

HOSPITALITY

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vol. 22, no. 1

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

January 2003

Inequity is Iniquity

Raising Prophetic Voices Against US-Led Globalization

By Severino Croatto

(Editor's note: José Severino Croatto is Professor of Old Testament at the Instituto Universitario [ISEDET], Buenos Aires, Argentina, and has published many volumes of Biblical scholarship and liberation theology. He and his wife, Professor Cristina Conti, were Campbell Scholars at Columbia Seminary in the fall of 2002, and they became beloved members of the Open Door worshiping community. Severino preached this sermon at the Open Door on November 10.)

"Now then, my flock, I, the Sovereign God, tell you that I will judge each of you and separate the good from the bad, the sheep from the goats. Some of you are not satisfied with eating the best grass; you even trample down what you don't eat! You drink the clear water and muddy what you don't drink! My other sheep have to eat the grass you trample down and drink the water you muddy.

"So now I, the Sovereign, tell you that I will judge between you strong sheep and the weak sheep. You pushed the sick ones aside and butted them away from the flock. But I will rescue my sheep and not let them be mistreated any more. I will judge each of my sheep and separate the good from the bad. I will give them a ruler like my servant David to be their one shepherd who will take care of them. I will be their God, and one like my servant David will be their ruler. I have spoken. I will make a covenant with them that guarantees their security. I will get rid of all the dangerous animals in the land, so that my sheep can live safely in the fields and sleep in the forests.

"I will bless them and let them live around my sacred hill. There I will bless them with showers of rain when they need it. The trees will bear fruit, the fields will produce crops, and everyone will live in safety on her own land. When I break my people's chains and set them free from those who made them slaves, then they will know that I am their God. The heathen nations will not plunder them any more, and the wild animals will not kill and eat them. They will live in safety, and no one will terrify them. I will give them fertile fields and put an end to hunger in the land. The other nations will not sneer at them any more. Everyone will know that I protect Israel and that they are my people. I, the Sovereign God, have spoken.

"You, my sheep, the flock that I feed, are my people, and I am your God," says the Sovereign God. (Ezekiel 34:17-31, TEV adapted)

Many years after the fall of Jerusalem and the exile, maybe some centuries after those events, many years after the prophet Ezekiel had uttered oracles of doom against the people of Jerusalem and was unsuccessfully claiming their conversion, a new prophet met a small and distressed community – a community apparently without hope, or even without confidence in the "God of the fathers and mothers."

This prophet is the one speaking in the book of Ezekiel, chapters 34 through 39. The passage we have chosen for this service (34:17-31) begins by recalling the deeds of the bad shepherds of old, who had been feeding themselves (34:1) and caused the sheep to be scattered and injured among different nations all over the world. God faces the task of bringing back the stray, binding up the injured, strengthening the weak (v.16).



ARTIST UNKNOWN

Reading our text in our own context, it means that the bad shepherds are those who have power – the rich nations, the wealthy sectors of society, the financial and industrial corporations, the local oligarchies in many countries, the corrupt governing class. The allegory of "fat sheep and lean sheep" (v.20) is a good image of the world we live in. Fat people and lean people are symbols of what happens in our society. Worldviews, skills, culture, and faith differentiate us from one another; but most importantly, we are differentiated by the economic possibilities for food, housing, safety, enjoying life, and being in community.

God commands the prophets to shout out, not to

hold back, to lift up their voice and denounce the sin of injustice and unrighteousness (Isa 58:1). This prophetic voice does not implicate the whole people, but primarily the powerful and the ruling class in our society. However, do they honestly receive the word of the prophets and convert to justice?

If shepherds become deaf and blind, God will turn over their privileged position and act alone. God will save the flock, "and they shall no longer be ravaged" (Ezek 34:22). "To be ravaged" is an appropriate description of what is happening in our midst in the present world. The research we made at the Columbia Theological Seminary as Campbell Scholars in the last eight weeks gave us a clear consciousness of the social and economic paradigm of "inequity as iniquity" that is ruling the world, and divides it into two symmetrically opposite poles of "oppressors and oppressed / dominators and dominated / exploiters and exploited." There is food in the world; nevertheless, some are well fed and others are hungry. Some are overfed but "about 170 million children in poor countries are underweight because of lack of food," according to the World Health Organization. Among the ten major health risks, lack of food ranks first. Countries with successful and sufficient production of food – such as Argentina, once celebrated as "the world's bread basket" – are falling into a grave crisis of food shortages. The problem is the distribution of what nature and human beings produce. Lack of equality, concentration of riches in increasingly fewer hands – hands of immense capacity – become the expression of injustice. Once again, "inequity is iniquity."

God is not asking us to cause more human casualties and economic disasters by war, but to struggle against war, weapons industries and trade, unequal land distribution, low and unjust salaries, and the present voracious economic system, which undermines the life conditions of weaker people and weaker nations.

This is what God is asking us to do in this time. Indeed, we can "imagine" a better future. When there seems to be no sign of imminent justice and solidarity, the oppressed and heartbroken appeal to God. This appeal to God is often the language of the Bible, as just now we have heard from Ezekiel. However, this kind of prayer should not be passive at all. We trust in God's presence and action because the oppressive structures are so strong that they do not seem to allow any way out. But we must struggle in every way we can, by raising our voice as the prophets did, by becoming conscious of how things happen in our world, by raising the consciousness of other people.

Let us give an example of this responsibility. It is
Inequity, continued on page 10

Waiving Good-bye to Rights

By Elizabeth Dede

In *Alabama v. Shelton*, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that a defendant has a right to legal representation even in a misdemeanor case, and if the defendant cannot afford an attorney, one will be appointed. In city courts here in southwest Georgia, I've been interested to see how this ruling affects the course of proceedings.

Even before *Alabama v. Shelton*, Judge Jim Thurman in Smithville, Georgia, had been providing access to a defense attorney to those who chose to consult with one, especially to those who faced mandatory jail sentences. Since a probation violation can land a person in jail, all defendants face the possibility of a jail sentence. At the Prison & Jail Project, we agree with Judge Thurman's interpretation of the law. *Alabama v. Shelton* seems to be straightforward: at all levels, defendants have the right to an attorney, even if they cannot afford to hire one.

Other judges seem to use all kinds of legal machinations to get around the ruling. In Americus, Judge J. Michael Greene narrowly interprets the Supreme Court's decision to apply only to those who face a mandatory jail sentence. In such a case, should a defendant request court-appointed legal assistance, they are bound over to State Court. As Judge Greene regrettably describes, they will be "re-arrested," taken out to the jail, booked, and made to post a bond. Understandably, most defendants choose to waive their right to an attorney, so that Judge Greene can handle their case in Americus City Court. No one wants to go to jail.

For those who do not face a mandatory jail sentence, Judge Greene uses a system called "supervision," which is basically probation by another name. If a person fails to comply with their court-ordered supervision, they are then subject to a contempt of court charge, which could result in jail time. At this point, they are eligible for a court-appointed attorney, according to Judge Greene's system.

In all cases, defendants are given a form, which states their right to an attorney at all stages of

the criminal process. The form they are asked to sign waives their right to an attorney. Since most defendants are unable to afford to hire an attorney, Judge Greene asks if they have read the form; if they agree to waive their right to an attorney, he then has them sign the form.

I have long suspected that most people have no idea what they are signing. Many people, I've come to believe, don't even know the meaning of the word "waive." Recently, in Americus City Court, my suspicions were confirmed. I sat behind a young man and his mother. The young man was in court on a shoplifting charge. He did not face a jail sentence, so in Judge Greene's economy, he had no right to a court-appointed attorney. I know that this young man did not read the form about his right to an attorney because his mother held onto the paper the entire time they sat in court. Nevertheless, when the judge asked him if he had read the form, he replied in the

affirmative, and then blithely signed away his rights.

In my mind's eye, I see all these defendants waving good-bye to their rights. In a recent court session, I overheard a defendant asking the bailiff some legal questions about a traffic ticket. The defendant was not facing jail time, so there was no attorney to clear up her confusion. She signed the form that waived her right to an attorney, even though she clearly needed legal assistance. She simply couldn't afford to hire a lawyer. If I were the judge, I'd rather assist defendants to embrace their right to an attorney. Then we would all be more assured that justice prevails in the courts. ✠

Elizabeth Dede, a non-residential Partner at the Open Door Community, works with the Prison and Jail Project in Americus, GA. Elizabeth also writes a weekly column on justice issues for the Americus Sumter Observer.

Join us as a Resident Volunteer



Evan Blackman joined us in August as a Resident Volunteer. Evan came from Arkansas to Atlanta to study at the Interdenominational Theological Center.

Contact: Phil Leonard
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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: Guest Ministry, Food Coordinator, and Hardwick Prison Trip
Gladys Rustay: Treasurer, Jackson Prison Trip, and Food Coordinator
Ed Loring: Correspondence, Resident Volunteer Coordinator
Murphy Davis: Southern Prison Ministry, Worship and Music Coordinator
Dick Rustay: Dayspring Farm Coordinator



CALVIN KIMBROUGH

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(A \$7 donation to the Open Door would help to cover the costs of printing and mailing Hospitality for one year. A \$30 donation covers overseas delivery for one year.)

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The Divine Office of Jail Time

By Toni Flynn

(Editor's note: Toni Flynn, founder of the High Desert Catholic Worker in Valyermo, CA, will be released from the Crisp County Jail in Cordele, GA, in January. Along with 35 other activists, Toni was found guilty of trespassing onto Fort Benning during the 2001 vigil action at the School of the Americas [WHISC] in Columbus, GA. The Open Door joined the 2002 protest on November 17. For more information, consult www.soaw.org.)

When I am afraid, I will trust in you. (Psalm 56)

I peek out of the narrow vertical shard of glass that serves as my cell window. It's morning – my favorite time – and I gratefully soak in a view of wet green grass, imagining the rich scent of blooming trees just beyond the jail parking lot.

A wild bird, no larger than my palm, flutters into view, skillfully perching itself at eye-level onto a portion of the wire fence that surrounds the correctional facility – avoiding the twisted barbs that might have torn both wings. We both pause and become still, our eyes sizing each other up: the free bird and the caged woman. Momentarily, the sky calls and the bird takes flight. I press my nose to the glass, my breath forming a thin moist wreath of envy around the window.

Surrender is not a practice that comes easy to me. Nor does the sensation of being brought level to the frailty of my own humanity. I leave the window and lie on my bunk remembering the Sunday afternoon at the SOA (WHISC) protest in November 2001 at the gates of Fort Benning here in Georgia.

What can I say that might best convey the turning of events? It was a day of reverence and a day of reckoning.

Everything was glorious and we, the righteous ones, processed ten thousand strong, remembering the disappeared and the dead of Latin America with a Litany of Names accompanied by our continual *PRESENTE*. We formed a multitude – a non-violent force, speaking truth to

power, giving voice to the voiceless. Together, we pleaded – demanded – that the men with guns, the U.S. officers who train them, the government that encourages and sustains the violence with our tax dollars, stop the madness and close the School of the Americas (now known as the Western Hemispheric Institute for Security Cooperation).

My own heart that day was pounding with exhilaration as I managed my way around a fence and proceeded onto military property. There, I joined hands with a Franciscan priest and other pilgrims of peace and justice. Then came a swarm of military police and I found myself alone, obeying their command to lie belly-down on the ground, my face

smothering in damp leaves, dirt seeping into my mouth. With a crude indifference, someone handcuffed my wrists behind my back. A panic flooded my body, invaded my head, and I was on fire with fear. My impulse was to aggressively resist and defy my captors – an awful temptation for any person of peace. Instead, I swooned and almost blacked out, thinking to myself, "Fight or faint, either way you are under arrest!"

Call it grace or give it some other name indicative of merciful intervention, I suddenly felt myself letting go of all my anxiety and I began to recite half-remembered pieces of a psalm: "We are brought down to the dust ... our bodies cling to the ground ... help us ... redeem us with your love." And a line from another psalm: "Renew a steadfast spirit in me." Or something like that. However sadly I may have misquoted the psalmist, the words served to bring me to a place of calm and yes, surrender.

The Catholic Worker house where I lived before my incarceration (and to which I'll return after I serve my six months as a prisoner of conscience) is situated in the High Desert region of Southern California, near a Benedictine Abbey. Many days, you can find me at the monastery, resting, walking, working in the ceramics shop, attending Mass, sharing in the meals, and praying – along with the monks – the Divine Office (the chanting of psalms at certain designated times throughout the day and night). I was surprised to learn from one of the elders that in the early days of monasticism, the monks, after chanting a psalm, would fall into silent prostration, freely and willingly remaining flat on the ground of the chapel for the same measurement of time that it took them to pray the preceding psalm.

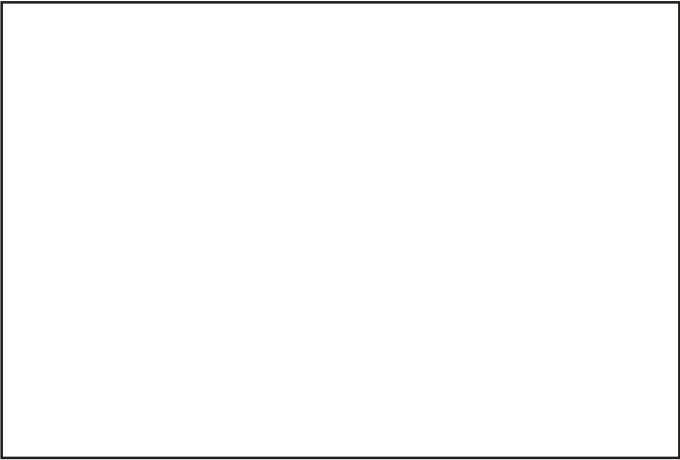
It occurred to me as I lay on the leaves, pinned down and shackled, to bring that example of sacred prostration into my own experience. And so I did. While I waited to be lifted from the ground, I searched my memory for more psalm remnants. I'm no biblical scholar, and hopefully God overlooked the way I frayed and frazzled the lines I conjured up. I prayed, "Our help is in the name of the Lord." Silence. "My prayer comes before you." Silence. "Hear my cry." Silence. Prayer. Silence and prayer. Soon I was feeling at least free in spirit, a "monk in handcuffs."

Here in the jail, where I now find myself several months distanced from the grandeur of the protest and a few weeks into my sentence, I continue with my monastic prayer life – however clumsy and faulty it may be. A friend in here loaned me a Bible so that now I have full access to the Psalmody in its exquisite entirety. Most mornings and evenings you'll find me on my stomach on my bed, reading the psalms, pausing silently after each one. Into those pauses I bring to mind the victims of the SOA, their perpetrators, their surviving families, my own family members, my friends, the women I've met in the jails, the SOA-Watch organizers, my fellow peace activists,

our attorney and his team, our supporters, the judge who sentenced us, the U.S. marshals who transport us, the county and federal correctional officers, all those in places of power who pin poor people down low and keep them there, all who devote themselves to a better way, and the Benedictine monks who taught me how to pray and how to practice the ancient, sacred art of spiritual surrender to a loving God.

I am still learning the ways of the wild bird – how to balance my faith in God between the twisted barbs of injustice and violence; how to fly above and beyond the holds of the powers and principalities; how to chart my course across unfamiliar terrain; how to trust in the promise of peace. How to become free.

The Lord saved them from distress... brought them out of darkness and deepest gloom and broke away their chains. Let us give thanks for God's unfailing love. (Psalm 107) ✠



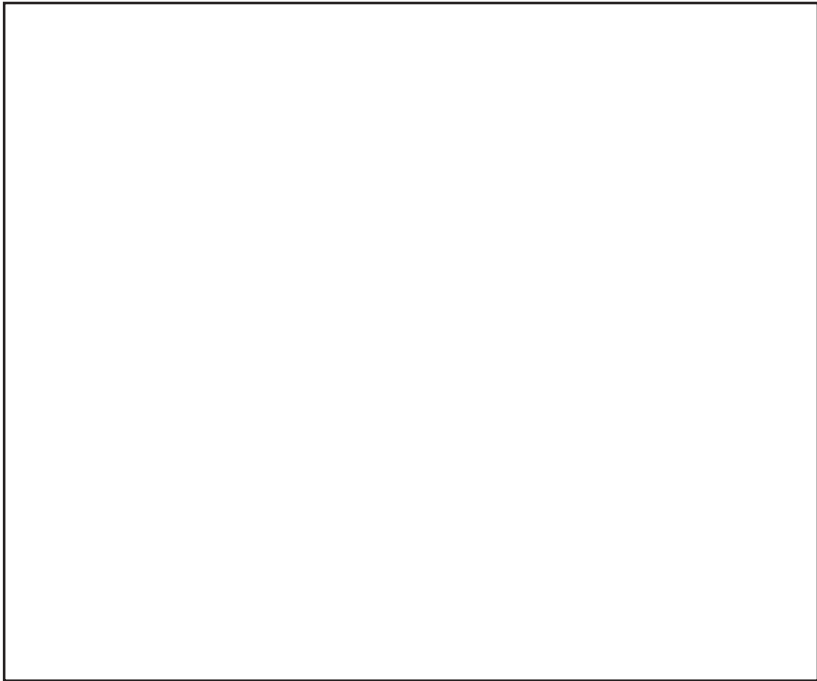
MURPHY DAVIS
*Outside Ft. Benning, our friends carried bird puppets representing each of the prisoners serving time for the 2001 SOA action. Here, Amy Webb carries the puppet for Rich Ring along with Barbara Ring, Rich's mother (right). In the center, Helen Grove carries the bird for Toni Flynn. Both Toni and Rich are contributing writers to *Hospitality*.*

MURPHY DAVIS
Brian Terrell of the Strangers and Guests Catholic Worker Farm in Maloy, Iowa, and the Open Door's Ed Loring joined more than ten thousand others at the School of the Americas protest action. The Open Door Community traveled from Atlanta to Fort Benning, near Columbus, GA, for the annual witness. 96 people were arrested for acts of civil disobedience.

VOLUNTEER NEEDS

- Help serving breakfast, Monday mornings, 5:50-9:30 a.m.
- Groups to make meat and cheese sandwiches on whole-wheat bread for Soup Kitchen on Wednesdays and Thursdays, and for our friends who sleep in our yard every night
- People to cook or bring supper for the Community on Mondays or Thursdays

For more information, call Phil Leonard at 404-874-4906 or e-mail him at pleon2000@mindspring.com

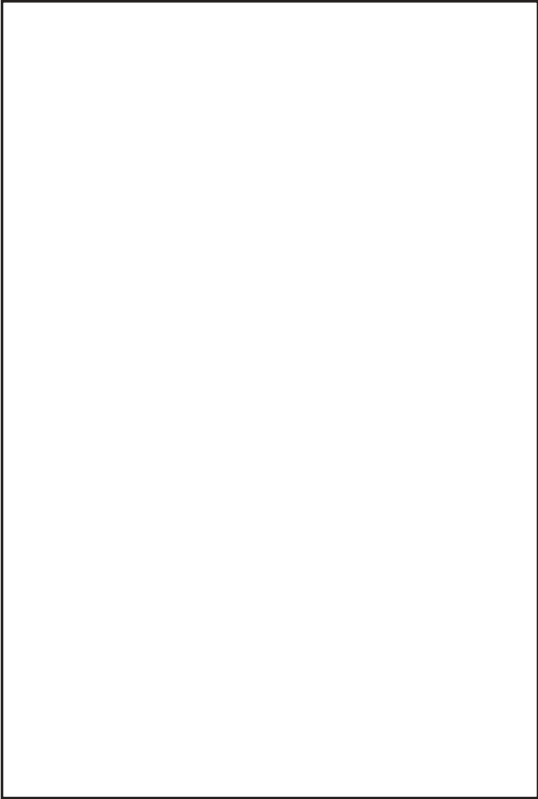


MIKE WIZNEWSKI

In October, Murphy Davis, Ed Loring, and Hannah Loring-Davis participated in the annual retreat for the Catholic Workers of Southern California which was led by Philip Berrigan and Liz McAlister of Jonah House in Baltimore. Several days before the retreat, Phil was diagnosed with terminal metastatic cancer of the liver and kidneys. This did not deter Liz and Phil from honoring their commitment to lead the retreat, and they led us through a stirring study of the Biblical call to peacemaking and the war machine we face. It was the last event of this kind that Phil and Liz led together. As we go to press, Phil has died on December 6. We can hardly begin to imagine our loss as we remember this fearless Christian peacemaker who has been a mentor for the Movement since the 1960's, and we ask your prayers especially for Liz and their children, Frida,

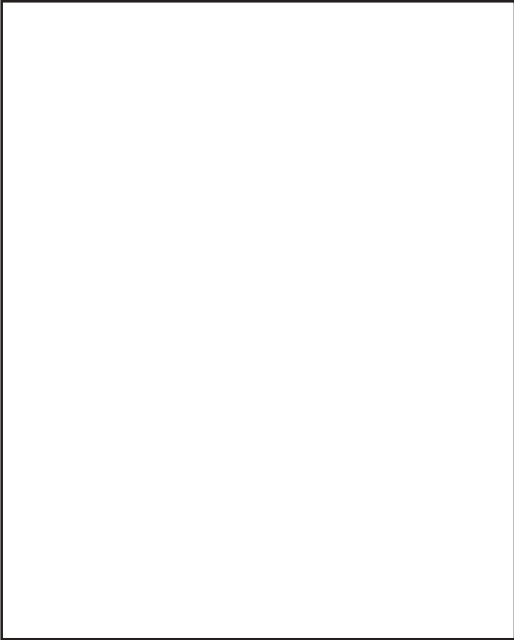
Jerry, and Kate, his brothers Dan, Jerry, and Jim, and for the community at Jonah House, Viva House, and all those who are in prison for resisting the war machine.

During the closing liturgy for the Catholic Worker retreat at Casa de Maria in Montecito, California, Ed and Murphy preached and performed the wedding service for long-time Los Angeles Catholic Workers, Martha Scarborough and Jesse Lewis (right). The newlyweds are living in the Hennacy House honeymoon suite and continuing the work of resistance!



HANNAH LORING-DAVIS

Festival of Shelters, October 30-31, 2002

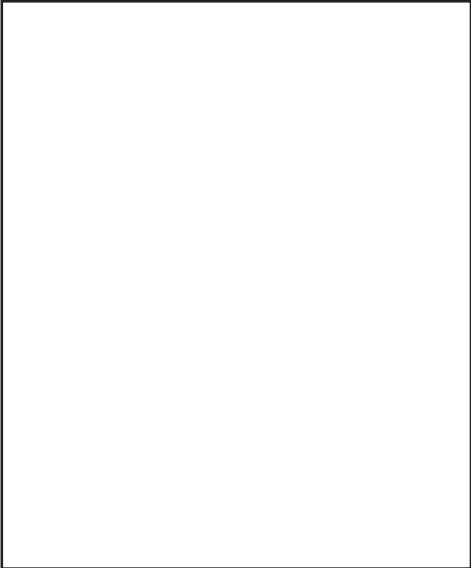


MURPHY DAVIS



MURPHY DAVIS

Our friend Judy Allen (left) joined us for our annual celebration of the Festival of Shelters in downtown's Woodruff Park to call attention to the pressing need to house the homeless of our city. Judy passed out leaflets to people passing through the park. Lauren Cogswell (above) is a former volunteer who came to spend the week with us and join in the park action as well. She is now serving as Associate Pastor of Westminster Presbyterian Church of Charlottesville, Virginia.

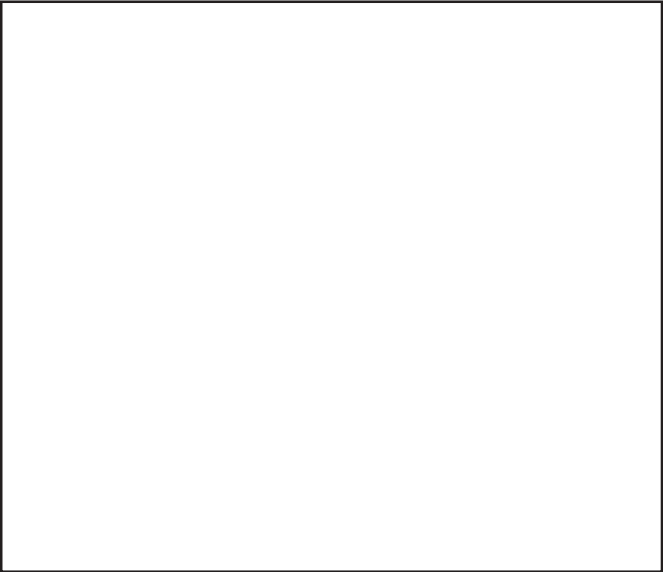


MURPHY DAVIS

Carina Henriques (above) of Portugal was a wonderful addition to our community life during the time she worked in Atlanta this fall. At the completion of her work, she spent a week living in the community before her return home. Here she is enjoying a moment with volunteer and friend Suzanne Bassett.



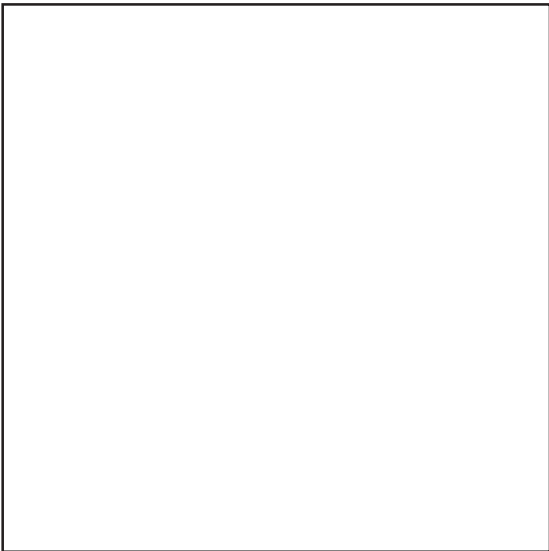
MURPHY DAVIS



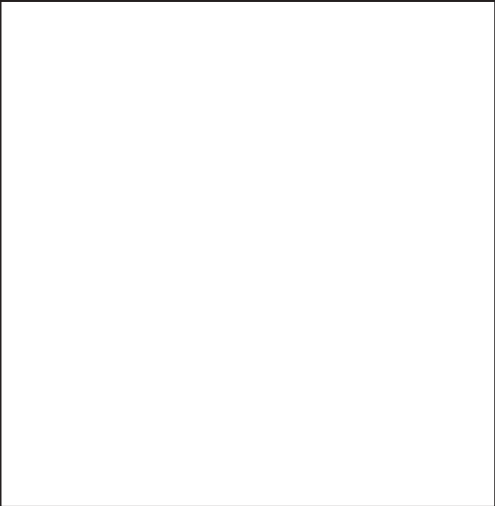
MURPHY DAVIS

Columbia Seminary provided the Open Door with great blessings in the fall when it brought the Columbia Scholars to town. Mark Gray and Betsy Cameron returned with their three children Rose, Hannah and Nathan (far left). Betsy made us happy with supper and freshly baked bread every Monday night, Mark preached for our worship and talked politics and theology with us, and the children filled our halls with happy noises. Cristina Conti and Severino Croatto (left) became our new friends and brought us the gifts of their experiences in Argentina, their passion for justice, and their warm and loving spirits.

A memorable moment in our summer travel to Scotland and the Isle of Iona was the great golf match between Norman Shanks, Leader of the Iona Community, and Ed Loring, on the island's golf course. The Iona course also doubles as a sheep and cow pasture (careful where you hit that ball!). Ed managed to make it to the second hole before Norman realized that Ed had never played golf in his life. From that point on, Ed was Norman's caddy, but not before a stop for Ed to present an award: To Norman Shanks, Second Place, Christian Golf! At left, Norman searches for the ball without the help of his errant caddy.



MURPHY DAVIS



MURPHY DAVIS

Later, Ed and Norman paused (left) to announce that their match was a fund-raiser for the Coca-Cola Corporation. They figured if they could raise enough money to give to Coke, maybe the company wouldn't be so short of funds that they have to oppress their workers in Colombia and other places and discriminate against women and people of color in the U.S. Unfortunately, they didn't raise any money, so we'll have to keep after Coke to change their ways.

How can we comprehend it, God, this beauty and this pain?
How does it hold together?
Is there pattern or purpose?

Iona Weaving

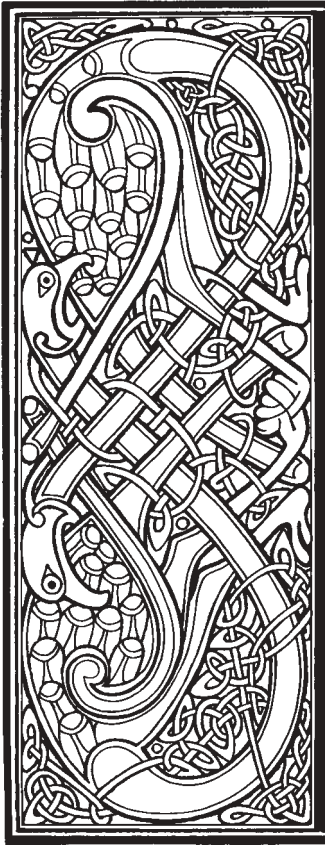
By Jan Sutch Pickard

On a still December day,
warp and weft glimpsed in the gold threads of the dawn sky,
in the blue-grey restless waters of the Sound,
in our laughter and our tears,
in our life together in this place –
your mysterious weaving of the world.

In the battle-song and surge of the waves
and the living silence of the hills.
In the welter of winter gales
and the sheltering space of church or home.
In angry exchanges that unravel,
and words and spaces that heal.
In isolation and in solitude.
In welcomes at the jetty
and in saying goodbye.
In the wind-bent trees, blasted by salt
and flowers flourishing in the village gardens.
In busyness that leaves no time
and folk making time, here and now.
In the richness of all we are given
in the ache of all we have lost.
In discord –
and in ceilidh music.
Stumbling in the dark –
and dancing under the stars.

How can we comprehend it:
Your beauty and ours – who are made in your image?
Our pain and yours – who chose to share our lives?
We cannot hold it together – but it holds us.

Help us to see pattern and purpose,
and our part
in the weaving of the world. **Amen.**



Jan Sutch Pickard is the warden of the Iona Abbey for the Iona Community, Scotland.

“This is a story of The Open Door Community, its leaders, and the way it has dealt especially with the issues of homelessness, our prison system, and the death penalty. It presents us with a radical, extreme, one-sided, disturbing, and sometimes irritating vision of faithful Christian discipleship that takes literally what Jesus said his followers are to say and do. The book should be read not as an invitation to decide whether this community is correct in the positions it takes but as an invitation for us to examine ourselves and what it means (would mean?) for us to be serious, committed followers of Jesus.

-Shirley Guthrie
Professor, Systematic Theology
Columbia Seminary

Dispatches from Iraq

A Witness for Peace Makes Desert Journey

By Bill Quigley

(Editor's note: Bill Quigley teaches at Loyola Law School in New Orleans. In September, he joined the Iraq Peace Team of Voices in the Wilderness on a trip to Iraq. For more information, see www.vitw.org and www.iraqpeaceteam.org.)

September 21, 2002

Amman, Jordan

Dear Friends and Family:

This is Bill Quigley writing you from an internet café in downtown Amman, Jordan.

I arrived in Jordan last night (Friday) around 10 PM after leaving New Orleans Thursday at noon. The Voices in the Wilderness team is purchasing additional medicines today to take into Iraq with us. We are meeting with three different pharmacy groups to try to get the maximum amount of medicines for the money donated. Today we are getting visas to go into Iraq and purchasing cancer medicines to combat all the unusual cancers in Iraq due to the vast amounts of depleted uranium still around from being used in weapons during the Gulf War. Everyone is very excited about all the medicines and vitamins I was able to bring. When we have done all the shopping, we will start the ride into Iraq, apparently in two GMC trucks.

We flew over on Royal Jordanian with lots of families and small kids. It was like flying in a hot crowded nursery! As people found out that we were Americans and going to Iraq, they wished us the best and were very friendly, asking us not to bomb Iraq. They are very, very concerned about threats of war.

Jordan is fascinating. As we drove into town from the airport, they had big billboard signs in Arabic and English. The first I saw was for Lipton tea! Most of the signs are not in English but some are, like this internet café. An olive tree was planted in a spot in the sidewalk on the walk over here! I ate lots of rice, hummus, falafel, and bottled water while a combination of game shows, CNN, and Al Jazeera played in the background. The hotel is simple. No A/C, no screens on the windows, right across the street from the bus station. Got to bed at 12:30 and woke early to loudspeaker outside my window calling all to morning prayers.

The people I am traveling with are very experienced and very nice. Henry Williamson is a three-term Vietnam vet medical corps from South Carolina who just finished a forty-day juice fast outside the United Nations in NYC, protesting the sanctions. Henry is staying in Iraq to prepare for the Iraq peace team. Barbara Lubin is a mother of four who leads Middle Eastern Children's Alliance in California and who is going to Palestine for a week or two after leaving here. Leah Wells is a young peace educator who taught nonviolence with Colman McCarthy. David Smith Ferri is a stay-at-home dad and poet from California. Nathan Mauger is also staying in Iraq and is one semester short of his degree at Washington State in Spokane. Nathan is one of the guys imprisoned for two weeks for bringing food into Church of the Savior in Bethlehem during the siege a few months ago. Danny Muller is in his twenties and is our leader. His mom is a parish associate at a

Catholic church in New York City. Our driver and guide is Sattar, who is the regular transport and guide for more than forty Voices in the Wilderness delegations who have already visited Iraq.

Next report will likely be in a few days and will be from Iraq.

September 22, 2002

Baghdad

Dear family and friends:

Arrived this afternoon after a long, long drive through desert. Very hot, over 100 degrees. I did not know that there were so many types of desert. Many areas of sand and rocks, saw small towns on drive over and even had to slow for a slow moving wild burro or donkey of some sort crossing the road! People live in stone square houses and some live in tents. Some wonderful houses, many poor.

Meeting with UN officials first thing in the morning. This is a much bigger city than I thought. People everywhere. People wear western clothes and more traditional garb as well. As we drove into town we could see big areas where housing construction has stopped in the last eight weeks or so as everyone is very nervous because of "the news." Cars drive as bad as New Orleans! Brought in much medicine, and thanks are due to so many who helped donate meds and money. We will be delivering meds soon and I will make report, but these are much appreciated.

Not getting very much sleep, but health is good. Going to change dollars for dinars. Before Gulf War, one dinar was \$3. Today one dollar is two thousand dinar. Teachers make \$6 per month! Big problems. They are closing this place so I am off.

September 23, 2002

Baghdad

Dear Family and Friends:

This is a brief hello from Baghdad. Feel free to copy and send on to others if you wish. This will be brief because there are few internet connections in Baghdad. The \$30 hookup charge is unaffordable for most everyone and security is tight. So there are few internet connections and a lot of our people are waiting for this computer.

First of all, people are friendly. I know many were worried that the people would hate us because we are from the United States, but they do not. They are very nice, even giving *us* small gifts. They worry George Bush will bomb them, but are friendly to individuals, especially when they find out we are here with medicines donated by Americans for peace.

It is very hot and very dry and very dusty, over 100 degrees. Even though everyone assures me that it is much cooler now than it has been in the past few weeks, it still is very hot.

We are staying at a very low-budget hotel, but it does have a weak air conditioner, unlike the last one, which had no A/C and not even screens. So I am counting my blessings. We take lots of cabs around. Many people drive cabs to make money. The cabs are just small beat-up cars, no air conditioning at all, most with broken windshields, windows that do not all roll down, etc. The average cost for a pretty long ride,

about 20 minutes, is about one dollar. (I got my laundry done, two shirts, two pants, socks and underwear and it cost about \$2.25 with a generous tip.) People are desperately poor and there are lots of them. I have stayed healthy so far. I am eating lots of bread and rice and bottled water and yogurt.

Since the Gulf War, the water system and sewer system have been intermixed and water quality is really pretty bad. They have been making some progress lately but it is still bad.

Met with head of United Nations Food Program today, a man from Denmark. He says that every Iraqi (24 million) gets a food ration every month of wheat, rice, powdered milk and cooking oil. This is paid for by Iraq under the oil for food program and the UN oversees to make sure it is done fairly. The ration amount is more than the UN gives to Somalian refugees. In return they pay 12.5 cents.

Unemployment is so bad that some people do not have the 12.5 cents and have to promise some of their food to borrow the money to pay for the month's rations. He says the program is very fairly run, but massive poverty, bad water, and disease still make malnutrition too frequent. (One person said economic sanctions are like the Great Depression each and every year being imposed on the people of the country, so many do not work, and rely on the food ration as their entire source of food, sometimes trading food for shoes or medicine or fuel for cooking.) Bombing bridges and electrical sources would obviously destroy this system of feeding people.

There are some places of considerable wealth, luxury buildings; we have seen new Mercedes Benzes and lots of products for the few who can afford. But for most people (more than 90%), the economy is in shambles. I have also seen horse drawn vehicles on the street.

Tomorrow we bring about \$30,000 worth of meds to a hospital and Wednesday we bring peace letters from United States kids to Iraqi kids to a school and also peace ribbons (good wishes from USA people to Iraqi people). We hope to go to Basra later this week.

If there is any message here, it is that there are over 20 million people in this country not named Saddam and they are in real trouble right now because of current sanctions. War? Bombing this densely packed city seems unimaginable.

September 24, 2002

Baghdad

Hello from downtown Baghdad. I have heard a lot of New Orleans music since I have been here. They have a wedding tradition of having a honking car caravan following the bridal car, which has ribbons and flowers on it, but the entire group follows a truck that blasts out traditional New Orleans brass band music! I have heard this each night since I have been here and it reminds me of home.

We are staying at the Al Fanar Hotel which is a small hotel by the Tigris River and just down the street from the Ishtar Sheraton. The Sheraton is famous as the place where CNN filmed the bombing

continued on next page

of this city in the Gulf War ten plus years ago.

Today we went to a big public hospital to give the medicines that you all donated. It was big and full of people, mostly women in black with children. While it is apparently much improved in the past few years, there are still many problems because the UN sanctions prohibit importation of many medicines that are designated as “dual use” or things that might be able to be used for weapons. Unfortunately, this includes a lot of cancer-fighting medicines, especially for child leukemia. We went to the children’s wards where mothers and children were on beds, moms fanning their children. There is one nurse for every forty children with cancer. The doctor said that in European countries, 90% of kids with these diseases could be cured; in Iraq, it is 10%. There are increasing numbers of these kids too, since there is lots of depleted uranium from the bombings still in the ground. I have some pictures that, if they come out, will break your heart.

One of our group asked a mother what message she would send to the mothers in America; most refused to answer, saying they were too shy, but one did. She was all dressed in brown robes and stood by her thirteen-year-old daughter who had two IVs running into her arms and said, “Please tell people that my thirteen-year-old daughter, Roa, cannot live without her medicine... a lot of children are getting diseases and all that suffering is caused by these sanctions and the uranium from bombs. Please help us get the medicines for our children.”

The head internist at the hospital, Dr. Hassani, says that he is convinced that “the whole purpose of the sanctions is to kill Iraqi children – there is no other explanation.”

As we left the hospital, a sobbing mother all dressed in black robes ran to the car and clutched my arm, begging me to help her first-grade son and showed me his picture while she cried. She begged us for medicines to help him as he is in a coma. The driver explained that we were not doctors and had already given the medicine to the hospital but she insisted on giving me her address and the picture of her son and a copy of his medical summary. Our driver finally said we must leave and we did. As we drove back to the hotel, I felt like I did when I saw the state of Louisiana execute my client fifteen years ago in front of my face. Except this time it is children and it is in slow motion and it happens over and over again.

The news media loved our visit to the hospital as there are media from all over the world here just waiting for the bombing to begin and they have little to do until then.

Despite all of this, people are very nice to us. I have never been threatened or intimidated at all. Cab drivers are nice, hotel workers are nice, soldiers are nice, people in the phone place and internet place are nice. People do not blame individual Americans for their suffering, but they do blame our government.

I am sorry to be so grim, but the reality here is pretty incredible. I have no doubt that if any of you were here to see what I am seeing, you would be as moved as I. These folks are people like us.

I give thanks for all our blessings and hope that we can find a way out of this disaster.

September 25, 2002
Baghdad

Love to you all. I miss you and look forward to coming back to be with you. I hope the hurricane does not cause too much flooding. I am keeping you in my thoughts and prayers.

I continue to be impressed by two things here. First, how really hot it is here, and I mean



Grade school girls, Basra, Iraq.

BILL QUIGLEY

HOT. I cannot read Celsius but it is very, very hot. There is little air conditioning. We went to a boys high school today and there was not only no A/C but there were no fans. We went to the local law school and they had a power blackout (they say it happens every couple of days) and we met in a room with no lights, no A/C and no fans. Tomorrow we are going to Basra, which is south of here. When you tell people here you are going to Basra, they all shake their heads and say, “hot, hot.” I cannot imagine hotter, but you can be assured that I will complain about it to you! Since I am going to Basra I will probably not be in touch for a few days, so do not fret if there are no emails!

Secondly, I continue to be amazed at how friendly people are. Many people speak English. Many signs are both in English and Arabic. While walking through one of the narrow streets in Daniel Market (named after the biblical Daniel who is buried outside of Baghdad) one of the markets in this city (like the French Quarter only much older and much more crowded) I came to a smaller place in the sidewalk where only one person could pass. I stepped back to let a tall man in long robes go first. He said in a low voice, “You are visitor, you go first.” I said, “Thank you.” He then asked, “Where are you from?” I hesitated for a second, and then said “United States.” He looked at me and said, “You are welcome here,” and then passed on.

Late yesterday we met with UNICEF officials who were from Canada. They gave us information, all of which is on the internet, on the effect of the Iran-Iraq war, the Gulf War, and the sanctions on Iraq. For example, in the 1980s, 47 out of every 1,000 babies born in Iraq died before the age of 1. Now it is 114 per 1,000. They said no country in the world has regressed in infant mortality like Iraq, mainly because of malnutrition and bad water from the water system that was destroyed by bombing in the Gulf War. Most of the babies who die do so because of diarrhea and respiratory infections (colds, etc.) that are preventable if there was sanitary water. We went to a boys’ high school today, 1200 students, where we brought letters of friendship and peace from students in the United States and peace ribbons signed by hundreds of others. They were in a square

room seated in twos at wooden desks. They were all dressed in western clothes. (One in the front was in a dark blue Aamco shirt with a name tag stitched on that said Darwin!) Many of the boys thanked us and we asked them for questions. Though they were reluctant at first, finally one very tall boy (who plays basketball) said in English, “I only have one question. Is your country going to make war against us?” I told him that there were millions of people in the United States who did not want our country to go to war against Iraq and that many are working to try to stop it from happening, but that the politicians are close to election time and calls for war seem to be better for votes than calls for peace. I told him we would continue to work for peace. He and the rest of the teenage boys were very friendly with all of us, as were the teachers and the principal. They promised to send letters to students in the U.S. and we hope to be able to bring them back with us.

This is very far from a perfect country. It is not anywhere near a democracy and not all their problems are from the economic sanctions, but many are. UNICEF estimates that over 500,000 children under five have died in Iraq as a direct result of the sanctions. Over a million over five have also. Being here I can see why. What I cannot see is why our elected officials continue to impose them on the poorest of the poor. Punishing children? I don’t see why. Weapons of mass destruction? Does 1.5 million people dead sound like mass destruction to you? Our elected officials need to take an honest look at reality ASAP.

War on Iraq? That seems totally unnecessary. It is impossible to think of us bombing this city. This country is already devastated by the last war and the sanctions. Please do what you can to tell our elected officials that further war will only hurt the poorest. I heard that the Catholic bishops delivered a letter to President Bush saying that unprovoked war against Iraq would be immoral. Please do what you can to help spread that word. I do not think any young man or woman in the military who spent time in this densely packed city of over five million could possibly follow orders to drop bombs on it. Please do everything you can to make sure they do not have to

Iraq, continued on page 8

Iraq, from page 7
face that horrible decision.
Help me answer the basketball player who asked if we are going to make war on Iraq. I said many of us are working to try to stop it. Work for peace.

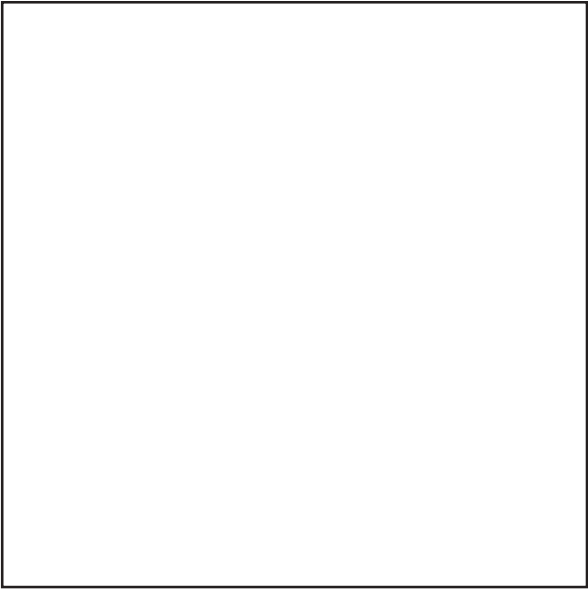
**September 28, 2002
Baghdad**

Dear family and friends:
First of all, we are all safe. I know that many were worried when they heard that Basra was bombed yesterday by U.S. or U.K. jet fighters while our Iraq peace team was there. It was a bombing of a mobile communications unit around the airport. Reports say one person was injured. We were there then but thankfully we were not affected. The area around Basra, a city of two million or so, is apparently bombed several times a month recently, and frequently in prior years because it is in the southern no-fly zone of Iraq.
In fact we met in the evening with the family of Uma Heider, who lost one seven-year-old boy to a bombing error by a “smart” bomb on January 25, 1999. One of their other children, Mustafa, who must be about seven now, still carries shrapnel in his back and foot. (Voices people say the Pentagon response to a question about the bombing was “a missile went astray and we have corrected that problem.”) Kathy Kelly and others from Voices in the Wilderness stayed with this family for several weeks and they are very warm to peace visitors. The family lives in a very poor neighborhood called Al-Jumerriya. Because of the bombing, everyone knows his or her street as Missile Street. The mother of this extended family of 25, who all live in one small house, welcomed us and gave us little cups of hot sweet tea. Their many children played with us and were excited because we brought a Polaroid camera and took their pictures and gave them copies. When we left, the family gave me a chalk drawing that I will share with you when I get back.
We also brought medicines to a clinic funded by an Italian organization, Bridges for Baghdad, that primarily helps children with diarrhea, and to a big hospital. Everyone is extremely grateful for your generosity and the good will of those who send wishes of peace. The medical situation is grim. The head doctor told us that a donated blood platelet machine and a centrifuge were sitting in Jordan as we spoke, but was not allowed in because of the sanctions against Iraq. Many, many medicines available in other countries are not allowed in either. And they are falling further and further behind in medical technology as well. For example, in the entire city of Basra,

there is no mammogram machine or MRI. People have to go to Baghdad, six hours away, and make an appointment to get seen there and there are few machines even there.
Finally, while we were waiting in the lobby to leave, a man about 25 or 30 came up to us and introduced himself to us. He said his name was Adil Hameed Raheem, an English teacher and translator. He said that when he learned we were there, he came to offer condolences on behalf of the Iraqi people to the American people for the tragedy of September 11. He said, “We know suffering and we feel the suffering of the people in the United States. Please on my behalf and on behalf of the Iraqi people put a white flower on the site in New York City.” He had tears in his eyes. Then he reached into his satchel and pulled out a small color picture of a little blue-eyed girl with dark hair and a ribbon around her head. This was his daughter, he said, and he wanted us to have the picture and the words on the back. On the back, her father had printed: “Dear U.S. administration members. I am Sala Adil. I am 8 months. I am Iraqi. I would be very grateful if you let me live peacefully away of bombing and sanctions like all the children of the world. Sala.”
I am carrying that little girl’s picture around my neck right now. When I get back I will make copies for everyone. Basra was bombed while we were there and many of you worried about us. Thank you for your thoughts and prayers. We left safely, but two million people are still there. I will show you the picture of that little girl. And I will also work to stop the bombing. Please do what you can.

**September 30, 2002
Baghdad**
Dear Family and Friends:
I have a coin collection, so I found it interesting that you never see coins in Iraq. All people ever use is one type of bill, a blue 250 Dinar bill issued by the central bank of Iraq. No coins, no other bills. On one side is a big picture of SH and on the other it says 250 in each corner. I will bring a few home so you can see them. Not all that long ago, the dinar was trading at one Dinar for \$3.00+. The 250 Dinar bill was the biggest bill they had, and it was worth over \$750. After two wars and the economic sanctions, the 250 Dinar bill is now worth 12.5 cents. Imagine.
Last night I went to a Catholic mass at St. Raphael’s church, not far from our hotel. It is a small church, seats about 200 max. It is across the street from St. Raphael’s Hospital, which is run by the Dominican sisters. They have a convent of thirteen nuns. They wear white dresses with a black veil trimmed in white. Sr. Maryanne Pierre is a tiny

nun, probably in her sixties, who runs the hospital. They have mass in English every Sunday evening, mass is in Arabic other times. I arrived at the church looking for Sr. Maryanne, an older sister. I tried to communicate, but the sisters spoke Arabic and French, and I did not. So we did sign language, and I kept saying Sr. Maryanne, and they found her.
It was a beautiful service. There were probably a hundred people there, mostly women, mostly filling from the back, just like home. They said most of the prayers in English, with pronounced French accents. They also did the Kyrie in Greek, the Gloria in Latin, and one of the readings in Arabic. There was a small organ, a violin player and a flute player. The



Bill Quigley in Baghdad.

priest was from Finland. Very simple and peaceful.
I needed the peacefulness of church because earlier I had toured the site of the Amiraya Shelter on the outskirts of Baghdad. During the Gulf War, while the men were in the army, the women and children stayed behind. In the neighborhood of Amiraya there was a shelter where people who wanted to could go when there were air bombings. In the early morning hours of February 14, 1991, 110 families were in the shelter. A smart bomb hit the top of the shelter and went down the ventilation shaft, blowing a ten-foot hole in the reinforced roof. A second bomb then followed the first down through the hole in the roof and exploded inside. They estimate the water inside the building reached 400 degrees. 394 died, including 52 children under five. Four days later we admitted that we had bombed it and said we had made a mistake. The shelter remains as a shrine to those who died. The 10-foot hole is still there in the ceiling and the burn marks are as well. The remaining walls are covered with memorial pictures and wreaths. Other U.S. citizens tell me it was in our papers, but only briefly. I never even knew. I imagine most of you didn’t either.
The people here remain very

friendly. Cab drivers, merchants, people on the street; everyone is considerate to strangers. There are even signs in English welcoming tourists.
Yesterday, Henry, a multi-tour Vietnam vet who is in our delegation and plans to stay indefinitely, was out walking by himself. He was on a side street when he saw a soldier with a machine gun. The soldier waved Henry over for what Henry assumed was a visa check. When Henry approached the soldier, the man shifted his machine gun to his left arm and stuck out his right hand and said, “Welcome, where are you from?” Henry told him the U.S., and the soldier shook his hand and said again “Welcome” and waved him on. It is like that here.
I know that, in light of our political and media stories, this is hard to believe, but we have not had a voice raised against us, nor a threatening gesture. The people are very, very poor, but they have a warmth and a dignity with visitors that is striking. I understand that back home the voices for war against Iraq are rising, but so are the voices of peace. No one who has seen what I have seen and met the people I have met can think that bombing this country will help it. Please raise your voices for peace.

**October 1, 2002,
Last message from Iraq**
Dear Friends and Family:
I see that another hurricane is working its way towards New Orleans. My thoughts are with you. Three short final notes about Iraq.
I met briefly with Bert Saacks, the man from the State of Washington whom the U.S. is fining \$10,000 for bringing medicines to Iraq with Physicians for Social Responsibility. He brought the three Congress reps with him to Iraq to see what our policies continue to do. He is an extraordinary man of peace.
I met two of the congress members at a visit to a Baghdad water treatment plant bombed during the Gulf War that remains unfixed because of the sanctions. Rep. McDermott said it well. We should not impose economic sanctions or military war on the people of Iraq. Should the people of Iraq have to choose between systematic economic war or the United States telling them how their country should be run or another military and war? Should anyone? They say no. I hear Trent Lott says they “should shut their mouths and come home.” Hello, democracy!
Finally, I leave you with this observation by Nobel Peace Prize winner Maired Maguire, after her visit to Iraq: “When I visited Auschwitz I was horrified. And when I visited Iraq, I thought to myself, ‘What will we tell the children in fifty years when they ask what we did when the people of Iraq were dying?’” Working my way back to you all. ✝

Risky Love, Shattered Trust: An Invitation

By Patrick O'Neill

Bea (probably not her real name) came to us via a battered women's shelter in Elizabeth City, NC. Her story was not unlike many we have heard in the eleven years my wife, Mary Rider, and I have been providing hospitality at the Fr. Charlie Mulholland Catholic Worker House (formerly St. Martin House) in Garner, NC.

Bea said she was fleeing an abusive husband who – the last time he tracked her down – broke all her fingers and toes. She claimed he was a U.S. Marshal, and that when she complained about the abuse to his superiors, she got nowhere. A stout woman probably in her late 50s, Bea signed her name in our guest book, but told us little about herself. Besides her husband, Bea claimed to have no living relatives. We respected her desire for anonymity. We have never asked for identification from the scores of women in crisis who have come to this community seeking safe haven. Bea said she wanted to move to Alaska and change her name so her husband could never find her.

The first morning she came to breakfast, Bea placed a five-dollar bill on the kitchen table. She said she had found it in her nightstand drawer, and she was giving it to us. We told her to keep it. Bea quickly got a cashier job at a restaurant within walking distance of the house. The restaurant owner, a kind woman, also took pity on Bea, paying her under the table so there would be no social security record for her husband to track. I was asked to give a reference for Bea, a person I had known just a few days. She seemed nice and trustworthy, I said.

A basically kind person, Bea kept mostly to herself. She did a little bit of work around the house. She taught my eight-year-old daughter, Moira, how to crochet, and she treated us to pizza one night.

To control bugs, we asked Bea not to eat in her room. However, a desire to be alone, and what I think was a compulsive eating disorder, kept Bea from following that rule – one of the few we have. She drank Diet Coke and smoked lots of cigarettes; her room was full of candy bar wrappers and empty potato chip bags. She seemed to be living her life in solitary fear.

Our family has often been in a quandary about what to do with our guests when we are going to be gone overnight. Our faith challenges us to welcome the stranger, but oft-times the strangers we welcome into our home are not well or trustworthy. We worry

about the house getting burned down or other problems coming up while we're away. On too many occasions to remember, those staying with us have taken things. Our car was stolen once – by a homeless man we took in on

Christmas Day. Money has gone missing, as have lots of other things. Most of the towels we started with in 1991 have disappeared.

Other times, the women staying with us have had parties, and at least one was "renting" out her room to a teenage boy whom she was sneaking in and out through the basement door. But, God is good. As quickly as things are stolen, replacements come in, thanks to the kindness of friends and strangers who support the ministry. While we've had our share of dishonest people pass over our threshold, countless others have become friends, and a few visit after they have moved on.

A Mexican mother and her four children stayed with us for about six years. Today, three of her children are in college, and another is excelling in high school. Still living nearby, they have become like family to us. Which brings me back to Bea.

Both Mary and I had a good feeling about Bea, so in late June, when we left town for a twelve-day trip to attend a retreat and visit family, we allowed Bea to stay in the house by herself. She was working five days a week, and she assured us she could take care of things like feeding the cats and bringing in the mail.

We had a friend who agreed to come by the house each day to check on things while we were gone. Two days after we left, we got a call that Bea had vanished. She called in sick to work, saying she was getting a ride to the hospital. Without much information about her, we had no way of knowing what happened to Bea. The WakeMed hospital emergency room had not treated any one matching Bea's description. Since our friend noticed that most of the stuff in Bea's room was gone, we figured she had gotten paranoid that her husband was closing in on her, and she left in a hurry.

It wasn't until we got home on July 4 that my daughter, Bernadette, noticed the top was off the jar she used to hold her baby-sitting money. The jar, which had had more than \$100 in it, was empty.

I looked around and noticed a bunch of rolled change – also more than \$100 worth – was also gone. Other cups of change were all emptied out. Moira checked her jewelry box,

and alas, her Tooth Fairy stash of gold one-dollar coins had been cleaned out. Bea had rummaged through the house, taken what she wanted and left us with a sinking feeling in the pits of our stomachs.

It's a feeling we have come to know well: anger mixed with despair. This time our trust was violated by a grandmotherly woman whom we welcomed into our lives – no questions asked. My five-year-old daughter, Veronica, cried and said, "I don't like Bea." Bernadette, thirteen, slept on our bedroom floor that night because Bea left with the key to the house, and Bernadette worried that she might come back and steal from us again.

We have all called the friends of our community to tell this story. Talking to friends in times of sadness is therapeutic. We also have used this experience to remind us of the important things in this life. Money is useful, but it must always be a secondary part of a well-lived, faithful life.

Each time we have been robbed, we have also been challenged by the irony of scripture: "Do not save riches for yourselves here on earth, where moths and rust destroy, and robbers break in and steal. Instead, save riches for yourselves in heaven, where moths and rust cannot destroy, and robbers cannot break in and steal. For your heart will always be where your riches are" (Matthew 6:19-21).

Like we do whenever we are betrayed, Mary and I have talked about ways to prevent this from happening again. In reality, we know there are no clear solutions. To be hospitable requires a certain degree of trust. To simplify our lives is one thing that would help. If we have nothing of value, we have nothing worth stealing.

For us, the most important thing is not to lose faith. Bea is a pathetic figure. She probably has no true friends as she moves from town to town, living a lie and ripping off the people who extend her a helping hand.

Sadly, all the things that Bea lacks in her life are

the very things she could have had from us. We would have let her stay as long as she wanted, and we would have tried our best to treat her as family. The children would have poured out their love to her, and she would have made many friends. So, Bea, if you happen to read this, know that we hold no grudges against you. We forgive you, and you are still always welcome in our home. ✠

Patrick O'Neill is a journalist and co-founder of the Father Charles Mulholland Catholic Worker House in Garner, NC. He met the Open Door Community in 1985 on furlough from serving a federal prison sentence in Atlanta.

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ART BY BRIAN KAVANAUGH

Inequity, continued from page 1

important for the nations to be in solidarity and to organize themselves for the well-being and the benefit of each. To achieve this aim, the constitution of trade unions is a way towards development and equal relations between neighboring nations. You know the European Trade Union very well, but perhaps you do not know what the MERCOSUR is.

The MERCOSUR is the trade union between Argentina and Brazil, joined by Uruguay and also Paraguay. This is the kind of economic arrangement we need in the "Far South" of the Americas. The MERCOSUR has been dealing in recent years with the pressure of globalization. The Bush administration is pressing all Latin American countries to join the ALCA (Area de Libre Comercio de las Americas, or Americas Free Trade Area, which extends from Alaska to Tierra del Fuego). The ALCA is a kind of extension of NAFTA. NAFTA (North America Free Trade Area) benefits only the U.S. against regional or transversal organizations. This is why it is strongly resisted by most of Latin America. There have been many expressions of refusal to accept the "imposition" of ALCA. For example, there was protest at the World Social Forum in Brazil in February 2001. Canada's Conference of Catholic Bishops issued a pronouncement against ALCA. We also saw a series of continental protests, one of which was held in Quito on October 31, with 16,000 people demanding a Latin American plebiscite on ALCA. In a referendum on ALCA that was held in Brazil on September 2, 98.35% of the participants expressed an explicit opposition to ALCA. They see that ALCA would produce more hunger, colonialism and oppression.

What is more, the very possibility of Lula winning the presidential elections in Brazil (October 27, 2002), had put Republican legislators in the U.S. on alert, because they consider Lula an obstacle for transnational corporations. Weakening the MERCOSUR is, for the U.S., an economic goal. The U.S. is aware, furthermore, of the distress caused by the abandonment of Argentina by the IMF and the World Bank this year. The "good politics" that the international financial organizations claim from the developing countries represent the interests of the wealthy world.

But even in this very sad situation—in which the leaders of the nations are forced by the grave economic and financial situation to sign the ALCA—Christians must "reconstruct hope" by imagining the future and struggling for liberty, independence, solidarity, and justice. With the prophet Isaiah, we want to announce "new heavens and new earth" (Is 65:17). We expect the eternal life, which is an ultimate hope. But in this world, we want to hope for a new life *in this world and on this earth*. Prophets speak of God as giver of the land and the rain (Is 55:9-11), who gives us the intelligence to transform the earth for the benefit of all humankind, who teaches us to break bread in community, in this world, on this earth, in this life situation. God promises us:

They shall build houses and inhabit them. They shall plant vineyards and eat their fruit; they shall not build and another inhabit. They shall not plant and another eat (Is 65:21-22a).

To conclude, let us read from Ezekiel once more:

The trees of the field shall yield their fruit, and the earth shall yield its increase. They shall be secure on their soil; and they shall know that I am Yahweh, when I break the bars of their yoke, and save them from the hands of those who enslaved them. They shall no more be the plunder of the nations...I will provide for them a splendid vegetation so that they shall no more be consumed with hunger in the land, and no longer suffer the insults of the nations. (Ezekiel 34:27-28a, 29) ✠

Welcome to the Spotlight: Jesse Poteek



By **Tonnie King**

Greetings in this New Year! I hope that you all had a life-filled holiday season and I wish the best for you this year.

I would like to begin this season of the Spotlight with the wonderful story of a volunteer who came to us by way of the Hardwick prison trip. Jesse Poteek became a part of our community life by joining several ministries at once. Jesse Poteek regularly goes with us to Hardwick to visit her loved one *and* she also volunteers in our soup kitchen on Wednesdays. Jesse told me that she thought that the work we do is very inspiring and that she loves to help.

This relationship with Jesse is a special gift to the community. This is clearly a glimpse of the Beloved Community that we are striving to create on a daily basis. Thank you, Jesse, for being the kind and gentle spirit that you are.

Tonnie King is a Partner at the Open Door Community.

TONNIE KING

Rediscovering the Other Side of Martin Luther King, Jr.



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The Other Side

300 West Apsley, Philadelphia, PA 19144
www.theotherside.org 800-700-9280

An Open Letter:

In the May edition of *Hospitality*, Bill and Mary Bardeleben (Letters, May 2002, vol. 21, no.5), you wrote a letter. It included a request to be removed from the *Hospitality* mailing list, which you've been on for twenty years or so after once donating some clothes – an act of kindness that I'm sure was appreciated. Likewise you appreciate what the Open Door Community does and you "suppose it is good." And you're not wrong; it *is* good. I came over to Atlanta from England and spent a month working with the community last summer. I can vouch for it.

You say that "there are people in prison who deserve to be there" and again you're not wrong. Of course, in any society there are people who do wrong things that require imprisonment. But prison is meant to achieve three things, and only one of these is punishment. Secondly, society expects to be protected, so prisons aim to provide security from dangerous individuals. But a very important third part of the prison service is rehabilitation – enabling offenders to adjust to the needs of society as a whole and not offend again. Prison therefore needs to balance punishment, security, and rehabilitation for the greater good. Sadly, what I saw of the prison system in Georgia is that it is all slanted in favor of punishment and to provide the rest of the residents with a (false) sense of security that these 'evil-doers' are locked away safely.

Finally on crime, you also say that there are some who have committed 'heinous crimes' and deserve to be executed – and it is possible you're not wrong here either, although I do question the logic that killing people who kill people shows that killing people is wrong. The social situation often leads to an environment where violent crimes are committed. That's not to excuse their appalling nature, but it is to suggest that we need to understand a little more and condemn a little less.

You also ask "why is it so important ... that God be a she?" And you're not wrong to ask this either. Then again you're perhaps misunderstanding the point. It isn't that God is a 'She' – it's that God isn't a 'He.' God is a God without gender and without sex. Alternative language is used to stress the point that God is not an oppressive male entity, but a loving and compassionate creator who cares for all - both male and female.

Finally, you concede that Jesus did indeed teach 'passionately about the poor' but addressed 'other topics as well' – and once more you're not wrong. Outrageously, though, many, many churches throughout Georgia and elsewhere concentrate solely on the other topics and *never, ever* mention God's very clear and special concern for the poor and oppressed of the world. So many Christians never get to hear this important aspect of Jesus' teaching. It is the special ministry of the Open Door Community to highlight this imbalance, so I think it needs no apology if the overwhelming message of the Open Door preaching, teaching, and writings in *Hospitality* focus almost solely on issues of poverty, justice, and Jesus' passionate teaching on these issues.

So as I say, you do indeed make valid points in what you say, as evidenced by the decision of the editorial team to publish your letter. You're not wrong in what you say, but then hopefully you can see from what I have written, you're not right either.

Grace and peace to you and to all at the Open Door,
Peter Clark
Cambridge, England

Peter Clark is a student at Westminster Theological College.

Dear friends at The Open Door,

Can you please send me 12 or 15 copies of October *Hospitality*? I am much impressed with Stanley Hauerwas's pacifist response to 9/11 (October 2002, vol. 21, no. 10). I realize I have a long way to go to be a pacifist! Thank you. Blessings and peace!

Dorothy Mock
Pigsah Forest, NC

May the great spirit continue to energize the Open Door Community.

Hospitality's reprinting of Kathleen Carlin's piece on battered women (July 2002, vol. 21, no. 7) was so fine, so tenderizing to the heart. That the speech is thirteen years old and still we have so much to do brings great pain, great shame.

While leading prayer in my church house on a recent Wednesday night, the particular plight of one battered woman came to mind while I prayed aloud, so I spoke of her situation. As soon as I did, seven other

battered women, all of whom had crossed my path in recent weeks, came to mind. Spirit shocked me with the gross power of the problem.

I know the Rev. Dr. Marie Fortune is a friend of the Open Door. Her books deal so well with the complexities of this particular struggle for justice. I hope your readers will seek out her work, especially Keeping the Faith, Guidance for Christian Women Facing Abuse. The book deals well with the Hebrew and Christian texts and makes a powerful case against abuse and male supremacy based on what most church folk call "The Bible." You folks give us such hope while being such royal pains with all your challenges. Thank you, thank you.

Pat Jobe
Chesnee, SC

I drive past the Open Door Community each morning, as I come into work. At 5 to 5:15 am, the line of men walking toward 910 Ponce de Leon stretches the length of Ponce. I thank God for your ministry, and the spirit of the Catholic Worker movement that has been one of your guiding lights. Blessings for an Advent of hope—

Msgr. David P. Talley
Atlanta, GA

Dear Ed,

A few months ago you send me *gratis* a copy of Word On The Street, apparently in response to a letter I sent you about TB in prison settings. I've never met you or Murphy and have never visited the Open Door Community. Yet I feel (as my wife Kathy) a part of the community there.

I read the book with avidity, marking it with notations for periodic review. I found many powerful statements and provocative ideas in this presentation of U.S. liberation theology. I was especially grateful for the re-framing of Resurrection and the Eucharist as Table Fellowship.

My life has encompassed a career as a physician and a student of theology (Iliff School of Theology in Denver). My wife and I are drawn to the studies of the Jesus Seminar, and we are about to depart for a pilgrimage to Turkey with John Dominic Crossan and Marcus Borg as leaders. I have read *The Catholic Worker* for 50 years! In my retirement from work at our county health department, I am donating time and effort to easing the plight of homeless persons in our area. Part of this is direct services and an important part is working toward systemic changes. Of course, abolition of the death penalty is high on my list of priorities!

Anyway, thank you for sending the book and for leading the way in service homeless persons. Our prayers are ongoing for you and Murphy and everyone at Open Door Community.

Shalom,
Dr. Tom Washburn
Bradenton, FL

Dear Ed and Murphy,

I was particularly interested in the recent article about prisons for profit ("Feds Bail Out Private Prison Industry," August 2002, vol. 21, no. 8), as Arizona has a bunch of them, and has just tried to get more. We seem to have a state legislature that finds no act too shabby if it involves prisoners.

I always enjoy receiving *Hospitality*. Even when the subject matter of the articles is sad, it helps us to realize that we are part of a sizable community of folks trying to live peace and justice into being. Thanks for your part in all this.

Sincerely,
Pat Corbett.
Tucson, AZ

Dear Murphy,

Thanks for putting my name on the mailing list. I have shared the paper, *Hospitality*, with the Presbyterian women of our church. Being the mission's moderator for this year gave me the opportunity for present the paper with the "Needs List" on the back. The coordinating team accepted my recommendation to use your ministry as one of our mission projects. So, from time to time, you will be receiving packages that we hope will help.

Sincerely,
Clara Carr
The First Presbyterian Church
Greenville, NC

"And hast thou slain the Jabberwock?

Come to my arms, my beamish boy! [er, girl!]
O frajous day! Callooh! Callay!
[I] chortled in [my] joy."

Murphy, what delight your letter brings! Health and Iona and time to travel through the Highlands and to visit the home of the forebears! Rejoice and again I say Rejoice!

Our prison work goes slowly. Getting fingerprinted and photographer takes weeks. But we persevered. Jack Carlton and I started a class at Men's Prison on Wednesday and will meet with about twelve selected (whatever that means!) students who are serious about Bible study, on the first, third, and fifth Wednesdays until about Christmas. The material (tapes) was selected for us, but we have out time to inject out points of view. More anon. And may your feet be beautiful upon the mountains (or hills?).

Love,
Mary Barbara Tate
Milledgeville, GA

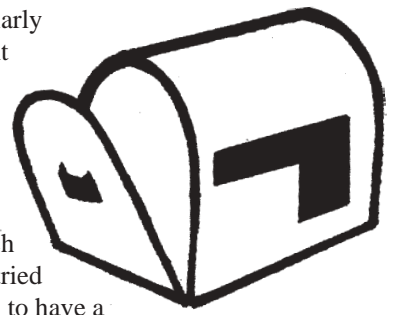
Hi folks!

An agent phoned me on behalf of a politician. I asked, "What's he for?" The kid said, "Education."

I said, "I have a solution. Tell him Pajama Lady said to stop the death penalty. In the past twelve years, Florida spent 65 million to kill 18 people – some of whom were innocent. Especially, for one, Jessie Taffero, whose head went up in flames, but they released his wife. If your politician friend stops the death penalty, you'll have plenty of money for education, victims of crime, rehab for prisoners, and for the elderly. That way you won't have to over-tax the elderly to educate children, after they've already raised their own kids."

I said, "Also tell him that I want to know how he stands on the death penalty, because if he is *for* the death penalty, I won't vote for him if he's running for dog-catcher!"

The guy hung up. And so it goes.
Love and prayers,
Helen Pajama
Debary, FL



Open Door Community Ministries

Soup Kitchen: Wednesday and Thursday, 11 a.m. – noon
Weekday Breakfast: Monday and Tuesday, 6:45 a.m.
Showers: Wednesday and Thursday, 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.

- January 5

Worship at 910
Peter Gathje preaching to conclude a study weekend
- January 12

Worship at 910
Brian Terrell and Betsy Keenan of the Strangers and
Guests Catholic Worker Farm, Maloy, IA, leading worship
- January 19

Worship at 910
- January 26

Worship at 910
5 p.m. Short eucharist and singing with Elise Witt

ELLEN GRIFFITH SPEARS

Needs of the Community

- JEANS

T-Shirts

Men’s Work Shirts

Underwear for Men

Women’s Underwear

Alarm Clocks

Eye Glasses

Men’s Belts

Washcloths

Socks

Men’s Shoes (all sizes)
- Ham and Turkey for our Soup Kitchen

Sandwiches

Quick Grits

Cheese

Coffee

Multi-Vitamins

BLANKETS

MARTA Tokens

Postage Stamps

French Horn for Music at Worship

CHILD AND BABY SAFETY SEATS (for Hardwick Trip Vans)
- Disposable Razors

Deodorant

LOTION

Vaseline

Towels

Combs

Sanitary Napkins and Tampons

Toothbrushes

SOAP (any size)

SHAMPOO (travel size)

Clarification Meetings at the Open Door

We will meet for Clarification of thought on selected Tuesday evenings in January. Please call 404-874-9652 for topics or check www.opendoorcommunity.org. Plan to join us for learning and reflection!

Can you bring medicine? (for our Thursday Evening Harriet Tubman Free Medical Clinic)

- antifungal cream (Tolfanate)
- cold medicine (alcohol free)
- COUGH DROPS
- medicated foot powder
- antibiotic cream or ointment
- SUDAFED
- Ibuprofen
- non-drowsy allergy medication

From 11am ‘til 1:30pm, Wednesday and Thursday, 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!