

HOSPITALITY

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Atlanta, Georgia
Permit No. 1264

Address Service Requested

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

vol. 19, no. 1

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

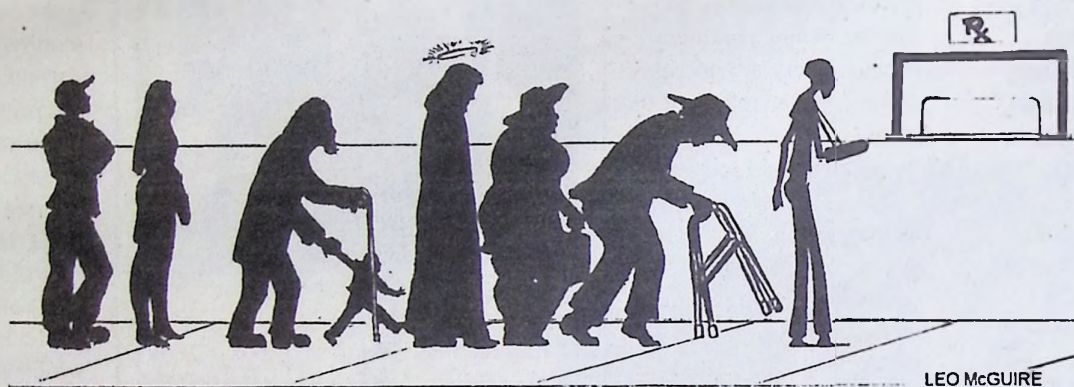
January 2000

The Grady Pharmacy— A Continuing Emergency

by Murphy Davis

You might begin to wonder after a while whether or not somebody is acting intentionally to get the Grady Hospital pharmacy not to work. The main pharmacy near the Pratt Street entrance of the hospital has always been a problem. On just about any day of the week, you could go by there in the late morning or early afternoon and find the line stretching all the way up the hall toward Butler Street. At any of those times, it would clearly take several hours for the waiting patients to get their prescriptions filled. It always seemed like one of those unnecessarily punitive structures that we so often impose on the poor. As it is with so many things, if you have money, you pay for your medicine with money. If you are poor, you pay with your time. You wait, and you wait, and you wait. You might have a broken foot, but you stand on it. You might have pneumonia, but you stand in line and probably cough on the folks around you. You might be 90 years old and tired, and your feet hurt, and you're sick and tired of being sick and tired, but you wait. You might be a weary mother with two small children; after three exasperating hours of trying to corral the children into the line, you grow weary of their cries and smack them hard. You might be a paranoid schizophrenic and begin to think there is somebody out there wanting to make your life miserable. Or you might be perfectly sane and think the same thing.

But around here, we've learned never to say "it can't get any worse..." because of course, most of the time, it can. Early last winter the administration of Grady Hospital proposed to the Board of the hospital authority that they deal with the budget deficit by imposing on the poorest of Grady's patients a \$5 charge for each visit to a clinic and a \$10 co-pay for each medication prescribed. Most of Grady's patients already paid something for their medications (on a sliding scale), but the patients who were to be charged the increased fees were those who had already been determined by the hospital's financial investigations office to have no money to pay for services, treatment, or medications. They are called "Zero card patients." This includes the uninsured poor: homeless men, women and children, elderly people whose fixed incomes are spent entirely on rent



Christ of the Pharmacy Line

and the barest essentials (and while Medicare covers some medical services, hospitalization, and treatment, it does not pay for medications).

The co-pay went into effect on March 15, 1999. It caused chaos, medical crisis and probably death for some unknown number of Grady patients. We will never know how many patients suffered and died and how many patients gave up on Grady as their only access to medical care and never came back. The director of the pharmacy, Dr. Doug Miller, did an in-house study that projected death or serious medical crisis for 6,500 patients when the policy went into effect. The study was never meant to be seen by the public, but those who recommended the co-pay increase obviously regarded these 6,500 probable crises and deaths an acceptable risk. Vigorous advocacy from the Grady Coalition brought a suspension of the policy on March 22, and the hospital board has shelved the policy for the foreseeable future. In the meantime, the Coalition has gone to Fulton County, DeKalb County, the State of Georgia, and Emory University to press Grady's urgent needs. In response to the pleas of the advocates, more than \$57 million has come to the hospital since last April. Emory University is the only major player that has not yet made a substantive response to its role in the Grady crisis. With the additional funds, the hospital is no longer in the crisis that existed last spring.

But the Grady pharmacy has become in recent months practically dysfunctional. In spite of having the funds needed to run the hospital and provide for all Grady patients, the administration has allowed the situation to get worse and worse and has never once gone to the community, the advocates, or even its own board to share the facts or any concern for this major crisis. As of mid-November, the staff of pharmacists was down to

less than a skeleton. The main pharmacy, which normally serves up to 1,000 patients per day, was giving out tickets to the first 200-400 patients and the rest were being turned away by security guards. There has been no one to help the patients figure out what other options they might have. On one occasion, the pharmacy was closed down entirely, and the patients sent to the pharmacy at a satellite clinic. Just as

the people started arriving at the clinic, the computers crashed and that pharmacy closed as well. No provisions were made for any patients, many of whom have little access to transportation.

It was clearly time for the Grady Coalition to take to the streets again to bring this emergency to the attention of the public. On November 29, some 75 members of the Coalition gathered to picket, leaflet, sing and shout for an hour in front of the hospital. There we all were again—black, white and brown, very young and very old, healthy and infirm, rich and poor, gay and straight, seminary professors and labor leaders, Grady patients and the well-insured—a beautiful rainbow on Butler Street. Here the Coalition was born last March and here we re-committed to this long and difficult struggle.

Two significant things happened. First, patients came by and shared their stories of crisis and frustration in their recent dealings with the pharmacy. We heard story after story of people who had come to the pharmacy five times and more to try to get their medications only to be met by the gruff reproach of a security guard barking, "No more tickets for today. You can't stay here." We have met with and heard testimony from patients who, after repeated trips to the pharmacy, are two weeks behind on their medications. For many patients with AIDS, heart disease, and other such illnesses, these delays mean death or debilitating crisis that will cost the hospital much more in emergency care than simple treatment would have cost in the first place.

Second, as we sang and marched, Mr. Edward Renford, President and CEO of the Grady Health System sent one of his staff to invite us to send a delegation to discuss his concerns with us. This was remarkable for several reasons. Last

(continued on page 2)

(continued from page 1)

March, when we wanted to talk with Mr. Renford, a number of us had to risk arrest to get to him. Though several of our members were handcuffed and detained, we did eventually have a meeting that lasted 5 1/2 hours. Mr. Renford, whom we were told was out of town, then out to a Rotary Club meeting, suddenly turned out to be in his office after all. Since last spring, though the Coalition has been largely responsible for the \$57 million raised for the hospital's budget, Mr. Renford has never contacted us for any discussion or seen us as partners.

But on November 29, we were invited in to meet with Renford and several of the top administrative staff, including Dr. Miller, head of the pharmacy. A great deal was accomplished in one hour. First we learned that Dr. Miller has made significant policy changes without the knowledge of Renford or the Board of Directors. For example, Miller had decided that patients would no longer be given over-the-counter drugs from the pharmacy and that in-patients would not be given their medications before discharge. This meant that people were being released from their hospital beds and sent to stand in the pharmacy line (sometimes for many hours), most often to be sent away without medications.

Mr. Renford said that he knew nothing of these changes. We were astounded! Before the meeting was over, the CEO had made seven commitments:

- #1 To take extraordinary measures to move as quickly as possible toward full staffing of the hospital and clinic pharmacies
- #2 To provide transportation for patients who need help to get to another pharmacy or satellite clinic
- #3 To "take security out of the

pharmacy business," i.e., to have other staff, specifically social workers, chaplains and pharmacists, communicate with patients about pharmacy business and to work with waiting patients and those being turned away to explore alternatives and stop-gap measures

- #4 To resume providing medications to patients before they are discharged from the hospital
- #5 To resume providing over-the-counter drugs as prescribed by physicians
- #6 To put up signs and distribute information to let senior citizens know that they can use the separate Senior Citizen pharmacy and telephone prescription refills. Many seniors do not use the Senior pharmacy because there are no signs and no one tells them of its existence.
- #7 To serve some food and drinks to patients who wait as long as ten hours in the pharmacy line and to continue to invite them to sit down to wait in the auditorium across from the pharmacy.

It was an extremely profitable meeting. Many of us have monitored the lines at the main hospital and some satellite clinics since then, and in fact, the commitments seem to be in the process of being carried out.

But what kind of way is this to run a hospital? That the advocates should have to get into the CEO's office by raising Cain on the streets and then spend time informing him of what is going on in his own hospital is preposterous. That his own staff can make major policy changes

without so much as informing him is unbelievable. And that anyone who actually seeks the health and well-being of Grady patients could let the pharmacy deteriorate to near-total collapse and dysfunction without calling for the aid of the wider community or even the Hospital Authority Board of Directors is beyond credibility. As one of the advocates said on the picket line, "If this had happened at Northside



GLADYS RUSTAY

Sarah Fitten, Regional Director for the Fulton-Atlanta Community Action Authority, inspired the crowd of Grady Coalition protestors in front of the Hospital.

I hospital, they would have called out the National Guard to dispense pills!"

The emergency continues in the Grady pharmacy. Somebody is dying as I write because the hospital is being run so poorly that they could not get their life-sustaining medications. But it is time to move beyond today's emergency to ask some

serious questions about Grady Hospital.

Do the people charged with the responsibility for the hospital really want it to work for the benefit of Grady patients? Who on the executive staff or the Board of Directors is willing and/or able to commit to a public hospital that will be administered responsibly and its patients treated with excellent medical care and simple human dignity?

It is no secret that there has been a distinct political agenda in Fulton and DeKalb Counties for some years to dismantle Grady Hospital: either to run off the poor patients and privatize the hospital or just to let the system collapse on itself. (This local agenda is part, of course, of a larger national agenda to consolidate power and privilege for the wealthy and take from the poor what little they have had in the way of goods, services, and dignity.) Are any members of the current staff and/or Board, people who are promoting this agenda? Are there those who have been appointed or hired to implement such an agenda? Is there any relationship between all this crisis at Grady and the fact that Edward Renford was hired as the CEO after he had administered a public hospital in Watts (Los Angeles) which closed its doors under his leadership? Who are the staff and Board members who are truly committed to the charter of the public hospital to be there to serve the poor and uninsured of our region?

For the Grady Coalition, the choice is clear: we can go on micromanaging these crises together, or we can start demanding that some questions be answered as we put our commitments and agenda on the table for public scrutiny and debate. It is nothing less than a matter of life and death.

Murphy Davis is a Partner at the Open Door Community.

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, please contact any of the following:

Brenda Smith—Volunteer Coordinator;
Group Work Project Coordinator
Ed Loring—Correspondence
Elizabeth Dede—Resident Volunteer Coordinator; Guest Ministry;
Hardwick Prison Trip
Murphy Davis—Southern Prison Ministry



Open Door Community

PHOTO BY GARY BECK

Newspaper
Editorial Staff—Chuck Campbell,
Murphy Davis, Elizabeth Dede,
Joyce Hollyday, Ed Loring, Tamara
Puffer, Gladys Rustay, Brenda
Smith, and Stan Saunders
Managing Editor—Michael Galovic
Layout—Michael Galovic
Copy Editing—Alice Alexander, Murphy
Davis, Elizabeth Dede, Julie
Martin, Tamara Puffer, Gladys
Rustay, and Heather Spahr
Circulation—Phillip Williams, and a
multitude of earthly hosts and
guests

Subscriptions or change of address—
Anne Wheeler
(A \$7 donation to the Open Door would
help to cover the costs of printing and
mailing *Hospitality* for one year.)

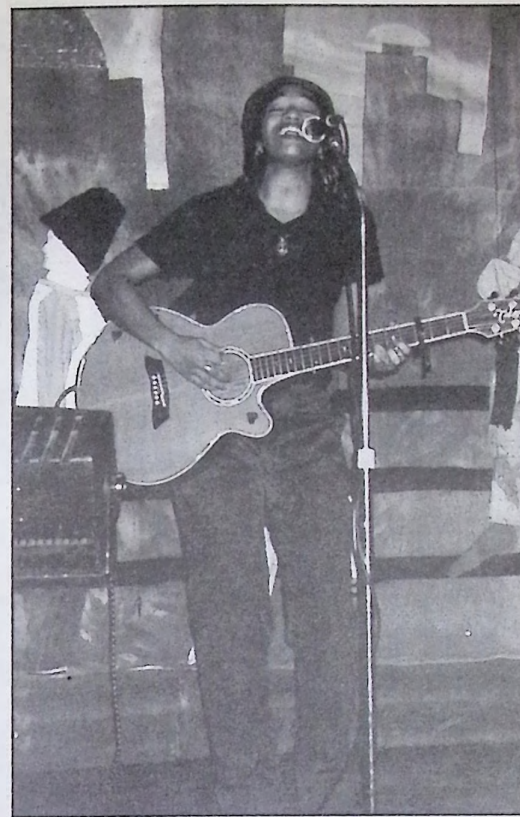
Open Door Community
(404) 874-9652; 874-7964 fax

Gesundheit Variety Show Benefit for the Grady Coalition



TAKA ONO

Musicians from 6 to midnight, on Saturday, November 27, entertained an overflow crowd and raised money to support the ongoing work of the Grady Coalition. Pictured here are a small sample of performers from the evening. On the left are the Tappin' Ukulele Ladies who danced, sang, and had the crowd howling with laughter. On the right is rising star, singer, song-writer Doria Roberts.



TAKA ONO

School of the Americas Watch--Action at Ft. Benning

On Sunday, November 21, the Open Door Community participated in the annual vigil at Ft. Benning, Ga. to protest the U.S. Army School of the Americas. The SOA trains Latin American soldiers in counter-insurgency and counter-narcotics techniques. Former SOA instructors and training manuals both reveal that among the "techniques" which are taught at the school are kidnapping, torture and "neutralization" of civilians. Among the 60,000 graduates of the school are some of the most notorious dictators in Latin America, as well as lower-level officers linked to infamous human rights abuses such as the assassination of Archbishop Oscar Romero and the massacre of the 900 men, women and children of El Mozote. This year's vigil observed the tenth anniversary of the murders of six Jesuit priests, their housekeeper and her daughter in El Salvador by graduates of the SOA.

Over 12,000 people gathered at the main gate of Ft. Benning to sing, pray and recite the names of the thousands of people, many of them infants and children, murdered at the hands of SOA graduates. After each name was called, the crowd responded by saying *presente* (present), declaring that those

holding vigil stand in the place of the victims and bear witness for the voices which have been silenced by violence and oppression. While the names of victims were being read, 4408 people risked arrest by "crossing the line" into Ft. Benning, carrying crosses bearing the names of the victims of the SOA. This procession was led by a smaller group wearing black shrouds and white death masks and bearing coffins. After entering the base, this group smeared red paint on themselves and laid on the coffins to recreate a death squad massacre. Among the "line-crossers" were many Open Door friends and volunteers, including, Don Beisswenger, Jim Powers, Richard Monet, Patrick Leland, Heather Barger and Rachel Weir. While most of the line-crossers were not arrested, 23 people who had crossed the line in past years will face prosecution for trespassing on federal property.

We were happy to share the day with many friends from around the United States. Among them were Hannah Loring-Davis and a group from Guilford College, Andy Summers and 90 students from Warren Wilson College, and Catholic Worker friends from far and near. We at the Open Door

Community continue to pray that violence toward and oppression of poor and indigenous peoples everywhere will come to an end, and that our government will cease its support of this violence immediately, beginning by closing the School of the Americas. To learn more about the School of the Americas and how you can get involved with the effort to close it, write or call: SOA Watch, P.O. Box 4566, Washington, D.C. 20017, 202-234-3440. To access the SOA Watch home page, go to www.soaw.org.

— Kristen Barger

To the New York West Side Jesuit Community

by Daniel Berrigan

(Editor's note: Fr. Dan Berrigan read this poem as the protestors assembled to cross into the base of Ft. Benning.)

Some stood and stood and stood.
They were taken for dummies
they were taken for fools
they were taken for being taken in.

Some walked and walked and walked.
They walked the earth
they walked the waters
they walked the air.

Why do you stand?
they were asked, and
why do you walk?

Because of the children, they said, and
because of the heart, and
because of the bread

Because
the cause
is the heart's beat
and the children born
and the risen bread.



The procession of line crossers at the SOA Watch action at the School of the Americas in Ft. Benning, Georgia. Marchers carried crosses bearing the names of victims of School of the Americas' graduates.

The End of the Reformation

October 31, 1999

by Ed Loring



MEINRAD CRAIGHEAD

The difference between an historian of ideas or intellectual history (e.g., Christian thought) and a social historian (e.g., the history of the lives of Christians) was unknown to me until I became pastor of Clifton Presbyterian Church in 1975. Subsequently the distinction became significant. An historian of ideas tells the stories of what a thinker thought. The social historian tells the stories of the consequences of those ideas as they hit the streets and market place. Often ideas and their consequences contradict each other. Thus, the point of view of the historian is important. As my friend on death row, Robert Conklin, wrote to me recently, "What you see depends on where you are standing." That is why Jesus concludes his Sermon on the Mount with a test for ideas and their truth: "Be on your guard against false prophets...you will know them by what they do." (Matthew 7:15a & 16a) Both the historians of thought and false prophets can tell stories of truth of the mind. The issue is how the story or word is put into practice.

The Catholics and the Lutherans have just signed a document ending the conflict of the Protestant Reformation. This war within the household of faith and the lands of Christendom began in 1517 when the monk Martin Luther nailed 95 Theses upon the church door in Wittenberg, Germany. (If our homeless friends think they have it bad for being sent to jail for sleeping in church yards or sitting on the steps during rush hour they should read this story. Luther was, for a time, under the Ban of the Holy Roman Empire, i.e., a death warrant was issued.) Both groups of the Body of Christ now agree that the individual believer is saved by grace, not by works. The papers have been signed, the Eucharist celebrated, and Martin Luther and Thomas Aquinas must be resting better in heaven, hopefully.

What is omitted from the reports I have read is the disaster that the idea of justification by faith alone has had for the Christian Church and

Western Civilization since the 16th century. Paul's idea and Luther's interpretation of Paul's idea, and Luther's interpretation of Paul's idea as interpreted by a million theologians, and preachers' proclamations of Paul's idea interpreted by Luther has been and is a major factor in the decline of the West and the practice of the Christian life as indistinguishable from consumer capitalism. "Beware of false prophets; you will recognize them by what they do." Often the time lapse between the idea articulated and the recognition of that idea's consequences in the local school shootout is a long one. The proof is in the pudding.

The social significance of justification by faith alone is this: it does not matter what you do. The Presbyterian practice and liturgical expression of this evangelical doctrine filtered through our modern lives occurs every Sunday. Many church bulletins include a confession of sin to be prayed in unison. First there is a moment of silence for the worshippers to confess their private sins or read the prayer before praying it. After the confession the liturgist says: "Hear the goodnews of the Gospel. In Jesus Christ your sins are forgiven." There is no structure or place for accountability. There is no discipline or action. No sense that the future is different from the past. No means to undo the consequences of the sins and errors of the past are afforded. It does not matter what I did; I am forgiven and so are you.

Since the mainline Reformation of Luther's day, the fundamental crisis of the Christian church has been community and accountability. There is no source to counter-act the devastating consequences of justification by faith/grace alone. A primary casualty of this theology is Christian life rooted in a common life among believers. The church can no longer afford to offer a community life based upon an ethical vision put into practice, because it does not matter what the members do. Many of the young people, even disciples of Jesus the

Jew, who visit the Open Door Community are not interested in Christian theology, because the consequences of the thought are to produce citizens of the kingdom of consumer capitalism rather than cautious snakes and gentle doves for love and justice.

The social and cultural issue of producing and nurturing a society in which it does not matter what you do has been advanced by the secularism of the West: particularly the loss of the consequence of life after death. As a maker and maintainer of cultural values, life after death was an important belief. Heaven or hell as a "place" and not as an emotional state of being after getting a raise or a new product, was rooted in the assumption of an ultimate judgment in large measure based upon "doing the will of Yahweh-Elohim" to adapt a phrase in the teaching of Jesus the poor man. Miriam, Moses, Deborah, Ruth, the prophets, Jesus, and some of his disciples believed that it does matter what we do. That is why Jesus the resister taught the Sermon on the Mount, which is the prescription for the life of discipleship. Please note that at the center of the teaching is the fundamental mark of the common life among Christians: forgiveness of one another. The more radical the Christian community, the greater the necessity for forgiveness.

James Cone, the passionate Black Theologian says, "the god of the Ku Klux Klan ain't my God." We are called to carry it, not burn it in some Blackman's yard. That is a cross of another color. Why have many Christians worked for an amendment to the US Constitution to outlaw flag burning, but have never introduced an amendment against cross burning as a means to intimidate former slaves and their ancestors? Which side are you on? What would the Black liberation movement in Georgia look like if it mattered how white Christians acted toward people of color?

The idea and belief of judgment after death kept human action, called works, significant. Most Protestant theology was able to

reduce the one human act necessary for a home in heaven belief that Jesus was the "Son of God"—a white American male. Thus Billy Graham and the whole revivalism movement to Christianize America could threaten the fires of hell on the one hand and promise that one's actions did not matter on the other. There is no call to justice in Billy Graham's life or thought. He is worth millions, however.

Heaven and hell died as behavior modifications about the same time that Christmas and ethics lost their relationship. As late as the 1960s children believed: "you better watch out/you better not pout/because Santa Claus is coming to town. /He knows if you've been bad or good/So be good for goodness sake." Santa Claus replaced God for a while in the second half of the twentieth century as an enforcer of at least obedience to parents and teachers (Exodus 20:12). Now even that is gone. Unruly or gun-toting kids need to get their gifts to keep the economy rolling. Many companies win or lose based upon Christmas sales. Santa Claus has joined the happy chorus with a Coke in his hand. It does not matter what we do.

The demands of development and economic expansion keep moving at a rapid pace, with consumption being the single most important economic act. The Church keeps shrinking in its encounter with social life and its call for justice. It does not matter what you buy; faith in Yahweh-Elohim's grace alone is what registers.

One of the primary reasons for the 16th century Reformation was the need to charge interest on loans to church members. Usury was a sin in Catholic lands. (Hence the importance of Jewish bankers). John Calvin, parent of the Presbyterians, was one of the first to say the Bible and tradition regarding interest does not matter. We can charge interest within the household of faith (even the poor will have to pay), and be justified by faith alone. Dorothy Day, a

(continued on next page)

(continued from previous page)

Catholic practitioner, believed that the Sermon on the Mount is a way of life and not a set of ideas or principles. (A beautiful but irrelevant sermon Reinhold Niebuhr would say). Dorothy Day, following the teachings of the Sermon on the Mount, taught that interest is the primary cause of war. She wrote that it *does* matter how one uses one's money. This is one reason thousands of us march and thousands of us face arrest each November at the School of the Americas at Fort Benning, Georgia.

We Christians had to do something about Judgment and the possibility of hell for the economy to grow. We had to come to some place whereby we could proclaim the gospel and still feel at home among politicians who call for bombs to fall on Iraq, for the death penalty, and the use of prisons for social control of the African American male population. We did!

Theologians of justification by God's grace alone—good works do not count—came up with an idea: Universalism. God's love is so undemanding and so unconditional that it does not matter what anyone or any society does. Everybody is going to heaven! As Peter Maurin said about the time of the founding of the Catholic Worker, "a newspaper for everybody is a newspaper for nobody." The same thing happened to heaven. A heaven for everybody is a heaven for nobody. The belief in life after death died. A faith basic to Greco-Roman life and the Judeo-Christian tradition is over.

When the denial of the afterlife, particularly of hell, is considered, one must, in fairness to the thinkers, consider social location. In the South

it was technological advance as much, if not more so, as the demands of consumer capitalism that brought death to hell. When writing of truth and reality in a quiet air-conditioned office far from the maddening crowd, the comfort zone was such that theologians could not conceive of the fires of hell. Thus, judgment had to go. This helps to explain why afterlife, judgment, and hell still exist in the minds, if not the practice, of many poor who toil in factories and tomato fields, or simply those who sit on the street corners in the heat or cold waiting for death to occur.

Fyodor Dostoevsky warned us in the 1880s that if God does not exist then anything goes. It does not matter what you do. John Updike has written more recently that if God does not exist, only sex matters. The consequence of the doctrine of justification by faith alone and its corollary of no judgment after death has led to Christian atheism: Christians who live lives as though it does not matter what they or the economy does. Thus, we see rich Christians. We have church members who serve in the military—even in peacetime. There are white Church members who work to keep white power on the Republican Party agenda. Women are belittled and abused, and taught to forgive the man without repentance or therapeutic intervention. Homosexuals are cast out like tax collectors of long ago. The homeless are left without housing, and we love our neighbors mostly in our prayers. But it does not matter. We are saved by God's grace alone. Works do not count.

We are thankful. We praise our loving Creator and Redeemer, who

yearns for reconciliation and friendliness on earth. We are hopeful in response to the Lutherans and Catholics signing the document that brings an end to the Reformation. We are amazed and joyful because of the goodnews of the gospel of Jesus Christ our Lord. We, too, know that this Yahweh-Elohim and Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit love and forgive and redeem each one of us who believe, repent, and practice the way. As our ardent ancestor Martin Luther put it so well: we are simultaneously saints and sinners. Nonetheless, the doctrine of salvation by God's grace alone, and without regard for the works of the disciple or the community, has consequences that are leading to the undoing of public life and private virtue. In the social context of individualism, the cultural context of consumer capitalism, and the faith context of the absence of communal solidarity with the poor and oppressed, the loving message of salvation by God's grace alone—justification by God's unconditional love—has led the

church and society to practice a way of life in which it does not matter what we do. We have become disciples of consumer capitalism. Homelessness is the consequence and the proof of its lie.

The Radical Left Wing of the Reformation had a better center of faith than either the Catholic or the mainline Protestant theologians and practitioners. Most accepted salvation by grace alone, as we certainly do. (Thank you, Jesus!) Yet, the center of their understanding was discipleship—the call to "follow Jesus." Discipleship was a way of life, a common and shared, disciplined life, rooted in a Christian Community. Discipline was a mark of the Church. Here it mattered what one did, yea, it mattered a whole lot.

"Be on your guard against false prophets...you will know them by what they do," says Jesus. His way of life mattered. He was executed for it.

Ed Loring is a Partner at the Open Door.

Holiday Thanks

Many thanks for all the gifts you gave us during this past holiday season. They will help us to serve our homeless friends and those in prison throughout the year. We are so very grateful for your kindness and generosity to us.



Jack Hinds, son of Resident Volunteer Joe B. Hinds, demonstrates that volunteering at the Open Door is an ongoing party and all the watermelon you can eat!

Join us as a Resident Volunteer!

Spend 6 to 12 months as a Resident Volunteer

- Live in a residential Christian community.
- Serve Jesus Christ and the hungry, homeless and prisoners.
- Bible study and theological reflections from the Base.
- Street actions and peaceful demonstrations.
- Regular retreats and meditation time at Dayspring Farm.

Contact: Elizabeth Dede
910 Ponce de Leon Ave., NE
Atlanta, GA 30306-4212
404/874-9652; 874-7964 (fax)

Walking The Road: August 1963

by Ed Loring

Thirty-six years ago I was twenty-three years old. In the hot and unairconditioned summer of 1963, in the long languid days before the assassination of President John F. Kennedy, I finally, after 4 attempts, completed college. I knew little about justice, but I did know a little. In July, I graduated from Presbyterian College located in the sleepy little mill town of Clinton, South Carolina. Across the street and nestled among mighty oak trees is Thomwell Orphanage. Named for the leading proslavery Christian thinker of the very Old South—James Henley Thomwell—the orphanage, like Presbyterian College, allowed no Blacks except for menial and domestic labor. One did, however, slip into the children's home! When I was sent, for my antisocial behaviors, to Patterson School for Boys in the North Carolina mountains, Charles Bell lived in the next dorm room. Charles was coffee with cream colored. His hair was kinky. He had been sent to Patterson from the orphanage for reasons we did not know, and he would not tell. Clarabell, as we called him, was a great athlete and a fine friend. Only years later, walking back down those narrow halls, did I realize in the left side of my brain that I roomed next door to a Negro in 1955.

Until the very end, finis, of my college sojourn, I was an active member of the Kappa Alpha Order. Last week, November 1999, the KA's were catching hell and receiving blessings for flying the Confederate Flag at Emory University. We flew the Confederate Flag at PC, too. The Kappa Alpha Order was founded at Washington College (now Washington and Lee University) shortly after the Civil War. Its purpose is to keep alive the myths and traditions of chivalry, Southern manners, and white superiority.

Paradoxically, the only idea and teenie weenie bit of practice of justice I had in my heart and head in July, 1963, was that Negroes and whites are equal. The idea was mostly romantic at the time, but that is what I had. It is who I was.

I did not know what I was doing, but I sure as hell found out. On the day after I completed my course work for a degree in history, Mom and Dad took me to Decatur, Georgia. Greek School was beginning in two days and I, Southern Baptist, but from a church where Rev. Will Campbell was an occasional preacher, had applied and been accepted at the

Presbyterian school: Columbia Theological Seminary. Columbia Seminary was a battleground between the fundamentalist segregationists and the liberals. But I knew nothing of that then. My dream, which to this very day faintly wafts in my heart, was to study theology and literature. I wanted to be a college teacher, to work with students and student life issues, and teach American (particularly Southern) literature from the perspective of faith and its issues of

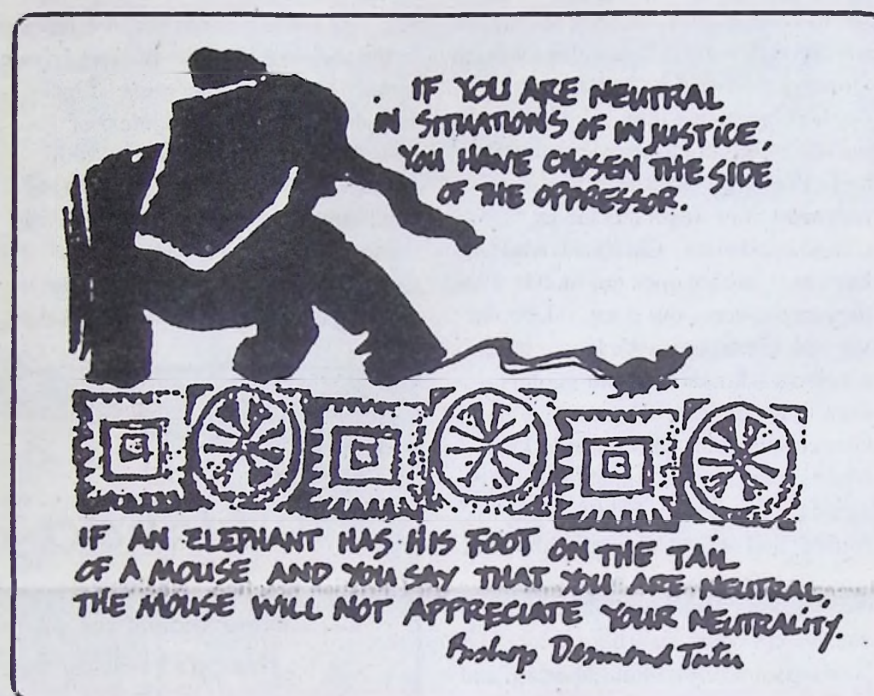
were married in June, 1964. So she rode in the middle of my heart as Dad grumbled about all the 16-wheelers that bounced us along this long and hope-filled highway.

As I rode along with my loving parents, two prominent points were clear to me. I was a Republican. That the Pope was going to dictate to President John F. Kennedy and thus rule America and, like *Time Magazine*, make us into Roman Catholics, was a real fear to white

refused to allow them to come to his home on Senior Sermon night when we went for dessert to various faculty homes. I remained silent for three years, though I did disrupt his class from time to time.

Dr. Neely McCarter was my friend and mentor throughout those years and we stayed very close until Pat and I got a divorce in 1974. He helped me become a Democrat and John F. Kennedy supporter during my second week of Greek School. Although my family life had been difficult at many points during my adolescence and college years, here began a rift that would widen and finally lead to a falling apart of life as I had known it. As was true in the early 1830s (Nat Turner Revolt), and again in the 1850s (Fugitive Slave Law and Harpers Ferry), the 1960s were a time when many a Southern son or daughter were fractured or split apart from family and community by having to take a private and public stand on race. The 1960s were defining for my generation. Not one person could escape the call to decision, though most of my friends and family decided not to decide or moved quietly, at first, toward Barry Goldwater and the Republican Party's Southern Strategy. It was a heart-breaking time filled with pain. It was also exhilarating, filled with meaning and a new relationship with Jesus Christ and America for many of us. It ended up, especially after 1968 and the assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr., costing me my friendship with my dad and ultimately my marriage to Pat. In the Deep South, to be a JFK supporter one was a suspected follower of Martin Luther King, Jr. While at Columbia Theological Seminary, I was occasionally called a "n-gg-r lover" not only for my social stands, but also because I questioned (until ordination exams—Rudolph Bultmann got me through) the Virgin Birth. Fundamentalism, segregation, and the refusal to open a place for the full participation of African Americans and women was all of one piece. It still is.

So it was that on August 28, 1963, a group of us watched on the TV in the Commons Room Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. spell his dream in letters that branded my heart. I now belonged to Martin King and the God to whom he testified. Any other God was a false God, coming not from the Bible, but from the horrors and hatred of the racists and their minions—the Ku Klux Klan. Some in the group of "baby Greek" scholars laughed and picked their noses. I was
(continued on bottom of next page)



meaning and engagement.

I sat in the back seat of the worst car Dad ever bought. It was green in more ways than one, this American Motors vehicle. It was really a Nash, but Nash cars were so terrible that they changed the name. Not an un-American thing to do in a society where the change of address and even our names are great substitutes for the reading of Shakespeare or the Bible. And I did not ride in the back seat alone on I-85 South from Charlotte, North Carolina. Pat Hiott was in my heart. I had met Pat at Pawley's Island during Easter break of 1963 (now named Spring Break to include those who do not worship rabbits). Five of us KA's, leaving our Confederate flags behind, journeyed to the beach in an A Model Ford pick-up with no cab. We made it too! Although we had to abandon the truck in Columbia, South Carolina on the return trip, it was still a better car than the green American Mom and Dad drove. Pat, a junior at Winthrop College, was at the beach with a house full of friends. We met and I kept singing, "I have found the golden Easter egg." She accepted my engagement ring at Christmas nine months later, and we

Baptists. I followed my family's lead in 1960 and supported Richard Nixon. Second, thanks to my powerful pastor, Dr. Carlyle Marney and the Student Christian Association of Presbyterian College, I was a beginner in listening to Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. I believed in racial justice and I wanted to work for it. Because I was a lover of literature and classical music and stood on the edge when I had the courage not to conform, I wondered if I was a homosexual. Where I come from that was a basic identity question about men outside the system. Just 35 years ago, to question the social system and cultural values made many a man feel queer. I am very thankful to the Beat Poets, Lawrence Ferlinghetti and Allen Ginsberg, for helping me make it through those days. This experience is a resource for me in my deep friendship and political advocacy with gays and lesbians.

When we arrived at Columbia Seminary the first person to greet us was Dr. William Childs Robinson. He was the most polite and mannerly prejudiced white racist at the Seminary. We only had two African-American students and Dr. Robinson

Being Daytime People

by Kristen Barger

Now concerning the times and the seasons, brothers and sisters, you do not need to have anything written to you. For you yourselves know very well that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. When they say, "There is peace and security," then sudden destruction will come upon them, as labor pains come upon a pregnant woman, and there will be no escape! But you, beloved, are not in darkness, for that day to surprise you like a thief; for you are all children of light and children of the day; we are not of the night or of darkness. So then let us not fall asleep as others do, but let us keep awake and be sober; for those who sleep sleep at night, and those who are drunk get drunk at night. But since we belong to the day, let us be sober, and put on the breastplate of faith and love, and for a helmet the hope of salvation.

For God has destined us not for wrath but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, so that whether we are awake or asleep we may live with him. Therefore encourage one another and build up each other, as indeed you are doing. (1 Thessalonians 5:1-11)

We've been talking a lot here at the Open Door lately, both in our worship and in our daily life as a community, about confession. So I thought it would be appropriate if I began this reflection with a confession. I confess that when Murphy called a few weeks ago to ask me to preach, I was just a little bit disappointed. Not because I don't like preaching — I do. But I had been hoping that if I were invited to preach sometime here at the Open Door, that it would not be in this long, seemingly endless stretch of Sundays that we've been in since April, now called Ordinary Time. I mean, if Murphy had just waited two more weeks, it would be Advent. Now Advent is really cool — it has all

these great songs and beautiful traditions, like the Advent wreath, and rich theological themes of hope and expectation of the coming of the Messiah. And then there's Ordinary Time—well, the name pretty much says it all.

So, I hung up the phone with Murphy and slouched off to look up the lectionary texts for the 33rd Sunday of Ordinary Time. But when I started reading, I found that the scriptures for this Sunday were anything but ordinary. In fact, they sounded a lot like Advent texts, especially the text from 1st Thessalonians. It is chock full of the Advent themes of living with the hope of the coming of Christ. The only difference is that we have now come full circle in the liturgical cycle, and instead of waiting for the birth of the Messiah with Israel, we are now living in expectation of Christ's return to earth. What I discovered is that the smart people who put together the lectionary—whoever they are—have given us in these last Sundays of Ordinary Time a sort of bridge into the season of Advent. Because the texts for this Sunday show us how to be that church who waits in hopeful expectation for Christ's return,

just as the people of Israel waited and watched and hoped and prepared themselves for the coming of the Messiah.

But the funny thing is, in the churches in which I have worshipped most of my life, we did not talk much about the second coming, or the "day of the Lord," as Paul calls it. Things like the Apocalypse, the Book of Revelation, the Last Judgement—all that mysterious, messy, just weird stuff in the Bible—we mainline folks preferred to leave these matters to those kooky right-wing Christians. Just give us the moral message for the morning, and we'll deal with the Second Coming when (and if) it ever happens.

And of course, it is not hard to understand why folks might want to try to avoid texts like this one in 1st Thessalonians; they aren't exactly the most comforting images you'll find in the Bible. Paul tells us that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night, just when you least expect it, just when you think that everything is locked up tight and calm and quiet and you've set the alarm and you're safe in your warm soft bed — that's when the judgement will come and when it comes, there'll be no escaping it, anymore than a pregnant woman can escape the pains of labor.

Well, who wouldn't be afraid of something like that?

Well, we Christians wouldn't. At least that is what Paul says. He says that we are children of the light, or as Clarence Jordan translates this phrase, we are daytime people. We are never in the night to be surprised by this thief, to be caught unprepared for God's judgement. Of course, the night time Paul speaks of is not that natural cycle where the sun hides behind the earth. What he is talking about is a night of the soul — a world in which people are always getting drunk (with various substances and habits), sleeping it off, and getting drunk again—a world which seeks numbness, oblivion to the reign of God, so that the powers of darkness and death may continue to have their way. And even though we are daytime people, we know this nighttime world. It's the world where we live, a world which is *drunk* on greed and consumption, *high* on selfishness and self-indulgence, *sedated* by television and movies and sports and *asleep* to the cries of those who suffer and

(continued on page 10)

("Walking," continued from page 6) not alone in being changed in the center of my soul. I knew this: I had to do something. I knew not what. But Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. had called me to action. I could not sit and listen. I had to move.

Within two months I decided what I would do. Greek School had ended and the fall semester was moving along. I had learned that the Greeks were bad and the Hebrews were good, that Schleiermacher had ruined theology, but Barth had rescued it. I had not learned that the Presbyterian Church US, formerly the Presbyterian Church of the Confederate States of America, was the only mainline denomination not to endorse the March on Washington. I was living in the dorm room next door to the now acclaimed American Church Historian, Dr. T. Erskine Clarke. He would lock his bed each night to his roommate's bicycle in hopes that no one would steal his upper berth. I decided to move out of the dorm and into a boarding house run and occupied by Negroes. (I still said Nigra thinking it was correct. The next year at a conference with Interdenominational Theological Center students I was instructed publicly to enunciate "kneecrow." Though done with patience and humor, I was humiliated. I have never said Nigra since).

The Atlanta newspaper listed numerous boarding houses in the

Negro section of downtown Decatur between Agnes Scott College and Decatur Presbyterian Church. I called several places. "Sonny, you got the wrong place." "No! all the rooms are rented." "Honey, this here is a Colored boarding house." I was very disappointed and I gave up. Since Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s speech, however, I have wanted to live an interracial life. One of the purposes of the founding of the Open Door Community in 1981 was to have a home where Black and white live together. In one sense the Open Door Community is my Decatur boarding house dream which was my response to Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. branding my heart with his love and vision.

One night I went down Kirk Road to the home of Neely and Jean McCarter, a safe place and haven for me during my seminary days. I explained my sadness to Neely and asked him what I could do. Neely linked me with an afternoon program at Trinity Presbyterian Church just across the tracks from Agnes Scott College. Trinity had been founded some years earlier as a way to keep African Americans from coming to Decatur Presbyterian Church. Jesus was fine for Blacks; and the church members were generous in paying for the land and building. But integrated worship, while the main point of the Book of Acts, was in violation of the

Southern Way of Life, a higher norm for Christian practice. Neely explained that I could work with the afternoon program of games and studies with African-American children. The seminary student who was heading the program was very conservative. His concern was for their souls and before the children could have snacks they had to repeat the answers to the questions of the weekly selection of the Shorter Westminster Catechism. The church was located in the very neighborhood where I had tried to rent a room. I was glad to go even under the guise of a soul-saving rather than a justice-establishing program. This was the first time I had been with African Americans. This was the first Black church I attended even though the preacher was a white fundamentalist seminarian. I kept at it for a while. Then the demands of school were too many. In November, President John F. Kennedy was murdered. In December, Pat Iliott of Walterboro, South Carolina accepted my engagement ring. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. kept marching in Birmingham, Alabama. Neither dogs, nor fire hoses, nor the killing of 4 little girls in a church bombing could stop the movement. Mom and Dad still had that green car that wasn't any good.

Ed Loring is a partner at the Open Door Community.

Taking Back the Power

by John Cole Vodicka

(Editor's note: This article is reprinted from "Freedomways," (November/December 1999), the newsletter of the Prison & Jail Project in Americus, Georgia, where John Cole Vodicka serves as Director. He and Dee along with their sons Gabe, Luke, and Sam are former Resident Volunteers of the Open Door Community.)

On November 3, 1999, Smithville, Georgia, Municipal Judge Jim Thurman ruled that the city ordinance used in an attempt to stop this year's *Freedomwalk* when it passed through Smithville was unconstitutional. Judge Thurman further ordered the "parading without a permit" charges dropped against the six *Freedomwalkers*--dubbed the "Chicken Pic 6"--who in September defied the police chief's order to stop and continued walking through the small southwest Georgia town.

After a three-hour court hearing where the Chicken Pic 6 attorneys introduced a half-dozen historic U.S. Supreme Court cases that protected citizens' rights to free speech and assembly, Judge Thurman determined that the Smithville ordinance was "unconstitutional on its face" because it allowed the Smithville mayor unilateral power to approve or deny the permit, and that there was no

means for someone to appeal the mayor's decision.

Quoting from *Shuttlesworth v. Alabama*, Judge Thurman said, "It is settled by a long line of (Supreme Court) decisions that when an ordinance which, like this one, makes the peaceful enjoyment of freedoms which the Constitution guarantees contingent upon the uncontrolled will of an official--as by requiring a permit or license which may be granted or withheld in the discretion of such an official--is an unconstitutional censorship, or prior restraint, upon the enjoyment of those freedoms."

"It is this Court's opinion and decision," Thurman ruled, "that the ordinance of the city of Smithville is unconstitutional on its face."

The hearing preceded what would have been the trial of the six *Freedomwalkers*--Carrie Thomas and Gwendolyn Gay of Smithville; Elizabeth Dede of the Open Door Community; Lee Formwalt of Bloomington, Indiana; and Prison & Jail Project staff members Tim Mellen and John Cole Vodicka--each of whom were stopped on September 17 and charged by Smithville Police Chief Jim Wright with "parading without a permit." The six were part of a larger group of people participating in this year's *Freedomwalk*, the annual journey for justice through southwest Georgia sponsored by the Prison & Jail Project. This year's walk took marchers 80 miles over a six-day period, starting in Blakely, Georgia and winding up in Americus. The *Freedomwalkers* were in Smithville on day five of the walk, having marched some 65 miles to that point. Chief Wright's attempt to stop the walk was the first time in four years that any law enforcement agency or official interfered with the march's progress.

Had the "Chicken Pic 6" gone to trial, lawyers were prepared to present evidence that the Prison & Jail Project was being singled out and selectively prosecuted by the Smithville mayor and police chief because the Prison & Jail Project has successfully challenged police abuse in the town. This past year the Prison & Jail Project along with courageous African American citizens of Smithville, have forced the resignation or firing of three white police officers who routinely harassed threatened or arrested Black residents or motorists. Just prior to the *Freedomwalk* this year, the Prison & Jail Project had placed most of the blame for police misbehavior on the shoulders of Chief Wright, who it said seemed to lack the ability to



The "Chicken Pic 6" in front of the Lee County Courthouse, Leesburg, GA. L to R: Tim Mellen, Elizabeth Dede, Lee Formwalt, Carrie Thomas, John Cole Vodicka, and Gwendolyn Gay.

hire police officers who were anything but "bullies and rogues." The trial would have also revealed that the city of Smithville had never issued a parade permit to anyone before, nor required a permit in the past for the town's "Chicken Pic Festival" (from which the Chicken Pic 6 took their name) or any other public event, including the 1996 running of the Olympic Torch through the city limits.

Just before the November 3 court hearing, Police Chief Wright announced he was resigning effective November 5. It was perhaps the most significant victory for the African-American citizens of Smithville in their struggle to truly govern their town.

The Chicken Pic 6 were ably represented pro bono by Albany attorneys Billy Mathis, Caroline Cormack and Phil Cannon. Ironically, Mathis is also a Lee County Commissioner and head of the Lee County Republican Party! "I took this case on," Mathis said, "because I was just sick that a town in Lee County would do something like this--suppress the First Amendment--to people walking peaceably along the highway in 1999."

The courtroom victory was celebrated by dozens of Smithville residents and southwest Georgians who attended the hearing to support the Chicken Pic 6. Following Judge Thurman's ruling, folks gathered back in Smithville that afternoon to talk more about what needs to be done to "take back the power" in their town where three of every four residents is African American. A coalition is forming and a grassroots effort is now underway that will certainly continue to monitor the police department and city hall, working to establish democracy and racial justice in a town largely controlled by white interests. †



In November, we said good-bye to our friend of many years, Hal Clements. Hal is pictured here with his wife, Cherry, walking to raise funds for one of the many organizations they have supported with their prayers, their resources, their hands and hearts and feet. When Hal retired from his life work in education and curriculum development, he went full-time and hand-in-hand with Cherry to work for justice, peace and compassion.

We have been blessed from our beginnings at the Open Door to count Hal and Cherry as our faithful supporters. We will miss his kind and loving face appearing at our door with clothes, sandwiches, and always an encouraging word, and we give thanks for his faithful journey toward the Beloved Community.

The Education of a Historian

by Lee W. Formwalt

As I watched the young Smithville, Georgia, chief of police fill out my citation form for "parading without a permit," I glanced at my half-dozen companions on the annual Freedomwalk and thought about how I had come to this spot on a lonely two-lane road in southwest Georgia. I also wondered if this was an appropriate situation for the incoming executive director of the Organization of American Historians to be in just a few days before moving to Bloomington, Indiana, to start his new job. The more I reflected on this, the more I realized that my career as a historian had led me both to this isolated spot on Georgia Highway 118 and to Bloomington.

When many of us look back to the time when we first developed an interest in history, we often find a teacher or two who was energetic and stimulating and able to develop that curiosity about and love for the past. For me it was Sr. Marie de Lourdes at Cathedral High School in Springfield, Massachusetts, who shared with her students a passion for American history. At Catholic University and the University of Massachusetts, several professors stood out and eventually became models for me in one way or another as I entered my career as a historian. Edward C. Carter II stimulated my interest in early American history and eventually directed my dissertation when I returned to Catholic University for the Ph.D. Max Bloomfield, Catholic's legal and constitutional historian, was the only professor I knew who, with his relaxed and engaging demeanor, could fill a class on Friday afternoon at 4 p.m. At the University of Massachusetts, Stephen Nissenbaum showed us how the often prosaic land and probate records in the local courthouse could yield important data to help answer some of the critical historiographical questions of the day and even pose new questions. At the same time, in Stephen Oates's Civil War seminar I learned many of the skills that turn ordinary sentences into sparkling prose; there I began to appreciate and enjoy the fine art of good writing.

My work in editing began shortly after returning to Washington to work on my Ph.D. At The Papers of Benjamin Henry Latrobe project at the Maryland Historical Society in Baltimore, I learned the many different aspects of editing historical

documents, completed my dissertation, and entered the job market at one of the worst times for new history Ph.D.s to find a job in academia.

Hard work is a key, even indispensable, ingredient to success; but a little bit of luck often makes the difference. It was this combination which brought me to Albany State College in the fall of 1977. A member of the history department there left to complete her doctorate. Her successor soon landed another position, however, which left ASC scrambling for a replacement. I was that replacement.

As a young white man with Ph.D. in hand, I knew I had the knowledge to be a successful teacher at one of Georgia's three public historically black colleges. Whether it was my whiteness or my arrogance as a newly minted Ph.D., I was convinced that I would be doing the teaching, and my black students would be doing the learning. I hoped that I eventually would be able to leave this isolated rural region of the South with its poorly prepared students for the much more stimulating climate and culture of a major research university. Little did I know that I would be spending more than two decades in Albany, Georgia, and that my learning was just beginning.

It started when I was assigned to teach the methods class for history majors. I decided to give my students a taste of what historians actually do in their research, especially in discovering and exploring primary sources. At the local library, genealogists had built a large collection of U.S. census records on microfilm, and our courthouse held the standard cache of deeds, wills and other probate records, court records, and local newspapers that went back to the county's creation in 1854. But before I gave them an assignment, I had to familiarize myself with the local history and what I found was very little, and even that was not very useful. The local D.A.R. chapter had written the standard history of Dougherty County in 1924. This four-hundred-page work about a Georgia Black Belt county had only a three-page chapter on "The Negro in Albany."

From the start, I worked alongside my students studying the rich African American history of the region. After surveying the previous twenty-five-year run of The Georgia Historical Quarterly and finding only

two articles on southwest Georgia, I helped the local historical society found The Journal of Southwest Georgia History, which I edited annually until this year. I then secured an NEH Fellowship for college teachers that provided me a year's leave to research and begin writing a history of nineteenth-century Dougherty County, now a fourteen-year project that continues my scholarly connection with southwest Georgia.

The more I researched southwest Georgia and its African-American past, the more I understood how that past connected with the present. Although my scholarly work was in the nineteenth century, I was learning a lot about the twentieth-century civil rights movement in Albany. Martin Luther King, Jr. came to Albany in 1961-1962 and left having failed to achieve his goal of desegregating the city. Although the local civil rights movement eventually succeeded in accomplishing many of its goals, I was becoming increasingly aware of what remained to be done.

As the study of whiteness began to take off in the 1990s, and we learned more about the phenomenon of white privilege, my understanding of local history grew. I reached the conclusion that the historian who understands the problems of his or her community and their historical origins cannot sit back and share those insights only with his or her college classes. In 1996 while several of us were starting to raise awareness of and money for an Albany civil rights museum project, the Prison and Jail Project of Americus, Georgia, announced the first Freedomwalk that would proceed through several southwest Georgia counties drawing attention to the poor conditions of the region's prisons and the institutional racism in its criminal justice system. As a historian I knew the origins of these problems and saw my participation in the Freedomwalk as a way to carry that history to people outside the classroom.

Last fall the Freedomwalk culminated in Camilla, Georgia, on the 130th anniversary of the Camilla Massacre. I had researched and written about that event a decade earlier, but no one in Camilla had ever publicly acknowledged the tragedy. For the first time, the history of the Camilla Massacre and the names of the twelve known victims killed on September 19, 1868, were proclaimed publicly on the courthouse steps in

Mitchell County. Two months later the \$1.2 million Albany Civil Rights Movement Museum was opened to public acclaim. A dozen historians, who had been with me at Harvard eighteen months earlier at an NEH summer institute on Teaching the History of the Southern Civil Rights Movement, came to Albany and demonstrated the public role that historians can play outside the classroom.

My experiences as a historian in Albany, as editor of The Journal of Southwest Georgia History, and in the past two years as dean of the Albany State University Graduate School and president of the Georgia Association of Historians, led me to apply for my new position as Organization of American Historians executive director. They also led me to my encounter with the Smithville, Georgia, police chief on Highway 118. In both places I try to encourage a deeper and better understanding of our past. Please join me in sharing our passion for history. I welcome your comments anytime.

Editor's note: Lee W. Formwalt is Executive Director of the Organization of American Historians. His e-mail is lee@oah.org. He returned to southwest Georgia earlier this month to stand trial along with five other marchers for violating the Smithville, Georgia, parade permit ordinance. The charges were dropped, however, when the court determined the ordinance to be an unconstitutional infringement on the First Amendment guarantee of free speech. This article was reprinted with permission from the November 1999 issue of the "Organization of Historians Newsletter."

Martin Luther King, Jr. Day Meal for the Homeless

We'll be serving ham, rice, black-eyed peas, greens, cornbread, and dessert.

Please contact us if you can help provide any of these items.

Being Daytime People

(continued from page 7)

hunger and thirst. It is a world which says "there is peace" but which shoots up on images of violence, inhales the sweet glories of war and chugs down the lifeblood of the poor as if it were living water. It is a world which says "there is security," when we lock ourselves away from the people in our own streets for something called personal security, when we have to train soldiers down at Fort Benning to torture and kill in other countries in the interest of something called national security and when we won't pay the people of this rich nation a living wage so we can preserve something called economic security. This drunken sleepy world of doublespeak and death—this is the world which will be surprised by the day of the Lord, this is the night into which Christ will steal, to bring his light of truth and love and mercy and judgement.

But you, beloved, says Paul, you already live in that light. You are already in the daytime, in the day of the Lord. For you, Jesus has already come, in the grace of the salvation which is yours now. You already share in the resurrected life of Jesus, which means you don't have anything to fear—not even death. You don't have to hide your fear by trying to drown it in possessions. You don't have to protect yourself by making sure you've got more than your neighbor, or by killing your neighbors to make sure they do not take what is yours. You are free—free to live the risky, foolish, joyful life to which Jesus has called you. You are daytime people—so do not worry!

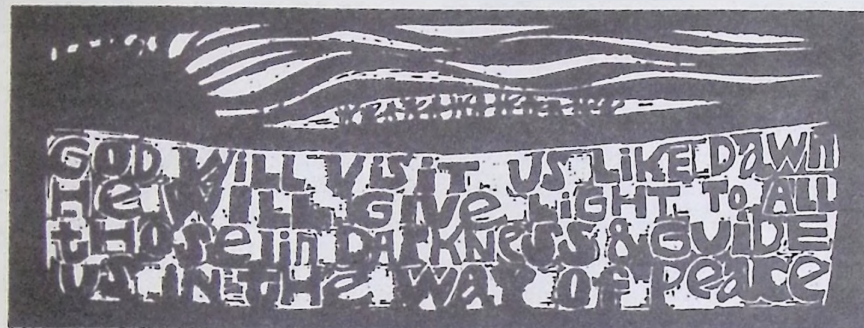
This of course, is good news. But it is good news which still puts us in a little bit of a bind. At the risk of sounding something like an old Kenny Rogers song, we're daytime people in a nighttime world. Another way of saying it which doesn't sound like Kenny Rogers is that we are a people living between the times. Because we believe in the resurrection of Jesus Christ and because we live with the hope of sharing in that resurrection, in a way, the day of the Lord which Paul talks about has already come for us. We already know how this story is going to play out, for as Paul says "God has destined us not for wrath but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ." But we live in a world which still awaits judgement, which is still in rebellion against the reign of God. We know that the judgement will come, though we know not what it will be, and we know that God's reign will come, although we do not know when. In the meantime, however, we must live *now* as a witness to the light of God's reign in a

world that wants so desperately to turn off the lights and go to sleep.

That is why, until Christ does return, daytime people will always be in struggle. It is natural, isn't it? We go around shedding light on stuff that likes to stay in the darkness. We make all this noise and wake up those who are asleep and drunk. No wonder when we try to go over to Emory University to have a conversation about getting the money that they owe to Grady Hospital, they

focused, be aware of who you are and what you're doing and why—you've got to be, as we say at the Open Door, intentional, because you can't be daytime people by going with the flow. And you've got to do it together, because this wide-awake, on-the-edge life is more than any person can do alone.

So there's no way to be daytime people in this world without struggle, and there's no way to maintain that struggle without a



Meinrad Craighead

call out the campus security (there is that security word again) and the county police. We look around at each other and laugh and say, "what on earth could they be afraid of?" But what they are afraid of is that we're going to wake them up. They are on a good, long drunk over there, and they don't really want to get sober. They do not want to be awakened to how they are hurting the poor by their greed. They do not want to have the light of justice shining in their eyes. They just want us to leave them alone and let them go back to sleep.

Paul, of course, was *well* aware of the struggle of being daytime people in this world. That's why he tells the Thessalonians not to waste any energy on trying to figure out when the day of the Lord will be—a message that could stand to be repeated to Christian book publishers these days. Look, he says, calculating the day of the Lord—that's just not your job. That's God's job. Your job is simply to stay awake, to stay sober, to live on the edge of your seats in a world that is constantly telling you just to relax and take a nice long nap. That will be plenty enough to keep you busy. You've got to read the newspaper, and look for what's not there. You've got to seek out the voices of those who are left out of the so-called peace and security that the powers of this world brag about. You've got to pray and read scripture all the time—before you serve the breakfast and after you serve the soup kitchen and when you sit down to lunch, before you go down to the School of the Americas and while you're there and when you get back. You've got to stay awake, stay

community, as Paul says, to encourage one another and build each other up in the hope of our salvation. Maybe that's why in the months that I have been worshipping at the Open Door I have been so struck by the emphasis on the return of Christ. I particularly can hear the voices of Tamara Puffer and Dick Rustay saying that everytime we eat the body and drink the blood at this table we proclaim Christ's death and resurrection until Christ comes again—and come again he will! Now I don't know if that's a standard line in the Presbyterian service or not, but even if it is, I've worshipped in lots of Presbyterian churches and I never remember that particular phrase hitting me with the impact that it always does when we are gathered together here at the Open Door. And I don't think that's just coincidence. For the life of a community like the Open Door to be sustained, we must always be proclaiming with fervor that Christ will come again. In fact, I think you could say that if we didn't believe that Christ was coming back, if we didn't believe that there will be a "day of the Lord" in which this world will be judged with the judgement and mercy of God, when all that is wrong will be set right—if we didn't believe that, there would be no reason for there to be an Open Door. Nothing about our life here would make any sense if we didn't believe that Christ will come again. If Christ isn't coming back, why not get all the stuff you can, any way you can get it? Why not have more cars than people in a household? If Christ isn't coming back, why not pollute the Chattahoochee and then sell water in bottles for profit? Why worry if your

sister or brother is going hungry? If Christ isn't coming back, why bother trying to overcome the terrible chasm that has been wedged between Black and white? Why not just maintain the status quo—white people trying to hold onto their privilege and black people trying to steer clear of those whites who have caused them so much pain? If Christ isn't coming back, why not get drunk, get high, numb yourself with entertainment or food or shopping? If this broken world is all there is, and death really gets the final answer, then you better just look out for number one, live it up while you can and not let anyone else get in the way of your good time, for however long it lasts.

But every week, we in this community stand and say what we believe—that Christ has died, Christ is risen and Christ will come again. And we continue to struggle together to live as daytime people in a nighttime world, because we know that the way things are, are not the way things will always be, that the powers of darkness and death will not rule forever, and that until Christ does come, we live as a sign of Christ's reign in our lives and his coming reign over the whole world. But this life of struggle is not a burden which we carry in order to somehow gain God's salvation. In fact, it is just the reverse. It is because of God's gift of salvation which we have *already received* that we are *able* to live in the daytime, to live this good life: a life in which we are not free of struggle, but we are free of fear; a life in which we are awake, yes to the pain and injustice of this world, but also to the abundant mercy and love of our God who came into this world and died for it so that we might be free from the power of death. A life where we know real peace and security, which cannot be built or bought or bribed, but only received from the one who is the Prince of Peace and the Rock of Salvation. This is the *good* life of hope to which we have been called as daytime people, and to which we hope to call others out of the nighttime of our world. This is the *crazy* life of hope which God has graciously enabled daytime people to live, from the Thessalonians at the beginning of the first millenium to us on the edge of the third. This is the *joyful* life of the hope which God will sustain in us until Christ comes again—and come again he will. AMEN!

Kristen Barger is a graduate of Duke University Divinity School and is currently a Resident Volunteer at the Open Door Community.

Peace and Blessings,

I commend you on your publication, *Hospitality*, and on your selfless efforts on behalf of the hurt and pained. I would like to learn more about your work, especially relating to pen pals for prisoners. I am associate chaplain in the Washington, D.C. jail, ministering to about 140 residents in person, weekly mail and phone. (I enclose) a copy of "Reflection Notes" I distribute weekly.

Murphy Davis' article "Power, Privilege, and Privatization, Part II" [*Hospitality*, August 1999] was extremely well done and on the mark. Privatization of America's prisons is an intense evil in sheep's clothes.

God bless you,

Brother Lou Schwartz
Chevy Chase, MD

Dear Ed,

I just finished reading the latest *Hospitality*. A very excellent issue, and it made me think that the archives of the Open Door contain some of the finest liberation writings this century. You should compile some of the most profound of the articles over the years and publish it. Many would buy it, and it would make a serious contribution to the struggle. I often think of Ann Braden's lament re: the back issues of the old Southern Patriot and how that is lost to history. Think about it.

Peace,

David Billings
New Orleans, LA

(Editor's note: David Billings is a Methodist pastor and a lead trainer of the undoing racism organization: The Peoples' Institute for Survival and Beyond based in New Orleans.)

Dear Ed,

Having known S.A. Williams well as a regular guest in our shelter [at Druid Hills Presbyterian Church] and having treated dozens of his seizures, I appreciated your article on our friend. I regret I didn't know about the service.

Enclosed is our change of address for *Hospitality*—one of the few publications that always gets read. I have mixed feelings about leaving Druid Hills, the shelter, and my close friends...as we move to North Georgia. I will still be teaching at Emory 2-3 days each week, so don't be surprised if I drop in.

Stan Foster
Sautec, GA

(Editor's note: Dr. Stanley Foster is a long-time friend who has served the homeless on Ponce de Leon for

many years, even as he traveled around the world as an epidemiologist for the Center for Disease Control. He continues to teach in the Emory School of Public Health. He and Dottie and their children welcomed us to Ponce de Leon by sharing our first Christmas dinner with us in December, 1981. We miss them.)



Dear Friends,

Thank you for sharing about Mr. Williams' life and death.

Marjorie Lacy
McDonough Presbyterian
Church
McDonough, GA

Dear Wonderful Family at the Open Door,

Grace and peace to you in the midst of your valiant work. I continue to enjoy *Hospitality* as an inspiring study break and want to thank you for all your efforts, both in writing, prayer and action.

I took summer Greek and this fall began full time M.Div. studies. Please keep me on the mailing list. Thanks.

Carrie Neff
Princeton Theological Seminary
Princeton, NJ

Dear Open Door Community,

As always, the stamps you send so regularly are much appreciated—raised this way to date, over \$46,670 to feed the hungry, all because people like you care!

Grace, peace, and hope,

Arthur M. Field
Plains, GA

(Editor's note: Arthur M. Field collects postage stamps to donate proceeds that go to ministries like the Open Door. Used postage stamps ordinarily thrown away, can be sold to raise money to feed the

hungry in the US and abroad. Large commemoratives (like Olympics, Black Heritage, Lighthouse, etc.) and all foreign stamps wanted, along with any collections (no standard issues such as Flags, Love, etc.) You can send stamps to Arthur M. Field at: 2124 Hwy 280 West, Plains, GA 31780.)

Dear Friends,

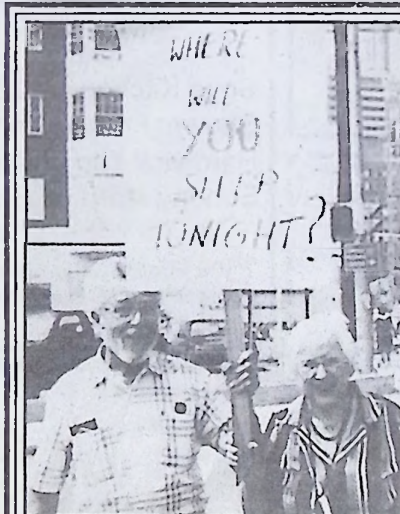
... We think of you often. As we read *Hospitality* we are grateful for your witness and thankful for the situation we are in here. Austria has good socialized medicine and tends to care well for those on the fringe. The results of the recent election were, however, not to our liking. The "FPO" (Freedom Party of Austria) which is now second in power, is neo-Nazi in their thinking although they deny it left and right. Thankfully they get the press they deserve here in Europe and even farther. The Israeli foreign minister threatened a "rethinking of relations with Austria" if the FPO came into power in any way, shape or form. Our Chancellor

complained about the bad press, but we pray that it will continue so that Austrians will realize how the FPO is really seen. (Their leader is definitely a racist although he claims to just be a democrat.) Anyway, it's on our minds and hearts. We pray for movement to the "left" rather than this slide to the right that this election demonstrated.

As a family we are well and seeing God at work in our midst. May you too be seeing God at work in your midst.

Donna and Norm
Heinrichs-Gale
Mittersill, Austria

(Editor's note: Donna and Norman were volunteers at the Atlanta Mennonite House for two years in the mid-1980s and Norman worked as a full-time volunteer at the Open Door. Pictured below, with their children Glynis, Graham, and Anna, they are directors of the ministry of Schloss Mittersill in Mittersill, Austria.)



GLADYS RUSTAY

Frances Pauley

Stories of
Struggle and
Triumph

Edited by
Murphy Davis

Foreword by
Julian Bond

Afterwords by

Marcia Borowski, Mary Eastland & Lewis Sinclair, and Jim Martin

Frances Pauley: Stories of Struggle and Triumph is a rich collection of the highlights of this remarkable woman's lifelong commitment to justice and freedom. In an age when it's easy to feel overwhelmed and powerless about making change, and hard sometimes just to keep on keeping on, this treasure trove of stories is an inspiring balm for the soul.

-Joyce Hollyday

- An Open Door Community Book -

for your copy, please send a \$5 donation to the Open Door Community

WE ARE OPEN. . .

Monday through Saturday: telephones are answered from 9:00am until noon, from 2:00 until 6:00pm. The building is open from 9:00am until 8:30pm those days (Both phone and door are not answered 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 are open from 7:30am until noon.** Sunday afternoon our door is answered until 5:00pm.

* * *

OUR MINISTRY. . .

SOUP KITCHEN: Wednesday-Saturday,

11 am - 12 noon

SUNDAY BREAKFAST: Sunday morning

7:30 am

WEEKDAY BREAKFAST: Monday-Friday,

6:45 am

SHOWERS & CHANGE OF CLOTHES:

Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday,
2-4pm (Be sure to call; schedule varies)

USE OF PHONE: Monday-Saturday, 9am-noon, 2:00pm-5pm

CLARIFICATION MEETINGS: Selected Tuesdays, 7:30-9pm.

WEEKEND RETREATS: Four times each year (for our household and volunteers/supporters), next retreat is our Advent Retreat December 3 - 5.

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

If you have found Hospitality helpful and would like to know more about the Open Door Community, please fill out, clip and send this coupon to The Open Door Community * 910 Ponce de Leon Ave., NE * Atlanta, GA 30306-4212.

_____ Please ADD to the Hospitality mailing list.

_____ Please accept my tax deductible donation to the Open Door Community.

_____ I'm interested in volunteering. Please give me more information.

_____ I would like to explore a six to twelve-month commitment as a Resident Volunteer at the Open Door. Please send more information.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ St _____ Zip _____ + _____

Phone _____

Open Door Community Worship

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

Please join us!

- | | |
|------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| January 2 | 5 p.m. Worship at 910;
Dr. Ndugu TOfori-Atta, preaching |
| January 9 | 5 p.m. Worship at 910;
Ed Loring, preaching |
| January 16 | 5 p.m. Worship at 910;
Celebration of Martin Luther King, Jr. Sunday
Dr. Marsha Snulligan Haney, preaching |
| January 23 | 5 p.m. Worship at 910;
Murphy Davis, preaching |
| January 30 | 5 - 5:30 p.m. Eucharist
5:45 Music Night |

Are You Moving?

Bulk rate mail is not forwarded by the U.S. Postal Service. Send Hospitality, 910 Ponce de Leon Ave., NE, Atlanta, GA, 30306-4212, your new mailing address as soon as you know it. Please enclose the mailing label from your most recent issue.

Thank you!

Clarification Meetings at the Open Door

Plan to join us on selected Tuesday evenings for presentations and discussions of topics relevant to the justice struggle. Call us for dates and times.

Volunteer Needs

Soup Kitchen servers & cooks on Fridays
Shower helpers on Wednesday - Friday
Hardwick Trip drivers
Sunday Morning Breakfast servers

If you would like more information about volunteering, contact Brenda Smith at 404-874-9652.

Medical Clinic Supplies

Can you help with the medicine cabinet?

aspirin
Tylenol
decongestants
non-alcohol based cough syrup
Band-aids and bandages
antibiotic cream or ointment
hydrogen peroxide
isopropyl alcohol

Open Door Community Needs

JEANS
T-Shirts
Men's Work Shirts
Quick Grits
Cheese
Coffee
Multi-Vitamins
MARTA Tokens
Postage Stamps
Underwear for Men
Men's Shoes (all sizes)

Meat for the soup in
our Soup Kitchen
Sandwiches
Table Lamps
Floor Lamps
Chest of Drawers
Small Drop-leaf Table
Vacuum Cleaners
Blankets !!!!

Disposable Razors
Women's Underwear
Toothbrushes
Deodorant
Vaseline
Towels
Socks
Shampoo
Men's Belts
Washcloths

From 11am til 1:30pm, Monday through Saturday, our attention is focused on serving the soup kitchen and household lunch. As much as we appreciate

your coming, this is a difficult time for us to receive donations. When you can come before 11 or after 1:30, it would be helpful. THANK YOU!