

HOSPITALITY

Volume 8 No. 4

May 1989

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

Address
Correction
Requested

Providing hospitality to the homeless & to those in prison, through Christ's love.
910 Ponce de Leon Ave. N.E. Atlanta GA 30306-4212 (404) 874-9652



A Place in the City

by Ed Loring

Ed W. sat on the wooden bench alone. Soaking wet, cold, and exhausted, he looked his part. Ed W. and six others were visiting the poor and homeless on the streets of Atlanta, Georgia. Together these seven had stepped out of their ordinary daily lives and entered the terrain of the pariahs of the streets.

The day was Maundy Thursday. That is the

day of Holy Week that Christians are mandated to wash the feet of the poor (Tradition changes--the emphasis on foot washing was changed to the celebration of the Eucharist.). So in obedience to God's call to life among the poor, Ed W. sat alone on the wooden bench in a labor pool. Scattered around the bleak and filthy room were Ed's six cohorts and about twenty young Black men waiting for work.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

CONTINUED FROM PRECEDING PAGE

Suddenly a terrible silence jolted the waiting room. The banter stopped; even the back-aching squirming on benches ceased. A slight buzz from the dangling fluorescent lights chewed at the ceiling like a single summer mosquito playing hide and seek around your ear. Eighteen of the Black men, like serfs before their liege, bowed their heads and began the lazy afternoon fantasy of the coming of God's good kingdom or of finding a bottle of liquor in the dumpster: justice and the quick fix--the two poles of the human heart!

The stillness stifled. The silence shrieked. At once the heads of the seven visitors--like Disney dwarfs--turned toward the left wall; their eyes connected with grizzled concrete and slid, like olive phlegm, to the floor. Thud! Thud! Thud! The silence was broken. A human head bounced upon the cement floor. Crouched like fierce lovers, two men made war. Except for muffled sounds of suffering in the corner, the room was silent. Except for the explosions of bone on stone, the labor pool was still. One man rolled. Both men stood. Giant hand grasped and squeezed the long purple neck: Cain and Abel danced before our fear-stricken eyes. Swiftly one man fell to the floor like a wet blanket tossed from a cathole after a rainstorm. The hired hand with giant hands bolted; like lightning, he was gone. The heavy steel door thundered shut. Still, silent, afraid the twenty-five of us sat motionless. Inside each head the screams kept coming: Is he dead? Oh God, is he dead? We sat silently. Forty-five seconds lumbered along. Then a minute. Almost imperceptibly the dead man began to move. Then he stood up and walked to the door. He lit a cigarette, exhaled deeply and stared at the dangling fluorescent light. The banter was reborn. Bodies searched for a comfortable way to sit on the wooden benches. Daydreams were dashed. Life and death were functioning normally again.

"Why didn't you do something, Ed L.?" she disturbingly questioned. "Because I was a visitor in their world," I lamely replied. "When I enter the streets I go as guest." "But he was almost killed! How could you just sit there and watch?"

Last night when I came home from the movie, now several weeks since Maundy Thursday, I stepped over two men asleep on my back porch. The day is not far off when Mannan will say, "Daddy, Daddy, how could you just leave them lying there?"



2



HOSPITALITY is published 10 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:

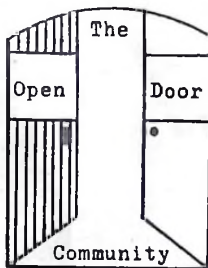
Murphy Davis--Southern Prison Ministry
Director
Ed Loring--Correspondence & Resident Volunteer
Co-ordinator
Joanne Solomon--Administrative Assistant
(Volunteer Co-ordination, Hardwick
Prison Trip)

Newspaper:
Editorial Staff--Ruth Allison, Murphy Davis,
Elizabeth Dede, Ed Loring
Layout--Ruth Allison
Circulation--Tim Wyse, Bettina Paul and a
multitude of earthly hosts and guests.

Though locked behind bars, the criminals of Congress share with the criminals of corporations a common defense that keeps presidents from mentioning them. They are seen as men of fine character who didn't commit a crime--they merely slipped. As the judge said when issuing a light sentence to Earl Butz for tax cheating, the former cabinet member had "a distinguished record as a gentleman and a citizen."

Street criminals--uneducated members of neither country clubs nor civic prayer groups--are not gentlemen. They can be damned by presidents as "career criminals." They are predators who prowl, not "good citizens" who slip.

--Coleman McCarthy



Dear Friends,

Thank you for your continued gifts which make our lives and ministries possible. No one at the Open Door Community earns income. We have no medical or life insurance. We have no savings. We accept no government monies. We receive fifty percent of our contributions from local congregations, church agencies, and other organizations and fifty percent from individuals. Like the homeless sisters we serve, we are needy. Like the homeless brothers we feed, we are dependent upon you for our daily bread. Like our friends in prison and on death row, we wait and hope for the mercy and love which come to us from folk we have never met.

We are in need this season. Because of a \$4,000 overrun in having our house rewired (\$19,000) and the unexpected \$3,500 replacement of our 400 gallon hot water holding tank (We now offer showers four mornings each week!), we are going into the summer months with absolutely no reserve. We are needy. Please help us.

Our household of 30 folk is a home of diversity and joy. We are thankful that we have the vocation of raising a prophetic voice on behalf of the prisoner, the hungry and the homeless. We are grateful that our work is rooted in the works of mercy: visiting, feeding, sheltering, clothing, bathing, transporting. . . . We are joyful that you make possible our common life and servanthood. Please send us a contribution soon. We are in need.

Peace and Thanks,

CARL CALIFANO, BARKER JOHN HOWARD

Edna C. Cline

Robert Barrett

Pat Ford, Joe Dan Walker, Harry Burnett, Dana Kish, Albert Lynch, Ty Brown, Jim Meyer

C. M. Sherrin

My yugur, Erlene Kennedy, Joe Bottomo, Peter Stumma, H. L. Landon, James Baver, John M. Mungo, Davis

Hannah, Loring, Davis, Carol Guedalia, Elizabeth Dede

Ken Rostoy, David, Ed King

William Robinson

At the Bottom of the Mountain

by Mark Harper

Editor's note: Mark Harper is a former Open Door Resident Volunteer who now lives in Durham, NC. We welcome the return of his writing to Hospitality.

For as long as I can remember, mountains have been formative, healing places for me. They are places where worship and thanksgiving come easily and where several month's--or even several year's--worth of wounds and world-weariness can be absorbed in a single afternoon's walk. As Annie Dillard writes, "You can heave your spirit into a mountain and the mountain will keep it, folded, and not throw it back. . . ."

Ancient, sacred places of Mother Earth, where I lift my eyes and find help, solace, and gentle hospitality.

The trouble is that most of us modern human beings seem pretty ham-handed around that which is sacred. We're an irreverent lot with a bad eye for places and things holy. We're always getting things backwards. Gold, coal, and timber have long been mistaken for true riches and so we enter the purple mountain's majesty, not with respect and on bended knee, but with bulldozers and dynamite. Native Americans might name this matricide, but these days acid rain is falling faster than teardrops.

Of course, there are powerful priests in our culture who spend a great deal of time and money telling us otherwise. Their liturgy would divert our attention towards other, more sacred mountains: created by layers of political rhetoric and the vested interests of our empire; and booby-trapped with a nuclear arsenal that looms as the largest volcano of them all, these form a mighty range dwarfing the earth's own upheavals. It is an awesome presence, and, like most things we understand to be holy, is felt more than seen. Yet we know the names of these peaks by heart because the powers chant them--and all their variations--like clockwork: Success; Private Property; National Security; Power.

Last year's presidential race paid homage to all of these, although, with the important exception of Jesse Jackson, no candidate bothered to address the folks scratching out an existence in the valley (Hard to see them, I suppose.). Still, the one who came out on top, George Bush, did say that from where he stood he could envision a "kinder, gentler nation," glowing with the good-hearted volunteerism of "a thousand points of light." And, demonstrating his mastery of the Gipper's peace-through-strength game-plan, he enthused that this vision could become reality as long as we do things like continue our defense-spending orgy, keep Willie Horton in jail, and add another notch to the already loose belt girding big business. Borrowing an idea from

an old beer commercial, one campaign graphic effectively summed up the required pilgrimage: "It's time for America to head for the mountains of Bush."

Well, Mr. Bush, please read the lips of someone who is running towards the sea and praying it will part. America's sacred mountains are dangerous mutations and need to be strip-mined. They do not "keep your spirit, folded." Instead, they chew it up, spit it back, and shove those who aren't strong enough to make the climb down the side and over the edge. We can only hope that enough people will choose to stick around and help pick up the pieces.

But let me put flesh to this metaphor.

I know a woman who, until a month ago, worked as a janitor in a picturesque college town in North Carolina. Five days a week, Erika and I exchanged early morning greetings in the small coffee house where I deliver bread and pastries, and where she stacked chairs, mopped floors and took out the trash. Erika was an intense worker, usually not taking her eyes off the floor when I would call "Good morning" from the doorway. "This floor won't look like I touched it in another hour," she sighed, nodding at the rain running down the windows.

Several days after that first brief conversation, I discovered another reason why Erika was so meticulous about the way she scrubbed the coffee house floor. It was, with the manager's permission, where she slept.

She had been homeless for more than a year. Before that, she had tried to share apartments and rooms with women students, but they always asked her to leave. "I must have scared them," she explained. "Especially since I've had some education. They'd look at me and see a middle-aged woman with nothing and not want to see themselves in my place. But just because I'm where I am, it doesn't mean I'm stupid. I hated it when they would look at me like I was."

A few weeks passed before Erika and I talked again, and when we did, she told me that she was leaving town. Where to? I wondered. She ignored my question. Instead, she asked me to wait for a moment, saying there was something that she wanted me to see.



CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

CONTINUED FROM PRECEDING PAGE

When she came back from the supply room, she was carrying a large scrapbook, her name carefully printed on the cover.

"This," she said, "is who I used to be."

Inside, there were dozens of pictures and articles about Erika. As she turned the pages, I could hardly believe the story they told. In the late 1960's, Erika had been a gifted young skier and a member of the U.S. Women's ski team. She had competed all over the United States, Canada, and Europe, skiing against the world's best and coming within one race of competing in the Olympics.

As we looked at the different clippings, she vividly recalled specific competitions and where she had placed in each of them. She also pointed out a small write-up from her hometown paper announcing her acceptance to both Harvard-Radcliffe and Stanford. "Like I said, I'm not stupid."

With some difficulty, I tried to piece together the rest of her story: there was the illness and sudden death of her father, a man she deeply loved and respected; a less-than-successful ski season became a much longer, darker season of depression; and, finally, a bout with drug addiction knocked her off the slopes for good.

Indeed, she's been falling ever since. Twenty years ago, Erika was--quite literally--on top of the world. She had played by the rules and made the climb. But in 1989, as we are beckoned to head for the mountains of Bush, she's finally landed in the streets. Not because she's stupid. Or lazy. But because nothing or no one was around to break her fall. Or to help her get back up. Or to let her cry and claim her weakness and begin to heal.

Dear God. How many casualties will we have to step over at the feet of these mythical (and therefore extremely powerful) mountains before we stop and consider the worth of the climb? And, as a body politic, when will we stop believing the voices that preach power as the only "effective" position from which to respond to human suffering? What we better believe is that there are a whole lot of people sleeping under bridges and in abandoned buildings whose thirst for justice won't be quenched by another round of supply-side charity.

Some of our Latin American neighbors of faith, particularly those living in base communities, seem to have a better perspective on things, though. They would teach us to redirect our eyes and hearts away from the seductive heights of success and power; instead, reads the invitation, turn to those who are poor and living at the base. Get close, listen, and break bread with the broken. Then, as the God of Amos promises, justice will begin to flow. Not the drop by drop result of some trickle down theory. But Justice: like a river that never runs dry, causing the blind to see, the lame to walk upright, and a cleaning woman's deep thirst to be satisfied. And, when that happens, there really will be peace in the valley. □

Loving & Dying

by Peggy Scherer

Editor's note: Peggy Scherer lives in New York and is the co-director of Bailey House, a hospice for homeless people with Aids.

"No people are uninteresting," wrote the poet Yevgeny Yevtushenko in "People." "Their fate is like the chronicle of planets. . . . And if a person lived in obscurity, making friends in that obscurity, obscurity is not uninteresting. . . ." As the lines were read at our January memorial service, I was struck by how they described those we had come to remember and mourn: Alex, Bruce, Jerry, Ken, Luke, Clem, Sammy, Carla, Clare. None of them famous, none of them rich, not one had an obituary in the newspaper. Only half had families who had visited them. But we who had known them, who had laughed with them, listened to them, held their hands and cried, found these men and women of much interest. Their lives had touched and enriched ours.

Take Luke, for example. I'd known this quiet, gentle, charming man for a year and a half. Hesitant as he was to "bother" me, our conversations were about practical matters at first. But his beautiful eyes betrayed his love of life, and while there never was enough time, I treasure the many good talks we had about so many things. Until those last awful weeks when diabetes, meningitis, anemia and a blood infection tipped the balance, finally robbing him of his sight, and affecting his mind. His death, a blessed release by then, left quite an empty space in my life.

* * * * *

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE



Rita Corbin

CONTINUED FROM PRECEDING PAGE

For the last eighteen months I have worked at Bailey House, a residence for homeless men and women with Aids, in New York City. With 44 people in various stages of the disease at any given time, all of us, residents and staff, share a life which is often busy, almost always intense. Together we try to help each other face good times and bad times and all that falls in between. Often we move from one difficult situation to another, if not grapple with several crises simultaneously. The time bomb of Aids casts its pall.

Yet when I'm asked how I can bear to work with the dying, my answers are several. Without denying the fact that to date, everyone with Aids will eventually die, a stronger reality hits me every time I pass through the door. For our house is always filled with those still alive. My faith and understanding of the Gospel give me direction and strength. And there's the fact that it's not always grim: parties and outings and chats over coffee occur more often than medical and emotional crises. It's not a work that is easy to do alone, and I'm constantly grateful for, and marvel at, my wonderful co-workers. Different as we are in some ways--of various races and religions, gay and straight, professionally trained and not, in recovery from drugs or alcohol or not--we're all there for one reason: we care. While we definitely get weary, and often feel sad, what we're most often acutely aware of is this: life is the most precious gift there is. We only feel grief because of the love that we've shared. The rewards by far outweigh the pain.

So it is with Jennifer, who, as I write this, lays dying. Abused and neglected as a child, out on the streets, on heroin and a

prostitute at an early age, she had a baby when she was only 14. Seven years later she came to us, after long months in a hospital fighting for life. With much effort on her part, and love and firmness on ours, she changed from a whining, manipulative young woman to a lovely, hard-working one. For several months she went to a GED program each day of the week, even when she had to drag her wasting body out of bed. She arranged for her child's custody, which meant sending her to a sister who lived out of state--insuring her child's well-being, though robbing herself of the comfort of her visits. One can't help but marvel at such courage, or fail to feel joy in having been part of such a blossoming.

Having put ourselves in a position to meet some of those people for whom too many in this world have shown only scorn, we've found there's much to learn. Stereotypical phrases turn out, as usual, to be unfair, and incorrect. Certainly there are people at greater risk of Aids than others--as is true with so many diseases. Our daily experience has shown us that the residents of Bailey House are first and foremost individuals: some quite lovable and attractive in the best ways; others try the patience, to put it mildly, and some have had to be discharged. Most probably wouldn't attract attention one way or another, unless you got to know them.

But get to know each other we do. I mourn for sweet, shy Danny, so withdrawn his first few months with us that we didn't know the color of his eyes. Precious in my memory are those moments when he began to open up, evidently having decided to try to trust a few of us. And what appeared was a kind, caring, intelligent, if sad and broken man. It was an important breakthrough for both of us when one day, each of us exhausted and worn, we lost our tempers with each other. Then we stopped, saw what we had done, and knew that we'd go on being friends--which we did--until he died, in his own room, surrounded by people who loved him.

Then there was Marvin--tall, skinny, eventually emaciated, he had a very dry wit, and his own way of seeing most things. He could be absolutely exasperating; and he could light up a room, and my whole day, with a joke and his grin--which stretched ear to ear. He yearned for two things: to see his newborn daughter, conceived before he knew that he had Aids, and to be baptized a Catholic. With great courage, determination and through grace, he managed to do both.

Mike, Rita, Jack, Randy, Dick, Cathy, Charlie, Bob, Linda, Jose. . . . As the months roll on, our family grows constantly larger with those who keep coming, and those who have passed on, one more almost every week. As the poem continued, "Not people die, but worlds die in them. . . . They perish. They cannot be brought back. . . ." The dead live on in our memories, and those with us play a big part in our lives. As I think of them, I realize how much the motto of Mother Jones, a labor organizer early in this century, has become mine: "Pray for the dead, and fight like hell for the living." May God bless them all.



Horace Tribble: An Attitude of Gratitude

by Murphy Davis

Horace Tribble is my teacher. Every Tuesday morning like clockwork Horace appears in our kitchen and before long he is busily slicing oranges and counting out eggs for Wednesday morning's breakfast. Later, with a friendly word for each one, he hands out sandwiches to those who come to eat with us.

Many other days, too, Horace joins us to stuff newspapers, help in the kitchen, visit with folks in the living room, and generally pitch in with the life and work here.

I first met Horace Tribble on the picket line at the Empire Linen Company. The workers--most of them black women--had been out on strike for several weeks, and the negotiations were wearing on. People were getting tired. With 3-year-old Hannah and Christina, I had started taking lunch over to the strikers several days a week. One day as we sat on the wall after lunch I saw a tall man get off the bus and walk, leaning on his cane, up to the line. I met Horace as he worked his way up the line greeting folks and sharing an encouraging word. Then he sat down quietly. He didn't seem to need to be noticed or thanked. He was simply there to lend his support. His presence was the gift.

And so it is often with Horace. If there is a vigil during an execution, Horace is there. If there's a rally for the homeless, Horace is there. If there's a meeting about neighborhood concerns or South Africa, Horace is there. Friend, brother, encourager.



Following the Stations of the Cross.

"It's simple," says Horace. "There're too many people who talk Christianity but don't live it. Why talk the talk if you're

not going to walk the walk? We got to live the scriptures. Feeding the hungry, visiting the prisoners, that's reality and I want to be a part of it."

But it seems to me we know Horace best through his prayers. When we come together for our noon worship after the soup kitchen, we often call on Horace to pray. In a clear voice he always begins, "Almighty God, we come to you today with an attitude of gratitude. . . ."

The familiar greeting tells us who Horace Tribble is. And it teaches us a straightforward lesson about the importance of living a life of gratitude.



Celebrating Christmas with us.

Thomas Merton says, "To be grateful is to recognize the love of God in everything God has given us--and God has given us everything. . . . Gratitude, therefore, takes nothing for granted, is never un-responsive, is constantly awakening to new wonder and to praise of the goodness of God. For the grateful person knows that God is good, not by hearsay but by experience. And that is what makes all the difference." (from Thoughts in Solitude)

Horace knows the goodness of God because he is grateful for every good gift of God. He is a person who never complains.

Often Horace prays, "We thank you God for two good eyes to see with; for two good ears to hear with; and two good legs to walk with. . . ."

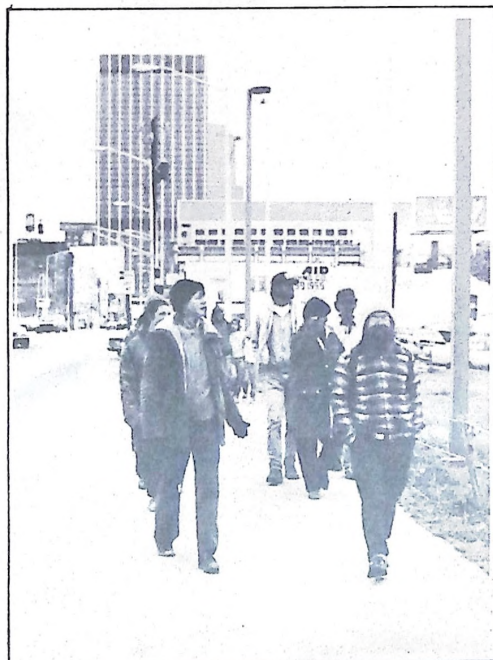
Horace has only one leg and walks with some difficulty and pain. But he is grateful to be able to walk.

For Horace Tribble's attitude of gratitude I give thanks. That he is a friend and part of the Open Door family we celebrate.

Holy Week ...



Worship at City Hall is ignored by passersby.



Some of the Jubilee Community returning from 24 hours out on the streets.



Wednesday Worship at Day Labor Center.



The Vagrant Christ in downtown Atlanta, on Good Friday.



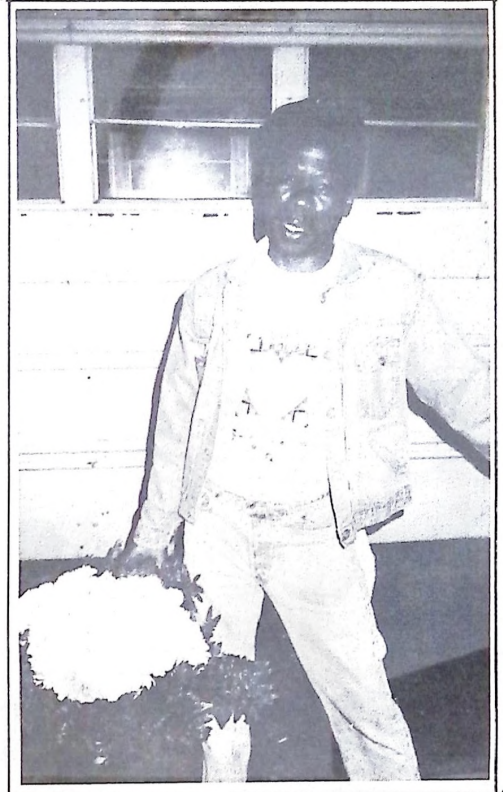
Vigiling through Holy Saturday night.

...and Easter at 910

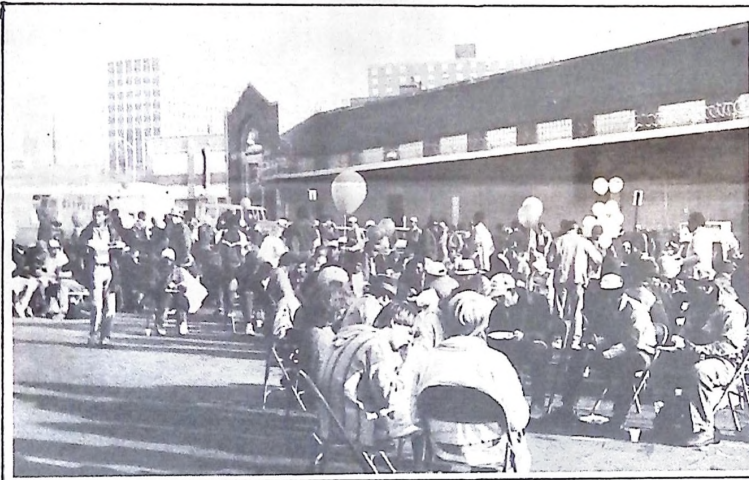
All photos by Peter Stinner, unless otherwise noted.



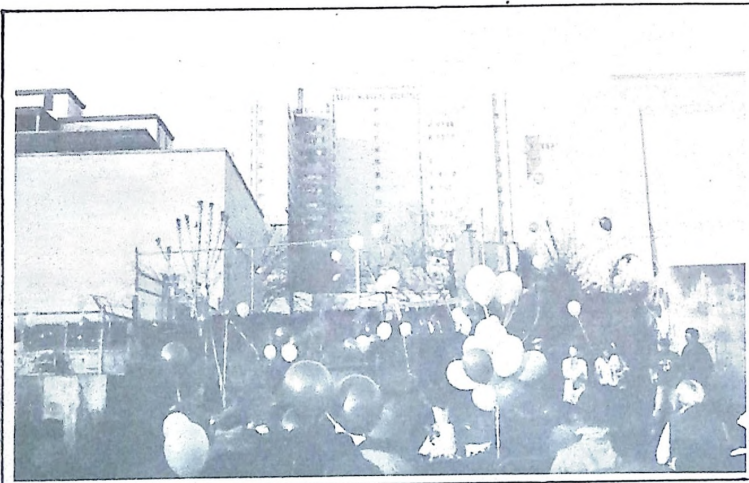
Loading 'Mabeline the Bus' at 5:30 AM.



James smiling - before the sun comes up!



Breakfast is served as the sun rises.



Balloons and flowers in the shadow of Grady Charity Hospital.

Joanne Solomon



The Reverend Tim McDonald speaks.

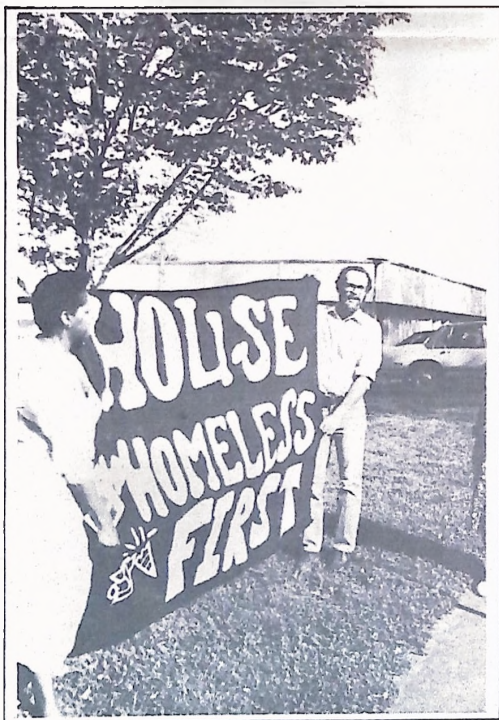


Build Homes - Not Bombs

by Ellen Spears

Thanks to the efforts of an enthusiastic ad hoc coalition of advocates for the homeless, churches, and peace and justice groups, the April 17th "Build Homes Not Bombs Rally" was a success. The event took place at the Decatur Main Post Office and started when demonstrators arrived at 5pm. They were there to protest the nation's tax spending: 52% of tax dollars goes towards the military while only 2% goes towards housing.

Among the groups participating were the following: Atlanta Friends Meeting/Social Concerns Committee, Clergy and Laity Concerned/Atlanta Chapter, Community of Hospitality, Concerned Black Clergy, Georgia Housing Coalition, Mennonite Central Committee, North Decatur Presbyterian Church, Atlanta Nuclear Freeze/Jobs with Peace, Open Door Community, Sane/Freeze, the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, Task Force for the Homeless, the Trident to Life Campaign, and Waging Peace from Agnes Scott College.

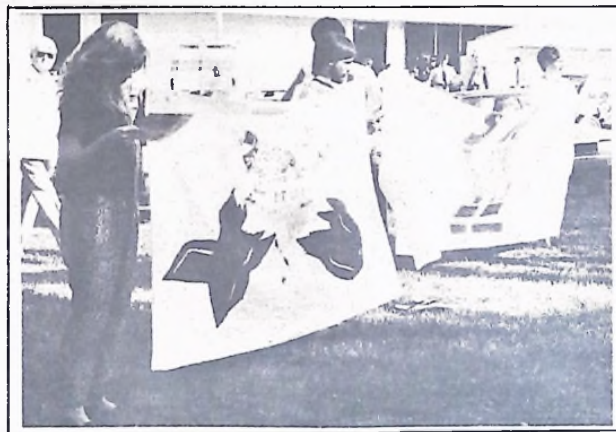


Several participants carried colorful banners and signs with slogans such as, "Housing is a Right for All" and "Spend on Life." Also, a 24-foot plywood model of a

Trident Submarine and a model house were set up to show that the federal government has misplaced spending priorities. Demonstrators pointed out that for the cost of one Trident Sub, Atlanta could build 25,000 homes. In addition, there were several musicians leading the crowd in classic sing-a-longs but with updated lyrics. David Davidson, of Task Force for the Homeless, inspired everyone with chants such as "Housing Now!" and "The people united shall never be defeated!"

Davidson and Ellen Spears of SANE/FREEZE were the MC's for the event. Those who spoke were Anita Beaty of Task Force for the Homeless, Rev. Ed Loring of the Open Door Community, Alice Broner of Help House, Rev. Tim McDonald of Concerned Black Clergy, Bob Mills of Community of Hospitality, and Dr. Joseph Lowery of SCLC. Their speeches focused on alerting the public to the homeless crisis in America and making them recognize that actions must be taken now in order to overcome it. Another issue raised was that the federal government must realize that the American public will not be satisfied with the present lack of affordable, adequate housing.

Meanwhile, 2,000 flyers were handed out to those who came to pay their taxes that evening. The flyers were geared toward educating the public on what their tax dollars are being used for. They were focused against the Pentagon's excessive spending on needless weapon systems, (i.e., Trident Submarines, SDI, etc.). Dr. Lowery pointed out that America has to "come home" and focus on human needs, such as housing.



More than a hundred people participated in the rally. The demonstrators were a diverse group of people of all ages. Overall, the reaction to the rally was positive. Hopefully, it inspired people to continue the battle for decent housing in America.

The Dialogue Continues ...

Dear Brother Ed,

I appreciate your taking the lead in initiating a dialogue on alternatives to the death penalty. It is a question I've wrestled with for a long time. I'd like to offer some observations and concerns.

Pragmatically, your suggestion makes sense, although it is important to reckon with the police/court/prison system's powerful and consistent ability to co-opt every effort at reform. Experience has shown that many intended reforms have eventually had the effect of deepening the suffering or of expanding it to even greater numbers of people.

I believe that people of faith are called to reject not only capital punishment but all punishment. The Biblical model and meaning of justice is one of restoration and healing, not of punishment or vengeance. Our need to punish is rooted in our weakness and sinfulness.

Jesus opened his ministry with an announcement of good news which included a proclamation of "release to the prisoners." There is no reason to think that he meant that proclamation less literally than those regarding healing for the blind or liberty for the oppressed. If Jesus is our model, then that is the direction our ministry should take.


In the context of these Christian teachings, to advocate imprisonment is to sell the Gospel short--to lie about the Good News--unless at the same time we are very clear that this is only a first step toward that to which God calls us.

To choose the lesser of two evils is to choose evil. It seems to me that God does not abandon us to such a choice but gives us another way.

We are not called to be effective--to get the right candidate elected, to reform the system, to compromise for the sake of expediency; we're called to be faithful--faithful to God who is working out a purpose for the world far better than we can envision. The more we remain faithful, rather than seeking to be effective, the better God can use us.

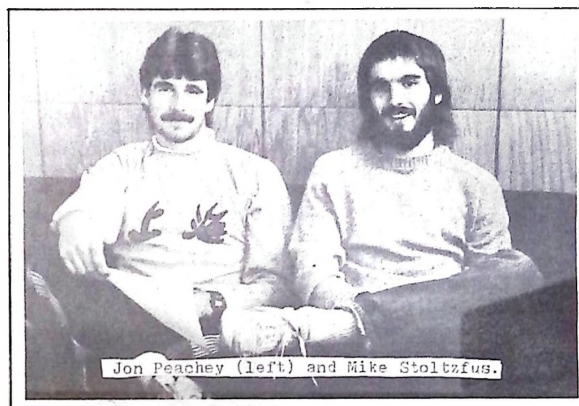
I offer these concerns and lift up these teachings with humility in light of my own inability often to live them out. And I would not stand in the way of those who honestly feel led to purchase abolition at such a cost, nor would I presume to judge their choice. Yet I have felt led another way and have wanted to share the understandings of faith which have led me.

Shalom,

Bob Gross 

RUN FOR SHALOM 1989 PORTLAND TO BOSTON

On April 25, 1989 Jon Peachey and Mike Stoltzfus started the cross-country trek from Portland, Oregon to Boston, Massachusetts. Endorsed by Mennonite Central Committee (relief and service agency of all Mennonite churches) and the Open Door Community, the Run for Shalom joins the race against oppression and injustice in North America. Through writing, speaking, fund raising and constantly listening to people and nature, Jon and Mike seek to raise awareness and support for the millions of hungry and homeless people that scar our land.



Jon Peachey (left) and Mike Stoltzfus.

To have homelessness and hunger in a land of plenty is a personal tragedy and a national disgrace. All of us hold both individual and corporate responsibility. Changes in our national policy will blossom from the new agenda we set for our private lives.


We run for both personal and communal shalom. We are not the carriers of shalom but are carried by a longing for shalom. Growth, integrity, and a rooted identity are needed for both individuals and groups. The Run for Shalom seeks to nurture both. As always, what we receive from the journey will be much more than we give.

Running and walking 30 to 40 miles each day, six days a week, we plan to rise with the sun, sleep under the moon, and hopefully flow like the rivers. We will be pushing our 50 pounds of food, water, clothes and camping gear in a modified running cart. If both our legs and the cart's wheels can hold out for four months, we will arrive in Boston in late August or early September.

If you wish to donate to, correspond with, or be placed on the mailing list of Run for Shalom, send your name and address to:
Run for Shalom
c/o Janelle Nofziger
Goshen College
Goshen, IN 46526

The next four or so articles will come from the road. We look forward to sharing our journey with you through Hospitality.

Shalom,

Jon Peachey 
Mike Stoltzfus

Diakonos

by Gary West

Editor's note: Gary West is a friend of the Open Door who often comes to visit with his family, bearing good gifts for our homeless friends.

In the fall of 1985, several folks packed their cars with clothing items and blankets and drove from Yancey County, North Carolina to Washington, D.C. to make a delivery. The purpose of the trip had developed in response to an invitation from Wanda McNeil, former Yancey County Health Nurse. Wanda, a Lutheran seminarian at that time doing specialized study in D.C., had contacted us, Gary and Patti West, and shared something of the terrific plight and need of the homeless in the nation's capitol. As a result, we enlisted other friends to assist in the delivery of some "essential items" to one of the shelters in Washington. We raised funds and purchased socks, underwear, caps, gloves, and blankets at the best possible price through some contacts with clothing mills in North Carolina. The manager of one mill agreed to donate a dozen pairs of thermal underwear for every dozen pairs purchased at cost.

In a caravan of three vehicles, each tightly packed with the needed items, this first group journeyed to Washington. After the goods had been delivered, we took a turn serving food in a soup kitchen for the homeless, and two women from the group spent the night in a women's shelter, listening, observing, encouraging. Approximately one year later, the same group made another trip, again delivering clothing and assisting with meal service.

From these experiences has come the development of DIAKONOS, a non-profit organization designed to assist shelters for the homeless in the Southeast with essential items for basic human need. Diakonos is a Greek word which means one who renders a service, to minister, or to supply the necessities of life. Challenged by what we saw in Washington and in similar trips to the Open Door Community in Atlanta, Patti and I decided to organize some kind of effort to address these needs. There are several hundred shelters in the Southeast alone seeking to respond to the thousands of people who have no home. The shelters seem to have a common need: basic essential items such as socks, underwear, caps, gloves, personal hygiene products, etc. Even though most of the shelters are located in cities, donations and provision of these items is often severely lacking.

Patti and I will serve as co-directors of Diakonos. We will be assisted by an ecumenical governing board and will be joined by numerous "volunteer partners" who will help in the day by day operation of the

organization. Patti, a native of Burnsville in Yancey County, N.C., has worked for several years in both the medical and legal fields. She will coordinate many of the office activities, including computerized record-keeping. I am an ordained minister from a Southern Baptist tradition and have served both as a pastor and a counselor in a psychiatric hospital. For the last six years I have served as director of Reconciliation House, a crisis center in Yancey County. While completing a doctorate in Theological Ethics at Texas Christian University, the focus of my study moved more and more toward the hurting and neglected of society. Many of the ideas germinated in that academic setting now serve as motivation for the development of Diakonos. Just because there is a tragic need on one hand and a lot of people and resources on the other doesn't mean that the two will automatically get together. It takes a deliberate effort to match active concern with the realities of pain and loss. That's what we hope Diakonos will be about.

Diakonos has just received its 501(c)(3) tax exempt status which means that all donations are tax-deductible. If you are interested in supporting this work, we need not only financial assistance but also donations of those "essential items" that have been mentioned. In addition, we are open to suggestions for sources of grants and suppliers of goods; i.e., retail or wholesale outlets, mills, factories, etc. Diakonos will make contacts with these places.

We also welcome the name, address, and list of needs from any shelter in North or South Carolina, Georgia, Tennessee, or Virginia. Our goal is to expand to a larger regional effort as soon as possible. When a list of needs for a particular shelter is known, Diakonos will make every effort to supply those needs. If shelters can assist with funds for purchase or shipping, this will be gratefully received. However, no shelter should hesitate to make known a request if financial support is not available. Diakonos will still make the effort to provide.

In the next few weeks we will develop a list of shelters and suppliers, and a brochure and periodic newsletters will be mailed. Anyone interested in making a request or providing assistance of any kind may write to Diakonos, PO Box 369, Burnsville, NC 28714, or call 704/682-2956 or 682-9206. □



Gary and Patti West, with Chad, Jordan, Pax and Lindsay.



OPEN DOOR FOLKS AND HOMELESS FRIENDS marching with the Mad Housers and Justice for Janitors in the Martin Luther King parade, January, 1989.

Housing Now!

A National Call To Action

Power concedes nothing without a demand. It never has, and it never will.

Come to Washington, D.C. on October 7th to demand an end to homelessness in the United States, and the creation of affordable housing.

In late September, thousands of people from around the nation will begin to march to Washington, D.C. for nearly a week of actions culminating in a massive march from the Pentagon to the Capitol.

October 5, 1989
MARCHERS ARRIVE IN D.C.

October 7, 1989
MARCH FROM PENTAGON TO CAPITOL

10 AM — Leave Pentagon
Noon — Rally on the Mall



HOUSING NOW!
425 2nd Street NW
Washington DC 20001

(202) 347- 2405



Summer Intern Program '89

The Catholic Worker Summer Intern Program offers an experience in prophetic Christian community as a spiritual alternative to the consumerism and militarism of the dominant culture.

It is an opportunity to live with the poor, to be a part of a community, to actualize in some small measure Christ's kingdom of peace and justice.

Please send more information on Summer Program '89 (June 18 - Aug. 13).

Name

Address

City State

Phone

Return to L.A. Catholic Worker, 632 N. Britania St., L.A. CA 90033/213-267-8789.

THE DEATH
PENALTY IS EASY
TO ACCEPT.

ALL YOU HAVE
TO DO IS DENY
THE FACTS.

ON NON-VIOLENCE

(The following is reprinted from Ground Zero, with permission from Shelly Douglas, the author.)

I believe that nonviolence is more than a tactic in political struggles, and more than simply not hitting someone who threatens or annoys us. For me it is a principle of conduct involving the idea of non-harm (ahimsa), or seeking harmony. I believe that each of our actions, no matter how small, is part of the fabric of our world, and contributes to the quality of life here. The Trident system, the county landfill, the depletion of the ozone layer, are all results of millions of small acts by millions of people like me, and these acts are in their turn the result of our attitudes.

If the society in which we live is in fact built up like a coral reef out of millions of tiny acts and decisions arising from our attitudes, and if those attitudes, acts, and decisions determine the structure of our system, then even disposal of garbage assumes importance, and transformation of society involves our minds, hearts, and daily lives as well as our political system. Understanding a nonviolent way of life becomes important because only a nonviolent way of life will lead to nonviolence in our relations with the natural world, with other nations, with our families, friends, ourselves.

LET'S BUILD A NEW PARK

To replace our loss of Plaza Park

THE AL SMITH PARK

A HOMELESS BROTHER



AL SMITH DIED OCTOBER 17, 1986

FIVE POINTS

1. A new park in the downtown area
2. A memorial for Atlanta's Homeless
3. A place for all who share Atlanta's streets
4. Water fountains
5. Public toilets

SAY YES!

PLEASE CALL AND WRITE TODAY:

AARON TURPEAU DEPT. OF ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES - 260 CENTRAL AVE., S.W. - ATLANTA, GA 30335 (658-7880)

ANDREW YOUNG CITY HALL - 68 MITCHELL ST., S.W. - ATLANTA, GA 30335 (527-7015)

MARVEN ARRINGTON 300 CITY HALL - 68 MITCHELL ST., S.W. - ATLANTA, GA 30335 (658-6300)

ATLANTA ADVOCATES FOR THE HOMELESS
876 -6977

UNDERGROUND ATLANTA OPENS JUNE 15

WHY IS THERE STILL HUNGER IN ATLANTA ?

Open Door Schedule

WE ARE OPEN. . .

Monday through Saturday, telephones are answered from 9:00am until noon, from 1:30 until 6:00pm, and from 7:30 until 8:30pm. The building is open from 9:00am until 8:30pm those days. (Both phone & 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 closed until 1:00pm. Please do not make unscheduled drop-offs of clothing, food, etc. on Sunday mornings. Sunday afternoon our phones and door are answered from 1:00 until 5:00pm.

OUR MINISTRY. . .

SOUP KITCHEN--Monday-Saturday, 11am-12 noon; Sunday 2-4pm

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

SHOWERS & CHANGE OF CLOTHES--Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday, 9-11am
(Be sure to call; schedule varies)

USE OF PHONE--Monday-Saturday, 9am-4pm.

SHELTER REQUESTS--Monday-Saturday, 9am-noon.

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

WEEKEND RETREATS--Every 6th Weekend (for our household & volunteers/supporters)--June 23,24,25.

Open Door Community Worship

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

Child care available.

Join us!



- | | |
|------------|--|
| May 7 | Worship at 910
5:00 Eucharist
5:30 Tandi Gcabashe
on South Africa |
| May 12-14 | Retreat at Dayspring |
| May 21 | Worship at 910 |
| May 28 | Worship at 910 |
| June 4 | Worship at 910 |
| June 11 | Worship at 910 |
| June 18 | Worship at 910 |
| June 23-25 | Retreat at Dayspring |

Every sixth Sunday the Community has a weekend retreat outside the city.
This replaces our evening worship at 910 Ponce de Leon Ave.

NEEDS

DRIVERS WITH CARS, VANS, OR STATION WAGONS
FOR THE HARDWICK PRISON TRIP.

- | | |
|---------------------|---------------------------|
| COFFEE | CHEESE |
| DEODORANT | MAYONNAISE |
| HAMS AND TURKEYS | VITAMIN C |
| BONGO DRUMS | MARTA TOKENS |
| POSTAL MONEY ORDERS | POSTAGE STAMPS |
| CAR | MEN'S LARGE SHOES (12-14) |

VOLUNTEERS FOR THE 3RD AND 4TH WEDNESDAYS OF
EACH MONTH, FROM 9AM TO 12:30.

*From 11am - 1pm Monday- 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 1:00, it would be helpful.
Thanks.*

Newspaper Requests - If you or a friend would like
to receive HOSPITALITY, please fill in this form
and return to Willie London at the Open Door
Community, 910 Ponce de Leon Ave. NE, Atlanta,
Georgia 30306-4212.

Name _____

Street _____

City, State, Zip _____