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Providing hospitality to the homeless and to those in prison, through Christ's love.

August 2003

Who Killed The Baby? *Revitalization and Death in the Center City*

By Murphy Davis

...When you see...your (Black sisters and brothers) smothering in an airtight cage of poverty in the midst of an affluent society...when you are forever fighting a degenerating sense of 'nobodiness' – then you will understand why we find it difficult to wait.

– Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

A newborn baby died in downtown Atlanta in the early morning hours of Sunday, June 30. His parents were homeless and black. The hospital said the baby died because the mother was malnourished. In other words, a homeless newborn starved to death. The city is outraged.

How could this happen in the “City too busy to hate?” they all want to know. We are a caring people, they all declare.

Enestae Kessie, Jr. was 25 days old. His parents were “living” in a boarded-up, abandoned house on the edge of downtown. In the middle of the night, little Enestae stopped breathing. His loving parents frantically bundled him up and ran from their “cat-hole,” crying loudly for help. People passed them and kept going. They approached one person after another, and they all turned away. In desperation, the distraught parents walked more than a mile to the city jail to seek help. By the time the baby arrived at Hughes Spalding (Grady Children’s) Hospital, he was dead.

The parents were arrested and jailed for “child cruelty.” After the medical examiner’s report confirmed that the parents had not harmed their child, a municipal court judge set them free. The police officer was asked why he arrested them and replied, “The baby was dead. I had to arrest somebody.”

There has been the predictable outpouring of charity and photo ops. The Mayor and more politicians than you can count have appeared at press conferences to affirm “the importance of caring,” and to declare that this should never happen again! A funeral home volunteered free burial services; a construction company has given the father a job; a rental firm has given the parents an apartment with six months of free rent; the furniture bank has brought in furnishings.

On Sunday, the parents looked like homeless people: shabbily dressed and their hair unkempt. By the time they appeared with the Mayor, their hair was beautifully dressed, and the paper even described the mother’s “conservative eggshell-colored suit.” They were transformed before our eyes into fit subjects for the 4th of July week’s human-interest story. The outpouring of care is good. But there is yet a public word to be uttered about what the death of this child might really mean for our city.

We are in the midst of yet one more effort from Central Atlanta Progress and the Mayor’s office to “revitalize” downtown Atlanta. King and Spalding Law Firm has decided to move away from their posh office adjacent to the Ritz Carlton Hotel and re-settle in Midtown. It is said that they are offended by the presence of panhandlers and the poor. Colin Campbell’s twice-a-week column in the newspaper has been ranting and raving for weeks on end about the bums who have “taken over” Woodruff Park and the intolerable presence of what he calls “Crackhead Corner,” where a large shelter is located at Peachtree and Pine.

The problem, though it is never specifically named, is the presence of the poor and the homeless, especially black men and those men and women who are clearly mentally ill and addicted. We are too polite to use old-fashioned racial epithets, but the meaning is the same. It is time for them to go, they all sing

Death, cont’d on page 8

Good News! Dr. King is Alive! *Name the Streets for the Dead Walk the Streets for the Living*

By Ed Loring

Good news! Dr. King is alive! The revolution of values and practices breathes the breath of God. Hope is making a home in our shoes and our hearts. And Dr. King, who will not get there with us, is way out front. “Come on, children,” Brother Brown, Sister Soul — come and catch up with me! There is revolution in the air.”

Dr. King is alive!

Thank you, Jesus, The Human One, who calls us out to radical biblical revolutionary discipleship.

Thank you, Coretta Scott.

Thank you, Ella Baker.

Thank you, Septima Clark! For teaching Martin the way.

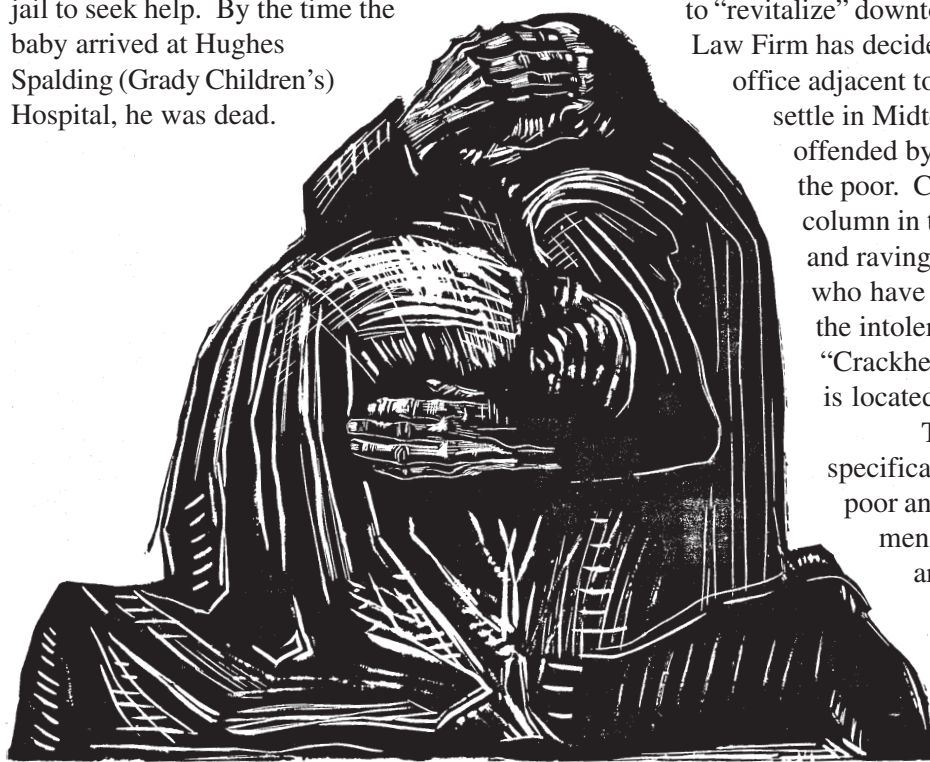
I. The Beloved Community

At The Open Door Community we seek a conversion that will teach us to follow the drum major for *justice*. So we practice the works of mercy. After our soup kitchen we have a period of worship and biblical reflection: an action/reflection model of thought and practice. One day in the midst of sharing, Jay Frasier, an African American man, spoke up with pride: “I am doing something Dr. King never did! I’m going beyond King. I live with white folk.”

But Mr. Frasier could not have done it without Dr. King! And Dr. King could not have done it without that Black Jesus, the Jew, and that Black Church filled simultaneously with suffering grief and joy both rooted in faith and hope. The revolutionary radical Gospel of Jesus cracks into our lives and world. For the sake of our souls we must listen and practice Dr. King and Black Church.

Agape Love is what Dr. King died doing. This love is practiced and confessed. This Agape is assertive non-violent resistance to evil, which manifests itself in love for enemies, revolutionary means (practice the future today), and the revolutionary ends of the Beloved Community. I have been moved to disarm by murderers on Death Row. Dorothy Day notes an angle of agape this way: “Love in action is harsh and dreadful when compared to love in dreams.” Let us, against the American Empire “Study war no more.”

The revolution begins with community, with
Good News, continued on page 10



THE PARENTS BY KATHE KOLLWITZ

News Briefs in Justice, Injustice

By Diana George

Sodexho Booted From College Campus

At a time when college students are being accused of turning their backs on radical politics, some of the most important action for change is coming from high school and college campuses. In the past five years, Students United Against Sweatshops has become the fastest-growing student organization in this country.

Recently, college students have also begun to target the food service provider Sodexho Alliance SA, a global corporation that feeds students at over 900 college campuses and that also manages for-profit prisons.

Writing in the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, Father George Lundy, President of Wheeling Jesuit College, announced that Wheeling Jesuit would no longer be using Sodexho's services. He credited the student organization Justice and Peace in Our Times with bringing the issue to his attention and listed these reasons for cutting all ties with Sodexho:

1. The rapid expansion of Sodexho's global prison operations.
2. Through contributions to the American Legislative Exchange Council, corporations in which Sodexho had a significant share helped shape the laws under which ever more Americans spend ever more time in prisons. Some of the laws, such as the "three strikes" statutes, have been criticized by the U.S. Catholic bishops as inappropriate.
3. The use of prisons as a preferred response to nonviolent crime is poor stewardship of resources and is a preferential option *against* the poor.
4. Sodexho's policies on collective bargaining stand in stark contradiction to the Catholic labor tradition.

For these reasons, Father Lundy concluded that "to continue our relationship with Sodexho would be inconsistent with the call of our tradition to have a special concern for and solidarity with the poor."

Greg Long Kept Alive – For His Execution

We are often told that the death penalty is not about vengeance but justice or that we execute convicted murderers as a matter of public safety—to keep them from killing again.

How, then, do we explain the case of Texas death row inmate Greg Long? According to the *Boulder Daily Camera*, Long attempted suicide on a Friday. He was placed on a ventilator in Galveston on Saturday until he was able to travel on Monday. On Tuesday, he was flown to the death house, accompanied by medical personnel who kept him alive until, on Wednesday, the State of Texas could kill him. ✦

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Dear Hospitality Readers,

Used postage stamps, ordinarily thrown away, can be sold to raise money to feed the hungry in the U.S. and abroad.



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Blacksburg, VA 24060

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**chicken leg
quarters**

For information about donations, contact Phil Leonard at 404-874-4906 or pleon2000@mindspring.com

HOSPITALITY

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 Community, please contact any of the following:

Phil Leonard: Volunteer Coordinator, Hardwick Prison Trip, Resident Volunteer Applications
Tonnie King: Food Coordinator and Hardwick Prison Trip
Gladys Rustay: Treasurer, Jackson Prison Trip, and Food Coordinator
Ed Loring: Street Preacher and Word On The Street Host, Resident Volunteer Coordinator
Murphy Davis: Southern Prison Ministry, Worship and Music Coordinator
Dick Rustay and Chuck Harris: Dayspring Farm Coordinators



CALVIN KIMBROUGH

Newspaper

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Tenured Radicals

By Diana George

(Editor's note: Diana George is Professor of Humanities at Michigan Technological University. She is spending her sabbatical year, along with her husband Chuck Harris, as a Resident Volunteer at the Open Door Community.)

Unless you were teaching at a college or university in the early 1990s, you might have missed the flurry of rage and paranoia that spread across the nation as *Time*, *Newsweek*, and other national magazines ran cover stories announcing the emergence of "tenured radicals." The term came from Roger Kimball's best-selling *Tenured Radicals: How Politics Corrupted Higher Education*, which told the story of sixties radicals moving into universities, getting tenure, and ruining all of higher education with their radical politics and their obscure theories.

I know I didn't pay much attention to it until Jim Berlin, one of those tenured radicals teaching at Purdue, called in a fury. Even then I brushed it off and tried to calm Jim. After all, if radicals were actually getting tenure, that could only mean we'd won and conservatives like Roger Kimball were just whining about it. Let them whine, I said. But Jim was smarter about cultural politics than I and reminded me that the mainstream media is a powerful tool for shaping popular sentiment. If the likes of *Newsweek* and *Time* were giving cover story status to Kimball's charges, many readers would accept—or at least not question—those charges.

I think of that conversation often these days. Jim died of a heart attack not many years after it, and I sometimes imagine his heart simply exploded in rightful rage over assaults like Kimball's on the politics of higher education. It surely would be laboring hard today in light of Lynn Cheney's post-9/11 list of unpatriotic professors and John Ashcroft's ongoing attempts to dismantle civil liberties.

I have been teaching and writing about college writing and rhetoric for more than thirty years now. It's a job I've always liked, but until recently I've never understood how crucial this job is to the survival of free speech and open debate in the U.S. On March 22, 2003, I gave the following talk to the Conference on College Composition and Communication in New York City, surrounded by talk of war:

We live today in a dangerously *polite* society. This is a culture which asks us to trust authority, have faith in expertise, and stand by government decisions. It is a moment in our history when Americans are urged to *shop* in response to threats against the nation.

In February of this year, Senator Robert Byrd—hardly a radical—charged his fellow legislators with "sleepwalking through history." At the brink of something the current administration has called *pre-emptive war*, Byrd noted

that the Senate stood, "for the most part, silent—ominously, dreadfully silent. There is no debate, no discussion, no attempt to lay out for the nation the pros and cons of this particular war. There is nothing."

What does that have to do with teaching composition? I would argue that it has everything to do with the business of teaching about language, about conducting public debate, and about how the absence of public debate contributes to what I would call a *culture of consent*. In such a culture, teachers are hesitant to make students (and themselves) uncomfortable by bringing up harsh politics, racial inequity, public policy.

And, in such reluctance, I would argue, we risk teaching our students not to engage in public debate at all, but instead to support—if only tacitly—the *status quo*, to trust that what is being done in our name is being done in our best interest.

Mine is a call to bring hard topics back into the classroom—those topics that seem tired and canned—gun control, reproductive rights, the death penalty, for example—as well as topics that seem hard to contain—international interventionist politics, world English, sweatshop economics, and more.

Michael Moore's *Bowling for Columbine* is a good example of how someone can take one of those canned debates—gun control—and refuse to submit to the familiar terms of the question. Instead of arguing yes or no—for or against gun control—he challenges his audience to ask *why*. Why does this country have a history of gun violence when other countries with as much violence in their past—some with a boat load of guns to match—do not experience the same level of gun violence?

Why? Now, *that's* a question that's going to

take more time to work through than pro or con/yes or no/for or against. That's the kind of question that, handled inside the classroom with rich resources and thoughtful teachers, need not lead faculty to run to TurnItIn.com to check whether or not their students are stealing arguments from the Internet.

That's a question that is going to take some deliberation, and real deliberation rarely lends itself to plagiarism (a topic that has once again become a popular one in our journals and conferences).

When I initially proposed this paper, I had in mind the work I have been doing with my friend and co-author Diane Shoos on visual representations of the death penalty and what those representations—everything from lynching photos to Hollywood films—have to do with the state of the popular debate about death penalty legislation in this country.

I wanted to know how—given the very real arguments being conducted in courtrooms, mostly concerning who should be executed and when—how that debate could come down in popular representations again and again to the very simple question of whether or not everyone on death row is guilty. I wanted to know what it means that these film stories typically pose an innocent prisoner facing the death penalty and rarely—*Dead Man Walking* is a notable exception—put the guilty in the center of the story.

Does that mean that we think it's okay for the state to execute the guilty? That is a question most frequently left unaddressed, and that is the hard question. It's also the question I would want students to ask.

Since I proposed that paper, however, much has happened in this country to prepare us for war, and so my remarks have had to expand to address those events. In that time, the uses of language to presume consensus, **Tenured**, continued on page 9



RITA CORBIN

Welcome to the Spotlight *Margaret Koehler*

By Tonnie King

Greetings to all in this merry month of August. During the summer, many of our regular volunteers take a little time to tend to personal business. During this season, our volunteer ranks sometimes seem a little thin. Margaret Koehler, who just happens to be a friend of Mary Byrne, our managing editor, recently earned her Ph.D. in English from Emory University. Margaret was more than willing to step in and lead the dining room during the Wednesday soup kitchen.

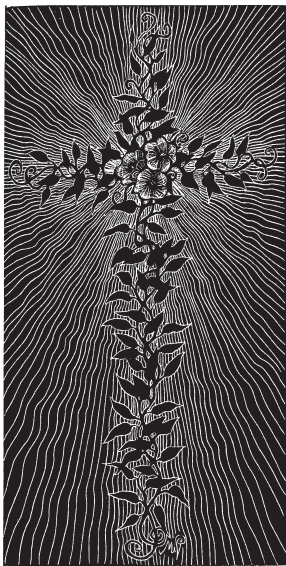
One day, I had the opportunity to teach Margaret how to prepare tuna salad! I had her roll up her sleeves and dive into the unusually large amount of tuna, so that our homeless friends could have tuna salad sandwiches for lunch. She embraced this task with as much enthusiasm as she probably did her studies. The final result: lunch was as tasty as ever.

Thank you, Margaret, for your support and your willingness to overcome the tuna and lead the dining room! ♣

Tonnie King is a Partner at the Open Door Community.



TONNIE KING



Send us your poetry!
Mark M. Bashor
The Poetry Corner
The Open Door Community
910 Ponce de Leon Ave NE
Atlanta, GA 30306-4212

Street Corner Majesty

By David Harris

Look at her-
she is regal
in her threadbare second-hand coat
and church-lady hat
garlanded with bright feathers,
the queen of her street corner...

She sweetly smiles and sings
for harried rush-hour passersby;
a few drop coins,
most glance away,
disgust, guilt, or a twinge of fear
stamped on their hardened faces

A curious traveler
with a moment to kill
stops to chat, and discovers
she has a tale, a life
beneath the veneer
of city grime
and corrugated skin

She is a mother;
her children are in places
of wealth and power;
one son's precisely surgical hands
bear the power of life and death

She is an artist;
she paints intricate portraits
of passersby who stop long enough
to be exposed for the camera of her eyes

She is a lover;
a lonely man's fantasy
of silk, lace
and kisses raining down on him
like softly brushing feathers

Twilight gently lands
on her corner of this earth;
she stands and trundles away
her rolling suitcase,
not bound for the alley where she lives
but for Paris in the spring
where she will pluck colorful blossoms
to adorn her crinkly hair.

David Harris, a recent panelist for the National Coalition for the Homeless's "Faces Of Poverty" workshop, is homeless in Washington, DC. His poems were sent to us by Rev. Ashley Goff.



Connections

Barbara Schenk
Atlanta, Georgia

On April 27, 2003, while I was visiting the Open Door for two weeks, we celebrated my birthday. My birthday was April 25, 2003. I was sixty-eight years old.

When someone's birthday is celebrated at the Open Door, they have to give a speech after they are presented with a cake with candles. Actually, I told a short story.

It was winter in the early 1980s. I was homeless and all alone on the streets of Atlanta. It was evening and I was standing next to the doors of the Atlanta Civic Center to try and keep warm.

A security guard opened one of the doors and invited me in. He took me to the women's lounge and I climbed up on a couch and fell asleep. The next morning the guard brought me a



MURPHY DAVIS

Barbara Schenk is a member of the Open Door's wider family. She lives at Phoenix House in southwest Atlanta and joins us often for holidays and retreats. During her visits, Barbara offers her skills and energy for administrative work.

Coca-Cola to drink. Then he let me out with the invitation to come back that night.

I decided not to go back to the Civic Center. Instead, I went to the Street Ministries pastor at St. Luke's Episcopal Church on Peachtree Street. He called the Open Door and they said, "Send her over." Rob and Carolyn Johnson, who founded the Open Door with Ed Loring and Murphy Davis, were living there with their daughter Christina.

The Open Door has taken me in as a resident on four different occasions. My circumstances are now such that I no longer live there. I am happy to say, though, I still continue my association with the Open Door. I come to visit quite frequently. ♣

Five Reasons To Oppose The Death Penalty

Reason #2: The Death Penalty Punishes the Poor.

- If you can afford good legal representation, you won't end up on death row.
- Over 90 percent of defendants charged with capital crimes are indigent and cannot afford to hire an experienced criminal defense attorney to represent them. They are forced to use inexperienced, underpaid court-appointed attorneys.
- In most states the pay for court appointed attorneys is so low that lawyers assigned to capital cases will lose \$20-\$30 an hour if they do an adequate job. In Alabama, Louisiana and Mississippi defense attorneys are paid a flat fee of \$1,000 – which translates into about 5 dollars an hour for most lawyers.
- In 1996, Clinton cut federal funding to 20 legal resource centers which provided counsel to poor defendants. Now, most of the centers that received this funding have shut down.
- Many capital trials last less than a week – hardly enough time to present a good defense.

The wealthy don't get punished

Between 1971 and 1977, an estimated 500 people burned to death in Ford Pinto

crashes. Ford Motor Company knew that the Pinto's rear gas tank tended to puncture even in low-speed crashes.

But Ford made a calculation that it could save millions of dollars if it opted to pay for damages and medical bills in Pinto explosion cases rather than install an \$11 safety device that prevented the gas tank ruptures. Ford made a calculated decision to sell a lethal product, yet it was acquitted of criminal charges.

But even had they been convicted, there would be no Ford Motor Company executives sitting on death row.

When it comes to capital punishment, our justice system can be compared to a fishing net in the ocean which has the peculiar quality of catching the minnows and letting the whales pass through!

One searches our chronicles in vain for the execution of any member of the affluent strata in this society.

-Justice William O. Douglas

In the months ahead, look for three more reasons to join the movement to abolish the death penalty. Above text reprinted from Campaign To End The Death Penalty, www.nodeathpenalty.org.

The Art of Reconciliation

Lessons from South Africa

Reconciliation: Restoring Justice. John W. de Gruchy. 208 pp. Minneapolis, 2002. Fortress Press.

By Mark Bashor

(Editor's note: Mark Bashor, a published poet who now edits Hospitality's Poetry Corner, directed the Night Shelter at Central Presbyterian Church for 22 years. The following book review is reprinted from The Other Side.)

In *Reconciliation: Restoring Justice*, the acclaimed political theologian John W. de Gruchy explores, explains, and affirms the spiritual, social, and political need for—and possibility of—reconciliation in a world choked by injustice, oppression, and exploitation, and shattered by violence from hatred and the cry for revenge.

The opening chapters focus on the language (or vocabulary) of reconciliation, and the concepts of reconciliation at the levels of personal and societal life

experiences, as well as from the perspectives of theological and political discourse and praxis. Here, and throughout the text, de Gruchy uses the lessons from the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) as a point of reference, since the TRC has become an internationally-recognized example of the struggle for reconciliation at the national level.

In the middle chapters de Gruchy explores the concepts of reconciliation that are presented in the sacred texts of the three faith traditions—Judaism, Christianity, and Islam—that trace their origins to Abraham (Hebrew Bible; Christian Bible; Qur'an). Particular emphasis is given to the Christian doctrines of reconciliation, with special attention devoted to the Pauline writings. Here, too, de Gruchy builds on his observation in the book's Introduction that these faiths "...should be a force for international healing rather than a source of continuing violent conflict."

In the final chapters de Gruchy draws on the TRC experience in South Africa as well as the writings of such notables as Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Paul Tillich, Desmond Tutu, Miroslav Volf, and others. Here he examines the process and goal of reconciliation ("The Art of Reconciliation") and the covenantal aspects of reconciliation ("Covenanting Together to Restore Justice").

This book is an excellent resource for anyone with a new or seasoned interest in the challenges of exclusion, alienation, oppression, exploitation, and violence, and in the hope of truth, justice, forgiveness, reconciliation, and peace. As Archbishop Desmond Tutu said of this work, "I warmly commend this timely book."✦

book
review

A Tribute To Elizabeth Sicheloff

By Joe Parko

(Editor's note: Joe Parko is a member of the Atlanta Friends Meeting. We are grateful for their remembrance of our dear friend, Elizabeth Sicheloff.)

Elizabeth Sicheloff, a true champion of peace and justice, passed away at Emory Hospital on June 5, 2003 at the age of 80. Elizabeth was a member of the Atlanta Friends Meeting (Quakers) and was a vocal opponent of war on Iraq. Even when she was confined to a wheelchair, Elizabeth attended almost every one of the peace vigils held in front of Zell Miller's office at Colony Square since last August.

She also participated in vigils against the death penalty on a regular basis for the last 25 years. In her youth, Elizabeth was involved in visiting and studying cooperatives in Denmark and Sweden. She was also involved with leading international workcamps in Finland and Mexico.

From 1949 to 1968, she and her husband, Courtney, directed the work of the Penn Center on St. Helena Island in South Carolina. This Quaker retreat center was one of the few places in the South during the volatile days of the Civil Rights movement where blacks and whites could stay together overnight.

From 1964 to 1967, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. came there to lead annual retreats of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference. Many of the Civil Rights campaigns, including the Poor Peoples' Campaign, were developed at the Penn Center.

In 1969, Elizabeth and her family left for a four-year stint with the Peace Corps in Afghanistan. While there, she taught English and helped Afghans to come to the U.S. to study. She traveled widely during that period, including a trek through Nepal and a train ride through Siberia.

In 1973, Elizabeth and her family came to Atlanta and bought a home in Inman Park when the neighborhood was attractive to only a few hardy urban pioneers. Elizabeth then began working in media relations for the Southern



(Above: Elizabeth and Courtney Sicheloff and son John, with Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., at an SCLC Retreat at the Penn Center, November 30, 1967.)

Regional Council, an organization dedicated to equal opportunity. She also worked for the local bureaus of *The Los Angeles Times*, *U.S. News and World Report*, and Reuters, tracking regional stories.

Elizabeth Sicheloff did more than talk the talk. She even did more than walk the walk. Elizabeth Sicheloff lived a deeply caring life devoted to peace and justice. ✦

Join us as a Resident Volunteer



TONNIE KING

Long-time friends of the Open Door, Pete Gathje and Jenny Case are spending the summer with us while Jenny is an intern at the Southern Center for Human Rights. Pete has lived with us before, writes about the community, and chairs the department of Religion and Philosophy at the Christian Brothers University in Memphis, Tennessee. Jenny is formerly a professor of philosophy and is completing her law degree at the University of Memphis.

Live in a residential Christian community.

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Join street actions and peaceful demonstrations.

Enjoy regular retreats and meditation time at Dayspring Farm.

Join Bible study and theological reflections from the Base. You might come to the margins and find your center.

Contact: Phil Leonard
For information and application forms, visit www.opendoorcommunity.org

Are You an End-of-the-World Creature?

Thoughts on Living on the Edge

By Norman Shanks

(Editor's note: Norman Shanks is the Pastor of Old Govan Presbyterian Church in Glasgow, Scotland. Last August, he completed a seven-year term as Leader of the Iona Community, and he preached this sermon in the Abbey during "Community Week" on the Isle of Iona.)

Until a man called Ed Loring came to Iona, this was to have been a sermon about the kingdom of heaven. That marvelous sequence of pictures in Matthew's gospel – the mustard seed, the yeast, the treasure in the field, the pearl of great price, the net full of all kinds of fish – building up a sense of small beginnings leading unexpectedly to wonderful, joyful growth and inclusiveness. That might have seemed a promising theme, if ever so slightly complacent perhaps, to reflect on at the start of another Community Week as members of the Iona Community and their families gather here once more to worship, to share, and to plan.

But Ed Loring changed that. He and his wife, Murphy Davis, are the founders of the Open Door Community in Atlanta in the United States that, through works of mercy and political campaigning, carries out a ministry to homeless people and to prisoners and their families. Ed and Murphy were leading the program here three weeks ago on "the spirituality of solidarity." It was very challenging in terms of process as well as content: Ed has the confrontational style of the southern street-preacher that he is – very direct, "in your face," a call to discipleship and radical political commitment, firmly rooted in scripture and prayer. And when he said that it was really important that we should make sure that we start each day with prayer and Bible-reading, even before we read the newspapers, especially before we read the newspapers, his words struck home, touched a raw nerve, pricked the conscience of this news junkie. It's a matter of perspective as much as priorities, the need to remind ourselves and keep ourselves in touch with our frame of reference or value base.

Ed Loring's words three weeks ago somehow drove me inexorably to the book of Jeremiah. Why on earth Jeremiah, I have been asking myself. I hope that a doom-laden calling to repentance of a perverse and faithless community that has lost its way is hardly right or appropriate for the Iona Community at this time! Nonetheless, here at last is the text:

An appalling and horrible thing has happened in the land: the prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests rule by their own authority. My people love to have it so, but what will you do when the end comes? (Jeremiah 5:30-31).

This scares me stiff. Words from Jerusalem something like 2500 years ago – a totally different time, place and culture – and yet they address us, challenge us with a terrible soul-stripping relevance. We live in such a complex world, full of so many good things and exciting possibilities. And yet there is so much that is wrong – all the suffering and need, the self-centered preoccupation with material possessions that flies in the face of the justice and harmony, the flourishing and fullness of life that is God's promise and purpose for

each of us and for the good of all. Our political and religious leaders are failing us. Their message, their policies, and priorities may be surprisingly attractive (*my people love to have it so*, says Jeremiah) but they are not ultimately for our benefit. We see the gap between rich and poor continuing to widen, within Britain and across the face of the world; we see a church often devoid of vision and confidence, more concerned about securing its own survival than about embodying and proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ. And then that startling, searing question that leaps out at us – *what will you do when the end comes?*

One of the children's storybooks I remember very clearly from when our family was young is "The Frog in the Well." In a sense, it is a tale for our times and a tale for Iona – not only because I've seen more frogs this year on Iona than ever before, but also because it is about a search for engagement, a hunger for meaning, a readiness to take risks. The frog was stuck in a well and he was discontented. He wanted something more out of life. He was an adventurous frog, he took his courage in his legs, and with a big leap of faith he jumped right out of the well. To be honest I can't remember the details after that (except that of course there was a happy ending) apart from one significant incident. The frog met a cow; and of course he hadn't seen a cow before. He had jumped out of his familiar world, beyond the horizon of his experience; and he asked the cow, "Are you an end-of-the-world creature?" Questions for us, too – urgent, basic questions – *what will you do when the end comes?* Are you an end-of-the-world creature?

I want to suggest that our calling – whether we are here as Community members and their families, staff at our islands' centers, local residents on Iona, holiday-makers or day-visitors – our calling, as we gather to share the bread and wine, as we seek to follow in the footsteps of Jesus Christ, faltering, stumbling, straying, as we do, as we reach out to God for the word that gives us life and hope, our calling is to be end-of-the-world creatures.

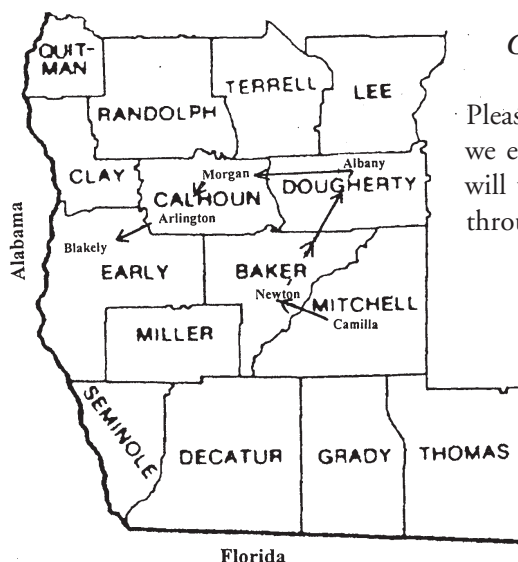
End-of-the-world creatures in the sense of living on the edge. When you come to Iona for the first time, it can seem like going to the end of the world. Six hours or so from Glasgow, with all the changes of modes of transport, feels like a long way when you can get to Greece, say, more quickly – even across the Atlantic, almost! Columba and his friends arrived here in 563, long before the arrival of road and rail. Sea-travel was often easier than by land, so Iona may have seemed rather less at the edge, more at an international crossroads. We are called to live on the edge of risk, to be people of vision, imagination, and adventure, to live at the cutting-edge, in solidarity with those who are marginalized and excluded, where Gospel values call into question the worldly pursuit of wealth and success.

End-of-the-world creatures too, in that this is a matter of urgency, not because of wacky predictions of the timing of Armageddon, or even a theology of the second coming. Perhaps the end of the age of which Matthew speaks is the perpetual present. The end of the world about which Jeremiah asks is already here. We are already living in the end-times, "between the

continued on page 7

Freedomwalk 2003 - September 7-13

Join our week-long "Journey for Justice"



Camilla—Newton—Albany—Morgan—Arlington—Blakely

Please plan to join the Prison & Jail Project this coming September as we embark upon our Eighth Annual FREEDOMWALK. This year, we will walk nearly 90 miles, beginning in Mitchell County and traveling through Baker, Dougherty, Calhoun, and Early Counties.

Along the way we will call attention to jailhouse conditions, courthouse oppression and other injustices we witness in this part of southwest Georgia. We will also lift up those who have gone before us and who struggle for justice today in these rural, Black Belt communities.

We will be joined by the Mt. Zion/Albany Civil Rights Movement Museum's "Freedom Singers" on one evening, and we will pay tribute to W.E.B. DuBois on the 100th anniversary of the publication of his important book, *The Souls of Black Folk*. DuBois was in southwest Georgia in 1900 and the book describes his experiences in and around Albany. We will also call attention to the 1868 "Camilla Massacre" and several other important events in our region's history. When we arrive in Blakely on Saturday, September 13, we will be welcomed by folks from the "Freedom Council," a grassroots organization doing powerful justice work in Early County.

Plan to join us in September!

Prison & Jail Project
P.O. Box 6749
Americus, GA 31709
(229) 928-2080

continued from page 6

already and the not yet,” as they say. There is more than enough to be concerned about in the state our world is in: wars, famine and the AIDS pandemic in Africa; global warming and the planet’s fragile ecology; the perpetual threat of nuclear annihilation five seconds or whatever to midnight; the apparently inexorable buildup towards our war with Iraq; the situation in Israel and Palestine – the litany could go on and on. We are called to prayer and to action – not to do it all ourselves of course, but to play whatever part we can in what is nearest to us now.

Of all the conversations I have had during my past five weeks on Iona, the one that stays with me most vividly took place on the pilgrimage three weeks ago. I was speaking to a man called Khader Rantisi who runs a media project for young people in Ramallah in Palestine. The Iona Community had helped him come to Britain to share in some of the events our youth development worker Helen O’Donnell was involved in. Khader told me movingly, graphically, what life is like now in Palestine – so much worse than we hear in the news reports: the educational and health services are no longer functioning, the economic situation is near breakdown, there are severe food shortages. He said, “We have nothing to lose but our lives.”

End-of-the-world creatures are people with a purpose. The end of the world, God’s end for the world, is that every man, woman, and child should enjoy fullness of life, should be in right relationship with one another, with God, and with the created order – so that “the whole earth shall cry glory!” This calling, this purpose inevitably is counter-cultural. The vision and values of God’s kingdom contradict so many of the preoccupations and prejudices and priorities of the world around us. Our faith in Jesus Christ, our conviction that Jesus is the decisive revelation of God and what a life full of God is like, our trust in God’s steadfast love, so generous, utterly unconditional, and totally reliable is proclaimed and experienced once more as we share the bread and wine. In our belonging together, in our dependence on God’s spirit, sustaining, challenging, disturbing, we open ourselves to the transforming possibilities that come through the miracles and mystery of grace. Frogs not only leap out of wells and bump into end-of-the-world creatures; they become princes. Tortoises keep on keeping on with patience and persistence, and they get there in the end; but they go nowhere without coming out of their shells and sticking their necks out.

A couple of years ago during Community Week, I well remember that around the tents at the back of the Abbey there were regular reading sessions – a chapter of the latest Harry Potter book each afternoon and not just for the children! I confess I have never really gotten into Harry Potter. But the best books I have read over the past few months are also supposedly children’s books – the *His Dark Materials* trilogy by Philip Pullman: *Northern Lights*, *The Subtle Knife*, *The Amber Spyglass*. The stories are wonderfully told, unputdownably captivating, deep and multilayered. They explore the meaning and purpose of life – the survival of the world (or rather of parallel universes) is at stake. The young heroine and hero, Lyra Silvertongue and Will Parry, are certainly end-of-the-world creatures. The church is portrayed in a very negative, cruel, and authoritarian light. Philip Pullman has been described as an anti-Christian atheist; and yet the note on which the book ends is so upbeat: it looks forward to what he calls, in the last words, ‘the republic of love,’ surely the ‘kingdom of heaven’ by another name, the new community of hope.

The question remains: *What will you do* (and what will I do) *when the end comes?* Amen. ☩

By David Janzen

(Editor’s note: David Janzen is a member of the Reba Place Fellowship in Evanston, IL. We are grateful for his joining us for last year’s Festival of Shelters, and we invite you to join us this year.)

In September 2002, I visited the Open Door, a Presbyterian “Catholic Worker” community with the motto: “providing hospitality to the homeless and to those in prison, through Christ’s love.” I arrived just in time to participate in their Festival of Shelters, building on the Jewish practice to move outdoors and live in booths in remembrance of the time when the children of Israel depended on God for their survival in the wilderness. At the Open Door, this means living and sleeping on the streets with the homeless people of Atlanta.

Soon we are in Woodruff Park, in the shadow of downtown Atlanta skyscrapers, setting up tables and hauling huge pots of soup in preparation for an utterly unique festival. An amazing collection of folks is gathering to offer this welcome to the homeless people of Atlanta. The Open Door community includes a dozen men and women who have “graduated” from the streets by way of conversion to Jesus and his way of life, along with an equal number of downwardly mobile folks captivated by the promise that Jesus is present in the least of these. Other friends of the Open Door, short-term volunteers and guests like myself, filled in the gaps.

After about 200 homeless persons have eaten, they are invited to help serve, to carry placards, and to hand out leaflets explaining the festival. Students, police, mothers with children in strollers, and business men and women passing through the park are all invited to “Come, share a meal with us.” Some take a leaflet, stop to talk and catch the spirit; others walk by with faces frozen in their determination to not see what they see. I began to understand the crowds that pressed around Jesus and hung on his every word – homeless, emotionally broken, disfigured, booze-shattered, prostitutes, scorned by proper society – they heard what he said as good news because it was from God and it was for *them*.

We carry signs around the park: *Housing is a Human Right; Hospitality Not Hostility; Millions on Prisons, Zero on Housing; Public Toilets With Disability Access For All; and Pee for Free with Dignity*. The police officers standing by also note with a thumbs-up the placard that says, *A 21% Raise for all Atlanta Police with No Second Jobs Allowed*.

Ed Loring is street preaching, yelling in the Atlanta wilderness like a transplanted John the Baptist. “Ladies and gentlemen, I beg you, pray for the business people in these skyscrapers, pray for the folks in the mayor’s office, pray for the architects of exclusion, pray that their hearts and minds will be converted to a love of the poor and a commitment to justice for all. I urge you up there in your offices, come down

and have a meal with the homeless people of Atlanta, your sisters and brothers. God wants to forgive you. Come down. Come down.”

A night of trying to sleep on the sidewalk has the effect of adjusting my bones and my theology. There are eight of us including Lynda, a veteran of the streets, who gives tips on how to sit on cardboard to keep our bums from freezing. In Woodruff Park, across the street from the police station, we begin a reflection time from Psalm 23:

*You prepare a banquet for me,
Where all my enemies can see me.
You welcome me as an honored guest
And fill my cup to the brim.
I know that your goodness and love will be
with me all my life;
and your house will be my home
as long as I live.*

Homeless for a night, we suddenly feel the presence of our enemies – rats scurrying in the park, temperatures plunging below 40, and police stationed across the street, guardians of propriety and good order for those with houses. Certainly we had known a banquet all day long, but God’s house seems rather large and drafty, and we wonder if “as long as I live” will last until morning.

Another homeless fellow named Mike asks if he can join us. Soon he is confessing to us his wretched life and addiction as if there had been an altar call. We pray together, assuring him of God’s love and forgiveness. Then Mike warns us that the police will run us out of the park at 11 pm, but we’d be safer around the corner. As he promised, the police make us move. Around the corner, where they do not have to look at us, they leave us alone. The night is a fine misery of turning every which way to find a little comfort. One blanket and two jackets are not nearly enough. I end up stomping my feet to keep warm and talking

with Ed, Alan, and whoever comes by in the last hours before the sun came up.

Day two of the festival is sunny and even more glorious than the first. Word has gotten around that a few of us privileged white folks passed the night on the streets and had been hassled by the police. I could not believe how many people thanked us warmly for this gesture that did nothing to warm their concrete beds. I am also surprised that scores of people who yesterday were strangers greet me with a sincere, “Hello David Janzen, how did you sleep?”

A strange and wonderful exchange of status is going on – the homeless of Atlanta are welcoming us into their community, and we are all healed in a mysterious way. It was only for a night, but we tasted it – the first were last and the last first, the way it will be in heaven. ☩

Join us for the Festival of Shelters!



DAN MAUK

September 24-26
Woodruff Park
Downtown Atlanta

look for more details in
next month’s Hospitality!

Death, from page 1

in unison. It is time to “take back” downtown for the loft-dwellers and tourists and shoppers and college students and professionals.

And so we are in the midst of *100 Days of Let's Do Downtown*. Every Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday, the powers at Central Atlanta Progress (CAP) and the city have hired musicians and entertainers to perform during the lunch hour in Woodruff Park. They have even replaced some of the tables and chairs that they earlier removed in their effort to discourage poor people from gathering there to sit down or play chess. Homeless people are being “moved along,” and those with money to spend are being welcomed. They are trying to re-define Woodruff Park as the “quad” of Georgia State University.

So what does this have to do with the sad death of a baby boy?

A lot.

The numbers of homeless persons, men and women, boys and girls, and even babies, are growing. The drastic loss of affordable housing in the city, the scarcity of jobs that pay a living wage, the growing crisis in health care, and the slashing of any and every service that helps the poor, the elderly, children, and the disabled, all combine to dump more and more families and individuals onto the streets of the city. And on the streets of the city we hear the whining of the rich who are not pleased to have to look at the vulnerable and the broken. And so we call for the police and demand, “Clean up this mess. Carry off all this human garbage!”

Mayor Shirley Franklin appointed a Commission to Study the Homeless “Situation” and make recommendations to the Mayor’s office. Some of their ideas were good ones and worthy of consideration. They even supported the city getting public toilets (hooray!). But they said, “We were not asked to look at housing.”

What? Study the “problem of the homeless” and not talk about housing?! Are we so insane and so numb that we cannot even acknowledge the basic truth that what homeless people need is a place to live? A home, for God’s sake!

Atlanta, Georgia has been systematically destroying poor and black neighborhoods for 50 years. When neighborhoods like Buttermilk Bottom and Summerhill were destroyed to build stadiums, civic centers and interstate highways, these neighborhoods were not replaced. Many, many homeowners became renters and public housing tenants. Now much of the public housing has been destroyed (for development of “mixed use” complexes for which only a tiny number of former residents are allowed to apply). When we opened the first free shelter for homeless men in 1979, there were estimated to be around 1,500 homeless people in the city. In less than 10 years, there were at least 15,000. The ascen-

dancy of Republican policy and ideology along with the elimination of any opposition party has rendered us silent and stupid as public support for housing has disappeared. The crisis has deepened since the ‘96 Olympics with the development of upscale downtown housing and the gentrification of neighborhoods that were poor and mostly black. Banks, real estate firms, and predatory lenders have worked in active partnership to re-define the value of these downtown areas, and it has become nearly impossible for poor residents to remain—even in homes that they have owned for many years. Not only are poor residents being displaced, but the well-heeled new residents are often offended by having to see the poor who no longer can afford to live in the space that is rightfully their own. Right-wing ideology has been canned and mass-produced and issues from the mouths and pens of pseudo-journalists and civic “leaders.” “If these crackheads would just sober up and get a job, they would not be in the mess they are in.”

We will not take the responsibility that belongs to all of us, and we will not even face the truth: homelessness is not an accident or some phenomenon that fell from the sky. *Homelessness is a direct result of public policy.*

Homelessness is an intended consequence. It has to do with shrinking wages, the dismantling of public services, the obscene wealth of the rich, and the accompanying hateful cultural myths about the sloth of the poor. Adding insult to injury, we have criminalized the very existence of the poor. We have become so numb and accustomed to all this that we cannot even have a reasonable public conversation about what is going on.

And it is getting so much, so much worse. The most recent of Mr. Bush’s tax cuts has brought in its immediate wake yet more drastic cuts in any and every program that in any way assists the poor and vulnerable. Every public program to aid the mentally ill and addicted has either closed or been drastically cut back. We have yet to hear a politician who will stand up and say publicly: *Tax cuts murder the poor!* But this is the truth of the matter. People who support and cheer or even stand silently by while taxes are cut are actively supporting a public policy that is death dealing to the poor and vulnerable.

Atlanta’s blind and stupid cooperation with this national culture of suicide has ushered in one more of their hundreds of efforts to sweep the human wreckage out of sight so that we can continue in our denial of what we are really doing. It is so much easier to complain about the disgusting sights and odors and behaviors of those who are forced to live outdoors than to admit that we have intentionally created their plight. We want to drown out their cries of misery with happy music. And in the meantime, we have

Death, cont’d on page 9



SAM RAWLS

Doing It Wrong

By Pete Gathje

(Editor’s note: Part of the program for the “100 Days of Let’s Do Downtown” is an open mike on Fridays. Poets and musicians are encouraged to share their gifts. Pete Gathje [see p. 4] took a break from picketing to read this poem. After his “performance,” several folks from Central Atlanta Progress were very grumpy. One of our homeless friends responded to the poem, saying, “That’s okay. But don’t quit your day job!”)

Central Atlanta Progress teamed up with the city,
To create one hundred days downtown without pity.

They rightly opened these days with a blues singer,
As they proceeded to give the homeless the middle finger.

Concerned they say with quality of life issues,
Their compassion is as deep as toilet tissue.

Panhandling and street behavior they name,
When really business as usual is their game.

Run the poor and homeless out of central city,
Is the Central Atlanta Progress ditty.

They don’t support a living wage;
Against public toilets they constantly rage;

About Grady they don’t seem to care;
Economic injustice they regard as fair.

Here’s a quality of life I’d like to see:
Set all the homeless in prison free;

Build homes for the poor instead of for fish;
A place for all to live is my simple wish.

Fund centers for addicts and the mentally ill;
Stop the noxious anti-poor swill.

Recognize the human dignity of all;
Listen to the prophets’ and Jesus’ call.

There’s enough for everybody if we share;
Trust in God, be imaginative, take a dare.

Remember Jesus who loved the least
Who invited the poorest to his feast.

May we today do any less,
If we hope our lives together to be blest?

Death, from page 8
easily come up with \$200 million for a “world-class” aquarium for downtown and \$300 million for a new symphony hall. The celebrations of these new ventures have not included any nuance of the irony of it all.

Let’s be honest. If Enestae Kessee, Sr. and Bonita Williams and their newborn baby had sat down on a bench in Woodruff Park on the Friday before the baby died, they would have been seen as “urban campers,” and a police officer or an “Ambassador” would have “moved them along.” If they had refused to move along, they might well have been arrested. If they had approached any business people, they would have been some of the “aggressive panhandlers” that the King & Spaulding folks are fleeing. Neither the parents nor the baby were welcome in the great “International” City of Atlanta. Neither the parents nor the baby were deemed worthy of a few bucks from the millions we will spend on a big fishbowl or a center to replace the music hall we already have. They were an offense to us, and we would rather get them out of sight. We have become comfortable with the lie that they are responsible for their own predicament and we rest comfortably with our illusions. One week they were poster children for the “homeless problem.” The next week they were the objects of the whole city’s pity. We are having an orgy of “concern” now *only* because the baby died and it became public. Hundreds of homeless people are known to have died on the streets in the last several years, and yes, some of them were children and newborn babies. Has anyone shared this information at any of the press conferences? Has any member of the press asked questions about this deadly pattern of neglect? Has the District Attorney filed charges against the City for “negligent homicide?” Have we charged any of our “leaders” or journalists who berate the poor with hate crimes?

Tenured, from page 3
and the role of the media in selling the notion of a consensus have been powerful and yet can easily go unexamined. I’d like my students to pay attention to how the media decides what is newsworthy and what goes unquestioned. What must it mean, for example, when the nightly news covers the “fact” that this country will attack Iraq as an inevitability; makes brief mention that millions of Americans oppose such an action; but goes on to explain when the attack will likely occur; then, takes up the rest of the broadcast with features on weaponry, military gear, and “life” in military camps.

What does it mean when the sole coverage of opposition to this action is relegated to a human interest story at the end of the evening news in which a member of Voices in the Wilderness is portrayed as tragically standing in opposition to members of her family who support military action? Where is the discussion? Where is the public debate? What are the basic assumptions from which such coverage emerges?

I want my students asking those questions as a part of understanding how language works, how argument is made or not made, and why it is crucial to question the language of power.

When I asked a recent class to identify where public debate takes place in this culture—where larger political or social discussions might happen—they flatly denied there was such a place unless possibly the Internet and that, they said, was too often just a lot of people talking to each other, sending satire and jokes and some petitions (which they didn’t trust because they figured those were marketing scams) and a lot of information (which they also weren’t sure they trusted because who knows who writes that stuff?).

Let’s face it: *if you are homeless, you are dying.* To be homeless is to be under a non-judicial death sentence. But this fact is not on anybody’s disaster list. The Red Cross has not been called in. Not even Witness for Peace. For the slow drama of the death of the homeless is hardly a daily photo op. It has simply become part of our national social and political landscape, and we are numbed to the death-dealing reality of it all.

Yes, the death of Enestae Kessee, Jr. should be mourned loud and long. His parents should be helped in all the ways that they are being helped. And then we must open up housing for the thousands of *other* homeless families. And then we must open up housing for every homeless individual. And then we must re-open addiction centers and mental health services. And then we must fully fund Grady, our only local public hospital and trauma center. And then we must make nutritious food available to the hungry of our city. The minimum wage must be a living wage and good work available to all.

And perhaps the police officer was right: the baby was dead; they had to arrest somebody. Until we make a real and substantive response to the death of this child, let’s arrest the Mayor and the City Council. Let’s arrest the staff and Board of Central Atlanta Progress and all the banks and real estate firms. Let’s arrest Colin Campbell and everybody who ever wrote a mean word about the poor. Let’s arrest the President and members of Congress. And let’s arrest every preacher, rabbi, imam, and every person of faith who dares to keep silent while the poor die under our noses because of our greed and cruel apathy.

The baby is dead. We are the guilty ones. Can God forgive us? ✠

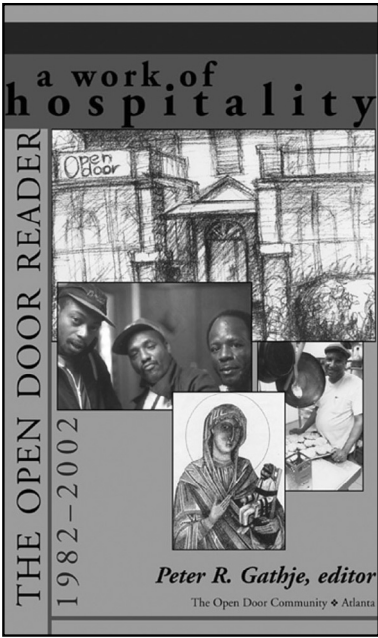
Murphy Davis is a Partner at the Open Door Community.

Addressing hard topics and complicated debate in the classroom might mean looking at the work of someone like Barbara Erenreich, who asks hard questions about welfare in this country. She doesn’t argue for or against welfare programs. Instead, she asks “*How?*” and “*What?*” For Erenreich the issue is not a simple matter of how many people continue on the welfare rolls—the question most frequently addressed in the media and by government officials—but, instead, what are the causes of poverty in this country? *How* is it possible to live on minimum income work? Once you ask how and why, you are into a very different kind of discussion, one that rarely surfaces in broader public debates on welfare in the U.S.

For many, “situating learning” means to take students into the places where they can do community work or see a community at work. We situate practice, as well, inside the classroom every time we examine real, ongoing debates that are, in some instances, quite literally a matter of life and death. When we examine news reports for how they are constructed and for what is actually said; when we study debates going on in our courtrooms and legislatures; when we set argument within its historic, cultural, and political contexts and refuse to rest on the common terms of a debate, then we situate learning.

What better time to be a rhetorician—to examine terms and phrases like *pre-emptive war*, *welfare reform*, or *privatization of medicare*? What better time to be a composition teacher—to teach the power of language, the value of debate, the importance of deliberation, careful analysis, and thoughtful response? If these are “radical” concepts—then what better time to be a “tenured radical”? ✠

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Dear Friends,

Thank you for the superb book. I hope it takes a proper place in history along with Dorothy Day’s writings, or John Woolmon’s Journal, or the Rules of Benedict, or Bonhoeffer’s Life Together.

In shared faith and service,

*Clay Oglesbee, Pastor
Northfield United
Methodist Church
Northfield, MN*

Good News, from page 1

life together. Dr. King is a founder of the Open Door, as is Dorothy Day. What Jay Frasier was discovering in King and going beyond King is the Beloved Community as a diverse folk living in covenant with one another.

At the Open Door Community we hear the Word and discern the Word from homeless friends and prisoners who are sisters and brothers. This forms our solidarity as we seek to reduce the distance among ourselves.

King teaches us today from the church basements and sanctuaries of Montgomery, Alabama, and the pulpit at Riverside Church in New York City, that faith and revolutionary communities are the roots of a movement. *Rosa Parks did not refuse to give up her seat alone.* Thank you, Black Church and Highlander Center. King calls, teaches, and practices: Be rooted in a community, Word-filled, and *practice the revolution together now.* Or as Ron Sider says, “Don’t ask the government or culture to do anything you are not already doing in your synagogue, mosque, and church.” The Beloved Community: breaking down dividing walls, becoming one new humanity, following Jesus, our Pioneer of the Revolution of Values and Practices.

We at the Open Door Community are living a life and are dying a death inside a little piece of the Beloved Community. Inside our home resides racism and white supremacy and privilege. At our welcome table, the fallen human heart – the root of the war itself, the designer of wart hogs – sits and coughs when we would pray. Materialism seeps from our clothes closet (hard not to be well dressed wearing used Presbyterian clothes!) into our eyes and we race down the hall to explore the recent donation of running shoes while barefooted men and bedroom-slippered women stand in our yard. “And there is no health in us...”

Yet, we keep hope alive — in the midst of it all as we confess, repent, seek conversion. God’s grace tumbles down like waters from the mighty Mississippi into our Beloved Community.

We’re getting to taste and touch it! The Beloved Community is at hand. The revolution is here. We are thankful, joyful, ready disciples. Thank you. Thank you.

II. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Sinner and Saint: As a resource for those of us Who are not good enough.

Another and *most important* way that Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., is a resource in our lives for the living of revolution in these days is simply this:

Dr. King was neither perfect nor innocent. Thank you, Jesus! Dr. King was broken and grasped by the tragic dimension of the Human Condition.

Oh, the good that I would, I do not do!

The evil that I would not do, I do.

Oh, wretched one that I am.

King, like you, like me, knew lust, paralyzing fear, adultery and nail driving guilt and oppressive sexism— King begged for mercy and pleaded for release to his forgiving God. While organizing the Poor People’s Campaign in the midst of a garbage strike and calling America to get the hell out of Vietnam, he was shot dead mercilessly by white racism and white fear of the loss of the privilege of “Whites only”... he was moving ever closer in the pulpit to confess and weep in public....

Blessed are those who are merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.

Ah, here is the hope in the revolution of values and practices: Our Beloved Communities will always

be made up of twisted vessels – sinners in our life together – as we are every day at The Open Door Community. One cost of diversity and liberation is that we sin more often. We stumble and fall going up the rough side of the mountain. At home, in our house of hospitality, we are a community of the guilty, the condemned, sometimes of the dead who are yet walking. We are desperate and starving for a new way, a new covenant, and *revolutionary forgiveness and a forgiving revolution.*

We can be like Coretta Scott King. “Martin, Martin,” she would whisper when Martin came home from the front lines. “Martin,” she would say, “Give me your hand. Let’s climb up a little higher.”

Let us go and do likewise. We are able, you know.

III. King’s Demand for Justice

The Open Door Community is a home where serious study and scholarship prepares us for justice work, and where the journey for justice demands that we return and re-read the texts, like Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.’s defining sermon “Beyond Vietnam,” with eyes and hearts focused by the streets and jails and engagement with death and execution. (Parenthetically, I want to say thank you to the gays and lesbians among us. You are really inspiring.)

In the theology of The Open Door Community, the Doctrine of the Trinity is our hottest doctrine. The Trinity shapes the Beloved Community and is a key to the hope we live and this revolution we practice. *3 is 1 and 1 is 3. That’s it.* Revelation and Revolution go hand in hand. Revolution is putting our feet in the street and building liberation history on Revelation. Dr. King loved the Trinity.

3 is 1 and 1 is 3:

Parent-Creator

Liberation Leader

Holy Ghost fire

3 in 1 is 1 in 3 and 1 in 3 is 3 in 1!!

Holy Ghost fire, Will of Yahweh-Elohim, and Jesus the revolutionary: practicing the one story of liberation that moves us in diversity and multiplicity toward the *unity* of the Beloved Community. 3 is 1, 1 is 3. 3 in 1, 1 in 3. Dr. King teaches us the *Trinity* for the justice journey:

Militarism

Racism

Materialism

When Liz Walz pours her blood on a Wart-hog - planes used for years to drop depleted uranium on the Iraqi people - Deb Van Duinen is pouring grits into the bowl of a dying and starving man who feels war-torn. At the same time, Reverend Andre Johnson is pushing Memphis to come out into the light with its policies of white supremacy while Liz is pouring blood on the Warthog while Deb is pouring grits into a bowl while you are saying *NO* to the military and *YES* to the Poor and *NO* to the racist death penalty and *YES* to a felon to come and live with you, while Liz is pouring blood on a Warthog, while Deb is pouring grits in a dying man’s bowl, while Andre continues a movement to stop Memphis death-dealing to the sons and daughters of sanitation workers, goes beyond King, and halts the entire city by dancing and singing and ripping the door off sanctuary while

Liz pours blood

Deb pours grits

Others restore justice

Deborah tells truth for reconciliation

Some go to Colombia, South America

Some to the center of hell in San Francisco

Others visit in the prison

While Andre dances with the Mayor on Beal Street

Liz pours blood

Deb pours grits.

And Dr. King laughs a bellyful

3 is 1

1 is 3

This is the key to the story of liberation, of manifold movements for peace, sharing sisterhood and brotherhood.

IV. Finally: A word about racism in the Revolution while we run this race.

Racists: those who give their lives to running the race for justice, to unbuild, brick by brick, the military industrial complex and bring hand-by-hand every soldier, buck private, and 5-star general to the welcome table.

Racists will be those who race to end poverty, feed the hungry.

White supremacy is murder; privilege is death.

Run this race to abundant life. Racists are runners to end the Church’s policies, which will not welcome gays and lesbians to ordination or marriage.

Racists are running hard up a Steep Mountain to transform justice by love, the criminal injustice system by restorative justice.

Racists are running toward the crucified messiah whose cross has been desecrated by the KKK and made into an instrument of terror by President Bush and Franklin Graham.

Racists are those who run long and hard. Tasting the Beloved Community as we drink the waters of love and eat the bread of justice.

Let us give Thanks and Praise as we follow into the prisons and streets Jesus the Human One, Martin Luther King, Jr., The Triune God at war with King’s triplets of evil, Word and World, this freedom school. ✦

Ed Loring is a Partner at the Open Door Community.

Do you know of a store that offers quality **underwear seconds**? If so, please let us know!

Each week we provide complete changes of clothes to dozens of our homeless friends. We are seeking a source of quality, inexpensive underwear before the fall months arrive.



volunteer needs

- People with good computer data-entry skills to work four hours or more per week
- People to accompany community members to doctor’s appointments
- People to serve breakfast, Monday and Tuesday mornings, 5:50-9:30 a.m., and Soup Kitchen on Thursdays, 9 a.m.-12:30 p.m.
- Groups to make meat and cheese sandwiches (no bologna, please) on whole-wheat bread for Soup Kitchen on Wednesdays and Thursdays, and for our friends on the streets
- People to cook or bring supper for the Community any evening Monday through Thursday

For more information, contact Phil Leonard at 404-874-4906 or pleon2000@mindspring.com

Grace and Peaces of Mail

An Open Letter To the Child Rescue Network:

I saw one of your representatives on television in connection with the tragic death of a child of a homeless couple in Atlanta a couple of days ago (see cover story, "Who Killed The Baby?"). I was horrified by his ignorant comments and by the thought that he represents an organization which works with homeless children.

When asked to name one thing which could have made a difference in why the child died, he said, "education." And explained that if the parents had been properly educated about how to feed their child and how much a baby needs to eat, the child may not have died.

He had NO IDEA how educated the parents were and what they knew or did not know about how to feed their baby. What was obvious, however, was that they lived in an abandoned house with NO WATER or ELECTRICITY and when their child got sick they had to WALK for miles to seek care for him. There is no indication at all that they did not know how to care for and feed their baby. Only that they did not have the resources to do so.

What would obviously have made a difference, is if these clearly loving parents had a home - with water, electricity and a phone to call 911 - and access to medical care for their baby.

A person who works with the homeless ought to know that and name that immediately as the first and obvious cause of any homeless person's problem.

Charlotta Norby
Southern Center for Human Rights
Atlanta, GA

Dear Ms. Davis,

As a member of Amnesty International and as your community sends your newspaper to our group, I had the opportunity to have a look on *Hospitality* and be informed about the Open Door Community's actions.

I read the article titled "Governor Ryan, Daniel Colwell, and G.W. Bush" (*Hospitality*, March 2003, vol. 22, no. 3) and presented a synthesis of it to the members of our group who works on death penalty.

I want to express that this article particularly impressed me, an atheist; the arguments concerning this tricky issue were expressed in a clear way with a great sense of humanism.

Best regards,
Brigitte Hallart
Champigny sur Marne
France

Dear Ed,

I received the June issue of *Hospitality* (vol. 22, no. 6) yesterday. I have read it. I did not forget you. There are three articles I really liked.

(1) "50 Years After the Rosenberg Execution: Looking Back and Ahead." This is really a sad story. This should not have happened since there was no real concrete proof. Just like today, there are people who are innocent of a crime but found guilty by a jury and sentence to die or serve time in prison. A person is supposed to be innocent until proven guilty. A lot of time I think it is the other way around, guilty until proven innocent. Yes we are living in a world of injustice.

(2) "Stay Close to the Tomb." This is a good article also. People are so spiritually dead, homeless, seems that no one cares about them. It is rough to be homeless. I know, I've been there.

(3) "The Wednesday Report." I have to say this is the best of the three. I hope God gives me a chance to get a homeless person when I get out that I can buy a meal for, clothes and shower and share Christ with them.

A friend in prison

Ed and Murphy and all the Beloved Community,

I was talking to Lance Stone the other day and we had to agree that Murphy's article on the Rosenbergs in the recent issue of *Hospitality* ("50 Years After the Rosenberg Execution: Looking Back and Ahead," June, vol. 22, no. 6) was not only enlightening, but the analysis was absolutely spot on - both politically and theologically. It was also incredibly moving - thank you for a brilliant piece.

We thought we ought to let you know that Sue and I are moving on 1st July to a new life in a group of churches in Gravesend - which is a highly poignant name for a place since Jesus put an end to the grave.

I would be grateful if in the interim you would change our mailing address; we don't want to miss out on *Hospitality*! I would also ask that you pray for us as we move to this exciting stage in our ministry.

Shalom,
Peter & Sue Clark

Peter Clark has recently graduated from Westminster College at Oxford and is taking up his first pastorate. He and Sue were volunteers at the Open Door in the summer of 2001. Lance Stone is on the faculty of Westminster at Oxford.

Friends,

The writing [in *Hospitality*] each month is outstanding, but the March issue is superior in its scope and inspiration.

Thank you so much.
Alice McConaughy Hartbarger
Bridgeport, AL



To Open Door People,

The enclosed check is given [for the July 4 picnic] in memory of Jean and LeRoy McMullen. Both died last December, 2002. We think they would like the idea of buying mustard, ketchup, mayonnaise, pickles in their memory.

Love,
Ray and Muriel Wilks
Atlanta, GA

Dear Friends,

It's now one year since I met you and I am thankful to God. My Holy Week this year is in Taize (France) in a silent retreat. It has been a really good experience! Sometimes we really need to stop and listen to what God has to tell us! Sorry I haven't kept in touch a lot but I have you in my heart and prayers.

At home I was able to find few, but good people, that are helping me follow "my way"... so, it was not that bad! Greetings to all and to the friends on the streets too!

Peace,
Carina Henriques
Alfornelos, Portugal

Dear Murphy,

Thanks so much for the splendid article on the Rosenberg execution. What a great injustice was done. And things aren't any better today. The USA Patriot Act is scary, indeed - the idea behind it.

I have just re-read, after many years, Doris Lessings' "Going Home," about her return to Rhodesia (as it was then in 1956 - now Zimbabwe). Eleven years later, she added her thoughts, which ended with a paragraph in which she noted "the most valuable citizens any country can possess are the troublemakers, the public nuisances, the fighters of small, apparently unimportant battles."

Surely you and all at the Open Door fall into that category as you continue to fight for the homeless, the imprisoned, especially those on death row. May God strengthen you all as you continue that work in the name of Jesus.

Shalom!
Jeri Abbott
Knoxville, TN

Dear Ed and Murphy,

A Happy Summer Holiday Seasons Greetings to you all and all of yours, from deep within the belly of the beast of the criminal state of Ohio. Thank you for the June 2003 issue of *Hospitality*.

I was exactly 2 1/2 years old when the Rosenbergs were judicially murdered. I was also in Israel at that time. I do know that Eisenhower was very much hated in Israel.

The judicial and penal systems of Ohio are up in arms; as their hens have finally come home to roost. First, the state is broke, so they got to close down prisons. Eventually they will have to reduce the prisoner population. Something they hate to do!

Then some formerly pro-state government newspapers are finally telling the truth about the parole board and their role in the state being broke. This is also helping the major lawsuit against the parole board.

Then some of the officers here have been charged with statutory rape and child pornography. Ditto for the officers at M.C.I.; where I was for 9 1/2 months. On this note I'll end this letter with a blessing for a more just world. Until then, I remain with Torah Greetings and Blessings and With Love for those remaining good within humanity.

In Friendship and Solidarity,
A friend in prison

Dear Open Door Friends:

Thanks for reminding us of the Rosenberg executions—Indeed...FEAR has returned and is being promoted...I am urging your readers to work hard and raise their voices to elect in 2004 new leadership...truth in place of deceit/lies...thirst for peace in place of hunger for permanent war...concern for the needy in place of care for the wealthy. Let's bring back to the USA, respect...by working with all nations, substituting listening and cooperation in place of going-it-alone imperialism.

Please check www.MoveOn.Org, which is organizing a nationwide campaign to assure new leadership; they will listen to and appreciate your ideas and beliefs.

Gratefully,
Ted Sizing
Syracuse, N.Y.

Open Door Community Ministries

Soup Kitchen: Wednesday and Thursday, 11 a.m. – noon.

Weekday Breakfast: Monday and Tuesday, 6:45 a.m.

Showers: Wednesday, 8 a.m.

Use of Phone: Monday – Tuesday, 6:45 a.m. – 7:45 a.m.,
Wednesday – Thursday, 9 a.m. – noon.

Harriet Tubman Free Medical Clinic and Soul Foot Care Clinic: Thursdays, 7:00 p.m.

Clarification Meetings: Tuesdays, 7:30 – 9 p.m.

Weekend Retreats: Four times each year (for our household, volunteers and supporters).

Prison Ministry: Monthly trip to prisons in Hardwick, GA, in partnership with First Presbyterian Church of Milledgeville; The Jackson (Death Row) Trip

We are open...

Monday through Saturday: We answer telephones from 9:00 a.m. until noon, and from 2:00 until 6:00 p.m. The building is open from 9:00 a.m. until 8:30 p.m. Monday through Saturday. (We do not answer phone and door during our noon prayers and 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 invite you to worship with us at 5 p.m. and join us, following worship, for a delicious supper.

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

Join Us in Worship!

We gather for worship and Eucharist at 5 p.m. each Sunday, followed by supper together. Our worship space is limited, so if you are considering bringing a group to worship, please contact Phil Leonard at pleon2000@mindspring.com or 404-874-4906.



August 3	Worship at 910 Pete Gathje preaching
August 10	Worship at 910 Dick Rustay leading worship in remembrance of Hiroshima and Nagasaki
August 17	Worship at Dayspring Farm
August 22-24	Annual Planning Retreat at Dayspring No Worship at 910
August 31	Worship at 910

Please check www.opendoorcommunity.org or call us for the most up-to-date worship schedule.

Clarification Meetings at the Open Door

We will meet for clarification on selected Tuesday evenings in August, from 7:30-9 pm.

Plan to join us for discussion and reflection!



DANIEL NICHOLS

For the latest information and scheduled topics, please call 404-874-9652 or see www.opendoorcommunity.org.

Needs of the Community

JEANS	hams and turkeys for our Soup Kitchen	disposable razors
men's work shirts	sandwiches	deodorant
underwear for men	quick grits	vaseline
women's underwear	cheese	combs
men's belts	coffee	toothbrushes
socks	multi-vitamins	SOAP (any size)
men's shoes (all sizes)	MARTA tokens	SHAMPOO (travel size)
EYEGLASSES	postage stamps	alarm clocks
baseball caps	HEAVY DUTY GAS LAWN MOWER	
	MINIVAN IN GOOD RUNNING CONDITION	
	two mountain bikes for Dayspring Farm	
	used or new french horn for music at Worship	
	child and baby safety seats (for Hardwick Trip Vans)	

Medicine Needs List

(for our Thursday Evening Harriet Tubman Free Medical Clinic and Soul Foot Care Clinic)

We are also looking for volunteers to staff our Soul Foot Care Clinic!	nail files
	Ibuprofen
	SUDAFED
	latex gloves
	lubriderm lotion
	COUGH DROPS
	toenail clippers (large)
	medicated foot powder
	antibiotic cream or ointment
	antifungal cream (Tolfanate)
	non-drowsy allergy medication
	COLD MEDICINE (alcohol free)