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910 Ponce de Leon Ave. NE, Atlanta, GA 30306-4212, 404-874-9652, www.opendoorcommunity.org

November-December 2003

“Pray Militantly, My Friends!”

Communal Prayer as a Call to Action

By Heather Bargeron

(Editor's note: Heather Bargeron, a Resident Volunteer at the Open Door Community, delivered the following sermon at worship on September 28, 2003, just a few days after the conclusion of the Festival of Shelters)

Are any among you in trouble? They should pray. Are any among you happy? They should sing praises. Are any among you sick? They should send for the church elders, who will pray for them and rub olive oil on them in the name of the Lord. This prayer made in faith will heal the sick; the Lord will restore them to health, and the sins they have committed will be forgiven. So then, confess your sins to one another, so that you will be healed. The prayer of a good person has a powerful effect...My friends, if any of you wander away from the truth and another one brings you back again, remember this: whoever turns a sinner back from the wrong way will save that sinner's soul from death and bring about the forgiveness of many sins. (James 5:13-16, 19-20, Good News Bible)

Prayer is a touchy issue for me. I have a long and difficult history with it, and I used to shy away from books and passages, biblical or otherwise, that focused on prayer. I catch a lot of flak from some folks in this community about the more conventional, some might say fundamentalist, beginnings of my faith journey. Then again, there are probably also some juicy rumors among folks in my hometown about how Heather Bargeron has fallen off the deep end and turned into a card-carrying, peacemaking radical. But that's another story.

Anyway, I remember when I first began to call myself a Christian at the age of 14, and I participated in regular group bible studies, and we “babes in the faith” were encouraged to develop a discipline of personal prayer and bible study as a part of our new walk with Jesus. Great! I was excited about everything else that this new journey had offered me so far, the singing, the rousing sermons, the warm fuzzies I got out of our small group meetings. I ran out and bought a book called *My First Thirty Quiet Times* that was recommended by my youth leader. I don't think I made it through my first

five. I just couldn't really get interested in developing an individual prayer life, and most of the time I didn't really see the need for regular prayer. Sure, I experienced times of trial and pain, and I certainly remember very powerful moments of God's presence in my life. But I believe now that as a white middle-class kid growing up in the suburbs, I simply was not in the right location to experience God's intervention on earth nor to see a real need for prayer on a regular basis for myself or for anybody in my immediate surroundings. That is why James' words are important for me today.

Which brings us to the reading. Let's first talk about the audience to whom James is writing to give us some background. Well, it's not altogether clear. In the beginning of this letter, James greets “all of God's people scattered over the whole world”...well, that narrows it down! He could be writing, as Peter did in his first letter, to believers who were being persecuted for their faith and were scattered in exile outside of Palestine. But some scholars think that this James (there are a few Jameses named in the New Testament) could have been the brother of Jesus and therefore a leader in the Jerusalem-based church. In which case, he may have been writing to Jewish Christians in other regions under the influence of the Jerusalem church, but scattered from the center.

In any case, one thing is clear. Some of those receiving this letter are outside the power center – possibly pushed from one place to another, transitory, rootless... homeless. They do *not* look like their neighbors, and as outsiders, they are most likely oppressed. James greets them in this letter with a message of encouragement and tells them to trust with an unwavering faith that God gives generously and uplifts the poor. He tells them to be patient in their suffering and keep their hopes high, for the day of the Lord's coming is near. Elsa Tamez, a Latin American liberation

theologian, says that one of the Greek terms that James uses, *makrothymia*, which is translated as “patience” here, is by no means a passive or submissive waiting. *Makrothymia* was a military term to be understood in this context as holding out in the face of life's battles. Tamez says that the message to the poor and marginalized of this community is one of *militant* patience. In other words, do not despair, and be alert, because the promise of God's reign on earth is not long off.

But if we look at other parts of the letter, we see that there are some rich folk who have joined the community to whom James is writing, too. He admonishes the rich for making themselves fat by their exploitation of the poor who work in their fields. He also warns the community against honoring rich folks more than poor based on their fancy clothes and jewelry. The phenomenon of the rich becoming part of the church community was likely a new one in James' time and created a new problem in the community: that of double-mindedness. As Jesus tells

Pray, continued on page 9



IRVING AMEN

We served 300 gallons of soup to all God's children at this year's Festival of Shelters. This was no “pathetic picnic.”

(For complete coverage of our Festival of Shelters with the homeless and actions in Woodruff Park, see pages 4-7.)

JUSTICIA PARA EL PUEBLO DE LAS AMERICAS – Nov. 21-23, 2003

Please copy and distribute this letter

JUSTICE FOR THE PEOPLE OF THE AMERICAS!

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U.S. policy in Latin America has but one purpose: to consolidate wealth and power for the corporate elite. The School of the Americas/WHISC trains the military muscle to enforce that policy. SOA graduates are linked to almost every major human rights violation in Latin America since the school's inception over 50 years ago. SOA graduates continue to cause suffering throughout Latin America.

There can be no healing and reconciliation without truth, an apology and reparations to the thousands who suffered from SOA violence and oppressive U.S. foreign policy. **We will gather at the gates of Fort Benning and demand justice** for the martyrs and for the thousands, who continue to suffer the brutal consequences of the combat training at the SOA/WHISC.

More and more people throughout the Hemisphere are standing up and demanding justice – no more murder in our name! The SOA/WHISC has to close its doors for good and oppressive U.S. foreign policy needs to change.



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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: Food Coordinator and Hardwick Prison Trip

Gladys Rustay: Jackson Prison Trip and Food Coordinator

Ed Loring: Street Preacher and Word On The Street Host, Resident Volunteer Coordinator

Murphy Davis: Southern Prison Ministry, Worship and Music Coordinator

Dick Rustay and Chuck Harris: Dayspring Farm Coordinators



MURPHY DAVIS

Newspaper

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Open Door Community

910 Ponce de Leon Ave NE

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The Fabric of Democracy, Snagged

By Joyce and Jim Parkhurst

(Editor's note: On September 4, 2003, six members of the Open Door Community were privileged to be present for the sentencing hearing for our friends, Los Angeles Catholic Workers Joyce and Jim Parkhurst. Joyce and Jim received criminal charges on two separate occasions for refusing to move while praying in front of the Los Angeles Federal Building. They were given fines totaling \$3500 and supervised probation of three years each. What follows is their pre-sentencing statements.)

JIM PARKHURST:

I want to explain from my perspective what I did and why I did it, starting with why.

The crimes committed by the Bush Administration since our protest six months ago are obvious to anyone willing to see, and, like Sept. 11, they should never be forgotten. It seems clear that the unprecedented arrogance of a small, unelected cadre in Washington, who believe they know what's best for the world, and who are virtually unrestrained in exercising the awesome power at their disposal to enforce these beliefs, has caused the deaths of thousands of innocent Iraqis, hundreds of American soldiers, and untold numbers of Iraqi soldiers. The Iraqi infrastructure has been destroyed; the people condemned to suffering, occupation and chaos; international law and the U.S. constitution violated; the U.S. economy and economic hope for the poor seriously damaged; the likelihood of terrorism and nuclear armageddon increased; and much of the world placed in a state of anxiety about who will be next. Washington has assumed the right to imprison virtually anyone they choose with no charges filed, no access to legal counsel and no public awareness as to their treatment. The American people have been lied to, bombarded with propaganda and manipulated with fear tactics to convince them that the program of this small, unelected cadre in Washington is necessary to preserve our American way of life. Serious crimes have been committed and the perpetrators, rather than being brought before a court of law – with impunity, declare themselves heroes and liberators.

I have been what most people would consider a good citizen of this country for over 50 years, having served in the military, worked on highly classified government programs, and voted religiously and paid taxes. Over the years I've come to recognize the senseless death, misery, and waste of war. When I look at my country today, I ask myself, how could this have happened? I got a clue to the answer recently watching the old movie *Judgement at Nuremberg*. It seems the German people in the 1930's were convinced by lies, propaganda and fear tactics that the Nazi program was necessary to preserve their way of life; the courts turned a blind eye to the atrocities being committed and simply upheld the laws, as unjust as they were; and the small cadre of Nazi leaders lost



Joyce and Jim Parkhurst of the Los Angeles Catholic Worker.

(and I believe legal) actions presented a threat to national security. It begs the question: where are we, as a nation, headed? Over and over we have heard it said how fortunate we are to have the right to demonstrate against our government. But when the law sees an action (walking on the steps of the Federal Building) that is perfectly legal at other times, as illegal when performed as part of a protest, one has to wonder if we have any rights of free speech or free assembly.

Logic would tell us that a right which is punished when exercised is no right at all.

JOYCE PARKHURST:

Three weeks before the United States government invaded the defenseless and ruined country of Iraq, I went to the federal building to add my voice to the worldwide outcry against the proposed holocaust to come. On the day the bombs began to fall I again went to this representative place to weep and mourn for the innocent civilians. As of the latest published report, nearly 38,000 civilians have been murdered by the United States, over 6,000 in Baghdad alone.

In both cases, and I want to be very clear about this, I stood out of the way of anyone approaching the doorways or exiting lines of people. I did not attempt to enter the building. I did not block the doorway. I did not threaten any of the guards or any persons. No one's personal safety was endangered in any way. In a picture taken of our protest, a woman is even sitting at our feet eating her lunch. We were engaged in a peaceful, non-violent protest.

I have been back to the federal building at other times since my arrest and have counted

contact with the core of our humanity: the idea that all life is precious – all life, German or Jew – all life, American or Iraqi.

When we walked on the steps of the Federal Building to pray for the Iraqi people, the soldiers about to be sent to kill them and those sending them, we were challenged by a significant group of armed federal officers as though our nonviolent

at least fifteen persons sitting or standing where I was arrested, and they were not being asked to leave. There was no reason to have asked me to leave except to suppress and silence my protest. It seems that I was very naive in believing the oft-mouthed but seldom honored words, "I don't agree with you, but I will defend your right to freedom of speech."

Why are the president and his advisors who have plotted and carried out their pogrom of terror, murder and genocide been allowed to continue plotting further crimes against the world with renewed plans for nuclear warfare? Why are the prosecutors and judges silent? Why am I arrested and in court when I stand for life and peace, and they are advocates of death and destruction?

This case does not appear to be of much import I'm sure, but Judge Lum, your sentence is one more snag, one more broken thread in the already worn fabric of our American democracy, and it will wear, it will wear. I repeat the line my husband spoke: "A right that is punished when exercised is no right at all. ♦

poetry corner



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

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

Migrant Christmas

By Helen Meserve Bayliss

Christmas this year
Is little Joe born at asparagus time,
Being Christ in the crèche,
And Ephraim tugging his pups by the tail;
The shouts and whacks and rush
As piñata shatters the candy crowd.

But Christmas, too,
Is Juana and bright José,
Their father killed in a truck up north,
It is Licha with crusty eyes
Using a butcher knife to open a sardine can,
And Lupe hobbling along on his cane.

It is Cruz with his stomach that hangs like a sack,
Pedro knowing his grandson dead,
And Beta without any hair on her head.
Christmas is both a star and a cross,
A block print with lines of sorrow scooped out
To heighten the message of a Savior ignored. ♦

The Poetry Corner extends a warm thank you to Helen Meserve Bayliss of Bandera, TX, for sharing this poem that she wrote during her years of ministry with migrant workers.

Lessons from Los Angeles

Pray That We Never Get Used To This

By Diana George

If you must, you can; and, if you can, you must.
-Father Daniel Berrigan, S.J.

I've been living at The Open Door Community for three months now, and things are starting to fall into a routine. On Mondays and Tuesdays, I'm up at 5:00. By 5:50 I'm downstairs helping to finish breakfast set-up. By 7:15, I'm probably in the sorting room handing out a change of t-shirt, aspirin, anti-diarrreal medication, soap, razor, socks, shampoo, caps. I hear sounds of breakfast from the dining room as 130-150 men and women from the streets sit down to eat eggs, turkey sausage, hot grits, and fresh oranges.

Later in the morning as I head out for a walk, I pass people I've seen come through the sorting room. I greet them; sometimes we talk for a bit. Mostly, we just nod, exchange a quick "Hi, there" and go on.

I've gotten used to it. Used to seeing a crowd of people, dirty and bleary-eyed from sleeping on the streets, wait in our front yard for the meal line to begin. I've learned names and faces and I recognize folks from the way they walk or the hat they wear or the cart they push down the sidewalk.

It's just a normal day to answer questions about when we'll be offering showers or whether the foot clinic will be going on Thursday.

It's all in the routine.

Then, this September, six of us from The Open Door - Murphy Davis, Ed Loring, Dick and Gladys Rustay, Chuck Harris, and I - traveled to the Los Angeles Catholic Worker Fall Retreat. Just about the first thing several of us did was volunteer to help with their Wednesday soup line on L.A.'s Skid Row. After the Eucharist, Chuck, Gladys, Dick, and I piled into a van with Mike Wisniewski and went off to what they call their "Hippie Kitchen."

I'm used to feeding people in the streets these days. East Coast, West Coast, South, Midwest . . . what does it matter? Hunger is hunger anywhere, right?

Well, yes. That's partially right. Hunger is hunger wherever you go. But there, in the dark of L.A.'s Skid Row, I realized how bad it is to get used to it.

We pulled up in the van and set up a makeshift soup line, using plastic crates for the soup pot, bread bowl, and water. In the dark of the streets, people came to the van and lined up automatically. They got a bowl of black-eyed peas from Mike, bread from Gladys, water from Chuck. I stood at the end of the line with Dick and Marcus, a volunteer from the L.A. house. We offered salt and pepper and hot sauce. Men and women and small children walked through the line.

I don't know how many people we fed that night. We just kept feeding people until the pot looked about empty and we didn't see any new faces coming up to the van. Then, as we started to pack up our gear and head back to the Hippie Kitchen, a family with two small children came running up to us, out of breath, and calling, "Are we too late?"

Mike didn't even hesitate. He reached back into the van, scraped enough beans from the bottom of the pot to fill four small bowls, and gave them what

was left. It was pitifully little though the parents were grateful. Their children looked hungry and embarrassed.

I am not used to this, and I pray I never get used to it.

On our retreat, Dan Berrigan told stories that, he insisted, were stories of hope. From the book of Jeremiah, he reminded us of the story of Jeremiah and Baruch and the burning of the scroll of prophecy. This was, Dan said, the first recorded book burning.

As each prophecy was read, the king cut the scroll and placed it into the fire. He burned the words he did not want to hear. But, of course, Jeremiah simply had Baruch write it all again. And, this time, when Baruch wrote the story, he included the story of the king burning that first scroll. And, we now still have the prophecies and we still have the story of the "book burning," while the king is long in his grave, his power lost.

This, then, is our story of hope: When we work with and for homeless men, women, and children throughout this country, we must tell the story and we must tell the story of how those in power try to keep the story from being told.

In Atlanta today, Central Atlanta Progress, the Downtown Neighborhood Association, the Mayor's office, and others in power do not want to hear the story. They believe that if they can move hungry and



MIKE WISNIEWSKI

In September, members of The Open Door traveled to Los Angeles to attend the annual L.A. Catholic Worker Retreat led by Father Daniel Berrigan, S.J., pictured here seated second row, center between L.A. Catholic Worker members Jeff Dietrich and Catherine Morris. Members of the Open Door Community - Ed Loring, Murphy Davis, Dick and Gladys Rustay, Chuck Harris, and Diana George - are here among Catholic Workers from several houses in California, Mexico, and Philadelphia.

homeless people out of their sight, they will be able to forget the truth. They'll be able to go back to business as usual. It is our job to make sure that the truth cannot be forgotten. We must tell the story, and when that story is rejected, we must tell it again and tell the story of how it was rejected.

On the first day of this year's Festival of Shelters, one reporter commented that there was "no story here" because he saw no conflict. It is true that there was no real confrontation between The Open Door Community and police or city officials. It is true

Lessons, continued on page 9

A Different Kind of Heroism

By Chuck Harris

This spring, the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* carried a front page headline about a baseball player's game-winning home run. Page one likes stories of sports stars, entertainers, and soldiers or of politicians acting like sports stars, entertainers, or soldiers. That's why White House PR folks stage or partially stage shots like Bush landing a jet on an aircraft carrier or soldiers rescuing a prisoner from an Iraqi hospital.

Most heroes are selected for their entertainment potential-their ability to distract us and minimize public discussions of real issues like war, health care, and poverty. Today's heroes, more often than not, are used to sell products or beef up support for the status quo. If you don't end up on a Wheaties box, what's the point of it all? At least, that is how heroes seemed to me

when I was growing up.

Then, in about 1968, I discovered a different kind of hero when Dan and Phil Berrigan made front page headlines across the nation. They didn't win the big game or star in a blockbuster movie or storm enemy lines. Instead, they entered a selective service office in Catonsville, Maryland, removed draft files, dumped them on the sidewalk outside, and burned them with homemade napalm.

So I felt fortunate this September to be part of a group from The Open Door at the Los Angeles Catholic Worker retreat led by Dan Berrigan. From a lifetime of study and activism, he urged the group to raise up those who restore the human community.

Imagine what that might mean. What would this world be if we honored a different kind of hero? Those who stand up for justice and

Heroism, continued on page 10

A Season for Self-Examination

By Joe Beasley

On September 25, 2003, an article by Milo Ippolito entitled "The Park's Lunch Bunch" appeared in the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*. On the same day, I received a copy of a letter from Rabbi Michael Lerner, who leads the Breyt Tikkun Congregation in San Francisco, which states that America badly needs 10 days of reflection and repentance. The Jewish New Year began on September 26 and will end on October 6th. During those 10 days, our Jewish friends will use the time as a season of self-examination, both as individuals and as a society. He lists eight sins of America for which we should repent.

On that same day, the Open Door Community began a three-day celebration of the Festival of Shelters. The Festival of Shelters is an Old Testament celebration that commemorates God's instruction to Moses and the Israelites. It is a joyful harvest festival and a time of remembrance. After the Exodus from Egypt, God commanded the people to "live in booths seven days; all citizens of the land shall live in booths . . ." (Leviticus 23:42)

The Festival is meant to remind all of God's people, especially those who celebrate a prosperous harvest, that we were once homeless wanderers. God provided for us in our thirst and hunger, and, remembering, we are led to do the same for the poor and homeless of our day. The Open Door has held this celebration in Woodruff Park for well over 20 years. However, this year, the corporate and political leaders sought to shut them down rather than join in the celebration.

Rabbi Lerner said that we, as Americans, should repent because we are: 1) "enjoying the benefits of living in the richest country on the earth while refusing to share what we have with the 2 billion people on the planet who live on less than \$2 a day, many of whom will die from diseases directly related to malnutrition and poverty;" 2) "failing to share our wealth with those who are impoverished and denying healthcare, education, employment, housing and other needed social goods to the poor, while further enriching the rich."

According to "The Park's Lunch Bunch," Mayor Franklin's position is that "...it [Woodruff Park] is not the best place and does not allow us to

provide services, in this case, meals, in a dignified way." The Mayor goes on to state that "...at least a dozen indoor locations serve food within walking distance." I called the Chief of Staff at the Mayor's Office and he could not identify those locations!

Since Georgia State University is a major player in the removal of the poor from downtown, I called President Patton's office to inquire as to the availability of the school cafeteria as this dignified location to which the mayor alluded to feed the homeless. I, then, called Governor Purdue's office and requested that a line item in the State's budget be set aside for the meals provided to the homeless at the "dignified" Georgia State University location.

Homelessness cannot be solved by the City of Atlanta nor the State of Georgia. It is a national problem with international dimensions. If President Bush can allocate \$87 billion for Iraq, surely, he can allocate \$20 billion that would end hunger and homelessness in America.

Let's accept Rabbi Lerner's suggestion and begin a 10-day period of reflection and repentance.

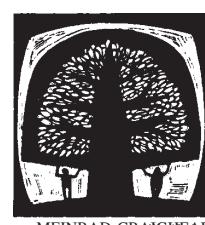


DIANA GEORGE

Longtime friends gathered to celebrate the Festival of Shelters. From left to right: Ed Loring, Charlotta Norby, Steve Bright, Joe Beasley, Donna Moore, Billy Moore, and Murphy Davis.

This time, next year, I trust that all city leaders will join Ed Loring, Murphy Davis, and the Open Door Community in celebrating the Festival of Shelters in the People's space: Woodruff Park. ♦

Our longtime friend and co-worker, Joe Beasley, is chair of Concerned Black Clergy's Political Action Committee and local chair of the Rainbow-PUSH Coalition.



Connections

Zdenek Rossman

Mossaka, Congo-Brazzaville

(Editor's note: Zdenek Rossman of the Czech Republic was a Resident Volunteer at the Open Door in 1993-94.)

I send you many greetings. I think very often about you and the Open Door Community.

My future is quite clear at the moment. In two days I'll leave Europe for a six-month mission in Congo-Brazzaville. Do you remember, Ed, writing a recommendation letter for me last fall? I passed a public completion for the post of doctor in Doctors Without Borders, and I was finally and surprisingly accepted (surely also thanks to your letter!). After that, I went for a short course to Germany, and in the beginning of July, they offered me a job in a mission in Congo.

I will work in the center for treatment of sleeping sickness. The sleeping sickness (human African trypanosomiasis) is a huge problem in Equatorial Africa and so far there have not been very good medications available. But now there is a new medication called Eflornithine that beats the sleeping sickness quite well, so many projects have now started in Africa to deliver it to the right places and to treat people who need it. I will work in a small town called Mossaka, which lies on the bank of the Congo River, about 600 kilometers northeast from the capital Brazzaville.

Our team of seven volunteers (I will be the only doctor, then two nurses and the rest will be logisticians) will live in one house, each of us will have our own room, and we will have our own cook and car driver. We will probably have a very high social status there. I think we will be able to do lots of good. We will travel through the whole region, which will be quite demanding because most of the transportation there is done by boats and canoes. We will actively seek the people with sleeping sickness and we will carry them to our hospital and treat them. We hoped that Zorka would be able to go with me, but they didn't find a job for her in MSP. Maybe she could come and visit me, but this would cost us a huge amount of money. After three months, I will have a one-week break when I will be allowed to travel out of Congo. My dream is to visit Lambarene in Gabon, a neighboring state, a place where Albert Schweitzer worked and is buried. Lambarene is only about 500 kilometers away from Mossaka – "my town."

Please keep me in your prayers. I am not very well trained in tropical medicine and my French is quite poor (nobody speaks English there, only French as Congo is a former French colony.) I will think of you very often, too – I know that without my experience at the Open Door, I would probably never have become a doctor and I would never have joined a medical mission to Congo. ♦

As we head into winter and the holidays, the Open Door Community especially needs:



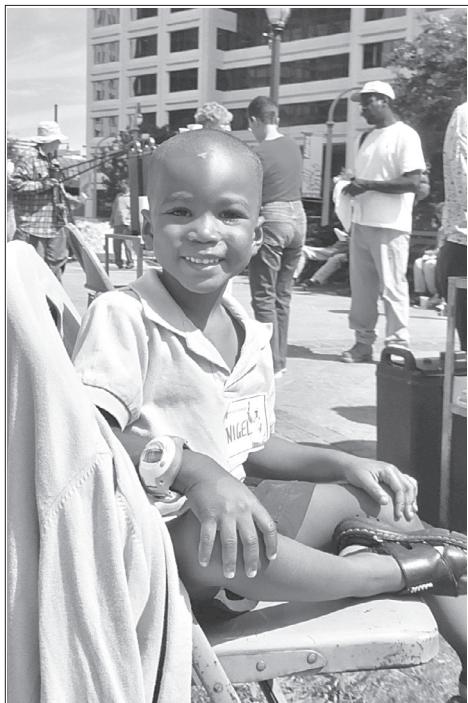
turkeys and hams
(especially for our short-order breakfast in honor of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.)

**warm coats
sweaters
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t-shirts (XL and XXL)
hats
shoes
blankets**

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

The Festival of Shelters

Woodruff Park Hosts Ancient Celebration



DIANA GEORGE

Above: Nigel came to help his mama serve soup.



DIANA GEORGE

Above: Chad Hyatt sings and preaches from the gazebo at Woodruff Park, where folks gathered to hear more about the Festival of Shelters.

The Festival of Shelters is an ancient Jewish harvest festival that calls the people of faith to leave our beds and our homes and make temporary shelters. We do this to remember that we were once slaves in Egypt and we were once homeless wanderers. We do this to remind ourselves that all that we have is a gift from God, to be shared among all God's children.

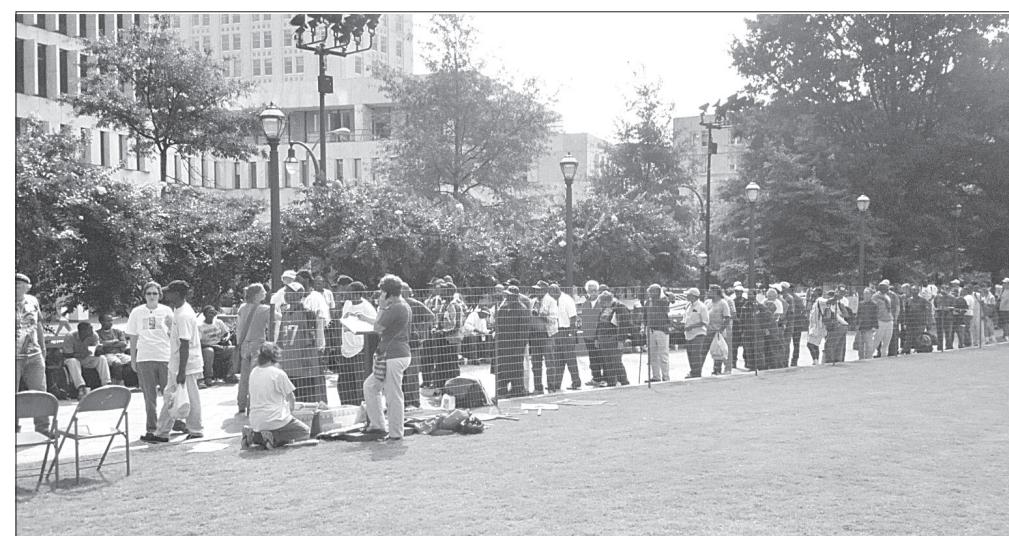
Each day of the Festival, we prayed together as follows (from *Gates of Prayer: The New Union Prayerbook*, Central Conference of American Rabbis):

Leader: In ancient times, after the year's final harvest, our people made the hard journey to Jerusalem to offer thanks for the blessing of fruit and grain, and to share the harvest with the poor and needy, as they had been commanded.

People: We too are commanded: the rich must give to the poor, the strong help the weak, and all live together in peace. And we have learned: not charity, but justice, is demanded of us. We must so order society that all people may earn their daily bread with dignity.

Leader: Help us, O God, to understand the needs of others, and give us the will to help them. Put within us that spirit of sympathy and friendship which is a reflection of your love. May this holy day renew our will to build a world in which the plea of the prophets will be fulfilled:

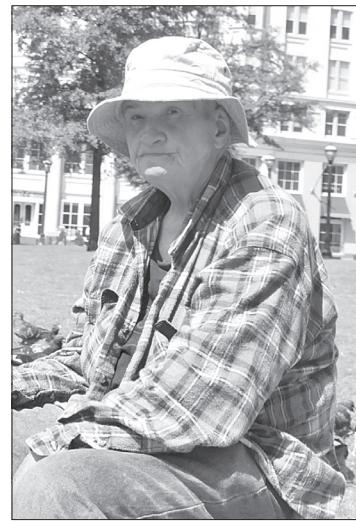
All: *"Let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an everlasting stream. Then with joy shall we draw water from the wells of our salvation."*



DIANA GEORGE

Left: Heather Bargeron and others ready the line to begin serving the feast on the first day of the Festival.

Below: Friends came from all over the city to join the festivities.



DIANA GEORGE



DIANA GEORGE

Above: Gladys Rustay swaps stories with Hook, a former volunteer cook at The Open Door.



DIANA GEORGE

Above: Mike Casey and a line of guests listen as Murphy Davis makes a call to the Mayor's office. Somehow, the Mayor's staff couldn't locate those "dozen places within walking distance" of Woodruff Park where homeless people can go to eat inside.



MURPHY DAVIS

Above: Resident Volunteer Julie Cook serves soup as one of our youngest guests reaches out.



DIANA GEORGE

Above: Folks came together to enjoy good food and good friends.



DIANA GEORGE

Above: Open Door Resident Volunteer Chuck Harris greets guests as they come to the front of the line.

Compassion, Not Conflict

By Anthony Eunice

Does the city of Atlanta have a desire to work with the homeless?

The corporate offices downtown can be a resource. This resource doesn't have to be money. The greatest resource of all is the compassion of people.

Jesus showed compassion to the afflicted, as we read in Matthew, Mark, and Luke. As Christians, we learn that Jesus took the time to listen to people's individual problems – and then he healed them.

When the city-elect create laws that discriminate against the homeless, such as banning sleeping and the giving of food in city parks, that is a hateful act.

When the city uses its authority to harass homeless people, such as telling them to move from public parks because they appear to be homeless, that is a hateful act.

When the newspaper incites hate, it causes division and creates conflict among citizens and business groups. ♦

Anthony Eunice, formerly homeless, is a resident of the Open Door Community.

Pray, continued from page 1

us, and as we witness today in our city and throughout the nation, it is impossible to serve both money and God. Or as James puts it, "Don't you know that to be the world's friend means to be God's enemy?" We cannot both pray that we may be given all that we want so all of our pleasures are satisfied until our belt buckles are busting, and at the same time pray that God would lift up the lowly and feed the hungry.

Or to bring this closer to home, we can't tear down public housing to build condos and parking decks, arrest people for eating, sleeping, and peeing in public places and then pray for God to help these "vagrants" and "aggressive panhandlers" who have strayed from the straight and narrow path. "Wash your hands, you sinners! Purify your hearts, you hypocrites! Be sorrowful, cry and weep!" James tells the rich of this community. God cannot draw near to you until you have repented, given up the life of corruption that has made you rich, and begun to live a life of single-mindedness and integrity.

So here we've got this complicated community of believers, both rich and poor, both "inside the system" and "outside the system," both housed and homeless, both showered and dirty, both fat and hungry. Sound familiar? Look around, folks. James' message is a message for us today. As our friend, Ched Myers says, there is one story, then and now. And so what are we to do? We who find ourselves right now in this room where the lines are so clear, where we cannot avoid the faces of those who have been "other" to us, where our sins of surplus and famine are staring us in the face. What are we to do?

James tells us there is one thing we can do: pray. We are to pray no matter where we find ourselves, whether we are in trouble, sick and suffering from oppression, or happy and full of hope and courage. We are to pray, and we are to pray *together*.

While the rich of the church are certainly given some hefty tongue lashings in James' letter, he doesn't tell them to leave the community. They are called to hear the cries of those they have oppressed (the cries that God has already heard), to mourn and weep for the damage they have done, and to humble themselves. And then, the *whole* community, rich and poor, is called to pray for the suffering – which implies all forms of oppression: physical illness, emotional trauma, or economic oppression imposed by those in power. Again, James raises his call for single-mindedness, this time a call to the church to be single-minded in their care for one another. Pray and sing and confess your sins together that the community may be one before God!

But it can't be that easy, and it isn't. Particularly those of us who live in this diverse community can attest to the fact that praying and singing together does not, on its own, a unified community make. No matter how many times we sing "Just a Closer Walk with Thee" together, it won't make me love the humble work of cleaning the public bathroom, nor will it make Ronald Williams love teaching me to do it! On a more personal and often more painful level, it also doesn't mean that when I have to tell a homeless, African-American person that they can't eat here today because they didn't get a ticket, that they won't see in me every white person who has ever told them, "No, you're not welcome here." Prayer does not erase our history or the boundaries that have been so carefully ingrained in our psyche and our social systems.

But this is why understanding James' call to prayer is so important. He says that a prayer made in



By Tonnie King

Knock, knock. Who's there? It's November, and the holidays are upon us! Hello to all. We are approaching a special time of the year that makes all of us here in the community very grateful for our lives and our friends. We are especially thankful for our friends Mark Walker, Chad Hyatt, and James Kimbrough, who are members of the loving congregation of the Cathedral of the Holy Spirit. Mark and Chad are associate pastors who are driven by compassion.

Chad is a real hands-on pastor and has been successful at getting many in his congregation involved in the life of the community. Mark, Chad, and James, along with many others, are faithful volunteers, not only at the Tuesday morning breakfast, but also at our large holiday meals. We continue to be grateful for the people that our God sends to help care for those who are forgotten, oppressed, and too often just plain left out. Thank you, Mark, Chad, and James. ♦

Tonnie King is a Partner at the Open Door Community.

faith will heal the sick; restoring them to health and forgiving them of their sins. His call to prayer is a call to action. Remember that for James, faith is dead if it is not rooted in works, in the way we live our lives. It's that single-mindedness thing again. We pray *in faith* to be healed and redeemed in order that we may work simultaneously for healing and redemption in our relationships with one another. Walter Wink says in his book, *The Powers That Be*, that those who pray do so "because the struggle to be human in the face of suprahuman Powers requires it...Prayer is the field hospital in which the spiritual diseases that we have contracted from the Powers can be diagnosed and treated" (Wink 181-82). If we truly wish to live lives of integrity as individuals and as a community, if we truly wish for God's justice and peace to reign in our hearts and in our community, we must *pray* for God's healing power to enter our lives and weed out the diseases of fear, selfish ambition and greed that so often contaminate our actions. And if we truly pray for God's transformation in our hearts and community, we must *work* daily for God's way of justice and

Pray, continued on page 10

Lessons, continued from page 4

that there were no fights or serious attempts to move us out of the park. It is true that there were no arrests. But no conflict?

Here is the story of conflict: In Woodruff Park, a relatively small patch of grass and sidewalk encircled by banks and condos and busy restaurants and a state university, hundreds of men and women lined up to get a cup of soup, a sandwich, and a drink of tea or water. They stood in line while volunteers handed them food and utensils and welcomed them to join us in celebrating our humanity. They stood in line while the businesses that surround Woodruff Park went about their daily work. They stood in line as testimony to the truth: In tremendous wealth there abides tremendous poverty.

That is the story. We must tell it. And, "if we must, we can." ♦

Diana George, Professor of Humanities at Michigan Technological University, is a Resident Volunteer at the Open Door Community.

Welcome to the Spotlight

Mark Walker, Chad Hyatt, and James Kimbrough



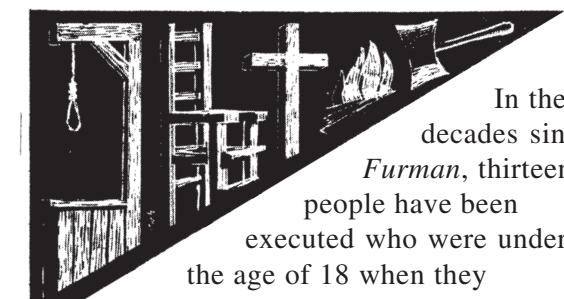
TONNIE KING

Mark Walker, Chad Hyatt, and James Kimbrough, of the Cathedral of the Holy Spirit.

people that our God sends to help care for those who are forgotten, oppressed, and too often just plain left out. Thank you, Mark, Chad, and James. ♦

Reason #5 to Oppose the Death Penalty

The Death Penalty is Cruel and Unusual Punishment



In the decades since Furman, thirteen people have been executed who were under the age of 18 when they committed the crime of which they were convicted. Seventy more juveniles are currently on death row awaiting execution.

Since Furman, 34 mentally retarded inmates have been executed.

Ricky Ray Rector died in order to help Bill Clinton get elected President. Rick was black and mentally retarded. In 1992, Clinton left the campaign trail and returned to Arkansas to oversee Ricky's execution, so that he could show he was "tough on crime."

Ricky had absolutely no understanding of what was about to happen to him. As part of his last meal, he requested pie for dessert, but explained he would eat it when he came back to his cell. He was executed on January 24, 1992.

Heard enough? Join the movement to abolish the death penalty! Above text reprinted from Campaign to End the Death Penalty, www.nodeathpenalty.org.

Pray, continued from page 9

peace. The two are inseparable in James' eyes.

Perhaps the only place we can see the action or effectiveness of our prayer is in a community of diversity where we stumble daily on our differences and the suffering that is within us and all around us, and yet where we are "single-minded" in our vision of the Beloved Community. On Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday of this week we celebrated the Festival of Shelters in Woodruff Park, a space that is highly contested in these days, a space where we see, smell, and hear (as much as Central Atlanta Progress would like for us not to) the oppression, the rising tension, and the slow death of our homeless friends strewn along park benches.

Each day before we departed for the park, we circled and prayed as a community to enter that space accompanied by the Spirit of welcome, the Spirit of abundant life, the Spirit of the bottomless soup pot! In the midst of hunger, greed, sorrow, rage, and violence, we lived our prayers by witnessing to the coming of God's reign on earth, here and now. "We will *not* stop serving soup until you ain't asking for soup! We will *not* take away the iced tea until your eyeballs are floatin'! We will *not* stop lying down on benches until *every* person has a bed to lie down in! We will *not* stop making noise until *every* person in Atlanta has a place to call home!"

We do not pray out of some vague hope that some day God will heal this messed up world while we sit back and watch in amazement. We are called to *live* our prayers and to pray for our lives. These prayers made in faith, made in action, James promises us, are what will heal us and redeem us from the sins we have committed against one another.

There is much pain in living in a diverse community where our own sin and need for prayer are so easily exposed. It hurts to have our wrongs laid plainly in front of us. It's painful to find that the very demons that we are praying and working to transform in Woodruff Park, in the city of Atlanta, in the United States and the world are found within our own hearts. You see, James' call doesn't just require us to pray for and live out God's transformation of the community and the world. We must start with ourselves. He says, "Confess your sins to one another and pray for one another." Beyond the pain in this call is a

great gift for me because...well, I finally know why I need to pray! For one thing, every day at the Open Door I am surrounded by people who seem to have nothing to lose in admitting their sin and asking for prayer. In fact it seems prayer may be all they've got left: people with addictions, people who have done violence because so much violence has been done to them, people who have abandoned or been abandoned by their families because they were unable to provide for them. In the face of such overwhelming odds and unbearable sadness, what else can one do but pray?

But it's interesting that James says, "Pray for one another, so that *you* will be healed." The cries of the poor and needy folks who walk through this door on a regular basis and who live here free me to examine my own heart, confess my own sin, and ask for prayer so that I might be healed. As I pray for my friends with addictions, I am freed to confess my own addictions to material goods, power, and even violence. When I pray for my friend, Joaquin, who lives on death row and for the redemption of the criminal justice system in this country, I confess my own desire to lock up (or just eliminate altogether) people of whom I am afraid or who have done harm to me. When community members confesses their deepest fears of ending up back on the street and of the death that awaits them there, I am freed to confess my fear of not being in control of my future, of being alone, of having no place to belong.

"The prayer of a good person [of the faithful] has a powerful effect," James tells us. "My friends, if any of you wander away from the truth and another one brings you back again, remember this: whoever turns a sinner back from the wrong way will save that sinner's soul from death and bring about the forgiveness of many sins." When our wounds are exposed to one another, as painful as it may be, we bring each other back to the truth. And the truth is

that we are human, all of us, and we need each other in order to be more fully human and live the lives of integrity that God intended and Jesus modeled. Again Elsa Tamez interprets James' word for "effective prayer" as an action word. *Energeo* – energy for action, to be at work or to accomplish. Just as James advises the poor to have "militant patience" in their expectation of the coming of the Beloved Community, he instructs the whole community to *pray militantly*. God empowers us, the faithful, to save one another from the powers of death and to redeem one another through our prayers, our work, and our living out of an alternative to the powers in our everyday lives.

And the accomplishment is not just the forgiveness of our own sins or those of our neighbor, but the forgiveness of *many* sins. That is, as we confess to one another the ways in which we

are captive to the powers, and as we pray for one another and steer each other back to the path of truth and love, we become co-creators with God of the hope and freedom that we long for. As the power of sin and death diminishes within our lives as

individuals and as a community, suddenly the transformation of those powers in the world doesn't seem so impossible. By our prayers made in faith and in action, we make it so that God's work can be accomplished in our own lives, in the life of the community, and bit by bit in our world.

So then, may we pray militantly for our own and one another's redemption and healing, knowing that the prayers of the faithful have a powerful effect. And may we live our prayers as we forgive one another over and over again and guide each other to the truth that God's reign of justice, peace, and love is on its way. Amen. ♦



RITA CORBIN

Join us as a Resident Volunteer

Registered Nurse Julie Cook has come to live and work at the Open Door after a three-year stint working in Washington, D.C. She is originally from Seattle, Washington. In addition to helping with the regular work of the house, Julie has made important contributions to our Thursday night Harriet Tubman Free Medical Clinic.



DIANA GEORGE

Live in a residential Christian community.

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

Join street actions and peaceful demonstrations.

Enjoy regular retreats and meditation time at Dayspring Farm.

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

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

Heroism, continued from page 4
nonviolence? Those who sacrifice their own freedom and wellbeing for the freedom and wellbeing of others?

Howard Zinn, in *A People's History of the United States*, recognizes such heroes - people who struggled for peace, civil rights, labor rights, human rights.

At the L.A. retreat, we honored Dan Berrigan for the example of his life. We remembered Phil Berrigan and many others from Catholic Worker history who struggled against the status quo to build a better world for all people.

Ammon Hennacy advocated a one-person revolution. That's the kind of revolution that starts with each one of us changing ourselves before we try to change anyone else. That is the sort of hero this world needs today, a hero who won't settle for the status quo, one who isn't out for glory, one who raises up those who restore the human community. We need heroes like Dan and Phil Berrigan -- people who would reject the notion of heroism altogether. ♦

Chuck Harris is a Resident Volunteer at the Open Door Community.

Grace and Peaces of Mail

Dear Friends,

Thanks for your latest stirring issue (August 2003, vol. 22, no. 8), especially Murphy Davis and "Who Killed the Baby?", Ed Loring's "Dr. King is Alive," Diana George to the campuses and "Tenured Radicals," and finally, friend of Jonah House Peter Gathje and his poem, "Doing It Wrong." Issue by issue you continue to inspire us.

Jerry Berrigan
Syracuse, NY

I read "Dr. King is Alive" (By Ed Loring, August 2003, vol. 22, no. 8). What a powerful article, what an analysis of a Christian must be in these days. In order to call the things by their own name, people like you and Murphy have to be full of blessed courage, full of God's fire when Jesus said in John 10:10. "I came to give you life and abundant life."

I wish all of those who are crazy about Military Power and Materialism and are silly enough to think that because of the color of their skin they are superiors, will think a little bit. I am asking God to open their eyes, to learn from the history of the Roman Empire. In spite of all things that are happening, it is music for my years to know that because of Dorothy Day the gospel is still alive, and because of the Open Door, Jesus is still among us serving the poor and homeless.

I am looking forward my dear friend to expend a few days among the members of the Beloved Community.

Peace and joy,
Luz Mestas- Nunez
Americus, GA

Dear Ed,

Thank you, too, Ed! Another good issue of *Hospitality* (September). Please tell Mary Byrne that the ad for the book is wonderful. Your struggle for Woodruff Park is a microcosm for the struggle for space and resources going on around the world. Blessings on your work and on your stand for that piece of God's earth.

I will find the different pieces on Bonhoeffer helpful as I travel to Europe next week to try to explain us to folks in Germany and England (sorry to miss you and Murphy by some weeks -- to use Sect. Rumsfeld's words, I will be "softening the targets" for you). You and all at the Open Door are in our thoughts and prayers. Hello from Betsy, too.

Love,
Brian Terrell
Strangers & Guests Catholic Worker Farm
Maloy, IA

To the Editor of the *AJC*,

I'd like Mayor Shirley Franklin to define "walking distance" when she claims that there are at least a dozen indoor locations that serve food to homeless people within walking distance of Woodruff Park. I'd also like her to clarify what she means when she says she'd like meals to be served to homeless persons in a "dignified way" and that cannot be done in the park. Does she want to imply that no one can eat with dignity in the park, or is it that homeless people just don't look dignified, whether eating or not?

Finally, I'm wondering if Jesus would also be hassled the city of Atlanta for feeding people for free? As I recall, he did that on several occasions.

Dr. Peter Gathje
Memphis, TN

Pete Gathje, a friend and former resident volunteer, sent the above letter to the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*.

Dear *Hospitality* and Ed.,

I received the July edition of *Hospitality* yesterday. It is a very good issue. You see things in reality, while the world sees material things and their own ego. I wish more people would see things as they really are.

I have already served 42 months on a 48 month sentence. I see people who don't need to be in prison. Mental health inmates are some. Some of these inmates are in really bad mental health and should have been sentenced to a mental institution. Prison gives these people pills and some of them walk around like zombies. They do not get the help they need in prison, all they get is time to serve. Most of the sentences do not fit the crime. A person who does not sell drugs but buys drugs for personal use. It don't seem right to give them 10 years and make them do all of it. They should be sentenced to rehab to receive the help they need. Although a person cannot receive help if they are not really accepting help. Some people deserve to be in prison and some don't. The law and courts practice injustice each day.

I am enclosing several names for people to receive *Hospitality*.

A friend in prison

Dear Heather and Phil,

I wanted to thank you both for hosting our students for a visit to the Open Door Community. The commitment that you and all of the members of the community have made to one another is humbling. Our girls came away fascinated, respectful, and broken open just a bit more by the short time they were there. Once back on the bus, they were immediately quiet as they started to read *Hospitality* and *I Hear Hope Banging At My Back Door*, and their discussions about the radical nature of love that the community embodies have continued to echo even down to our last days of school. Hopefully, they will hear the echoes all of their lives.

Your ministry is unique in the city of Atlanta, and I hope you will be willing to have us come back some time in the future. Next year, we begin the course anew with another set of seniors at Westminster as well as our new public school partner, Benjamin E. Mays High School.

Fondly,
Jim Justice
Atlanta, GA

To the Editor:

It seems everyone wants to talk about homelessness these days. The mayor does. Colin Campbell can't resist it. Even the venerable *AJC* editorial board has weighed into the fray.

And, oh, let us not forget the horror of so many fine middle-class citizens, fresh from their warm, cozy beds, still in the fog of a good night's sleep—only to be scandalized by the graphic image in their morning papers (cover the eyes of the small children, folks): a homeless man with a cell phone. Gasp.

To this earnest civic conversation, I offer my own observation (drumroll, please): homeless people are... well... people without homes.

I know. It's startling. Mind-blowing. Revolutionary, even. But I really can't take the credit for this shocking insight. The homeless themselves taught me.

In recent months, I have begun a journey into the world of the homeless. It is there, in that world, among women and men without homes—talking to them and walking beside them, breaking bread with them and listening to their stories, that I have begun to see our beloved city from the streets, as they do. And it is the rich humanity of these women and men that exposes the inhumane poverty of values in our city.

The problem with the mayor's policy is threefold. First, her plan stops short of the real answer to homelessness. Homeless people are, after all, people without homes. The mayor should commit herself to creating affordable housing and the living wages that are necessary to make any housing truly affordable.

Second, the mayor's plan does have some good proposals. A new shelter? Great. Better services? Wonderful. But even the recent *AJC* editorial sees the problem here: there's no funding for these proposals. Without the money to back it up, the mayor's much ballyhooed plan is nothing more than a lot of hot air. Let us remember that these ideas are not new. We've heard it all before. And past

promises from city leaders have not been kept.

Which brings me to my final point. If actions speak louder than words, then what the mayor is doing speaks volumes. Shirley Franklin is not committed to ending homelessness—just hiding it.

Yes, our hard-working mayor is busy "cleaning up" the city. Even in this politically correct world, our language about the homeless still betrays our true values. We want to "cleanse" Atlanta of human beings, of people without homes, as if these women and men were nothing more than trash to be thrown away.

And all around, there is applause. But not from the women and men on the streets. And not from those who know the truth of the streets.

So why do we harass and intimidate the homeless, attempting to drive them out of our sight? Because downtown businesses have hit hard times. And somehow, people without homes are responsible. Because the "right" to walk my dog without being asked for money by someone who has no home is more important than the right for all people to have a decent place to live. Because we fear the homeless, assuring ourselves that they are on the street because of their own bad choices -- that they "really want to be that way." Because we see the homeless as stereotypes, as a problem.

But we do not see them as people.

If every community is judged by the way it treats its most vulnerable members, then Atlanta can no longer call itself the City Too Busy to Hate. Perhaps we should turn to another marketing strategy, one that more closely reflects truth-in-advertising:

Welcome to Atlanta, the City Too Pro-Business to Love.

Chad Hyatt
Decatur, GA

Chad Hyatt is featured in this month's Spotlight on page 9.



Open Door Community Ministries

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

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

Showers: 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.

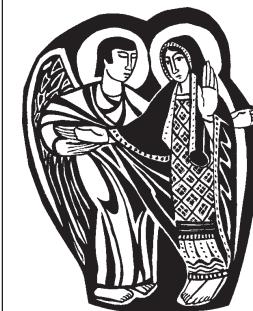
November 2	Short Eucharist led by Heather Bargeron
November 9	Worship at 910
November 16	Worship at 910
November 23	No Worship at 910 The Open Door will join in witness at the School of the Americas. For more information, see page 2.
November 30	Worship at 910

December 7	No Worship at 910 Advent Retreat at Dayspring Farm
December 14	Worship at 910
December 21	Worship at 910
December 28	Worship at 910

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

Clarification Meetings at the Open Door

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



Plan to join us for discussion and reflection!

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

Needs of the Community

JEANS	hams and turkeys for our Soup Kitchen
men's work shirts	sandwiches
underwear for men	quick grits
women's underwear	cheese
men's belts	coffee
socks	multi-vitamins
men's shoes (all sizes)	MARTA tokens
winter caps	postage stamps
sweatshirts	HEAVY DUTY GAS LAWN MOWER
	MINIVAN IN GOOD RUNNING CONDITION
	two mountain bikes for Dayspring Farm
	WASHING MACHINE FOR DAYSPRING FARM
	child and baby safety seats (for Hardwick Trip Vans)

disposable razors
deodorant
vaseline
combs
toothbrushes
lip balm
SOAP (any size)
SHAMPOO (travel size)
alarm clocks

Medicine Needs List

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

nail files

Ibuprofen

SUDAFED

lubriderm lotion

COUGH DROPS

toenail clippers (large)

medicated foot powder

antibiotic cream or ointment

antifungal cream (Tolfanate)

non-drowsy allergy tablets

COLD TABLETS (alcohol free)