

Although over sixty percent of the victims of murders in Georgia each year are African American, 18 of the 20 cases in which executions have been carried out involved white victims, and over eighty percent of those on Georgia's death row are there for the murders of white victims.

The history of racial violence

Georgia's death penalty is a direct descendant of racial oppression, racial violence and lynching. From colonial times until the Civil War, the criminal law in Georgia expressly differentiated between crimes committed by and against blacks and whites. Georgia law provided that the rape of a free white female by a black man "shall be" punishable by death, while the rape by anyone else of a free white female was punishable by a prison term not less than two nor more than twenty years. The rape of a black woman was punishable "by fine and imprisonment, at the discretion of the court."

Disparate punishments exacted by both the courts and by the mob, based upon both race of victim and race of defendant continued in practice after the abolition of slavery.

As racial violence was achieved increasingly through the criminal courts, Georgia carried out more executions than any other state in the twentieth century. Georgia carried out 673 executions between 1900 and the end of 1994. Between 1924 and 1972, Georgia executed 337 black people and 75 white people.

Discrimination under the current statute

For the most part, people of color have no voice in the two most important decisions which determine whether death will be sought: decisions by prosecutors with regard to whether to seek the death penalty and whether to resolve a case with a plea bargain and a sentence less than death. And even after prosecutors make those decisions, African Americans may be excluded from later decisions about whether to impose death.

Dr. Joseph Lowery, President of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, has observed that the criminal justice system is the institution least affected by America's Civil Rights Movement. Judges and prosecutors are still elected in judicial circuits drawn to dilute the voting strength of racial minorities. People of color are often excluded in the jury selection process.

Often the only person of color who participates in the process of deciding whether the death penalty will be imposed is the accused. In many parts of the state, the critical decisions about whether the death penalty will be sought or imposed are made by persons who may have overt or unconscious racial biases.

Race makes a case that would otherwise not be a capital case into one. Interracial murders are only a small percentage of the total homicides. However, Georgia prosecutors seek the death penalty in 70 percent of cases involving black defendants and white victims and in less than 35 percent of cases involving other racial combinations.

Discrimination by prosecutors

For example, an investigation of all of the murder cases prosecuted between 1973 and 1990 in Georgia's Chattahoochee Judicial Circuit, which includes the city of Columbus, revealed how race plays a role in the imposition of the death penalty. The study found that in cases involving the murder of a white person, prosecutors often met with the victim's family and discussed whether to seek the death penalty.

Exclusion of racial minorities from juries

The prosecutor's decision to seek the death penalty may never be reviewed by a person of color sitting as a juror. Many capital cases are tried in predominantly white suburban communities, such as Cobb and Douglas Counties, where there are so few persons of color in the community that there is little likelihood that they will be represented on the jury. But even in communities where there is a substantial number of people of color in the population, prosecutors are often successful in preventing or minimizing participation by minorities.

During jury selection for a capital trial, the judge or the prosecutor asks potential jurors if they are conscientiously opposed to the death penalty. If

they are and cannot put their views aside, the state is entitled to have those people removed from the jury. This "death qualification" process often results in the removal of more prospective jurors who are persons of color than of white persons. People of color may have reservations about the death penalty because it has been used in a racially discriminatory manner.

Once a group of people have been qualified for jury service, each side is given a number of discretionary strikes to remove potential jurors. The prosecution is given 10 strikes in a capital case in Georgia law. Many prosecutors use these discretionary strikes to remove any African Americans who are left as potential jurors from service.

When a prosecutor uses the overwhelming majority of his jury strikes against a racial minority, that part of the community is prohibited from participating in the process and the jury does not reflect the conscience of the community.

Many judges are former prosecutors who may have hired the district attorneys appearing before them. Even if the judge is not personally close to the prosecutor, he or she may be dependent upon the prosecutor's support in the election to remain in office. Thus, it may be politically impossible and personally difficult for the judge to reject a reason proffered by the prosecutor for striking a person of color.

The Georgia Supreme Court has shown very little willingness to scrutinize the use of jury strikes to eliminate people of color from juries. The courts routinely uphold convictions and death sentences where a grossly disproportionate number of African Americans have been excluded from jury service by the prosecutor's peremptory jury strikes.

Racial disparities in infliction of death

The lack of racial diversity among judges, jurors, prosecutors and lawyers has a substantial impact on the quality of justice which people of color receive in Georgia's courts. An African American member of the Georgia Supreme Court has observed that, "[w]hen it comes to grappling with racial issues in the criminal justice system today, often white Americans find one reality while African Americans see another." Yet despite the fact that the criminal justice system often decides whether an African American will lose his life or freedom, the decision is often based only on the version of "reality" seen by white people.

Racial disparities occur in all types of sentencing in the courts of Georgia, but they are particularly evident in death penalty cases. Although African Americans were the victims of 63.5 percent of the murders in Georgia between 1976 and 1980, 85 percent of the cases in which death was imposed during that period involved murders of whites.

Nevertheless, public officials and courts in Georgia and elsewhere have been remarkably indifferent to the racial discrimination in the criminal justice system. After it was discovered that a prosecutor instructed jury commissioners in one county to underrepresent black citizens on the master jury lists, Georgia Attorney General Michael Bowers defended the prosecutor's actions all the way to the United States Supreme Court, insisting upon the death penalty for an 18-year old youth sentenced to death by the unconstitutional jury. However, the U.S. Supreme Court struck down the conviction and sentence due to the racial discrimination.

Legal representation provided the poor in capital cases

The quality of representation in capital cases in Georgia has been so bad that it was singled out by an American Bar Association study of the capital punishment process and described as follows:

Georgia's recent experience with capital punishment has been marred by examples of inadequate representation ranging from virtually no representation at all by counsel, to representation by inexperienced counsel, to failures to investigate basic threshold questions, to lack of knowledge of governing law, to lack of advocacy on the issue of guilt, to failure to present a case for life at the penalty phase. Even in cases in which the performances of counsel have passed constitutional muster . . . and executions have been carried out, the representation provided has nevertheless been of very poor quality. In some instances, mistakes by counsel have resulted in the execution of one person while that person's codefendant has obtained relief on the identical issue.

In many capital cases, judges simply appoint members of the bar in private practice to defend indigents accused of crimes. The lawyers appointed may not want the cases, may receive little or no compensation for the time and expense of handling them, may lack any interest in criminal law, and may not have the skill to defend those accused of crime. In contrast to the virtually unlimited access to experts and investigative assistance by the prosecution, the lawyer defending the indigent accused in a capital case may not have any investigative and expert assistance to prepare for trial and present a defense. As a result, the poor are often represented by inexperienced lawyers who view their responsibilities as unwanted burdens, have no inclination to help their clients, and have no incentive to develop criminal trial skills.

The American Bar Association report pointed to numerous capital trials in Georgia in which attorneys appointed to defend a capital

case failed to offer any evidence in mitigation, were unaware of the law, distanced themselves from their clients, and gave arguments that either conceded guilt or did more harm than good. Some people were sentenced to death at trials where they were represented by attorneys trying their first case, by attorneys who slept during parts of the trial, or by

PREFERRED SEATING FOR BLACKS AND HISPANICS



attorneys who were absent during parts of the trial.

Inadequate legal representation also leaves the poor without the protections of the Bill of Rights in cases where their lives are at stake. The first person executed under Georgia's current death penalty law, John Eldon Smith, was sentenced to death by an unconstitutionally composed jury, as was another person involved in the same crime who was tried separately in the same county. The other defendant's lawyers challenged the jury composition in state court; Smith's lawyers did not because they were unaware of the Supreme Court decision prohibiting gender discrimination in juries.

A new trial was ordered for the codefendant by the federal court of appeals. At that trial, a jury which fairly represented the community imposed a sentence of life imprisonment. The federal courts refused to consider the identical issue in Smith's case because his lawyers had not preserved it. He was executed. Had the co-defendant been represented by

Smith's lawyers in state court and vice versa, the co-defendant would have been executed and Smith would have obtained federal habeas corpus relief.

Despite such shocking instances of inadequate representation, the judiciary, the bar and the legislature have done little to improve the situation. Although a Multi-County Public Defender office was established within the Georgia Indigent Defense Council to provide specialists to defend capital cases, the office has never grown beyond four attorneys and thus its impact is limited. As a result, most poor people facing the death penalty in Georgia continue to receive poor quality representation.

Conclusion

There is little likelihood that Georgia will follow the example of South Africa, whose Constitutional Court unanimously concluded last year that the punishment of death is cruel, unusual and degrading. The Constitutional Court, after reviewing the history of capital punishment, concluded, as did Justice Harry A. Blackmun of the U.S. Supreme Court that "the death penalty experiment has failed" because "no combination of procedural rules or substantive regulations ever can save the death penalty from its inherent constitutional deficiencies."

South Africa, like Georgia, has had capital punishment as part of its harsh legal heritage. South Africa's past, like Georgia's, included repression, apartheid and prejudice. South Africa's enlightening includes a changing outlook, in the words of one member of its Constitutional Court, from "vengeance to an appreciation of the need for understanding." Rather than cling to a primitive, racist and discredited form of punishment, Georgia should join South Africa in moving to a new day.

See the next issue of *Hospitality* for the conclusion of this 3-part series by Stephen Bright.

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The Bureau of Justice Statistics of the U.S. Department of Justice reports that at the end of 1995 there were 3 million United States' citizens on probation (up 4% during the year), 700,000 on parole (up 1%), and nearly 1.6 million in federal, state and local prisons and jails (up 6%). These figures do not include children in state custody. The total of 5.3 million men and women was 2.8 percent of U.S. adult citizens.

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Letters to the Editor of the Atlanta Journal Constitution

Dear Editor:

Have you ever had to go to the bathroom so badly that you could hardly stand it and there was nowhere to go? Let's say you are in downtown Atlanta when this situation arises. Well, if you are well dressed and have a few dollars in your pocket, you might be able to run in a department store, a food establishment or even a hotel to use the facilities. If you are homeless, not so well dressed, and you definitely have no pocket money, what are you to do? You could find an empty alley and hope you don't get caught. If you are caught, you will be arrested for public urination. What choice did you have? I mean you had "to go." This is the plight of the homeless.

There is a group in Atlanta that is trying to remedy this situation. They are from the Open Door Community. The Open Door Community is a ministry for the homeless and prisoners of Atlanta. On Monday, June 17th, they had a Public Toilet Action on the street in front of Mayor Campbell's office to petition the mayor and the City of Atlanta. They, as well as numerous others (myself included), have asked the mayor to have public toilets built in Atlanta (This fight has been going on for over 12 years with promises made/promises broken.). What did this group receive from the City of Atlanta when they tried to visit the mayor in his office? An arrest for criminal trespassing, that's what. Hello, I thought the building was public property, taxpayers' property.

The homeless are not the only ones who would benefit from public toilets, but they are the ones who are really suffering from the lack of such. It is much more humane than arresting them or giving them one-way tickets to parts unknown. Atlanta, stop the arrests and build public toilets! The homeless have a right to Pee for Free with Dignity as Jesus did in Galilee.

Jo Lee
 Cedartown, GA

Dear Editor:

Rich men of Atlanta, unite! Let's start taking care of those who can't take care of themselves.

My dear friend, Murphy Davis, of the Open Door Community, says this in her latest article, "The visitors from all over the world will only see the bright lights and pretty people. The police will make a sweep of the homeless and hide them away until the Olympics are over. Atlanta has a very large amount of poor people."

Mr. Woodruff has given us parks and hospitals. His generosity is well known. Is there anyone, or any group of people, who could give money for building a hospital for the alcoholics on the street? What is their history? Why are they on the street anyway? And why do they drink? There

are mentally ill roaming the streets since Milledgeville was closed. These people need help. They need treatment and some responsibility. They need cleaning up, and loving. Aren't there any truly compassionate people who have money for charity? It's such a good write-off.

Most of the remaining people are simply down on their luck. Yes, there are shelters. Children are enrolled in our schools with addresses of these shelters. Surely big manufacturers could give to our educational facilities to help improve the skills of those both homeless and employable.

A great many of us go to church on Sundays, and some go during the week. Do the lessons and sermons we hear roll off us as rain on a duck's back? Do we close our eyes as to what is going on around us?

If Billy Payne could bring the Olympics to Atlanta, just think what we can do for those less fortunate than we. They have no power. They do not vote. But some could have power and also vote if they were rescued.

We are admonished by the old hymn, "Rescue the Perishing, Care of the Dying." We must do something. We must. And we must do it now.

Jean McMullen
 Sandy Springs
 Atlanta, GA

Murphy,

Thanks for the excellent article, "Olympic Atlanta" in the recent Hospitality. It's the best I've seen yet on what is happening to us with the Olympic juggernaut bearing down.

In September, I'm moving my counseling ministry to Trinity United Methodist, where I hope to establish an accredited, urban CPE program. Your ministry remains an inspiration.

Peace,

Kempton
(Rev. AK Haynes, Jr.)
Atlanta, GA

Dear Murphy,

I wanted to drop you a line and thank you for writing such a powerful and compelling article about Atlanta and the Olympics in the last issue of Hospitality. It was a terrific piece that clearly articulated the problems of the homeless and marginalized people in Atlanta while this unprecedented event is being used to justify such poor policy making. Your piece was so well documented and persuasive it made my day. I miss you and all of my friends in Atlanta but I'm pleased to know that you are still bearing witness for hope and justice.

I hope you are well and thank you again for doing such great work.

Your friend,

Bryan Stevenson
Equal Justice Initiative of Alabama
Montgomery, AL

Dear Murphy—

Today I received the Hospitality July issue and was very disappointed in your front page article attacking the Olympics. You obviously do not have all the facts, and I regard your article as extremely negative.

You mentioned Montreal lost money on the Olympics. Why didn't you report that Los Angeles had a very excellent Olympics and made a few million dollars and provided much employment, like the Atlanta Olympics!

You have apparently forgotten the old adage—"You get more with honey than with vinegar!" Your article was all vinegar!

Billy Payne is a mighty fine individual and so are a lot of Dunwoody residents who give of time and money to help the poor, sick, and hungry.

You and Ed do a lot of good work, but don't knock the Olympics, Coca Cola and other institutions without more research.

You and I have met a few times and I respect you... but your article made me ill... very ill!!!!

From a positive person,

Charles Richardson
Dunwoody
Atlanta, GA

Responses to "Olympic Atlanta" (July 1996 Hospitality)



Dear Murphy—

Greetings from your friends here. Thanks for your fine issues of Hospitality which reflect your vital work in Atlanta. Thanks and best wishes!

Ruth Maier *et al*
meeting in Albuquerque, NM -
Presbyterian Peace Fellowship

Dear Murphy,

Thank you. Your "Olympic Atlanta..." article should be reprinted in the New York Times. Your accurate knowledge of Atlanta is clearly evidenced, and you are right: ACOG is a house built on sand.

I enjoyed Hannah's photos, and especially the "Pee for free... as Jesus did in Galilee" page. The drawing of Jesus in line for His pee is... wow!

Hospitality is a prophetic newspaper of the first class: same as Ezekiel and Jeremiah. Ed and you are true evangelists.

With love and prayers—

Tom
Father Tom Francis
Monastery of the Holy Spirit
Conyers, GA

Dear Murphy,

Thank you for your article, "Olympic Atlanta," in the July, 1996, issue of Hospitality. It was informative, telling me of information I did not know. It was appropriately editorial, expressing opinion about the process employed. It was prophetic, both in its judgment of the greed and megalomania present, and in its call to an opportunity to solidify the spirit of this.

May all of us—leaders and followers—have ears to hear your prophetic words and have hearts and wills to respond with appropriate service.

Your brother in Christ,

Quentin (Hand)
(Retired Professor of Pastoral Theology,
Candler School of Theology)
Loganville, GA

Dear Friends,

You are all in my prayers as you minister to those whose needs will be even greater now than ever. Murphy's recent article is wonderful. Good luck!

Blessings to you all!

Rev. Debbie Kirk
Tuckahoe Presbyterian Church
Richmond, VA

Dear Ed and Murphy—

Just read Murphy's article on Olympic Atlanta—really good and no surprise. I'm wondering if I could get 30 copies of the issue. Do you have extras? I'm coming again August 7 to do nonviolence training for the Methodist volunteers (Can't believe they've kept it in town during the great fiasco—transportation can only be, I assume, a gridlocked nightmare.). Anyway I would like those kids to get a different picture.

We're still at the newspaper strike. Actions this week to mark the one year anniversary! Hope you're well.

Love,

Bill (Wylie-Kellerman)
Whittaker School of Theology
Detroit, MI

Hospitality, July 1996

WE HAVE EXTRA COPIES OF OUR July issue which includes OUR RESPONSE TO THE Olympics in ATLANTA. Call Elizabeth Dede at (404) 874-9652 OR WRITE TO HER AT 910 PONCE DE LEON AVE., NE, ATLANTA, GA 30306

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 12:30 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 annual planning retreat in August.

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.

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 _____



RITA CORBIN

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!

Open Door Community Worship

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

Please join us!

- August 4 Worship at 910;
Tandi Gcabashe, preaching
(We will celebrate Tandi's life and work as she prepares to return home to South Africa after 28 years of exile.)
- August 11 Worship at 910;
Hiroshima Remembrance
- August 18 Worship at 910;
Todd Cioffi, preaching
- August 23-25 Annual Planning Retreat, Dayspring Farm
No Worship at 910



Open Door Community Needs

- JEANS
- T-Shirts
- Men's Work Shirts
- Quick Grits
- Carpeting
- Cheese
- Coffee
- Multi-Vitamins
- MARTA Tokens
- Postage Stamps
- Electric Percolator
- Underwear for Men & Women
- Men's Shoes (all sizes)
- Disposable Razors
- Toothbrushes
- Deodorant
- Vaseline
- Towels
- Socks
- Shampoo
- Men's Belts
- Washcloths
- Weed Eater
- Sandwiches
- Vacuum Cleaner
- Soup Kitchen Volunteers*
- Butler St. Breakfast Volunteers*

* contact our Volunteer Coordinator, Brenda Smith at 404-874-9652

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!