

HOSPITALITY

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910 Ponce de Leon Ave., NE, Atlanta, GA 30306-4212 • 404/874-9652

vol. 12, no. 3

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

March 1993

Frances Pauley

Stories of Struggle and Triumph

Edited by Murphy Davis

When Frances Pauley comes through the back door and rounds the corner in the back hall of 910 Ponce, the lights come on. Faces light up, arms reach out, greetings are shouted and our spirits rise.

Frances was a friend to the Open Door before there was an Open Door and through the years she has nurtured us, encouraged us, picked us up when we were down, laughed and cried and marched and picketed with us. And always there have been the good stories: stories out of her past that inform, enlighten, help us to analyze the present, and sometimes just make us laugh.

Several years ago we began the tradition of Frances' storytelling on a Sunday evening close to her September birthday. In several installments we will share some of these wonderful stories.

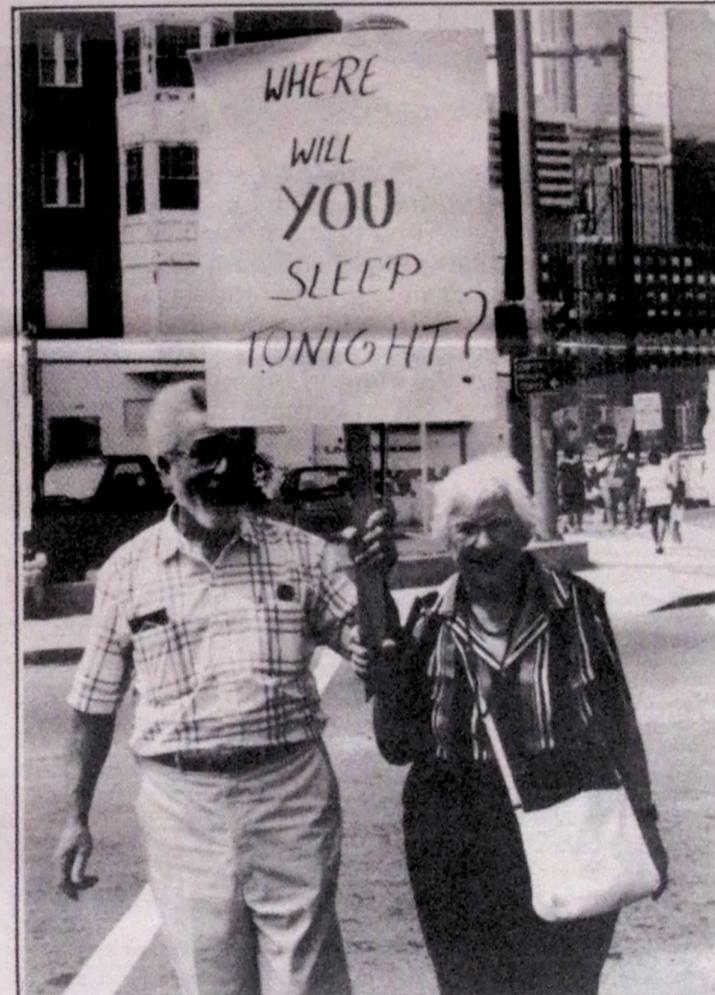
Frances Freeborn was born on September 11, 1905 in Ohio. In 1908, her family moved to Decatur, Georgia where she completed high school (and was the first girl to bob her hair) and graduated from Agnes Scott College with a degree in math and a reputation as a promising playwright and actress.

She married William Pauley, a landscape architect, and had two daughters and seemed headed for a normal comfortable middle class life. During the depression she worked in a free medical clinic in Decatur and she started the first free lunch program in the public schools of DeKalb County.

In 1940 Frances began to lobby in the Georgia State Legislature and in 1951 was elected state president of the League of Women Voters. Her first act as president was to strike the "white membership only" clause from the by-laws. After the 1954 Brown vs. Board of Education decision she decided that she would not belong to any groups that were not biracial and withdrew her family's membership in the Druid Hills Country Club.

Through much of the 1960s Frances was Executive Director of the Georgia Human Relations Council whose mission was to set up biracial committees across the state. She worked tenaciously for civil rights and de-segregation and was maligned, threatened and called everything but a child of God.

In the late '60s, at the age of 62, she took an assignment as Field Representative for the Department of Health Education and Welfare to work for school de-segregation in Mississippi. When she left that position after five years, she spent most of the rest of the 1970s and '80s representing the Georgia Poverty Rights Organization lobbying the Georgia General Assembly on



Frances Pauley marching with Lewis Sinclair

behalf of poor people. She worked hard for funding for Aid to Families with Dependent Children, medical care, AIDS research, care of the elderly, etc. During these years state Senator Julian Bond described her as "everybody's grandmother and nobody's fool."

When People for Urban Justice (PUJ) was formed out of the Open Door in the spring of 1990 Frances became Honorary Chair. During the 1990 occupation of the Imperial Hotel she would come down every afternoon and sit among the homeless folks in a lawn chair on the sweltering pavement. The homeless folks dubbed her "Mother PUJ." The name has stuck.

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HOSPITALITY



910 Ponce de Leon

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 and about others involved in ministry to Atlanta's homeless, please contact any of the following:

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Newspaper:

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Layout--John Cole Vodicka and Gladys Rustay

Circulation--Phillip Williams and a multitude of earthly hosts and guests

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In recent years Frances has received numerous honors and awards including a Doctorate of Laws from Emory University, a national award from Common Cause and she has been featured in *Newsweek* magazine and a 1991 book titled *Going Strong*. "I just don't know how to act now that I've gotten so damned respectable," she has complained on more than one occasion. And then she recalls her friend Mr. W.W. Law of Savannah who was recently asked: "How do you account for the honors and accolades you are receiving these days? Why only a few years ago lots of people wanted to kill you." "Simple," said Mr. Law. "I've just outlived my enemies."

So be it.

—Murphy Davis

The Stories....Part I

First John says "Let's put love into action and make it real." (Cotton Patch version)

When I was a little girl I used to love fairy stories. But when I'd heard a few I would turn to my mother and say, "I want a really truly story now." I used to like the "really truly" stories best. And I guess I still like the real things best, the true things, the things we know are happening. With whatever love we have we can see the real things-the hard and painful and bad things-and make them a little bit better.

I've always had a simple faith. I went to Sunday School as a child and wanted to be like Jesus. I liked the song "Give of Your Best to the Master" which meant to me: don't give your old rags to poor people. Give your best dress-the one you love. I've always been grateful for those things that I learned.

One of the things we did in the early 1930s was to establish a clinic in Decatur. At that time there was no way for poor people to get any kind of medical assistance unless they could find a doctor who would let them come in the back door. If they were shabbily dressed they usually couldn't sit in the waiting room because that might scare off the paying patients.

So we established a clinic. We weren't afraid; we just decided to do it. We began to get a little money here and there and somebody gave us an old place; we got doctors to volunteer their time, and we started the clinic.

This was the first time that I really got to know and love poor people as individuals: as people. It meant everything to me because all of a sudden my life was just really opened up and I could see what love meant. It mattered to me that I had a great love for these beautiful people.

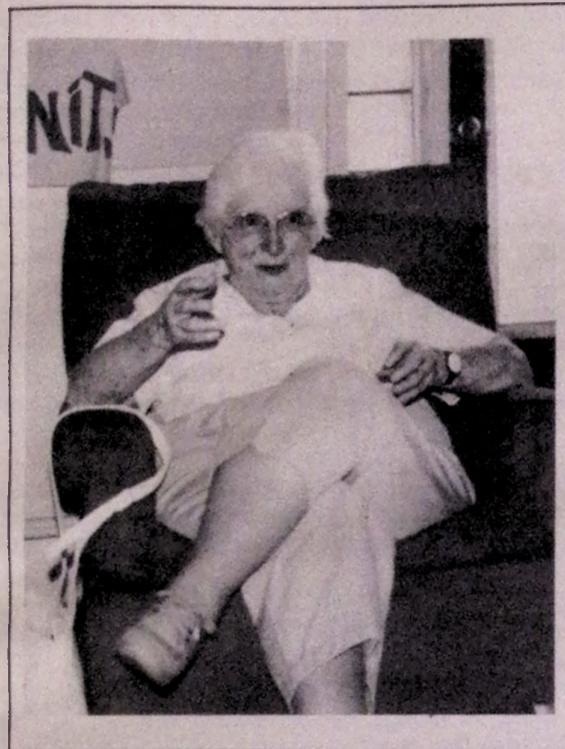
I learned a lot about race in that clinic. I learned a lot that upset the myths I had known. For instance, on well baby day we always had more blacks come, bringing their babies. They wanted to keep their babies well, the people who came on well baby day. Often it would be a great big man who would come, bringing a little baby or a little child to be checked because maybe the mother was off in Miss Ann's kitchen somewhere, and she couldn't get away to bring the child. And I would do things like weighing and measuring, and taking down the data. So I got a chance to really know these people. And I all of a sudden thought, "My goodness, but these people know how to feed these children. They're feeding these children so well. That's why they're here on the well baby day." But they were feeding them well because they worked hard to do that. It wasn't because they had the money to go out and buy some fancy things. They were giving those babies things like pot liquor and all kinds of good nutritious food that they were raising at their own tiny dooryard.

On the sick baby day, there were many more whites

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than there were Blacks. The most whites with the worst nutrition and the poorest and the sickest were the mill people. The mill owners wouldn't hire Blacks; they would only hire white people. But if ever a group of people were in slavery, that group of white people that lived in those mill villages, and worked in those unhealthy mills, were slaves. And the most unhealthy people were the people from Scottdale Mill that came into our clinic. So I thought, "You see, all these



things about who's intelligent and who isn't, and who does things right and who does things wrong--this is not any matter of race." And that was good for me to learn a lesson in race.

We did not have a segregated clinic until the grand jury came down and told us we had to, because we were breaking the law. We managed that pretty well. We put an arch without a doorway in the middle of the hallway, but we never put up any signs. When the grand jury came we said, "See, this is the dividing line." The grand jury went away happy, and we asked them to tell the commissioner to give us more money, which they did, and we got it. That kept us in business.

It upset me terribly how many of the children didn't have enough to eat. But I heard through the principal of the Black school that she was going to have a Federal lunch program. The Federal government wanted to start a hot school lunch program. The schools had to have a stove and some dishes, but the government would pay all the help and buy all the food. I said, "That's great! Why don't we do it in all the schools?" The principal said, "I'll help you if you want to." And I said, "Well sure. I think we can do this together." I didn't bother to ask the superintendent. I didn't know it then, but I've learned it since: one of my nun friends taught me that it's easier to ask forgiveness than to ask permission.

So I just called up all the principals and asked them if they wouldn't come to a meeting at the library and learn how to have a hot lunch program. Mrs. Hamilton, the Black principal, came in and told them about how to get the school lunch program. They were all sitting on the edge of their chairs, seeing this as a real possibility. A member of the board of the clinic, who worked for Coca-Cola and was also at this meeting, rose and said, "Go right ahead and go down to Beck and Gregg Hardware (which was the biggest hardware store in Atlanta), and charge the things you need; charge them to the clinic, and we'll see that they're paid for." In six weeks, every school in DeKalb County had a hot lunch program. I'd say that was a triumph.

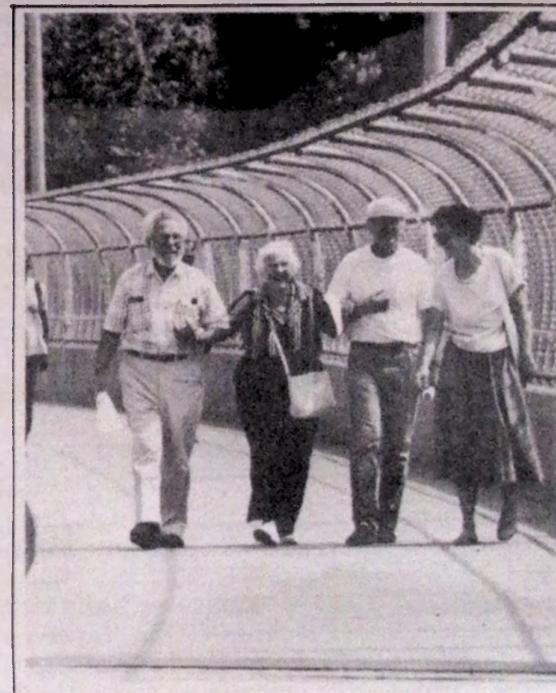
The struggle came later. Enrollment and attendance

just boomed. Children swamped into school for a free meal. We were so happy. Then the bills came into the clinic, and I handled the books, and so I went and said, "Look, here are these bills, I'll give 'em to you. I guess the Coca-Cola Company's going to pick 'em up." "Oh no," he said, "God just told me to say that." Well, that took me back quite a bit because I didn't want to see the clinic go down the drain because we had been keeping pretty much in the black, and we owed Beck and Gregg \$25,000. Now that was a lot of money then, but it had bought an awful lot of stuff. We did, though, have a lot of children eating. So I said, "This will be easy. We will just get 5,000 people to give \$5. And as hard up as they are, I believe in this whole county we can get 5,000 people." Don't ever try to get 5,000 people to give \$5.00!

So then I learned some more. By the time we got half the money raised, the superintendent called me to the office. I went in fear and trembling. He said, "I just want to tell you what this means to the system. Attendance is up; we'll get more from the state; so I'll pick up the rest of the tab." And he offered me a job. I looked at him like he was crazy. By that time I had two children, two cats, three dogs, my father, my brother, my husband. I thought I had enough jobs. It took me quite a while to get all the house work tended to, so it never even dawned on me that I could take a job.

There were a lot of heartaches along the way. One was that we couldn't get any of the preachers to help us. We couldn't get one who would say the blessing at a fundraising dinner. We asked every preacher in DeKalb County to help us. They said that we would make these people dependent and people should send their children to school with their own little lunches. They had various excuses--their churches were having hard times, and they had to save their church. And I wondered, for what? But that was one of the huge disappointments.

After the Brown vs. Board of Education decision in 1954, I decided I was going to make a change in the way I operated. I wasn't going to belong to anything that wasn't integrated. That was sort of hard. We lived real close to the



Druid Hills Club, and whenever we had company I'd take 'em over there, so I wouldn't have to cook. But it wasn't integrated, so either we had to stop having company, or I had to cook for 'em. My cooking didn't improve too much either, I'm afraid.

Then I really got into working with the various racial issues. It was the first time in my life that I ever really realized what hate was. I never knew what it felt like to have a whole

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Stories of Struggle

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group of people just literally loathe you and be willing to tear you to pieces. In my very sheltered life, I simply had never had that experience, or felt that. I tried to see how I could combat it, not just be overcome with lack of courage and be so afraid.

In about 1962, I was in Albany, Georgia and the jails were all full. They were even sending people to the neighboring county jails. This was one of the most chaotic days of my life.

I came out of the Movement Headquarters, which was in the back of a little church in the Black section of Albany. A Black woman came out with me and we got into my car together. As we started out I realized that, as usual, I was being followed by the police. So I was extremely careful not to go too fast and to stop at every stop sign. But finally they stopped me anyway. So I turned to my friend and said, "Well, they've stopped me and there's no use in both of us going to jail, so you go on and get out." She did, and the police officer said, "Come on with me," which I did since I couldn't do anything else.



Now I didn't particularly like to go to jail and I always tried not to get arrested-and I still don't like it (of course for Open Door folks I think it's wonderful and you all are heroes, but somehow or another it's not very appealing to me)!

Anyway there I was in the jail and they were over in a corner talking and trying to figure out what to charge me with since I hadn't done anything except go to the mass meeting (I was probably the only white person there; I usually was).

A messenger came in from the mayor's office with a note saying to charge me with a traffic violation and let me go. Do you know what had happened? That little woman had gotten out of my car when I got stopped; and even with all the disturbance in that place and the hatred just sticking out all over the place, she had walked into the Mayor's office. She told the Mayor that I had been arrested and that I hadn't done anything and what was he going to do about it?

Wasn't that beautiful? With all that chaos, it took more nerve than you can imagine for her to do that; but she did.

So they charged me a fine and let me go, and I went back to my motel room. I sat down and I was frightened. You know you can't be free when you're frightened.

So I sat there and thought: "What am I going to do? They told me to leave. Am I going to leave? If I leave when

will I come back? Can I come back?" Finally I realized I couldn't leave, and I had to get up enough nerve to go see the Chief of Police.

Now this Chief, Laurie Pritchett, has been written up as being a very wonderful Chief of Police. Maybe he was; maybe he didn't kill quite as many people as some of the others. But I never could see why he got so much credit.

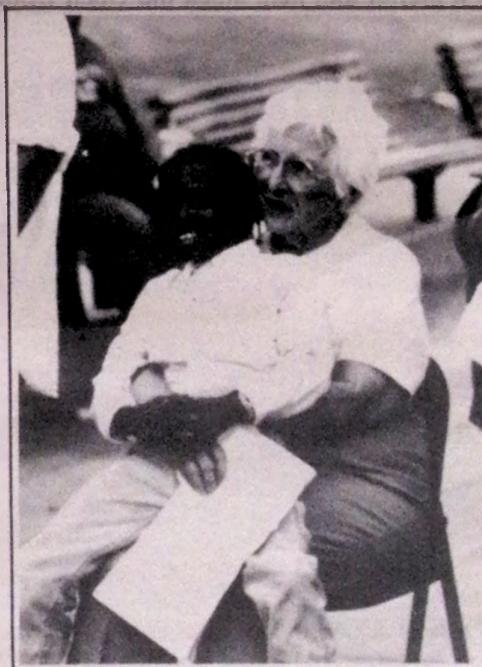
Well, I got to the front steps of the Court House and there weren't but about six steps up to Mr. Chief's door; but when I looked up it seemed like those steps went up to the top of Stone Mountain. I thought, "Will I ever make it up those steps?" It was raining and cold so I went next door and did some Christmas shopping. I came back and the steps looked even higher. I thought, "Well I'd better go on before they reach clear to the moon." So I went up to Chief Pritchett's office.

I said, "Chief, they arrested me for a traffic violation and I paid my fine. They asked me to leave town, but I've got a few things I haven't quite finished yet. So I thought I'd tell you that I'm gonna be here a few more days. If there's anything I can do to help you, please let me know. I'll be leaving when I finish up. Bye." And I turned quickly and left.

Well, the Chief didn't know what to think. That wasn't the usual sort of thing that went on so I left while his mouth was still hanging open. They didn't arrest me again.

That really set me free. It wasn't that they couldn't arrest me again, it was just that I didn't have to worry about it anymore. Finally I had the freedom to concentrate on getting the most done in that particular situation.

I just wish that woman could know how grateful I am for what she did and what she taught me about courage.



Frances Pauley's "stories" will continue in the April issue of Hospitality.



The Hardwick Trip Needs Vans and Drivers

Each month, the Open Door Community and a large group of volunteer drivers take a trip down to Milledgeville, Georgia with 75 people who visit their loved ones in prison there. We leave Atlanta at 10am and return to Atlanta at 6pm, one Saturday every month. The trip depends on drivers, cars, and vans. Do you have a vehicle, or could you drive on this trip? Please give us a call at 874-9652 or 876-6977. Ask for Dee Cole Vodicka.

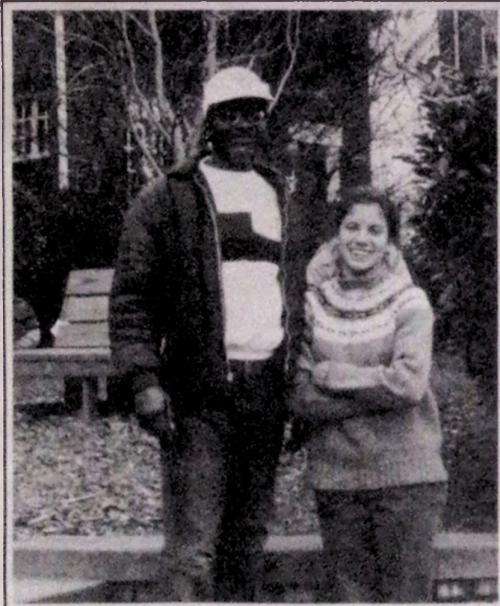
Donating the Gift of Time

by Perry Sheffield

Editor's note: During her Christmas break Perry Sheffield lived at the Open Door joining in our work and mission. She attends Roswell Presbyterian Church, a church that has been a faithful friend to the Open Door Community. Year after year one of the many ways they have helped has been to serve a supper at the Open Door every other month. When Perry went back to Roswell Presbyterian Church and reported on her experiences here at the Open Door, the Committee on Homelessness was so impressed with her sharing that they have now decided to bring a meal every month! Our thanks to Roswell Church for its many donations and especially donating its "gift of time." We thank Perry for writing this article and sharing her experiences at the Open Door with our readers. Perry is a high school junior.

Coming to consciousness in the total darkness, I lay stunned wondering if the sun had really come up that day. I seemed so sealed off from the rest of the world, but as my eyes peered through the still blackness and my ears strained for a sound, signs of life became apparent. A sun ray had forced its way across the ceiling and there was thumping and muffled voices from above. I was in my basement bedroom at the Open Door Community, and there was indeed life above me. There was a wonderful group of people, who love and encourage one another and who welcomed me on my first extended visit as if it was a homecoming.

I am Perry Sheffield. I have attended Roswell Presbyterian Church all of my life. Once every other month 3-4 volunteers from the church take food down to the Open Door and serve dinner to the residents. Members of the church also make sandwiches once a month that help stock the Open Door's soup kitchen. Requests for donations such as men's jeans and big shoes that come from the Open Door are publicized by the Homeless Committee, the group that forms the link between the church and organizations which serve those in need. Jill Cohn, a friend of my family's, is the contact person on the committee who coordinates our church's interaction with the Open Door.



Perry (right) with Open Door partner Phillip Williams

On a whim, I asked Mrs. Cohn about being one of the volunteers to serve dinner there. I was easily signed up, and I went with a friend and an experienced volunteer. We served dinner to the approximately 30 residents of the community. They offered to let me stay sometime for an extended period and help with the daily routines. I returned several months later to serve another dinner and made definite plans to come for a week over

my Christmas vacation. Since my first visit my entire understanding of the Open Door, although still not completely clear, had changed. The "Open Door" was no longer just a name of a charitable shelter but an old friendly house, hospitable people, and a loving environment.

As scheduled, I arrived at 910 Ponce de Leon the Sunday after I got out of school for Christmas vacation. I got acquainted with the permanent residents and the long and short term volunteers. I had several first observations about the community. Most apparent to me was the maintainable level of love that was omnipresent. There were constantly warm feelings and encouraging words but not over-abundant bubbliness that easily fizzles. As an outgrowth of the love, there was practicality, respect, and peacefulness. The partners administered the realistic approach of having distinct periods of both hard work and relaxation. There was an ever present respect for each person, and peacefulness refers more to a state of mind that came from being there than to the level of noise. Happy laughter and talking were usually drifting into the main hallway from the adjacent rooms.

Christmas day was filled with an excited bustle. There was not an overwhelming materialistic edge, but the donated presents certainly added to the twinkling atmosphere. The warmth, I felt, came from a wholesome, ideal holiday spirit that radiated throughout the community. The day of and the day after Christmas my parents and my uncle got to come be part of the chaos as they served in the soup kitchen. The ease of their transition into the volunteer process and the warm welcome they too received made me aware of how very accommodating the Open Door really is.

I saw during my stay many realities from which my life in the suburbs had sheltered me, but the individual experience that made the deepest impression on me during my stay was the Butler Street Breakfast. The breakfasts are a magnificent outreach program, but all the activities at the Open Door seem to be that. What made Butler Street CME church stand out in my mind was the faces I saw. After waiting in the cold, pre-dawn darkness these human creatures, only as different from me as any of my closest friends, filed through the church's basement doors to be fed. They were humans living in "unhumanlike" conditions. I saw in the faces my father, my neighbors, my rich acquaintances; I saw myself. By numerous paths, these people had come to where they were. I knew there was a path on which I could travel as easily. In a poem by Ed Loring, I read about birds with their nests and the foxes with their holes; so where do the humans find their place? The world has so evolved that our ability to survive on our own is suppressed. I feel a certain duty as someone born into comfort to help those born or sleeping on rocky beds. I am an adolescent, but I feel that I am more aware of certain things than some people ever become.

Open Door enhanced my ability to appreciate, to feel love. I owe these people more than chores could ever repay for I received more than food and a secluded subterranean room. For Christmas I received more than coffee and tea. I have vivid images emblazoned in my memory. I have smells of my surroundings familiar to me and laughter from the card table echoing in my heart. I made friendships held close by a bond that formed by working together toward a cause in which we believe. I love every person I met; each name came to symbolize a dear individual, and each face evokes warm memories.

Reflecting back over my stay on the drive home the day after Christmas, I realized that the Open Door Community is as unique as every individual who is involved with it and what an enlightening experience the Open Door provides. Waking up every morning there, I had noticed the darkness less and less. The light of my awareness that grew during my visit had

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I Hear Hope Banging at My Backdoor, Part II

Comfort

by Ed Loring

"I have to admit I love to be waited on..."

Blanche Dubois, *Streetcar Named Desire*

There is a mystery in our flesh and spirits. We want to be at ease in Zion and rest upon beds of ivory even as we drink our wine from crystal chalices. We need comfort. Our bodies and spirits are never satisfied. One of the root causes of slavery and poverty is the power of the few to accrue comforts at the expense of the many. Shortly after European Americans discovered how well rice grows along the South Carolina and Georgia coast lines, our forebears found out how miserable mosquitoes make the white worker. Quickly the philosophical doctrine flowed across the land that Africans were not bothered by mosquitoes, heat, swamps, and poverty. African slavery, in addition to being destiny and God's will, simply sat the simple sambos in the environment where they were happiest. The desire for comfort can make us liars and cheats.

In this era of technological progress and moral entropy, we stand and watch the sky grow dim and the ozone layer crack as we condition the air in our cars, homes, the mall and office. Alcohol, sex and suburbia titillate our innate hungers for comfort and the need to dull our pain. T.V., the primary drug of North American culture, promises life in the comfort zone if we only obey the word of advertisers. But dullness, numbness, and moral death are the foul fruits of a comfortable life purchased by the blood of the poor; the choked skies, and our rivers rise with filth.

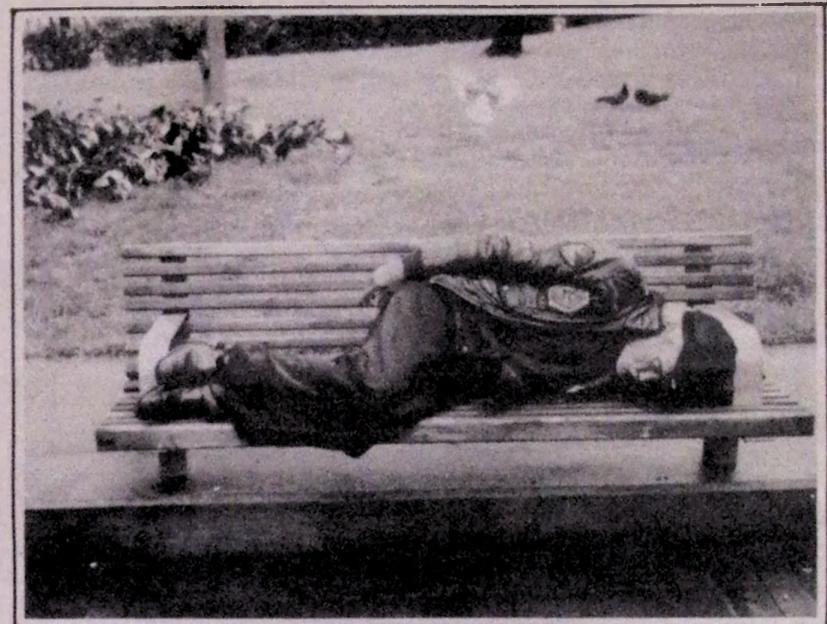
A short while ago I was discussing the fatal flight from the city with an African American colleague. He reflected upon the drive in the African American middle class to move away from the city and its wounds to suburbia where people can forget their pain for years at a time. Comfort is dangerous.

Though dangerous, comfort is good and a blessing to enjoy when shared among all God's children and not purchased at the sole price of pollution. After stepping over the men who live on our back porch for a few nights and sleeping in an almost unheated room visitor Greg Goering said, "Hell must be the inability to find a comfortable place to sleep." Discomfort is often the result of oppression and is a synonym for suffering. Compassionate love for each other demands that we each have "our daily bread" and everything we need. (Acts 4:34) We must also establish just laws to govern ourselves. For in each of us is the desire to have another stoop for us or fetch the needed bowl. Jesus calls us not to rule as the Gentiles (masters-servants) but to be a people whose comfort ethic is rooted in serving one another. Let us not be comfortable until everyone is comfortable!

Dan Berrigan: Hope and Insight

One morning in 1984 Murphy and I sped to the airport in our love-given jalopy. We waited anxiously at the gate for Dan Berrigan to arrive. Before long he breezed in and we were off to death row in Jackson, Georgia. Dan has been a consistent witness to the foul fanged folly of execution. A lover of GOD and life is he. He knows death and its extravagant gluttony. Caged in the steely visiting room as sad-eyed guards picked their noses, we talked with Billy Mitchell (executed August, 1987), Billy Neal Moore (set free November, 1991), and Mike Berryhill (now doing a life sentence). Time bounced against the walls like a ping pong ball in the wind. At 3:30 P.M. we were told to leave while Billy, Berryhill, and Billy were forced to stay.

Our little red Toyota made us look like a fire ant as we busily threaded our way among the 18 wheeler giants toward one of God's favorite places: Koinonia. On this farm filled with love and peanuts Dan Berrigan led us into a deep study of God's



word. In the Book of Revelation, he taught us, is a profound word we must put into practice: comfort. Our comfort comes from the latin **confortare**. It is a word often used in the Vulgate Bible; and it means to **strengthen much**. Con is an intensifier: very, much. Fortis means strong. To comfort is to strengthen those in misery or need to consolation. To be comforted is to gain the power for the long haul journey toward justice. Comfort is a primary fruit of life together and a shared work with the poor and oppressed as Jesus joins us in word, sacrament and deed.

Dan comforted us greatly that day in Bible study as he led a small group of Christians to practice the art of strengthening one another very much. In our lives among the homeless and with prisoners we find a curious comfort for the living of these days.

The Practice of Comfort

There are four ways to encounter and make concrete comfort. We are called to be **comforters**. This is a friendship and pastoral vocation. We give strength to those who are in prison, on the streets or caught unawares by corporate success when we simply are with them. To be with is to visit. To sit and stand and quietly listen to the pain and grief of our friends or the strangers who seemingly stalk our neighborhood alleys.

Visitation reduces the distance and breaks the walls of separation between us. We are comforters when we stand in solidarity with the homeless poor or stand outside the prison gates protesting the sexual abuse of our incarcerated sisters.

A second encounter with comfort is God. "But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost...shall teach you all things." (Jn 14:26 KJV) Through God's presence and teaching we meet our divine sister the Comforter who is the Spirit of God. God strengthens us very deeply. We live by the power and strength of the Holy Ghost - the Comforter. When we pray for the coming of God's Spirit we are praying for power and strength; so that we may visit and fight for freedom together in God's name.

A comforter is also a quilted bed covering. Often when I come home at night I see comforters piled high on the basketball court or slumped together on the back porch. Under these comforters sleep people who have no where to go and almost no place to turn. The comforters are the only shelter and cover they have. Looking across my lawn and seeing the comforters as housing I am called to struggle more faithfully to make housing a human right and to clothe the naked in a fashion better than this.

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Yet these brothers and sisters sleeping under the comforters demonstrate the power of comfort for they are very strong and bring magic gifts to those who but listen.

A fourth significance of this word is comfort station. Oh, how we need free public and private toilets to be available to the homeless. Can you imagine the life of so many in our cities who rise up in the mornings and have no hot water or toilet paper or even a toilet? In Atlanta we arrest and incarcerate hundreds of folk each year for public urination. Yet, we have no public toilets.

All of our rapid rail stations have toilets. Only three of them are unlocked. Not long ago a woman who is disgusted by the urine odor in the MARTA elevators suggested that the system purchase alarms to ring when the elevators' floors become wet and dry. The suggestion illustrates the poverty of our public imagination and compassion to respond to the basic needs of our citizens. Why not unlock the already existing bathroom doors at each station?

We must find ways to "pee for free with dignity." Comfort - to strengthen much - comes as comfort stations, houses, good jobs and friends.

A Final Paragraph

I hear hope banging at my back door. Some nights the windows rattle and the sills shake. I go out the door and watch the piled comforters huddled on the ground. Someone gropes toward our comfort station while another simply sits and listens to the anguish of his sister. Suddenly I hear The Comforter sing of a mighty battle brewing for all God's chosen ones. I am strengthened. I hear hope banging at my back door. Won't you join me?

Ed Loring is a partner at the Open Door Community. □



Christ Comes in The Stranger's Guise:

A History of the Open Door Community

Peter R. Gathje

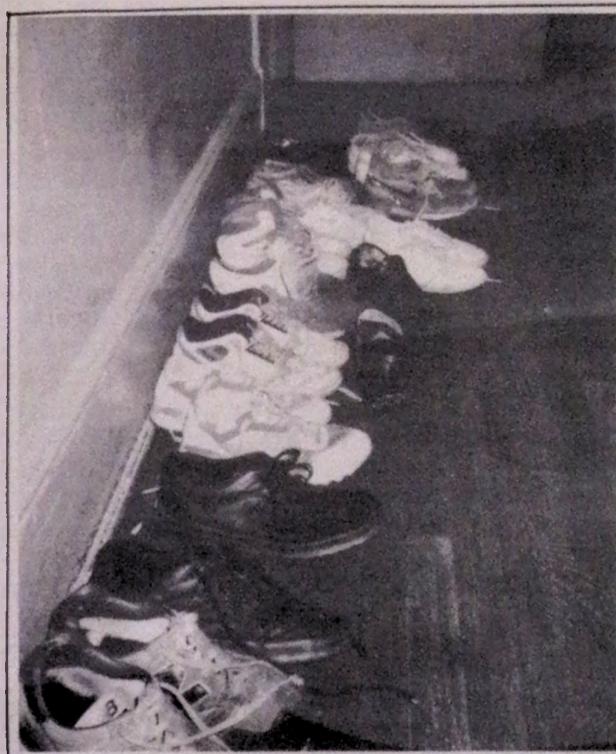
For your own copy of Christ Comes in the Stranger's Guise write to

Phillip Williams
910 Ponce de Leon Ave., NE
Atlanta, GA 30306

Please send a \$10 donation to help cover printing and postage and to feed the hungry and homeless.

Shoes

by John Cole Vodicka



The Open Door Community needs your shoes!

Shoes of any size. Shoes that are made for walking, shoes that are made for working. Shoes that can fit comfortably over tired and weary feet. Shoes that will warm the toes and soles of our homeless friends who, three times each week, come into our home to shower and exchange dirty clothes for clean.

* Don came to us with blisters on his heels and toes the size of golf balls. The shoes he had on were worn through so badly that his socks had to be soaked off of his feet.

* James, whose foot size rivals that of a small motor boat, has to cut out the toe of his shoes so his feet can sort of fit into an old raggedy pair of sneakers.

* Melvin's job possibilities are in construction work. He needs work boots to enhance his chances to find any employment.

* Mary spends her days walking, walking, walking. She is mentally ill and walking up and down Ponce during the day is her occupation. She needs shoes that cushion her feet from the street, shoes with tread on the bottoms that will last a long, long while.

Our friends on the streets of Atlanta need shoes to walk in, shoes to work in, shoes to sleep in. They need shoes that dignify, shoes that enhance self-esteem, shoes that can offer hope and possibility as they daily pound the pavement looking for shelter, jobs, food, friends.

All God's children need shoes.

Please look in your closet today and gather up that extra pair of tennis shoes, or a decent pair of work boots, or those shoes that just don't quite fit your feet right, and donate them to the Open Door. It will be a special gift to us, a necessary gift to our homeless friends. Thank you!!!

John Cole Vodicka is a resident volunteer at the Open Door. □

Remembering Mr. Willie Dee Wimberly

DECEMBER 18, 1918 - MARCH 15, 1992

by Ed Loring

In the year that Mr. Willie Dee Wimberly was the age that I am today with one testicle and a bicycle he moved to Buckhead, a wealthy section in north Atlanta. An unlikely place in the year 1970 for this son of humanity to move. There behind a fancy restaurant he built a cardboard shack and he ate the refuse dropped from the plates of rich men and fancy women. They seldom saw and never heard the little man until 13 years later-the owners, sensing a boom time under the leadership of an old boy named Ronald Reagan, decided to expand the restaurant into the wooded area where Mr. Willie Dee Wimberly had built his home.

A stubborn man of biblical values Mr. Wimberly refused to leave his home. Suddenly the Buckhead investors saw the bright shining black being as if for the first time. Then they heard what is intolerable to any master: "No, I will not go." They saw and heard a piece of black trash; a trouble maker who, now after years of life together, was trespassing on this valuable plot of God's good earth. This no good piece of garbage needed to be moved out of there. "Call the cops," shouted one of the monied men. Soon sirens shrieked. Mr. Wimberly was shackled and thrown into the police van. He was to them and he is today to those like them, nobody. He was a vagrant. He was garbage.

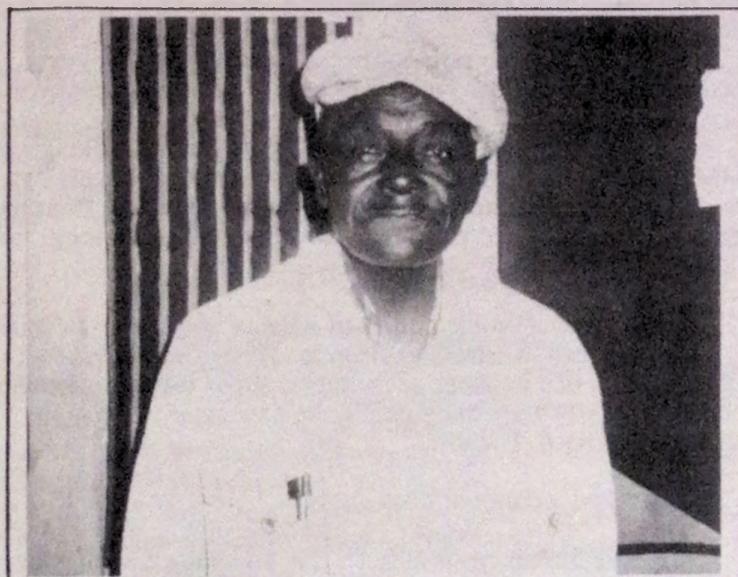
Judge Barbara Harris sent him to live at the Open Door and he changed our lives into a more loving and gentle community. He was Jesus Christ among us; and he shall forever be.

So anytime we see a no trespassing sign we hear the cry of Mr. Willie Dee Wimberly.

Anytime we see a person peeing in the bushes we see Mr. Willie Dee Wimberly.

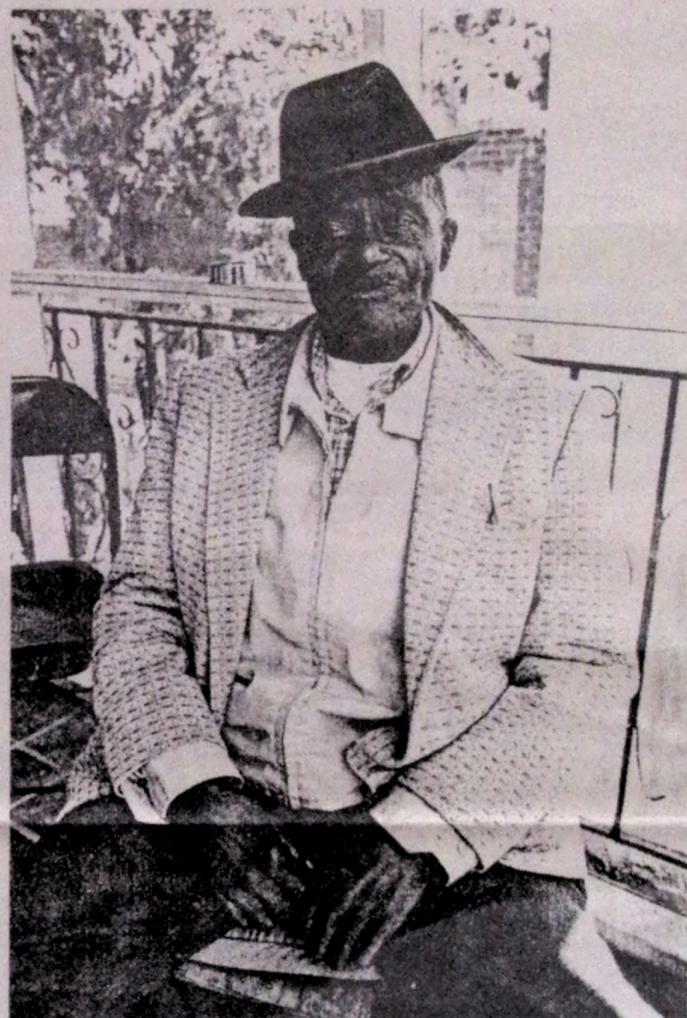
Anytime we watch a lonely woman on the corner beg a dollar we watch Mr. Willie Dee Wimberly.

Anytime we worship our God we worship the God who loves the homeless poor; and the God who abhors the policies of



this city and our churches who exclude and condemn the poor, the panhandler, yea, the Vagrant Christ.

Into our lives he has become resident. With love and kindness he spreads his presence among us though he has now been gone for a year. Mr. Willie Dee, we miss you. Mr. Willie Dee, we remember you. Mr. Willie Dee, we love you. Thank you!!



Willie Dee Wimberly

December 18, 1918 -- March 15, 1992

"We gonna do the best we can
'til we can't."

The above photograph and quotation are available on 11" x 17" blue poster-paper for \$2.00. Order your Willie Dee poster now: Open Door Community, 910 Ponce de Leon Ave., N.E., Atlanta, GA, 30306.

Gift of Time

(continued from page 5)

apparently made my room a little brighter too. I believe that not many people my age, nor people of any age, get to be involved in such an experience. I hope in the future people will realize that the opportunity is there, how much they can learn from it, and what a difference there is, for both the giver and recipient, between giving donations and donating the gift of time.

Folk, Faith and Bob Dylan

by Bert Cartwright

*Editor's note: Bert Cartwright is a retired pastor who has for years been a significant interpreter of the lyrics and cultural importance of Bob Dylan. Please read his *The Bible in the Lyrics of Bob Dylan*, rev. ed. Welcome to our pages Rev. Cartwright.*

It's been thirty years since Bob Dylan first began shaping America's conscience through the songs he composed and sang. His method was to break through the tinpan alley love song stereotypes and reach back to the roots of folk music. In doing so he changed the face of American popular music. He infused it with concerns of the spirit which grappled with the eternal issues of human existence.

In 1963 Dylan explained: "I'm tryin' to be like the medium at a seance. There's mystery, magic, truth and the Bible in great folk music. I can't hope to touch that, but I'm goin' to try." The genius of Bob Dylan lies in shaping a whole quest for life's meaning by the use of these folk ingredients.

In that same year he composed and sang a song titled "When the Ship Come In" which takes the form of a sea chantey. Using this traditional folk genre, Dylan seems to have toyed with the common American Dream of what it would be like "when my ship comes in."

However for the Dylan of "mystery, magic, truth and the Bible" the ship becomes an apocalyptic ark of salvation. The song is a millennial vision of God's renewal of creation.

The song opens with a time

When the winds will stop
And the breeze will cease to be breathin'.

That alludes to Revelation's picturing angels holding back the winds in utter stillness just before all havoc breaks loose (Rev. 7:1).

Subsequent verses envision a renewed order of nature and history. Instead of streets paved with gold, as in Revelation, here

Then the sands will roll
Out a carpet of gold
For your weary toes to be a-touchin'.
And the sun will respect
Every face on the deck,
The hour that the ship comes in.

In the end all foes will be judged:

And like Pharaoh's tribe,
They'll be drownded in the tide,
And like Goliath,
They'll be conquered.

• A NEW BOOK •

THE BIBLE IN THE LYRICS OF BOB DYLAN

ENLARGED AND UPDATED
BY BERT CARTWRIGHT

Available from: The Bob Dylan Collectors' Service
Rolling Tones, Inc.
PO Box 1943
Grand Junction, Colorado 81502



At his Carnegie Hall, New York City concert of October 26, 1963, Dylan introduced *When the Ship Comes In* by saying: "I want to sing you one song here recognizing that there are Goliaths now days and, uh, people don't realize just who the Goliaths are. But in olden days Goliath was slain, and everybody now days looks back and sees how cruel Goliath was. Now days there are crueler Goliaths who do crueler, crueler things, but one day they are going to be slain, too, and people 2,000 years from now can look back and say, 'Remember when Goliath the Second was slain.'"

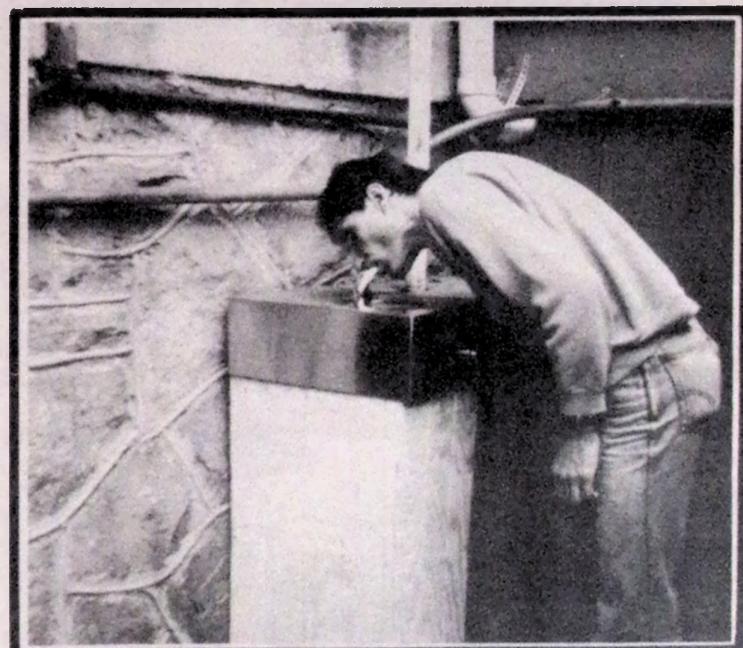
Throughout Dylan's 30-year-span of song writing he has shifted perspectives many times. As a born-again Christian in 1979 he re-envisioned the apocalypse as "A Slow Train Coming." The years have taught him to be less sure of human success in conquering evil and more dependent upon the sovereign grace of God.

But the vision of a new humanity of love, justice and freedom haunts all his compositions. Even in the midst of a world where "Everything is Broken" Dylan sings with compassion:

Ring them bells, Sweet Martha, for the poor man's son,
Ring them bells so the world will know that God is one.
Oh, the shepherd is asleep
Where the willows weep,
And the mountains are filled with lost sheep.

With the prophet Ezekiel, Dylan laments the false shepherds who fail to attend their sheep, (Ezek. 34). Dylan claims to be "no prophet or prophet's son." He is not a reformer. But keeping a steady eye upon mystery, magic, truth and the Bible, he has consistently woven for thirty years a passionate vision in which one day every person may sing, "I Shall Be Released."

For his 38th album, issued in November, titled *Good as I Been to You*, Dylan has returned to his roots, singing nothing but folk songs. One suspects in his waning years of creativity that Dylan is seeking renewal where he first discovered it--among the common folk of faith. He obviously continues to live by his adage expressed years ago: "(Anyone) not busy being born is busy dying."



Dennis Hoffarth enjoys a drink from the Open Door's new public water fountain, which he helped install. Thanks to everyone who contributed money to make this available to our homeless friends!

ORGANIZING IN THE Other Atlanta

A Case Study Handbook
(200 pages with photographs)
Rev. Houston Wheeler
Southern Ministry Network, Inc.

"Houston Wheeler has compiled an extraordinary book on organizing God's good friends - the poor and oppressed in Atlanta. A radical thesis lines the pages that Atlanta had and now has the resources to house the homeless and improve public housing communities. Not cash flow, but the inequitable and greedy power arrangements among the well-to-do are the root cause of poverty, homelessness, hunger and suffering. Rev. Wheeler - part prophet, sometimes poet, always an organizer with a vision of fire and love - calls upon the oppressed and their friends to build a movement of unity and power for justice and peace. He also shows us how to do it. It won't be long now !!!"

- THE REV. ED LORING, *The Open Door Community*

Book Signing & Press Conference

Wed., March 17, 11 A.M.

Dunbar Center

(corner of Windsor & Fulton Streets, S.W.)

Featuring

Marie Rasheed

"Growing Leaders In The
Concentration Camps Of The Other Atlanta"

Joyce Brookshire

Singer / Songwriter In Cabbagetown
"What Will We Do With The Homeless
(When The Olympics Come To Town)?"

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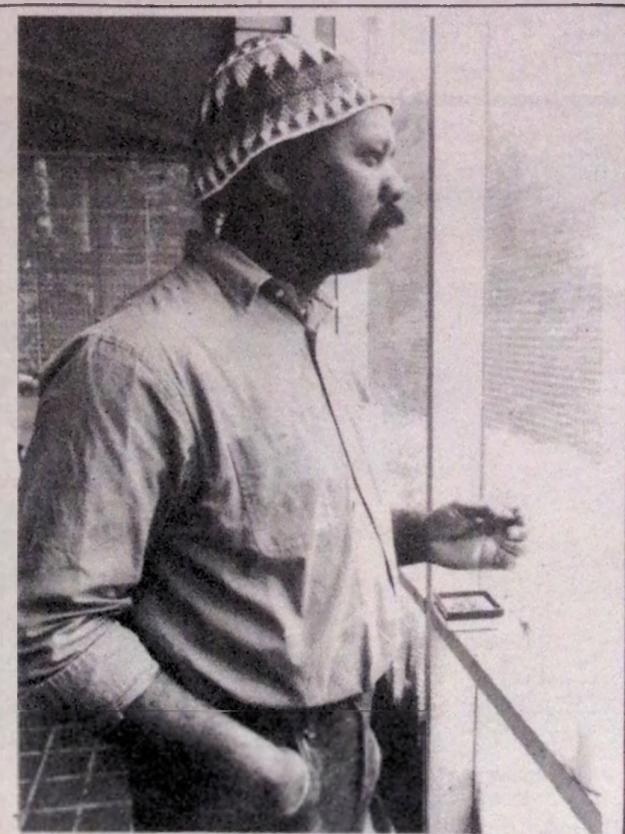
MAIL TO: SOUTHERN MINISTRY NETWORK
P.O. BOX 89278, ATLANTA, GA. 30312

PHONE: (404) 624-9079

A Partnership with God

by Gladys Rustay

If you were to stop by the Open Door you might see two men seated in the corner deep in a serious debate. One would be Marcus Gill and more than likely the conversation would be



CALVIN KIMBROUGH (PATCHMARK COMMUNITY)

Marcus Gill

about religion. You have a question about the Bible? See Marcus. He's also the man you might see standing on our porch looking out at life on Ponce as he smokes his famous cigars.

Sunday, February 21, Marcus became a partner at the Open Door. Such occasions are times of joy and remembrance. It was almost three years ago that Marcus came to the Open Door. He followed the entrance of his friend Phillip Williams who had been invited in by C.M. Sherman. Each year Marcus has taken on new responsibilities and challenges. This past year he took on cooking for Butler Street breakfast which means getting up at least by 5 A.M. to get started. His scrambled eggs on Sunday morning are another specialty.

Benton Harbor, Michigan is where Marcus grew up. He is the sixth of nine children from a poor working class family. After his years in school he took jobs as a handy man. Later he joined the Navy. For five years he traveled in the Pacific. He saw Japan, the Philippines, Korea and other countries.

Back out of the service Marcus was at home and unemployed. In the fall of 1989 he left Michigan for a possible job elsewhere. The journey led to Atlanta, day jobs, homelessness, shelters and eventually the Open Door. Marcus describes it as a "joy ride into a bad dream, Atlanta; into a nightmare, the shelters; to a beacon of light, the Open Door." He says God was at the center of it all...his meeting Phillip and Sherman.

We welcome Marcus as a partner in the Open Door Community and give thanks for his gift of faithfulness.

Grace and Peaces of Mail

Dear Friends:

I just read your latest piece in Hospitality as part of my Sunday afternoon reading and had to halt that longer process to tell you how much I appreciated "Angola Bound." Your relation of that visit, accompanied by "the shortest Presbyterian minister in America," was rich and faithful. Thank you for a fine piece of writing that was able to focus on a person in Tony's condition without being in anyway exploitative itself. And you were able to create a relationship between the reader and the situation described, while avoiding a drift into maudlin melodramatics that could cause less sympathetic auditors to shout "bleeding heart!" You just told the truth as usual. Keep it up.

Your mention of life narrowed to "2 Bleeds or 4 Bleeds" calls to mind a recent conversation with a lawyer up there in Atlanta with whom I was discussing conditions in our local jail and a possible suit against the county. She said oft times it gets down to how high the sewage backs up in a facility that may determine the success of the suit! ("How high's the water Papa? Three feet high an' risen").

Regards onto Murphy and thanks for her discussion of matters in the women's prisons-a situation that seems oddly similar to the rape of Muslim women by Serbs in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Some say this atrocity accompanies every war. That the subjugation and torment of the enemies' women is a clear sign of victory. What does this say about our culture? Is this part of our own "ethnic cleansing" campaign? Our war against the poor?

Barry Burnside
Koionia Partners
Americus, GA

□□□□□□□

Dear Friends at Open Door:

Many thanks for your support and excellent article in your January issue of Hospitality. It is the best I have read and the most accurate reflection of the horror of this existence.

I am requesting you to send copies of the January issue to members of my family and friends so that they will understand.

Thank you.

Name Withheld
Women's Prison
Hardwick, GA

□□□□□□□

Dear Open Door:

Have the editors of the Constitution or the New York Times, Washington Post, St. Petersburg (FL) Times been treated to the January Hospitality?

"Tantamount" ...and "Angola" are great reporting and journalism as it was meant to be. Thank you.

If I get to my native town again I want to eat, worship and identify with the Open Door family...

...Enclosed donation for drinking fountain fund, gasoline for Dee Cole, pocket change for Andrew H. or whatever your discretion. A little more as time permits.

Love,

Hugh Carter
Gulf Breeze, FL

□□□□□□□

Greetings:

Murphy Davis has done a superlative piece of work in the article you just published in Hospitality. The article should have the widest possible circulation. I intend to share it with our pastors here at the United Church of Chapel Hill (UCC). They are already helping in a local program of prison visitation and will be interested to know what you are doing in Georgia. I have been on your mailing list for about ten years...

Richard Stein
Carborro, NC

□□□□□□□

Dear Friends at Open Door:

I trust all the folks at 910 are doing well and staying busy.

I wanted to let you know that I found your recent article in Hospitality, "Tantamount to Torture," to be both enlightening and for lack of a better description, agitating. Thank you for the article.

I'd also like for you to send Hospitality to a friend of mine on death row here in North Carolina...

Sincerely,

Bill Rogers
Pastor, Tabor City
Presbyterian Church
Tabor City, NC

□□□□□□□

Dear Open Door:

Enclosed you'll find a gift. I know you will find good uses for it and I give it with happiness that it will bring some happiness and ease to others. Open Door has a special place in my heart.

I loved Ed's piece in the newsletter last month-his stream of consciousness piece. I felt like I was right there with him. I have similar experiences in my daily 60 mile commute to work. My own children and spouse often dance across my heart. All three are fine....

With much love,
Laurie Easterlin
Bartow, GA

Editor's note: Laurie and her husband Abbot were resident volunteers at The Open Door in 1983.

□□□□□□□

Dear Open Door Community:

Just a note to say thanks for your ministry and for your persistent faith and commitment to justice. I enjoyed hearing Murphy Davis and Ed Loring when they were at the Berkeley Presbyterian Missionary Homes and have appreciated getting Hospitality.

I hope this check helps you buy a few cups of coffee this winter.

Peace,

Linda Wygant
Livermore, CA

□□□□□□□

Dear Friends in Christ:

Answering your current List of Needs in the latest paper, I went shopping.

Of course I know this is a drop in the bucket but I want to be part of your ministry. How happy you folks make our Lord! You all are living the Gospel message!

With money donations, I do what I can when I can (not much I know).

I left all tags on; I am also sending sales slip in the event you need to exchange or return. Normally leaving prices on is pretty tacky, but practical in this case.

Kokie and Jack Slep
Ellijay, GA

□□□□□□□

Dear Friends:

At Noonday Farm we are grateful for your newsletter and persistent witness.

Special thanks for the cover article in Vol. 11, #10/Oct. '92 on "The Life of Resistance" of Ida B. Wells. How much we need to learn about her struggle and spirit and our own need to seek truth and not be misled by propaganda and oppression. Thanks for the urging to resist more deeply. Keep on! May the Spirit guide you.

Suzanne Schmidt
Winchendon Springs, MA

WE ARE OPEN . . .

Monday through Saturday, telephones are answered from 9:00am until noon, from 1:30 until 6:00pm, and from 7:00 until 8:30pm. The building is open from 9:00am until 8:30pm those days. (Both phone and door are not answered during our lunch break from noon until 1:30.) Please call in advance if you need to arrange to come at other times. On Sunday we are open from 7:00am until noon. Sunday afternoon our door is answered until 5:00pm.

OUR MINISTRY . . .

SOUP KITCHEN--Wednesday-Saturday, 11am-12 noon

SUNDAY BREAKFAST--Sunday morning at 910, 7:15am

BUTLER ST. CME BREAKFAST--Monday-Friday, 7:15am

SHOWERS & CHANGE OF CLOTHES--Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday, 2-4pm (Be sure to call; schedule varies)

USE OF PHONE--Monday-Saturday, 9am-noon, 1:30pm-5pm

SHELTER REQUESTS--Wednesday-Friday, 9am-noon

BIBLE STUDY--Alternate Tuesdays, 7:30-9pm.

WEEKEND RETREATS--Four times each year (for our household and volunteers/supporters), April 23, 24, 25.

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

NEEDS

50-cup coffee maker

JEANS

Men's Work Shirts

Men's Underwear

Quick Grits

Cheese

Mayonnaise

Multi-Vitamins

MARTA Tokens

Postage Stamps

Men's Large Shoes (12-14)

Coffee

Non-Aerosol Deodorant

Toothbrushes

Toothpaste

Disposable Razors

Shampoo

WINTER COATS

SWEATERS

HATS

GLOVES

Soup Kitchen Volunteers

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 11:00 or after 1:30, it would be helpful.

Open Door Community Worship

We gather for worship and Eucharist at 5:00pm on Sunday evenings followed by supper together.

Join us!



March 7

Worship at 910
Father Tom Francis, preaching
(Monastery of the Holy Spirit)

March 14

Worship at 910
Sister Terri Bolotin, preaching

March 21

Worship at 910
C.M. Sherman, preaching

March 28

Worship at 910
Murphy Davis, preaching



Holy Week with the Homeless

We invite you to join us for worship and/or a 24-hour period of solidarity with our friends on the street during Holy Week.

Services of Worship:

PALM SUNDAY	Open Door Community 9:00pm.
MONDAY	Grady Hospital, Butler St. 8:00pm.
TUESDAY	City Jail, Peachtree St., SW 9:00pm.
WEDNESDAY	Trust Company Bank, Park Place 9:00pm.
THURSDAY	Woodruff Park 9:00pm.
GOOD FRIDAY	City Hall, Trinity Ave., SW 8:00pm
HOLY SATURDAY	City Shelter, Jefferson St., NW 9:00pm.
EASTER MORNING	23 Butler St. 6:30am
	WORSHIP OF THE RESURRECTED LORD FOLLOWED BY A HAM AND EGGS BREAKFAST



The Open Door Community
910 Ponce de Leon Ave.
Atlanta, GA 30308-4212

On Easter Sunday morning we will serve a ham and eggs breakfast to 500 people. Please help us by donating hams for the breakfast.