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vol. 23, no. 6

The Open Door Community – Hospitality & Resistance in the Catholic Worker Movement

June 2004

Writing Hospitality

By Murphy Davis

We never really started out to have a newspaper. I guess we always assumed in the early days that we would have at least an occasional newsletter: mainly as a vehicle to tell about the work of the community and ask for support.

So the first newsletter went out under the title *Hospitality* in January 1982, one month after we moved into 910 and got started with the work. Rob Johnson, one of the community founders, got it done. It was a simple four-page fold-over on 11"x17" copy paper. Rob took it to a commercial copy center, as I recall. After an issue or two, our friend Hugh Ward, then Pastor of Columbia Presbyterian Church, offered to run off several upcoming issues on the church's copy machine. Hard to remember that copy machines were pretty new in those days, and not many churches and organizations had one. Anyway, Rob pasted together typed manuscripts and made headlines with "press type," and Hugh copied a few issues. And so it went out. The whole thing evolved.

The Open Door Community is a part of the Catholic Worker movement. Our founder, Dorothy Day, came to this work after many years as a journalist, so writing was a given for her. Peter Maurin introduced her to the way of life that put together the daily practice of the works of mercy, community with the poor, and putting out a newspaper to "indoctrinate" and reflect on the plight of the poor and the teachings of scripture and the Church: the task of "building a new world in the shell of the old." The first issue of *The Catholic Worker* was published on May 1, 1933, and it was distributed in Union Square for a penny a copy. After 71 years, the newspaper is strong, and the price has remained the same. Hard to beat that.

But this kind of writing was not a given for us. We were activists, teachers, and preachers, but none of us thought of ourselves as writers. But sometimes, something just has to be said. As time went by, we found ourselves with news to share and stories to tell. Watching the political changes in our city and nation from the vantage point of our life with and among homeless folks and prisoners weighed on us and we needed to tell the story. Like I said, it evolved.

And it's always been a community process. Most of writing has always been done by those of us who live here in residential community, including many who have come from the streets and out of prison. But the definition of community writers extends to writers and artists who are volunteers, former volunteers and residents, and co-workers near and far. We have been

Writing, continued on page 9

The People's Power in the Small Press

By Diana George

Not long after I arrived at The Open Door to spend a year away from teaching, a colleague at Temple University asked if I would come to Philadelphia to talk to his students and faculty about what I thought working in a community of hospitality had to do with my teaching. Eli's question was one I'd pretty much dodged in my sabbatical leave request, but here it was again, and so I had to take the vague connections I already felt and put them into words.

Much of the work of The Open Door is work people can see: making and serving meals; cleaning bathrooms; handing out a change of shirt, shampoo and soap, razor and socks, a sandwich or two; transporting folks to Hardwick to visit family members in prison; leafleting in support of Grady Hospital or in opposition to harsh "quality of life" ordinances. That is, after all, what The Open Door is about – living in solidarity with the poor, the homeless, the imprisoned, the oppressed. It's good work, but Eli wanted to know what it had to do with the classroom.

I begin, then, with what I do for a living.

I have been teaching college writing for over thirty years now. It's good work. I like it. I like watching students who don't believe they can write anything worth reading get so excited about what they are writing that they create a piece that truly moves a reader. I like watching them struggle to write something they really care about. And, I like reading what eventually comes of that struggle.

Through those thirty-plus years, I have also watched the media report on one "literacy crisis" after another. In the late seventies, *Newsweek* complained

that "Johnny Can't Write." In the wake of this last election, the Bush administration, in a cynical distortion of "no child left behind," has called for "back to the basics" teaching and "outcomes assessment" funding. Those reports can all sound pretty worrisome, but they don't mean much if you are a teacher who cares at all about how students write and what they write. Back-to-the-basics education doesn't mean a thing to students who don't think their writing is about anything more than getting a grade.

That's all very well and good, I know, but what has that to do with The Open Door?

In my writing classes, I've spent most of my time teaching students to produce writing that matters, and to do that I also have to read and write words that matter. So, while I have felt at home doing the visible work in the community, I've been even more at home in the invisible work, the work of writing for *Hospitality*, a paper in the long tradition of small alternative press papers that might seem insignificant but that stand in stark contrast to the giant media conglomerates that produce most of the information most Americans read, see, or hear every day.

Think about it. If you listen to NPR in the morning, you will hear the same wire stories that you read in the *New*

DANIEL NICHOLS

York Times. If you go on the Internet—say Yahoo's home page—to pick up the headlines, you will get the same stories you heard on NPR and read in the *New York Times*. If you turn on any of the major television news shows, you will see the same stories you heard on NPR, read in the *New York Times*, and found on the Internet. And, all of those stories will have essentially the same angle with very few differences. Many are, in fact, simply the same wire stories taken from AP or Reuters.

People's Power, continued on page 9



Stop Judicial Terrorism

By Elizabeth Dede

On April 19, 2004, I joined about 15 other activists to call for the resignation of Judge Henry Williams, municipal court judge for the city of Dawson. We marched around city hall as city court was in session, with signs that read "Stop Judicial Terrorism," "Fire Judge Williams." We chanted that we were fired up and fed up. We cried out, "Henry Williams has got to go!"

We know that it is serious and strenuous to ask that a judge be fired from his position, but Judge Henry Williams has committed many improprieties. The following are just two examples of his behavior that leave us wondering if he is mentally competent.

Two weeks ago a case of a city nuisance came before the judge. The defendant is in poor health because of diabetes. He is chronically unemployed and keeps house and home together by repairing appliances at his home. Admittedly, his yard was full of parts and pieces of appliances, creating an eyesore. This would seem like a minor case, but Judge Henry Williams sentenced the defendant to 11 years in the county jail! A sentence of that length is not even legal in a city court, let alone ethical.

On the same evening, a young, 17-year-old man came before the judge on a disorderly conduct charge. After lecturing him, the judge sentenced the defendant to house arrest, and told him that his grandmother would be his "jailer." Henry Williams told the young man that he could do nothing without his grandmother's permission. This was outrageous enough, turning a grandmother into a jailer, but then Judge Williams went on to say that he was doing the young man a favor because he could send him to jail, where the men would love to see him coming. "You're a tender, young thing," Judge Williams said. "You're fresh meat."

Judges are supposed to treat each defendant with fairness and respect. Judge Williams obviously over-stepped the bounds into unfair, rude, and disrespectful behavior. These are not the first examples of Judge Henry Williams' bizarre behavior. They are only the most recent.

We've been monitoring Judge Williams' court for more than a year and a half now. We have entered Judicial Qualifications complaints and have let the city government know of our serious concerns about Henry Williams' competence.

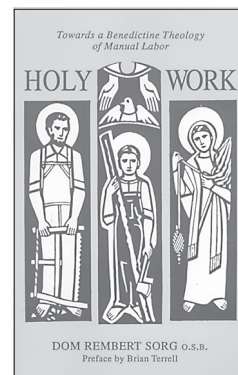
It is now past time for Henry Williams to be removed from the bench before more people are made to suffer under his reign of terror. With the people of Dawson, we cry out: "Hey, Hey! Ho, Ho! Henry Williams has got to go!" ✠

We have this late-breaking news to share with readers of Hospitality. On May 13, 2004, the Dawson city council voted 5 to 1 to remove Judge Henry Williams from the bench. We thank God for this sign of hope and justice. Elizabeth Dede, a non-residential Partner at the Open Door Community, works with the Prison & Jail Project in Americus, GA.

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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 resist war and violence and nurture community in ministry with, and advocacy for, the homeless poor and 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:

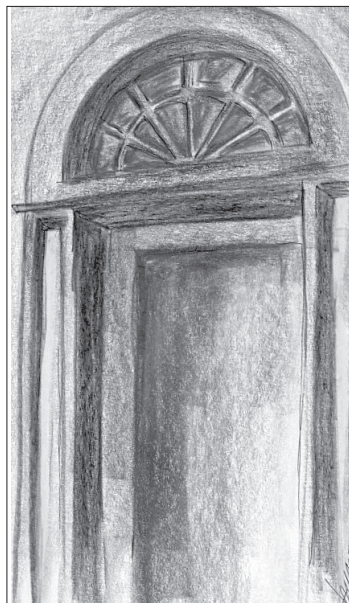
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Dick Rustay, Chuck Harris, Shari Fradenburgh, and Joe Taylor: Dayspring Farm Coordinators



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Writing . . . Despite the Odds

For Those Living in Poverty, Street Papers Foster Public Expression

By Paula Mathieu

(Editor's note: Paula Mathieu is an Assistant Professor and Director of First-year Writing at Boston College. She is also on the Executive Board of the International Network of Street Papers and writes for Boston's street paper Spare Change. For more information on the International Network of Street Papers, see www.street-papers.org or contact Paula Mathieu at mathiepa@bc.edu.)

Once a week, writers in Porto Alegre meet in a city park to write. In Utrecht it's in a tiny office. In Seattle, a library. In Boston, a women's shelter. In Odessa, Stuttgart, Gothenberg, Bratislava and Sao Paulo, it's wherever and whenever they can. When you hear the term "homeless person" you might not think "writer," but perhaps you should.

Around the world today, many people living in poverty are developing their skills as writers while making their messages public through local street papers. More than 100 street papers operate today as independent media organizations located in 27 countries around the world. Built on the principle of self help, street papers give people living in poverty the chance to earn an income by selling high-quality alternative magazines and newspapers to the reading public. Many street papers also provide an outlet for poor and socially excluded people to develop their abilities to articulate their views of the world and to claim a voice in the public media.

While acting independently, most of the world's street papers belong to a common network, the International Network of Street Papers (INSP). The INSP supports its member papers as they create innovative social businesses that aim "to alleviate poverty and build a just, civil society in the world." INSP articulates its vision as both local and global, by "changing the world one street paper at a time."

In April 2004, members of the INSP network gathered for their ninth annual conference in Glasgow, Scotland, to share knowledge and plan future projects, such as a global news agency of street journalism and its second annual Homeless World Cup soccer tournament, planned for Gothenberg, Sweden this summer. (For more on the World Cup, see www.streetssoccer.org.)

As part of the conference, street papers with writing projects for vendors and other poor people met to share ideas and practices. The format and participants in the writing groups varied, but a common theme emerged: writing is an important act of social inclusion, allowing marginalized people to see themselves differently and to help the more affluent society around them see the world differently as well.

As a delegate from Boston's *Spare Change News*, I was in Glasgow to participate in and report on the conference and take part in a discussion of street-paper writing groups at work in the world today.

Brazil

Clarinha Glock from *Boca de Rua* (meaning

"Mouth of the Street") in Porto Alegre unrolls a mostly black-and-white poster with a child-drawn smiling image standing over a sea of text, a manifesto, entitled "The Street Boys and Girls Bill of Rights." Printed in Portuguese in the center of the poster but artfully translated into English text that unobtrusively frames the borders, this writing by street children in Porto Alegre represents one of *Boca de Rua*'s weekly collaborations. The fourteen articles of this bill of rights betray the double consciousness of these writers, fully children but struggling to survive in a brutal, adult world:

Article 1: To do everything they please that don't harm anybody.

Article 2: To have mom's lap.

Article 3: Neither to be flogged or to have people do wrong things to them.

The mission of *Boca de Rua*, according to Glock, is to invite homeless adults as well as street children to participate in weekly writing groups. Two journalists meet weekly in a city park with a group of homeless adults and children in order to help them tell stories, create illustrations, write, and publish a newspaper. In exchange for their writing, participants are given a number of copies of *Boca de Rua* free of charge, which they sell to the reading public. Every issue has a theme, although writers insist that one page is always devoted to issues of violence; three pages of each issue are devoted to *Boquinha de Rua* (little mouth) which highlights writing by street children.

Glock says she notices a change once participants begin to see themselves as writers. "When they first join the group, people often feel they don't matter and don't have anything to say. Now people are organizing themselves, developing as writers, going to school, selling their work." According to Glock, this project paints the role of the journalist as a teacher of writing, to help those on the margins report directly to the world around them. Glock says that mainstream

media interest in *Boca de Rua* is increasing, and future plans include a partnership with a Porto Alegre university to make computers available for the writers who eventually, she hopes, will produce the paper too.

At *Ocas* in Sao Paulo and Rio de Janeiro, each issue of the paper contains a section called "Cabeso Santito" (Homeless Heads). According to Norma Garcia, the staff is working to increase vendor writing skills and interest to make this section more central to the publication. They hope to work more closely with *Boca de Rua* to spread the idea of writing groups across Brazil.

Slovakia

At *Note Bene* in Bratislava, two pages of each monthly issue are devoted to the writing of the paper's vendors. According to Michaela Lacková, "Many of our vendors have a lot to say and their writing is very popular with readers. Our readers want to read how the vendors see the world, often in humorous ways or in very serious ways."

Those who are selling the paper and want to write for it as well, according to Lacková, work individually with editorial staff on writing and editing; plus a group meeting each month brings together professional staff and those selling the magazine to comment on content and design. Writers whose work gets published in the magazine receive free copies to sell or keep.

Note Bene also wants to know what readers think about the magazine, especially about the writing by vendors, and asks readers to vote by email or text message on favorite stories. "This involves the public more, and the writers like to know that people are responding to them" says Lacková. Prizes are awarded to the most popular stories.

The Netherlands

A weekly writing group at *Straatnieuws* in Utrecht is always filled to capacity. "Our room only holds 10, so we take the writers in the order that they

Despite the Odds, continued on page 10

Join us as a Resident Volunteer



DIANA GEORGE

RV's Meridith Owensby and Connie and Clive Bonner take a break in Birmingham's Kelly Ingram Park during our African-American History Trip.

Live in a residential Christian community.

Serve Jesus Christ and the hungry, homeless, and imprisoned.

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For information and application forms, visit www.opendoorcommunity.org

Feed My Sheep

By Pressley Neal Cox

(Editor's note: Pressley Neal Cox, a minister at First Presbyterian Church in York, SC, was a regular volunteer at the Open Door Community during her college and seminary years. The following is adapted from a sermon she preached at her church on September 28, 2003.)

When they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, 'Simon son of John, do you love me more than these?' He said to him, 'Yes, Lord; you know that I love you.' Jesus said to him, 'Feed my lambs.' A second time he said to him, 'Simon son of John, do you love me?' He said to him, 'Yes, Lord; you know that I love you.' Jesus said to him, 'Tend my sheep.' He said to him the third time, 'Simon son of John, do you love me?' Peter felt hurt because he said to him the third time, 'Do you love me?' And he said to him, 'Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you.' Jesus said to him, 'Feed my sheep. Very truly, I tell you, when you were younger, you used to fasten your own belt and to go wherever you wished. But when you grow old, you will stretch out your hands, and someone else will fasten a belt around you and take you where you do not wish to go.' (He said this to indicate the kind of death by which he would glorify God.) After this he said to him, 'Follow me' (John 21:15-19).

On youth Sunday, Sarah Langford, a junior in high school, shared a quote by a Spanish mystic known as Teresa of Avila. The quote reads, "Christ has no body now on earth but yours, no hands but yours, no feet but yours. Yours are the eyes through which Christ's compassion is to look out to the world. Yours are the feet with which Christ is to go about doing good. Yours are the hands with which Christ is to bless all people now." This is the point Christ was trying to drive home to Peter: I am no longer here on earth, but you are. Go out into this world and care for the world as a shepherd tends to his sheep.

So how are we to tend and feed the sheep? How are we to be a shepherd for others? How are we to care and minister to one another?

A few weeks ago, I was sitting in my den enjoying pizza, good conversation and laughter with a bunch of the youth. We were in the midst of talking about this past summer's mission trip and what it had meant to each of us. Somewhere in that conversation, Scott Hill (a sophomore) stopped me and asked if he could ask me a question. I, of course, said yes but prepared myself, for often Scott's questions are meant to be humorous or to trick me or catch me off guard. But on this particular occasion, Scott surprised me. He said, "Pressley, you know on the back of bulletin, why does it say 'ministers' and underneath it reads 'all members of First Presbyterian Church?'"

I have to say that this question did catch me off guard, but in a pleasant and thankful way. Because it hit me that Scott was beginning to ask those questions, to be curious and to wonder who he is called to be and how could he at his age be considered a minister. What a great question that so many of us don't ask or find it hard to find the answer to.

So, I answered Scott's question in the most

honest way that I could, saying that we are all called to be part of the larger body of Christ. We as members of the church are called to participate in the life of church and to care for our brothers and sisters in Christ. We are "called to feed, tend, talk with, listen to, play with, comfort and support those around us. We are asked to share what we have been given, to put aside some of our selfish desires in order that we might satisfy the needs of another human being" (Lindsey Horton, *Hospitality*, May 2001). In short, we are ministers to each other and we are called to minister to the world and to share the good news to all.

But another daunting set of questions emerged from our evening's discussion: "Who are the sheep?" and "Am I the sheep or am I the shepherd?" There is not one clear answer. Throughout our lives we find ourselves in places where we need to be the sheep and places where we act as the shepherd.

A few years ago, I found myself in one of those situations where at first I thought I was the shepherd, only to realize that I was the sheep. I was spending the night out on the streets of Atlanta with a group from the Open Door Community. On this particular night, Good Friday of 2001, I found myself sleeping in the parking behind Trinity United Methodist in Atlanta. And on that night, I witnessed something very peculiar. I was about 20 feet away from some of our group who were trying to sleep huddled up together.

As I lay there trying to fall asleep, I saw a homeless man approach the group, holding out his hand out and saying in a firm voice, "Here, y'all have this blanket. It's gonna be chilly night." My friends tried to refuse, for we knew it would only be a short while before we could return to the comfort of our beds and the warmth of our homes. It did not seem right to take a blanket from a man who would probably spend the next night on the streets, and many nights following it. However, the man insisted, and said something that has always been with me since I witnessed the event. It was a remark that spoke directly to the heart of justice and fellowship. As he pulled out the blanket and covered my friends up, he said to them, "No, I want you to have it. It wouldn't be fair for me to have two when you all have none." This man did not know the strangers that he covered that evening. All he knew was that they had a need, a need for a blanket. They had a need to be shown how to survive a cold night on the streets. And that need was met, in the act of a stranger who shared his resources with those in need.

In our scripture, we hear the cry of Jesus to "Feed my lambs" and "Tend my sheep." We hear the cry of every person who is in need of care and attention. We also hear the cry to each person who could

serve to fill that need. We are each called to feed, tend, talk with, listen to, comfort and support those around us. We are asked to share what we have been given, to put aside some of our selfish desires in order that we might satisfy the needs of another human being. We, as Christ's followers, are called to feed and clothe, to tend and care. And in this shepherding we are asked to go beyond merely giving a coin here and there, although such actions are important. But equally important is the effort we make to reach out and sacrifice for one another.

To God be the glory. Amen. ✠

poetry corner



JULIE LONNEMAN

Send us your poetry!
We especially welcome
poetry from people in
prison and on the streets.

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In My House

By Timothy J. Muise

In my house God can be
extremely hard to find,

The bars, the chains, the hatred
offer much to hide behind.

At times the will to seek God
is so very, very weak,

But urgency, desire, can spark
a soul that's incomplete.

Just ask and you'll receive
must be your battle cry,

And on the wings of angels
to new heights you will fly.

Freedom of the soul
is what God has in store for you,

In spite of bars, chains, and hatred,
a miracle can break through. ✠

Timothy J. Muise describes himself as a "forty year old former fisherman from Gloucester, Massachusetts," and a high school drop-out who has had to work hard to become a writer. He is presently incarcerated at the Souza-Baranowski Correctional Facility in Shirley, Massachusetts. In addition to his writing for prisoner publications, he is active in political/prisoner rights causes.

Reflections on Welcome

By **Connie Bonner**

(Editor's note: Connie Bonner is a minister in the United Reformed Church in Annan, Scotland. She and her husband, Clive, spend some time with us each year as Resident Volunteers [see photo, page 3].)

This is my third stay at the Open Door Community and I have been struck by the richness of the welcome to me and to others. As I am on vacation just now and have been given gentle work rotations, I've had many opportunities to reflect on welcome in this special place. Perhaps what, in part, brought the theme to birth was Ed's reflection on the lectionary readings from Genesis 18: *Abraham ran out to meet them... let me wash your feet... give you strength for the journey.*

In 2000, Clive and I were welcomed into the Spring Community Retreat at Dayspring. We were invited into the circle beneath the fresh green leaves, by the sound of trickling water running through the creek. As the community kneels in peace and washes each others' feet, not only does the Open Door Community make space for two once-a-year volunteers from Scotland who are renewing old friendships and are forming new ones, but also the community embraces and welcomes, by the simple action of footwashing, the practice of resistance. Here all are welcome.

Welcome is a way of living – a welcoming of truth speaking in our lives. During my stay at Dayspring, I was invited to share about what it is like to work for church community formation in Annan URC. This is a ministry that can be hard to perform and hard to speak. In Britain, the United Reformed Church has stated you cannot be a Christian and a member of the British Nationalist Party; some people feel such direct speaking is not part of the remit of the Church. But at the Open Door, we learn over and over again that seeing with the eyes of faith points us to action: to speak truth to the people who need to hear it. So at the Monday and Tuesday morning breakfasts, whenever there have been enough volunteers, two people have demonstrated with anti-war placards to the folks of Atlanta as they speed past 910's yard, ignoring the footsore homeless lining up for food.

While in Birmingham, Alabama, on the African American Civil Rights History Tour, Clive and I were faced with the uncomfortable process of welcoming the realization that we share in the horrors of racism. It is far too easy for people from the U.K. to say we do not have that problem in our town or village or church, but as long as people suffer prejudice because of race, gender, age or sexual orientation, all human beings are tainted by the stain of hatred and disrespect which marks our failure to act in solidarity with the suffering ones. We can ask ourselves, do we have people from other backgrounds in positions of leadership in our church organizations? Do we understand the plight of those who work in the low-paid catering jobs or in the rag trade? Who makes the branded shoes and designer clothes we wear? Who earns a fair wage for the

coffee and tea we demand for our refreshment?

This is a shrinking world that we live in and each one of us has a responsibility to ensure our life of comfort is not built on the suffering of others.

That is why it is so good to be welcomed into an intentional community where we can deepen our understanding of what it is like to live without a home, dependent on others for food, toilets, clean clothes and medical care. It is so hard for us to be separated from our cars and our livelihoods and to be restricted in our choices of food, toiletries and clothing. That is why we need the friendship and welcome of a community of people who recognize our brokenness and still welcome us. Here our African American friends patiently unravel our preconceptions that racism belongs to the past, and by their lives and daily experiences, our protective layers are stripped from us until we too can begin to do justice, to love kindness and to walk humbly with our God (Micah 6:8).

Clive and I experienced the welcome greetings extended to us by so many people in the yard and among the Partners and residents in the house. It is great to be remembered, to share stories and experiences, and to build one another up in love. So much of the Open Door's work happens through providing space and time where this sharing of stories widens our experiences and continually draws us back to Jesus' teaching stories and to his retelling of the people's faith history. The encouragement we draw from others' witness to the power of God present in their lives and from the retelling of small but life-changing moments, when gleams of resurrection light break through, are priceless.

Welcome is also the hospitality offered to others as breakfast and lunches are served with a smile and a greeting, clean clothes and showers are offered, feet are softened, boots and shoes purchased and innumerable works of mercy shared by the crowd made up of volunteers and residents that sit on the 910 hillside of Atlanta. Overheard in the darkness as people were sipping coffee from the big brown thermos: "At other places we get fed; here at the Open Door we are served." Welcome is respecting the friends we meet here.

Welcome is the invitation to come and eat at the welcome table: coffee and grits and oranges, bread and juice. *My body broken for you, my blood shed for the forgiveness of sins.* This supper feeds the community and supports us through the narrow way that leads to life. We have glimpses of the thirsty Jesus given water by a foreign woman at a well and by a soldier at the cross as we tentatively insert the works of mercy into the contested spaces of the city. Woodruff Park became the scene of blessing for some who accept a cup of coffee or water and muffins from us. But so many poured through the concourse, eyes fixed on emptiness, intent on securing their privacy from the world. Only one from this throng raised haunted eyes to me and accepted a cup of water. "You startled me," he said. But we talked

and parted more friendly – one out of hundreds who passed by on the other side.

This welcome – the running to meet strangers, the offer of food and shelter, taking care of material needs and the opening of self to vulnerability, sharing stories and recognizing and respecting the difference of others and then releasing them out into the world, again refreshed and strengthened for the journey – is joy and blessing. It is also only a pale reflection of the welcome God holds for us in eternity. Jesus shows us God's love breaking relentlessly into our world from before creation and onwards into the future:

How many times I wanted to put my arms around all your people, just as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings (Luke 13: 34). ✠



volunteer needs

- People to accompany community members to doctors' appointments
- Groups or individuals to make meat and cheese sandwiches (no bologna, please) on whole-wheat bread for our homeless and hungry friends
- People to cook or bring supper for the Community on any Tuesday, Wednesday, or Thursday evening

For more information on volunteer opportunities, contact Meridith Owensby at 770-246-7627 or ponce910@earthlink.net.



JULIE LONNEMAN

This 4th of July, the Open Door Community needs help to provide a festive holiday picnic for 500 hungry friends:

watermelons
ground beef for hamburgers
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ketchup, mustard, mayonnaise

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In, Out, and Around Nine-Ten

Compiled by Murphy Davis



CLIVE BONNER

The Open Door on the Road

The spring retreat was the occasion for our largest-ever community hike in the Cohutta Wilderness (left). Eighteen community members made the 10-mile hike to Panther Creek Falls, and everybody even made it back! We posed here at Bear Creek Falls along the way. We are so blessed by the beauty of forests and mountains near Dayspring Farm, and we always return refreshed, carrying this natural beauty in our hearts.

This year's annual African American history trip was to Birmingham, Alabama. We visited the Civil Rights Institute (a wonderful museum of the movement up to 1963) and the 16th Street Baptist Church (scene of the tragic 1963 bombing that killed four little girls). Below, our group stopped for a picture on the steps of the church. On the lower left, Willie Carter sits in the Kelly Ingram Park to sketch one of the sculptures.



JOE TAYLOR



JOE TAYLOR

A Visit to Baltimore

In March, Hannah Loring-Davis, Ed Loring, and Murphy Davis journeyed to Baltimore to speak for a Clarification meeting in a series put on by Jonah House and Viva House. We loved the opportunity to visit with our friends and co-workers in the Catholic Worker and resistance movement there. In this picture (right) are Willa Bickham and Brendan Walsh, founders of the 30-year old Viva House. While there, we met many of the members of the extended community of Jonah and Viva Houses, we got to help serve a meal in the Viva House kitchen and shared an evening at Jonah House and visited the grave of our brother Phil Berrigan who died last year.

Willa is one of our leading artists in the Catholic Worker circles. In February, a parish in downtown Baltimore sponsored a showing of 14 of her paintings and silk screens in a lovely gallery in the church. The opening reception was covered with pictures in the Baltimore Sun. When Willa and Brendan returned after the opening, one of the silk

screens was missing. This piece (left) is a red, white and blue screen of one of Dorothy Day's famous quotes: "Our problems stem from our acceptance of this filthy rotten system."



WILLA BICKHAM

with the rest until the end of the show. During that time the priest would celebrate Mass elsewhere, and another priest would say Mass in this parish.

There is a great movement afoot, supported

by many Catholics, to canonize Dorothy Day (to make her a saint). Aside from what Dorothy often said about this ("Don't call me a saint, I don't want to be dismissed so easily."), it's interesting that many people want to remember her as a sweet harmless woman who helped the poor and loved everybody. Her regular indictments of a "filthy rotten system" that produces poverty and suffering don't quite fit. Before Day became a Catholic, she was a Communist; but when she came into the church, she did not leave her radical politics behind. In fact, she understood the Christian faith as the most radical vision to lead us to a just social order.

When we returned home and shared this story, Lauren commented, "How wonderful! The art triumphed."

Thank you Willa, for helping to keep the vision alive.



MURPHY DAVIS



DIANA GEORGE

Music, Music, Music

Talk about a house full of harmony! Just Voices, with Liz Fazier as director, is a noted local a capella choir, so we were all happy when they came to see us again in May. They put on a splendid concert after Sunday worship and knocked our socks off.



DIANA GEORGE



MURPHY DAVIS

The Walker brothers, long-time friends from the streets, love to sing. So (below) all three, Samuel, David, and Michael were here for an evening of singing with Elise, Mick, Stranger and Inge.



MURPHY DAVIS

The house always comes alive when Elise Witt walks in the door. In March, we shared a most wonderful evening singing with Elise—pictured (above right) with Mick Kinney on the piano, Stranger Malone on clarinet and flute, and Inge Witt (left), who played Bach on the recorder and piano. Documentary filmmaker, George King was here (above) to record the whole extravaganza for a film he is making on Stranger Malone, a 94-year old musician who has been recording since 1924.



MURPHY DAVIS

Holy Week with the Homeless



DIANA GEORGE

On Tuesday of Holy Week, members of the Lighthouse Mennonite Church in Jackson, Georgia, joined us for worship in front of the City Jail. Afterwards they served a delicious fried chicken dinner in our front yard and sang for our guests. We love that unaccompanied four-part harmony!



CLIVE BONNER

We give thanks that our twentieth Holy Week on the streets was again a moving and blessed experience. We walked through the week, remembering the journey of Jesus of Nazareth toward his betrayal, trial, and execution; and we continue to wonder aloud: How can it be that in a city so full of wealth and abundance that the poor suffer such humiliation and deprivation? How can it be that thousands of girls and boys and women and men have no place to call home? How could there possibly be hunger in the United States of America? How can we *not* recognize the presence of God in the suffering of the poor?

Notes from a Lenten Sketchbook, 3/23/04

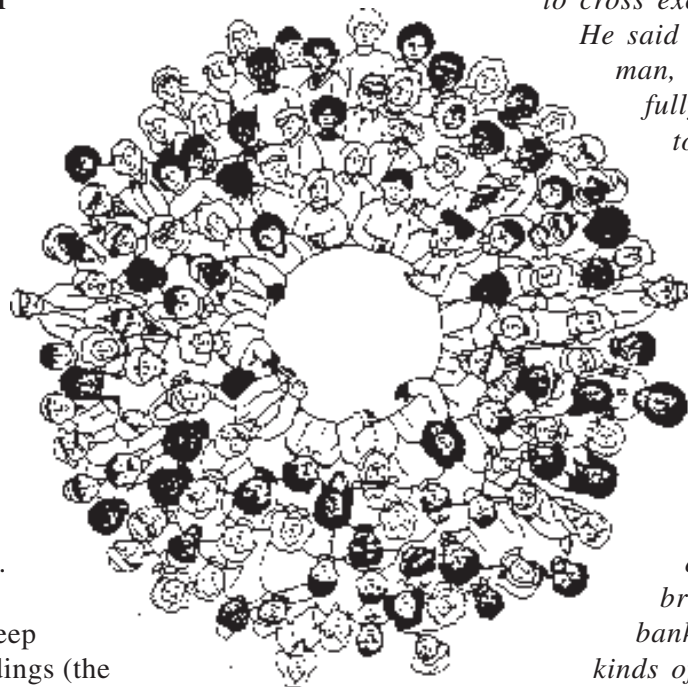
By Mark M. Bashor

A part of my little discipline for Lent this year included not just reading the daily scripture readings, but spending quiet time with them, *praying* them, and then revisiting them as meditations and as prayers at different times throughout each day.

The little lectionary I used to keep track of the daily readings (the *Ordo*, as my church calls it) included a line or two about the readings for each day to guide the reader's reflections. For Tuesday in the fourth week of Lent, the *Ordo* offered this theme for the readings: "From the temple of Zion flows a stream of life-giving water, a symbol of the healing grace of baptism." The readings were from Ezekiel (47:1-9, 12), Psalms (46:2-3, 5-6, 8-9), and the Gospel of John (5:1-16).

I found plenty to meditate on in both the Psalm and the Gospel passages, and the connection with baptism was clear in all three readings, as the *Ordo* pointed out. Yet that day it was the reading from Ezekiel that held my attention almost completely, and the direction of my meditations did not lean toward baptism. Using *The Good News Bible/Today's English Version*, the most moving verses from the Ezekiel reading were these:

The man led me back to the entrance of the Temple...A small stream of water was flowing out at the south side of the gate. With his measuring rod the man measured 560 yards downstream to the east and told me to wade through the stream there. The water came only to my ankles. Then he measured another 560 yards, and the water came up to my knees. Another 560 yards farther down, the water was up to my waist. He measured 560 yards more, and there the stream was so deep I could not wade through it. It was too deep



to cross except by swimming. He said to me, 'Mortal man, note all this carefully.' Then the man took me back to the riverbank, and when I got there, I saw that there were very many trees on each bank. He said to me, 'This water flows through the land to the east...and wherever it flows, it will bring life...On each bank of the stream all kinds of trees will grow to provide food. Their leaves will never wither, and they will never stop bearing fruit. They will have fresh fruit every month, because they are watered by the stream that flows from the Temple. The trees will provide food, and their leaves will be used for healing people...'

This was not a "new" passage for me. I've heard and read it many times, and I love the images and messages. But when I spent time with it during Lent it left me with nothing but questions, troubling questions, perhaps as troubled as the waters alluded to in the passage from John.

From the water imagery came questions like: Have I even gotten my feet wet in these living waters? Am I standing ankle deep, and for how long, and for how much longer? What would it mean for me to wade in knee-deep? Waist-deep? What would it mean to swim in these living waters? Do I bring life, do I nourish, and nurture life, wherever I go?

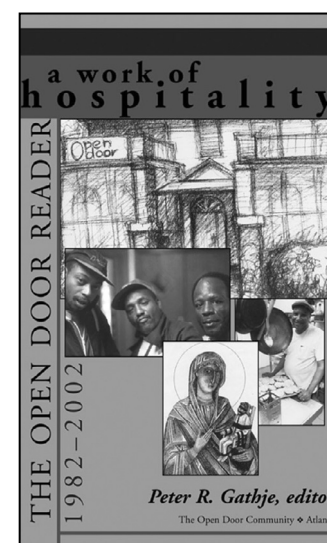
And from the tree imagery came questions like these: Do I bear good fruit at all times, in all seasons? Do I feed the hungry? Do I bring nourishment to everyone I encounter? Am I always a source of healing?

Questions, troubling questions.

Rich food for thought for the journey. ♦

Mark Bashor is the editor of *Hospitality's Poetry Corner*.

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-Anna Clark
Professor of English
University of Tennessee
at Martin

People’s Power, continued from page 1

That isn’t because there are no other stories out there. It isn’t even because they are the most important stories of the day. It is because the major media is owned and operated by a very few large corporations whose interest is in selling as much and making as large a profit as they can. The goal is not so much freedom of the press or an open exchange of ideas in a democracy as it is the accumulation of capital.

In the research I did before I came to The Open Door, I wanted to be able to explain the role writing plays in the work of organizations that hope to change people’s lives. These are nonprofit and independent groups – local coalitions for the homeless, women’s shelters, Catholic Worker houses, soup kitchens, environmental groups, local land trust groups, and other organizations like them all across the country.

In organizing and in carrying out the work of the organization, these groups must rely on some means of communication – usually a newsletter, a small newspaper, brochures, signs, banners, posters, public service announcements, and more – to get the word out, raise funds, and build memberships or foster coalitions. Many of the women and men in these groups did not think of themselves as writers when they began, and yet they found themselves confronted with a moment when writing was needed if the organization was to survive and if they were going to get their message across.

Here is how Dorothy Day describes the first moments of *The Catholic Worker*:

I had sent my copy to the printer—news accounts of the exploitation of Negroes in the South and the plight of the sharecroppers; child labor in our own neighborhood; some recent evictions; a local strike over wages and hours; pleas for better home relief, and so on—and we were waiting for proofs.

When they came we cut them out and started making a dummy, pasting them up on the eight pages of a tabloid the size of The Nation, writing headlines, and experimenting with different kinds of type. Peter looked over what I had written as it came back from the printer. I could see that, far from being happy about it, he was becoming more and more disturbed. One day, while looking over some fresh proofs, he shook his head. His expression was one of great sadness.

“It’s everyone’s paper,” he said. I was pleased. I thought that was what we both wanted. “And everyone’s paper is no one’s paper,” he added with a sigh.

Peter Maurin would have made a very bad Time/Warner-AOL executive because he didn’t want to try to reach everybody. He didn’t want to try to make as much money as he could. Instead, he believed that a newspaper could and should bring about what he called “clarification of thought”—the first step in moving others to action. People, he told Dorothy Day, “must think before they can act. They must study.” He was calling for a paper that could and would be radical. A newspaper that is for everyone is a newspaper that speaks to no one and, thus, moves no one to action. What Peter Maurin was after was a public voice speaking to those who would listen and be moved to act.

Like *The Catholic Worker*, none of the newsletters and newspapers that made up my little study could be called “everyone’s” paper. They speak to special interest groups on unpopular topics and take radical positions. To be quite honest, they ask their readers to do what some would call the impossible:

End the Death Penalty Everywhere for All Time
Feed, Clothe, House ALL the Poor

Stop Abuse
End Violence
End Poverty
Stop War

In other words, they call for not just radical but outrageous action. And, yet, it is only in outrageous action and impossible radical activism that much ever happens, anyway, and the writers and workers for these organizations seem to know that instinctively. These papers do much more than report the news of the day; they witness.

When Dorothy Day described laying out the first issue of *The Catholic Worker*, she started by making a dummy and pasting it up on “a tabloid the size of *The Nation*.” It was no accident that she identified with a publication like *The Nation*. First of all, Day’s own background was with small, alternative and leftist newspapers. Her brother worked for the dime-novel sized labor paper, *The Day Book*, which introduced her to Eugene Debs and the IWW and labor struggles throughout the nation and the world. Her first job was with the Socialist paper, the *Call*. In *The Long Loneliness*, Day writes of absorbing a radicalism from *The Day Book* and Jack London and Upton Sinclair and other socialist writers she encountered through these small papers and magazines.

And, though today we would not call *The Nation* a radical paper, when it began publication in 1865, the press was being pulled by serious factions emerging from the Civil War and Reconstruction. Its founders declared that one main object of this new magazine was to be “discussion of the topics of the day, and, above all, of legal, economical, and constitutional questions, with greater accuracy and moderation than are now to be found in the daily press.” At least one motivation for starting *The Nation*, then, was to set the record straight.

Setting the record straight was, in fact, what all of the people I interviewed identified as a primary motivator as they set themselves to the task of creating a paper. In the little trail of people and papers and organizations I followed, one of the first things I discovered was something very simple: These inexpensively produced, often unprofessional-looking papers and newsletters defy what some have called a Culture of Disconnect.

They do not exist in a vacuum. They defy the fragmentation many people experience as or at least suspect is characteristic of life in the 21st century.

They do not exist to make money but to make action.

And, they actually do create change, on the local level and beyond, in the lives of the people they work with and for.

If you hang around city hall very long, it would be easy to believe that small changes/small movements don’t really mean much. They don’t really change much.

And, yet, if I look at a community like The Open Door or New Hope House or any number of Catholic Worker Houses, it is very clear to me that the only way we even have access to alternative views is through these networks of small newsletters and newspapers that reach out to like-minded readers.

The only way we know that there is poverty in this country – unless we are experiencing it ourselves – is through the people working with the impoverished. And, the only way to understand the role communication plays in the lives of the people is to look way beyond *Time*, *Newsweek*, and the NBC nightly news.

In the first issue of *The Catholic Worker*, published in May 1933, Dorothy Day named her audience:

For those who are sitting on park benches in the warm spring sunlight.

For those who are huddling in shelters trying to escape the rain.
For those who are walking the streets in the all but futile search for work.
For those who think that there is no hope for the future, no recognition of their plight—this little paper is addressed.

The writers who follow in Dorothy Day’s footsteps look for that audience, the people with little power who do not believe they have a voice.

I teach writing.
I’ve been doing that for more than thirty years and I know that writing is much more than spelling, punctuation, and grammar. Writing is about saying something that truly matters, something that can change lives. Students who don’t believe they have a voice become citizens who don’t believe they have a voice. And, citizens who don’t believe they have a voice become complacent. Complacent citizens leave the decisions to the powerful and the self-interested. I have bigger dreams than that for my students. I want them to know that what they say, what they write can make a difference in other people’s lives and in the politics of a city, a state, a nation.

If we learn to say and write what matters, it can even help us in larger ways to live a life that matters: a life that makes a difference. Articulating what matters can help us to act for justice and human rights. Writing at its best is not just about getting words on a page, but about reflecting on a life of action in a way that nurtures a meaningful and redemptive life. And that really matters. ✚

Diana George is a Resident Volunteer at the Open Door Community.

Writing, from page 1

blessed with many gifted souls who have done the layout of the paper, lots of meticulous copy editors and proofreaders, and a host of helping hands who prepare the paper for mailing to individuals, churches, and numerous colleges, seminaries and other institutions. The living room at 910 Ponce has always been a beehive of activity (and sometimes a party as well) on the day or days of preparing the paper to go out.

Within a few years we were putting out a newspaper eleven times each year. The cutting and pasting finally gave way to a computer layout, and our mailing list is now around 12,000.

We’ve found it an interesting process in preparing this issue, to reflect on the whole process of writing and producing our newspaper. We do it month after month, year after year, but we’ve never written about what we are doing, per se. So in this issue, Diana George, who has taught writing for many years, reflects on her experience of writing for this newspaper. Paula Matthieu, another writing professor and a colleague of Diana’s, writes about her work with street papers produced by people who are homeless in cities all over the world.

Hospitality is in a long tradition of Catholic Worker newspapers, and we are happy to be counted in that number. We are nourished by papers from Catholic Worker houses all over this country and parts of Europe, and we write each of our issues with the hope that our words might encourage and strengthen others in the movement. We are also hopeful that our newspaper will always be part of the action for justice and peace. We hope not to publish articles or art that tend to the abstract, but to keep it all rooted in the concrete reality of the lives of the poor. The articles and art here are not intended to be scholarly, but we hope they are well-informed; we

Writing, continued on page 10

Despite the Odds, continued from page 3 come. When we reach 10, we close the group for that week,” says Iris Pronk, facilitator of the writing group. “I give out a theme each week, such as emotion or religion, and those present write about whatever ideas that theme gives them. Sometimes they have other things they want to write about, but the theme gives them a framework,” Pronk says.

Since the vendors must work for a living and time spent writing means time not selling papers, *Straatnieuws* offers small compensation for participating in the writing group and for getting something into print. Offering nine euros per published article has meant that writers work to get their work in print. “The competition to see the work in print means that the quality of writing by those in the group is increasing.” Future plans for this Dutch writing group include an anthology of their best writing.

Sweden

One section of Gothenberg’s gorgeously designed street magazine *Faktum* contains poems, short stories and photos by vendors. One vendor in particular, according to *Faktum*’s Emil Sernbo, writes a popular monthly opinion column and is starting to expand his writing skills more broadly as a journalist. “Many of the vendors have a lot to say, and their writing is very popular with our readers,” said *Faktum*’s Per Adolfsson.

Another popular project, according to Sernbo and Adolfsson, is distributing disposable cameras to vendors, so they can document a place, a story and idea, and writers can work with the staff journalists to create a story around the photo. *Faktum* also periodically hosts a panel of vendors to discuss a certain pressing social issue, and the magazine transcribes and prints their remarks. “We have a lot of great writing by those who sell our paper,” says Sernbo, “but we want more.”

Germany

In Stuttgart, vendors of *Trott-war* magazine have always been encouraged to write articles for the magazine and are paid when their work is published. Even so, according to Beatrice Gerst, “it was difficult to get vendors to use the magazine as their vehicle.” Thanks to a German-wide street-paper network, vendors across Germany began working together and agreed to create an issue of vendor writing across Germany. “*Trott-war* offered to help the vendors publishing the German-wide edition, and this project is really working well,” says Gerst. “Since they got themselves organized, they’re more into writing than ever before.”

The Ukraine

Space confines the possibilities for a fuller writing group in Odessa, as does the need for the paper vendors to make money. Still, Caroline Schlauffer from *The Way Home* is working to build a writing workshop and meets with vendors to discuss content and help them develop their articles. Future plans include inquiring to move the group to a local room in a church to make space for writers to work.

“We recently published the story of a homeless child. We worked closely with the writer to discuss editing, but finally it was published and had quite an impact.”

The United States

Seattle’s *Real Change News* believes that giving access to the writing of people living in poverty doesn’t mean compromising journalistic or artistic standards. “We publish the writing of a lot of poor people, but only if it’s of the highest quality,” says Tim Harris, executive director of *Real Change*. Such writing is not in short supply, according to Harris. “We

have one political writer, a real Christopher Hitchens type, and his writing is always provocative and thoughtful,” says Harris, “but in the magazine we don’t explicitly identify the writer as formerly homeless. We don’t think it’s a necessary detail.” Blurring the lines between included and excluded is one of the paper’s goals.

“We look for talent, and you can find it in unexpected places,” says Harris, “and part of the mission of *Real Change* is to track down exceptional writing and put it into the public realm.” The paper does this in several ways, including a workshop at the paper’s office as well as a free writing group in a local public library. “A lot of people who are without housing spend time in public libraries, and setting up a writing group there is a good way to interest them in writing without stigmatizing. We don’t ask and often don’t know which writers have places to stay and which ones don’t, unless they tell us,” says Harris.

In Boston, MA, at *Spare Change News*, I coordinate a weekly writing and art group for school-age children living at a local shelter. Twice a year, *Spare Change News* publishes a special issue called *Kids’ 2 Cents* that highlights the writing of the kids and includes journalistic articles written by college students who take part in facilitating the writing group, offering readers some background and context about the reasons why families in Boston often find themselves with no housing. In the April 29, 2004 *Kids’ 2 Cents* issue, Chris, age nine, writes, “I live in a shelter. . .where only poor people live when they can’t afford a place. What’s it like here? It’s kind of fun. . . .sometimes it’s not good. . . If you’re on the waiting list you can find a house. We’re on the waiting list but we don’t know when we’ll move.”

These writing groups—and still others in places like Buenos Aires, New York City, Montréal and Cape Town – attest to the fact that people living in poverty are not defined by their economic situations; despite material and emotional hardships, writers write despite all odds and often because of them, with an abiding need to share a perspective on history that is too often unheard.

Future plans for the INSP network include building outlets for street-paper writing groups to share their work broadly, through projects like joint publications and a Global Street News Service, which is currently under development. ♣

Writing, from page 9

hope that they are never non-committal but rather provocative; we want “not to report the news but to make news,” as Peter Maurin said.

We’ve heard from more than one reader, “My favorite part of the paper is the Letters page. I always read that first!” The letters come from many different places: from the academy and from the prison; from the seminary and from the street; from Atlanta and from New Zealand; from the homes of the poor and from wealthy neighborhoods. The letters praise us and scold us. They thank us for an article and they demand to be taken off the mailing list IMMEDIATELY! The letters help us know whether we’re doing our job. We love to hear the letters that say an article or issue was helpful or insightful; we are happy and humbled to hear that articles are used in sermons and classrooms; but if everybody loved what we wrote, we figure it must not be based on the truth, since the truth is often hard to take. The past year has been especially filled with controversy, especially around our criticism of our government policies of tax cuts for the rich and war on the poor, the war in Iraq and Afghanistan, our insistence on the rights and dignity of gay and lesbian people in church and society, and the personal and corporate greed that leaves the

poor out in the cold or caged in prison.

To paraphrase Dorothy Parker, “This (newspaper) should not be tossed aside lightly; it should be thrown with great force.”

It’s not very hard to be controversial in these days of the voluntary censorship of most of the American press. The “war on terror” has brought a new level of complicity from the reporters and establishment alike with “embedded” reporters trained with and by the military authorities and Washington’s insistence that the coffins of dead American soldiers not be shown in the press. And of course we are never told how many Iraqis or Afghans have died from our bombs. This contrasts, we are told, with the British press who regularly report the casualties of all sides. Every day 35,000 of the world’s children die of hunger and nutrition-related illness; thousands more die in war and unceasing violence. But you wouldn’t know it if the American mainline press is your source. We are fed a steady diet of News McNuggets and details about the sex lives of celebrities. If you watch the TV news, you would think that the streets are filled with dangerous criminals (“if it bleeds, it leads”), but all will be well if you buy a sexy car and treat your hemorrhoids, acne, or the heartbreak of psoriasis with the latest drug. Little or nothing is said about the real lives of more and more people in our country who are falling over the edge, people who cannot get the health care they need, or the millions of people who are working more and more for less and less while the millionaires and billionaires laugh all the way to the bank. Nor do they tell us much about the millions of people all over the world who are organizing to stand up against war, globalization, and oppression. Our mainline press asks very few of the pertinent questions, and this helps us to get used to not asking questions for ourselves.

The mainline press, it must be said, is a major contributor to the demise of critical thinking and the process and institutions of democracy in this country. And the mainline press assumes the power to declare consensus and to define individuals and groups of people. The press in Atlanta is often known to run stories or commentaries about the unsightly presence of the poor in the downtown area. The poor (and with poorly veiled references, especially Black men) are assumed to be the cause of many business and civic failures. Epithets like “vagrants,” “crackheads,” “aggressive panhandlers,” and “bums” are used without embarrassment or question. And certainly there is no public reflection to wonder about what happens to all of us when we are willing to silently witness the dehumanization and degradation of the people Jesus the Jew called “the little ones” among us.

And so we hope to at least offer to you, our readers, another angle. We make no claims to get it right all the time, but we do hope to send out a word from the bottom of the heap: a word about our life together that includes some perspective from the experience of the homeless poor, prisoners and those who sit on death row, the hungry, the abused, the addicted, the mentally ill, the forgotten and excluded. We also want to spread the news that there is a lively and energetic resistance against the power of war, death, and greed. And the movement is growing in this country and around the world.

And yes of course, we do have an ax to grind. We want to clarify our common vision as we write. We want to really believe (we believe, help Thou our unbelief!) that the God of Hope makes a preferential option for the poor. We want to believe, and we want you to believe, that Jesus Christ really *does* come to us in the disguise of the most unlovely, smelly, condemned, and forgotten people. We want to believe, and we want you to believe, that each of us and all of us together can make a difference by welcoming the Beloved Community, beating our swords into plowshares, and sharing our lives together.

Thank you for reading. ♣

Murphy Davis is a Partner at the Open Door Community.

Grace and Peaces of Mail

Best wishes to (you all) at the Open Door. Lee and I are “thrice blessed” with God, each other, and nearby children. So what could be better at 83?

Continued blessings on you and your ministry in Atlanta (and the world really). Stay on the firing line as long as you can. Victory is assured.

Gay Wilmore
Washington, D.C.

Dr. Gayraud Wilmore, retired from his teaching at the Interdenominational Theological Center in Atlanta, is the author of the classic, Black Religion and Black Radicalism: An Interpretation of the Religious History of African Americans and many other books and articles.



Dear Ed and Murphy,

Greetings to the Open Door Community. As a former member of the Open Door, I pledge my support.

I enjoyed the March 2004 article on “Connections” by Peter Gathje. He does good reflections.

In Christ’s Glory,
Andrew Bosier
New York, NY

Andrew Bosier was a community member at the Open Door in 1991-92.

Dear Dick and Gladys,

We are glad we were able to visit and see what you are doing. While visiting our grandchildren, I was able to finish *I Hear Hope Banging at My Back Door*. This is a potent little book! The writing is vivid, the critique devastating, and the theological and biblical support overwhelming. The local churches here all participate in the food pantries and hospitality networks which provide temporary housing in church facilities for people who have lost their housing and do not have enough income to get immediate housing on the open market. Social services works with them to find housing. I have always felt that, while the food pantries and hospitality networks are important in filling an immediate need, these are band-aids where major surgery is needed. Something must be done to solve the problems that make them necessary.

This two-pronged work of the Open Door Community impressed me greatly. This, of course, is the insight of the Second Great Revival: it is not enough to convert sinners; the society in which they live must be “converted” so they do not fall again. The articles “Housing Precedes Life” and “The American Dream Revisited” are especially powerful, and I will be passing the ideas on (with due credit of course). Now I will work on the other book. Also, I would appreciate having a copy of Peter Gathje’s paper presented at the American Academy of Religion “The Open Door Community of Atlanta: Radical Christianity in the Bible Belt.”

Paul and Yasuko Grosjean
Chatham, NJ

Paul and Yasuko Grosjean were classmates of Dick and Gladys Rustay at Drew Seminary.

Dear Friends of the Open Door,

You are celebrating life not death and destruction and, of all the greed and small-minded actions of our government, your actions tend toward healing and hope. I’m grateful for your long record of supporting constructive actions and acts of mercy.

My loyalty began with the Clifton Shelter in the 1970’s and stayed thru their transition. My interest in the Open Door began with Erskine and Nan Clarke’s daughter Legare (married to Chris Hartbarger, our son).

Your actions on behalf of political equality in Atlanta and its surrounds in Georgia are brave and Christ-like, and make me wish I were much younger.

We pray daily for you all. You inspire us.

Love in Christ,
Alice Hartbarger
Bridgeport, AL

To the Open Door Community,

Namaste, Peace, Shalom, thank you, thank you, thank you *prabhu; for giving me shelter from the cold cold helter skelter. Thank you for being—instruments—of the Lord’s peace, to those you have served of the least. From my heart of hearts, I just want to say, Namaste, have a very nice day.

Sincerely,
Forever now,
Gunnar
Atlanta, GA

Gunnar is a homeless woman who spent many winter nights with our “Room in the Inn.”

We read the Open Door paper and thought of you and are grateful for your devotion and commitment. We see John (Shattuck) and Ellen, and it is exciting to witness the changes in the Kennedy Library, as John has brought weekly forums on human rights and policy issues.

We hold you in the light, with love,
Noa (Hall) & Ike (Williams)
Cambridge, Massachusetts

News from Hebron

Dear Friends,

When I read the newspaper of the meeting of President Bush and Prime Minister Sharon, I thought of a story I first heard when I was a child, “The Emperor’s New Clothes.” Most know the story of the tailor who convinced the emperor that he was wearing fine new garments. In reality, he was wearing no clothes at all. No one would tell him the truth until, finally, a small boy yelled out that the emperor was only wearing his underwear.

There are no small boys to tell the truth to President Bush: that he is destroying the last hope that the U.S. has to be the so-called “honest broker” for peace in the Middle East. Regardless of International Law, he has decided that the only place Palestinian refugees may return is to a fragmented Palestinian state. None of the residents of the over 440 Palestinian villages, which were destroyed in 1948, will have the right to live with their Israeli neighbors.

And there is more. Bush has made it perfectly clear that Israel will be able to hold much of the territory it grabbed from the Palestinians in 1967. He refers to “the new realities on the ground, including already existing major Israeli population centers.” How can a nation seize another’s land, occupy it, build settlements on it, pay immigrants to populate it, and then have those actions justify keeping the land? This is like my taking your lawn mower, bringing in my son to mow your lawn, writing my name on your mower, and then saying that since I have invested so much

in your lawn mower and in your lawn, they are now mine! Bush has stated publicly that since Israel has held Palestinian land for so long and has settled Israeli folks on it, it doesn’t have to give it back.

I’ve had many conversations with Palestinian people who have said to me, “Please tell your President that we only want peace.” These are ordinary people trying to make a life for themselves and their families. They don’t know how inaccessible Mr. Bush is to me and to you. They don’t know that American politics is about power. They just want him to know. The people I talk to don’t approve of suicide bombers, but they do understand the bitter despair of their actions. They understand the need for people to have security but they do not understand how humiliating men and intimidating women at gunpoint at checkpoints helps provide that security. They do not pretend to understand all the nuances of international relations, but they see that my president seems not to see them or care about their suffering. They continue to say, “Please tell your president that we only want peace.” And so we will.

We live in a new hope. We are Easter People who will join with people all over who know that there are paths to follow to peace which do not depend on oppression or terror.

Joanne Lingle
Hebron, Palestine

Joanne Lingle, a former Resident Volunteer at the Open Door, is a member of the Christian Peacemaker Team in Hebron, Palestine.

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; Pastoral visits in various jails and prisons

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 for donations. (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 for 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 us at 404-246-7621.

In our June worship services (June 6, 13, 20, & 27) we will have preaching by Ed Loring, Lauren Cogswell, and Murphy Davis, and a Music Night.

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 June 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.

Medicine Needs List

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

We are also looking for volunteers to help staff our Soul Foot Care Clinic!

ibuprofen
lubriderm lotion
COUGH DROPS
non-drowsy allergy tablets
COUGH MEDICINE (alcohol free)

FOOT CLINIC NEEDS
epsom salt
anti-bacterial soap
shoe inserts
corn removal pads
exfoliation cream (e.g. apricot scrub)
pumice stones
foot spa
cuticle clippers
latex gloves
nail files (large)
toenail clippers (large)
medicated foot powder
antifungal cream (Tolfanate)

Needs of the Community

JEANS

men's work shirts
underwear for men
women's underwear
men's belts
socks

men's shoes (all sizes)

EYEGLASSES

BLANKETS

WALKING SHOES for men and women (especially 9 1/2 and up)

LARGE and X-LARGE T-SHIRTS

hams and turkeys for our Soup Kitchen

sandwiches
quick grits
cheese
coffee

multi-vitamins

MARTA tokens

postage stamps

MINIVAN IN GOOD RUNNING CONDITION

two mountain bikes for Dayspring Farm

2-drawer file cabinet

disposable razors

deodorant
vaseline
combs

toothbrushes

lip balm

SOAP (any size)

SHAMPOO (travel size)

alarm clocks

REFRIGERATOR

stainless steel pots and pans

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!