

HOSPITALITY

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May 1997

Patsy Morris: Gifts for the Long Haul

by Murphy Davis

Harriet "Patsy" Pratt Morris died in the bright early morning of March 23, Palm Sunday. She had struggled since the fall with lung cancer, facing her illness as she had lived her life: straightforwardly, pulling no punches, unafraid.

Patsy was my colleague and friend for exactly twenty years. We both began to work against the death penalty in 1977 in the months after the U.S. Supreme Court affirmed the new Georgia death penalty statute, opening the way for another era of executions. For these 20 years she has been the legal monitor, tracking every single death penalty case in Georgia and working to try to insure competent legal representation for everyone. Along the way she recruited and trained hundreds of lawyers and helped to provide the meticulous detail work showing the racial and class disparities and the capricious and arbitrary nature of death sentencing. She has been recognized nationally for her work and inspiration.

The Open Door Community owes Patsy a special debt of gratitude. Not only was she our friend and co-worker in the movement against the death penalty, but she supported and encouraged us with great generosity through all of our years and work—including the designation of the Open Door (along with the Georgia Appellate Resource Center) to receive memorial gifts.

During my last visit with Patsy three days before she died, we read some favorite Psalms and scriptures. We talked about her favorite hymn (known as the Seaman's hymn) and John, her husband, and I sang it for her—in voices wavering and cracking at points.

She had spoken often of the anxious days during World War II when her father was at sea. Every Sunday in their parish on Long Island they would sing this hymn. Every verse ended with, "O hear us when we cry to thee for those in peril on the sea." The last verse was different:



Patsy Morris at the Open Door with Billy Neal Moore several months after Billy was released from prison after 14 years on death row.

*O Trinity of love and power,
All travelers guard in danger's hour;
From rock and tempest, fire and foe,
Protect them wheresoe'er they go;
Thus evermore shall rise to Thee
Glad praise from air and land and sea.*

I have thought often since that day of Patsy's work on behalf of the condemned: her passion to guard travelers "in danger's hour." Surely out of her early spiritual formation her life was crafted as a prayer of protection and salvation for the most vulnerable among us.

The following text is from my homily for Patsy's funeral service on March 26 at the Episcopal Cathedral of St. Philip.

This Gospel reading is not generally thought of as a funeral text, but it is one of Jesus' stories that could well have been a story about the life and work of our dear friend and sister Patsy Morris:

Then Jesus told his disciples a parable to teach them that they should always pray and never become discouraged. "In a certain town there was a judge who neither feared God nor

respected people. And there was a widow in that same town who kept coming to him and pleading for her rights, saying, 'Help me against my opponent!' For a long time the judge refused to act, but at last he said to himself, 'Even though I don't fear God or respect people, yet because of all the trouble this widow is giving me, I will see to it that she gets her rights. If I don't, she will keep on coming and finally wear me out!'"

And Jesus continued, "Listen to what that corrupt judge said. Now, will God not judge in favor of God's own people who cry out day and night for help? Will God be slow to help them? I tell you, God will judge in their favor and do it quickly." (Luke 18:1-8a)

Patsy Morris was a long-haul person—a tenacious, persistent woman, just like that widow in Luke's gospel. She was a New

York native who fell in love with a good Southern boy, and moved to become a preacher's wife in Dillon, South Carolina—truly a stranger in a strange land. It was from there, beginning in 1954 that she opened her life to the struggle. She learned to love the whole broad spectrum of the work for civil and human rights, and she gave her life to the struggle for justice. Patsy's spiritual and character formation took place in the crucible of the 1960's. Those days and nights were filled with so much fright, terror and threats, assassinations, grief, and loss. But for all that, the 1960's were an era of hope. Patsy took hold of that hope in the 1960's and lived it out in the 1970's, '80's, and '90's. In this current era of despair, Patsy lived to teach us that the long-haul is not a quantitative reality, but a deeply spiritual well. And she showed us how to live the long-haul with tenacity, care, and a sense of humor.

There was continuity for Patsy from the movement of the '60's to the anti-death penalty struggle of the '70's, the '80's, and beyond, because she has held to that minority view that the death penalty is a central issue in the civil

(continued on page 2)

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("Patsy Morris," continued from page 1)

rights' agenda. She began the work of fighting the death penalty in 1977, when Georgia's death row included one woman and 65 men. Patsy studied and scrutinized the process of death sentencing with an increasing sense of horror and amazement; but she communicated it with a finely honed moral fervor tempered with wit and irony. Over the years, she intuited and keenly observed patterns—some of which were later documented for some of the most important judicial tests.

But when asked why she did what she did, Patsy always went first to the fact that she was a Christian. She traveled in the civil liberties' circles that did not always appreciate that, but we need to acknowledge the importance of her faith in this day of remembrance. Patsy was a Christian—a woman of deep faith—boldy and unapologetically. She refused to let the right-wing social and political agenda be the last word in defining the practice of faith in the public arena. And she spent her life showing us the practice of public faith.

In finding legal advocacy for "the least of these," Patsy understood Christian service—the life of faith. She was an advocate all through her life for the people who would have been traveling with Jesus: Jesus the vagrant, Jesus the outsider, Jesus the homeless wanderer, Jesus condemned by the pious establishment, Jesus tried and found guilty in a court of law (without due process), Jesus executed by the state (Had Patsy been one of the disciples, she at least would have found him a lawyer.). But none of this story went unno-

ticed or unappreciated by Patsy. Neither did she fail to appreciate that, at a place or two in the scriptures, one of the many names for Satan was "the Accuser," or "the prosecuting attorney."

Reflecting on her first six years of anti-death penalty advocacy, she wrote in 1983, "As an ACLU of Georgia staff member in 1977, I volunteered to assume responsibility for monitoring Georgia's death row, and for recruiting volunteer counsel to represent these inmates. It was later that I realized that my satisfaction with a depressing, frustrating, although challenging, job could only be because I was using my God-given talents to help those who could not help themselves, and that what I was doing was a valid and useful expression of deeply held religious, ethical, and moral values. One particular verse from the New Testament frequently enters my mind. It is, 'Let the one who is without sin among you be the first to cast a stone.'"

Patsy, this strong, bold sister, walked resolutely and with no fanfare into the war zone: the courts of this land as they are used to control the lives and communities of the poor, especially for people of color, the courts used to humiliate, degrade, and discount the humanity of the poor. And she was from day one to her last days outraged, insulted, and angry. It fueled her work with a white-hot passion that served the movement for justice and mercy in this land.

In recruiting lawyers, Patsy nurtured, taught, loved, and admired so many. She carefully noted the hard toll of the death machine on the lives of advocates and responded with compassion and a listening ear. But lest anyone let their little lawyerly heads swell, she said very precisely on occasion, "It's so desperate. You take whom you can get."

Patsy had a deep compassion for everyone touched by this brutal system—prisoners, families, defense lawyers, judges, prosecutors, police, prison guards, and bureaucrats. And in a special and particular way, her heart ached for the surviving members of the families of murder victims as she saw them used and abused and abandoned by the cruel process of death sentencing. It frustrated and angered her to see the death penalty offered to grieving survivors as though this judicial act of brutality and revenge would help to heal their wounds.

To every task she took on, Patsy brought precision: with her eye, her mind, and her razor point pen; whether it was the checkbook of the American Civil Liberties Union (which was carried, by the way, in Patsy's purse), or labeling coat hangers at the Resource Center to indicate which ones were bought with federal funds, and which ones with state funds, or the meticulous lists and lists and lists and records of death penalty cases.

In and through her precision, her meticulous care, she genuinely cared for our society's throwaways—those abandoned by our communities and systems—those without advocates. But before we begin to idealize Patsy as some kind of pious lady (Patsy would HATE that!), it must be said that she could cuss and fuss and fume with the best of 'em. But she struggled never to dehumanize her opponents. She was very clear about who her enemies were. Insofar as it was humanly possible though, she treated everybody with respect—as a human being—and believed that any and everybody, even her most bitter rivals, could be rehabilitated and restored (or when she couldn't really believe it, at least she tried!).

It was, as she often said, "dreary" work, but thank God Patsy knew how to find and hear and remember the moments of comic relief. And sometimes she even created the moments of comic relief. So often she would regale various ones of us with some account of a conversation, or a trial, or a letter, until we screamed and howled with laughter.

She loved the story about receiving one set of case records. James Venable, the lawyer and late Grand Dragon of the Ku Klux Klan in Stone Mountain, represented several men in capital cases (all of whom ended up on death row). When Patsy found a volunteer lawyer to take over one of the cases, Mr. Venable dispatched his secretary to deliver the trial transcript to Patsy at the ACLU office.

The poor woman found her way to 88 Walton Street in downtown Atlanta, walked up the creaking stairs, and opened the door. Patsy described her face as she stood in that doorway as one who might as well have landed on Mars. (We can imagine it: posters, bumper stickers, and slogans covering every inch of wall space; file folders and piles of paper falling off the shelves; Eleanor Brownfield working away at the front desk, probably with her shoes off; Gene Guerrero hollering from the back office; and Patsy in the back corner, in a thick cloud of smoke no doubt, talking on the phone and balancing the accounts at the same time.)

The bewildered secretary finally composed herself enough to deliver the goods, and sputtered: "Thank you for working for them poor devils. They sure do need help and it takes do-gooders like you to do it."

(continued on page 8)

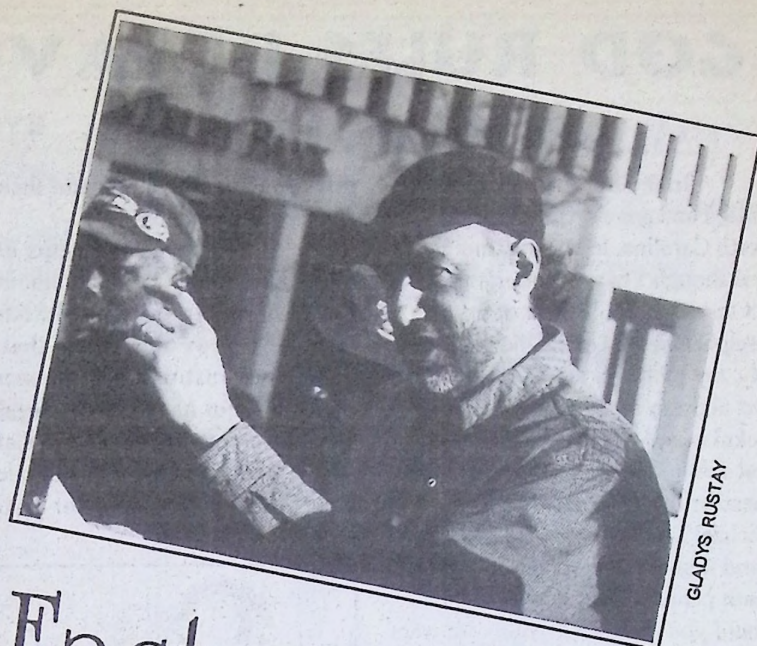
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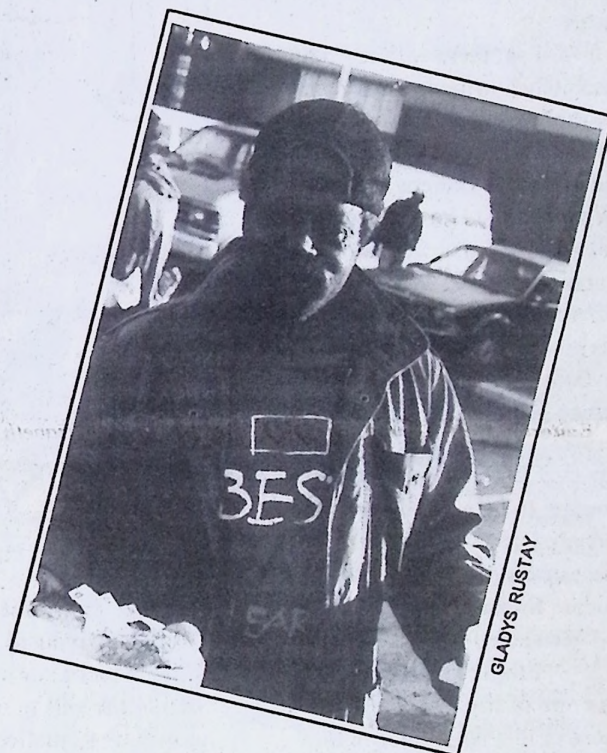
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GLADYS RUSTAY

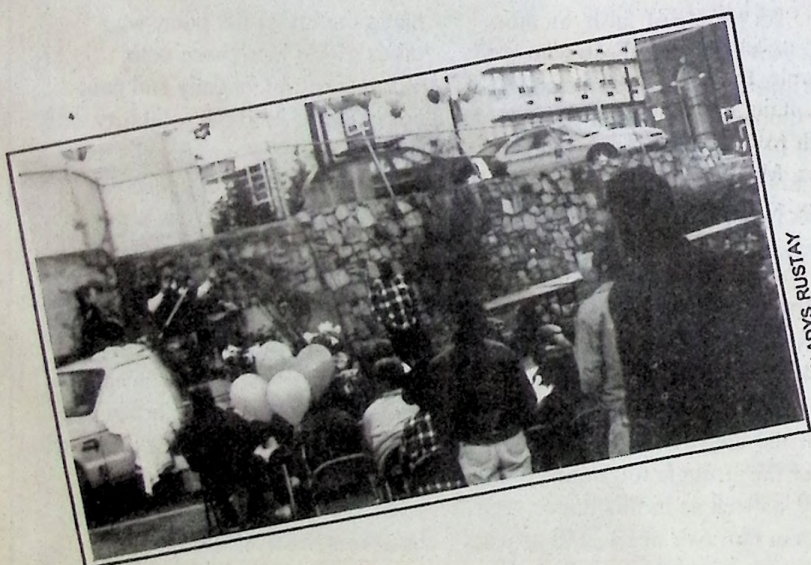


GLADYS RUSTAY



GLADYS RUSTAY

The Community and Extended Community spent another Holy Week and Easter morning with the homeless in downtown Atlanta. Each day, beginning on Palm Sunday and ending on Easter morning, a group of us spends 24 hours with the homeless in downtown Atlanta. We gathered as a whole at 5p.m. each day at various sites downtown for a worship service where we prayed, sang, and commissioned out a new group for their 24-hour stay out in the streets. The photos on this page show various scenes from our Holy Week and Easter time in the streets including: friends from Roswell Presbyterian Church at an evening worship service, one group sleeping out near the municipal market, and our Easter morning breakfast in the Butler Street parking lot.



GLADYS RUSTAY



GLADYS RUSTAY

GOD RULES IN FAVOR OF THE OPPRESSED

BY ED LORING

In the Presidential year of 1988, I had gone up to Charlotte, North Carolina, to visit my mother. And though I have a commitment not to watch TV as part of my discipline in the Open Door Community, my mother wanted to watch TV that night to see a debate between Dukakis and Bush. We watched that debate together. The opening question from Bernard Kalb to Michael Dukakis was, "We understand that you are opposed to the death penalty, Mr. Dukakis. How would you respond if your wife were to be murdered?" Dukakis thought for a minute, and then he gave a long, verbose answer about how he would try to find ways to curb and limit the drug traffic in the United States.

I sat there with my mother absolutely horrified at that response. I wished Dukakis had looked at George Bush and at Bernard Kalb and at the TV camera and shouted: "What I would like to do is to take that no good person and stomp and beat him and say, 'Why in the hell did you kill my wife! I can't stand this kind of behavior! Why would anybody hurt and maim another human being?' Let's get rid of the person!" How natural! How expected it would be to want revenge, to be angry if one's close and intimate partner, spouse, loved one, associate, neighbor, child, mother, friend, in a senseless way had been killed!

I think Dukakis' response was one of the things that created space in this land, later in that Presidential year, for the use of Willie Horton. It was a space opened up by the inability of the Democratic candidate to be horrified at the despicable act of murder. One of the ways that I dreamed and fantasized about Dukakis' response in the debate was that after he had finished giving some emotional response, trying to illustrate the pain and horror of murder when it comes into your life, he would have been able to back off and say, "However, it is a wonderful privilege to live in a democratic land, a land that is ruled by law, rather than by passion. There is an understanding of justice that comes not from the feeling of revenge and the understandable passions of 'an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, a life for a life,' but to know that we live in a system where law encourages and enables us to move against the

rule of men and women and their anger and passions."

Law moves and helps us build community and a commonweal for all of us. In the United States, at least 20% of us understand that good law, constitutional law, means we would not have the death penalty. It is not the role of the state to take a person's life. On the one hand, there is the space for us to

The poet Langston Hughes wrote a piece entitled, "Justice":

That justice is a blind goddess is a thing to which we Blacks are wise. Her bandage hides two festering sores that once perhaps were eyes.

Walter Wink writes: "What killed Jesus was not irreligion, but

judge's bench, takes off the judge's robe and climbs onto a cross in solidarity with those who are vulnerable, weak, oppressed, and hurt.

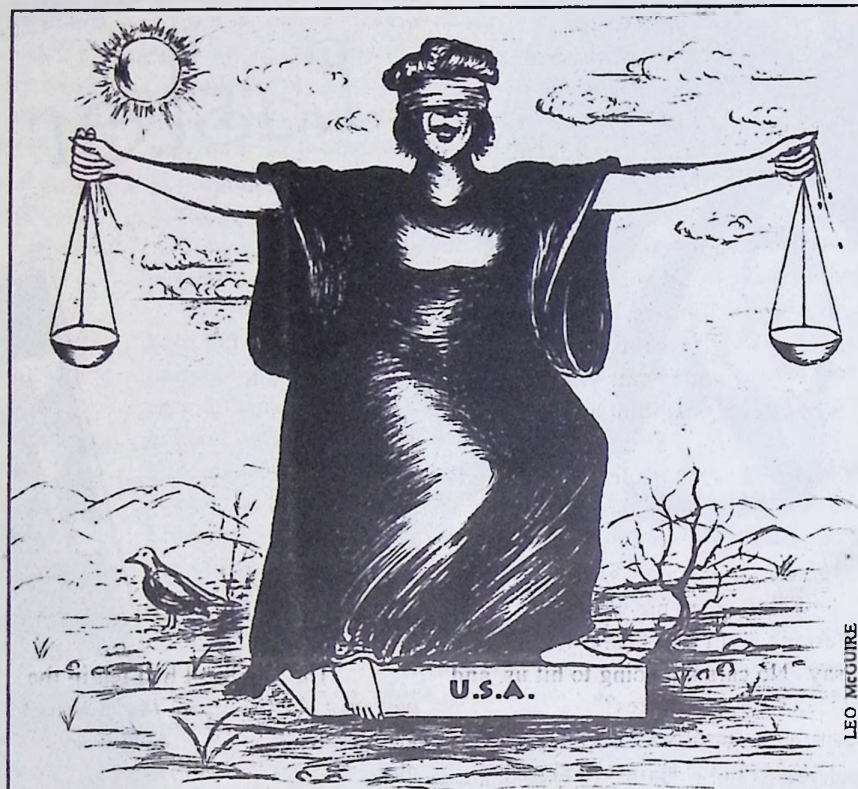
As we follow Jesus, even in the midst of this United States of America, with its ideology of a blind justice, with its festering sores for eyes, we are called to employ, embody, and practice a justice with two parts: empathy and resistance.

Justice is rooted in compassion and empathy. As we meet Jesus in the stranger's guise, we meet ourselves. As we can feel deeply the passion of another's life—murdered or murderer—we can meet Jesus, and we discover ourselves. Jesus came to teach us a new law that did not abrogate the Ten Commandments, or the law of the Old Testament and the biblical covenant. But he said, "Love one another, as I have loved you." Even greater than the commandment, "Love your neighbor as you love yourself," Jesus teaches us to love one another as Jesus has loved us. Love, by the taking up of a cross; love, by going into prison; love, by being on the streets with the homeless; love, by being in the grit line—eating and serving there; love, by being in a kitchen, or a backyard, or a shower line; love, by being a servant, by washing feet; and in this love we meet Jesus, and when we meet Jesus we meet ourselves. The critical dimension of New Testament justice is empathy, compassion, where we discover in the other, who is the Christ, ourselves.

A biblical and New Testament understanding of justice calls us to resistance. Our God, who for us pulls off any blindfold, who hears the cry of the poor, who takes a side with those who struggle empathetically and compassionately to live in solidarity with those outside the camp, calls us to a justice ethic of resistance.

Homelessness is a permanent part of the American landscape now. Racism, as we've learned from Derek Bell's *Faces at the Bottom of the Well*, is permanent. Name what we're struggling against—sexism, homophobia, the minimum wage—we are up against a permanence, an intractable power and principality. We must be people of resistance.

We are called to build a community of loving, solid, deep
(continued on next page)



feel rage and want to kill a killer. On the other hand, there is that dimension in our lives which understands the call to obey law. It moves us to justice. It is a primary source of justice in the land.

The United States' symbol for justice is the blind goddess. Her arms are stretched out, and her eyes are closed and bound with a blindfold. Her arms are level, representing equality—the balance of justice. Her eyes are blindfolded because the law is intended not to be partisan, or on the side of any. There is to be no privilege in the American understanding of justice. When you break the word "privilege" down to its Latin roots, you find that it means private law: some who have access to something that others do not. The intent of the American Revolution and development of constitutional law has been to get rid of privilege. Anyone who has a privilege over another is not living within the democratic system. All people are created equal and are equal before the law. Therefore, the symbol of American justice is a blindfolded goddess.

religion itself." Not lawlessness, but precisely the law. Not anarchy, but the upholders of order. If there is anything we know in these days and in our lives, it is how the blindfolded goddess is no longer blindfolded in a way that brings equal justice, but how instead "her bandage hides two festering sores, that once perhaps were eyes."

As people of faith, as those who follow Jesus, as those who study the scripture, (be it inerrant, or an inspiration and demand in our lives to always find its deeper meanings as it confronts us), we find, and we meet, another judge. We meet in God, in Yahweh, in Jesus Christ, a God who sees. God's eyes are not festering sores, though her heart, no doubt, is broken. This God sees most particularly the poor, the homeless, the prisoner, the righteous. God is on the side of the oppressed. As we encounter the struggle for justice in this society, as well as in this house, as well as in our own hearts and in what we do with our hands and feet, we encounter a judge who comes out of the judge's chair, out from behind the

relationships. Last fall Ralph Dennis, with lots of courage, told us of his life as an African-American man, as a human being, as one who struggles for dignity, freedom, and equality in the North American context. It was a profound experience we had as we built a deeper community. All of us knew when we walked out that we had not undone racism, we had not created a living minimum wage. As we were leaving, Jennifer Lee and Todd Cioffi said, "Thank you, Ralph, for what you have shared tonight. I feel a deeper relationship with you. We've grown in community."

In our empathy and compassion as we meet Jesus in the stranger and find ourselves, we live lives of resistance against the permanence of sin and iniquity, and we build the community of deep and solid relationships, but we must also build a life that puts the pursuit of justice into practice. We know that racism, homelessness, hunger, and prisons are a permanent part of our lives. But hope, rather than despair, is the quality of our practice. We wait and are open for the coming of the Beloved Community, which is just beyond us on the horizon. Hope is our word of welcome and thanks. We hope as we engage the powers in their permanence.

Then and now, yesterday and tomorrow, we must build skills of resistance. We must find more and more places to pee for free with dignity. We've got to discipline ourselves in the midst of the cacophony of this land so that we find more conversation and less chatter. We are nothing if we do not have a deep private and shared prayer life. Building the skills of resistance means we know how to rest and to play, and we know how to work and to struggle. And time and time again, as often as we can, we will come with the anguish and hurt of the permanence of our sins and the sins of our mothers and fathers, coming down among us to the third and fourth generation. But we also come with the joy and the hallelujah and the glory that the Lord, our God, loves thousands upon thousands of generations of those who obey God's law, God's law of love. In the midst of our pursuit of justice with a life of resistance we say, "Yes, yes, yes, yes to life itself!"

Ed Loring is a Partner at the Open Door Community.

"I Promise... During Life's Tough and Joyful Times"

by Michael Galovic

"Tamara, I am glad to be here with you on this our wedding day. Because of you in my life, I have felt great joy in living. With you I have felt understood and appreciated. Because of these and the many other ways you have brought a sense of wholeness to me, I stand before you and pledge my love to you and my commitment to our relationship...I promise to stand by you during life's tough and joyful times, as well as during the ordinariness of daily life..."

I wrote these words last spring—a month before my May marriage to Tamara. Three months later, in a split second, my relationship with Tamara was changed forever in a near fatal auto accident.

There was a selfish pride inside me. As I made that left hand turn and heard Tamara scream to me not to go. I silently responded to Tamara, "Quit your yelling. You're not going to tell me what to do. I'm turning and I don't care what you say. No cars are going to hit us, and if they do, who cares?"

These were my ugly thoughts in the split second before impact. The next thing I heard was tapping on my car windows, and people calling out, "Are you OK?" I awoke, replied "Yes," and looked over at Tamara who was peacefully at rest beside me.

It finally occurred to me as they were wheeling my stretcher into the ambulance that something serious had happened. I began to recite a litany of prayers out loud; prayers asking God to let Tamara be all right.

All of my life I mused at the thrill of riding in the back of an ambulance—fast driving, siren screaming, cars pulling out of the way... Though I passed in and out of consciousness, I felt the cold reality that this was no thrill. I remember the same thought coming over me the time some college students visiting the Open Door shared how their friends lived as homeless people for the thrill of it. And how I too, during Festival of Shelters some years earlier, was filled with excitement to spend the night on the streets in downtown Atlanta. Maybe it was the extreme cold, or the fear of police harassment, or just the hard dirt-filled

flower bed I lay in as I tried to sleep, but soon after night fell, the thrill was gone.

A week after the accident, I was out of the hospital after having suffered a fractured skull. I was OK: Tamara was not. As I watched her lie in a coma, and later slowly come out of it, my mind fluttered with questions.

In my wedding vows, I said, "With you I have felt understood and appreciated. Because of these and the many other ways you have brought a sense of wholeness to me, I stand before you and pledge my love to you..." During the first few months after the accident, I was overwhelmed by the naivete of these vows. It became evident to me that the reason for my love for Tamara was not as I had expressed in my wedding vows. It was not because of what Tamara could do for me. This was no longer relevant while Tamara was in her current state of health. She would certainly no longer be able to engage in challenging discussions with me. It would seem we would not be equal partners anymore. Tamara would be my dependent. When people pledge their love for each other in a commitment service, do they ever seriously consider their pledge to care for their partner—even if that person becomes their dependent?

The comfort I had felt in the past was almost always the product of the pleasure principle. And in my life of the senses, that comfort was dependent upon my having a logical understanding of the state I was in.

Two weeks after the accident I made the following reflection:

"The last two nights as I sat next to Tamara's hospital bed, I peered over the rails into her blank stare. Sometimes a warmth would come over me. Maybe that feeling was from a sense of the peaceful innocence I saw in her face, or maybe it was from thinking that she is totally in God's hands. Then I stopped and thought of my responsibility for her condition. I thought of how happy we were. I thought of how lonely I will be if she does not remember me. I thought of how our newlywed life in Atlanta is over. I thought of how this all does not make sense. It won't.

As I reflect today, two weeks after the accident, I think that it was not God's will that I thought thoughts mired in selfish pride as I drove in a death-wish maneuver. "God will make this turn out for the best" is a nice comfort, but, you know God is God and God will do whatever God wants to do. And though I believe that God is good, if I make predictions about what God will do, or ascribe too many

qualities to God, then I get into the trouble of making God out to be whom I want God to be. I think I will just leave God alone on this one. I do not know why this had to happen. I do not know how much Tamara will heal, or how much God wants her to heal.

Living in this emotionally painful state is so much different than pondering it from a distance. My old habits die hard, and so I will allow myself a bit of rational comfort. In the end, I am motivated by the excitement of learning more about the mind, which I will do during Tamara's recovery. Also, I feel the joy of feeling like a martyr who is needed—one whose job it is to care for a severely challenged person and forego the mutual, equal-terms friendship of the typical partnership. But these are selfish rational reasons to give value to myself, to give me a reason to carry on. I think I need to let go of these rational reasons. Somehow, I feel that they are just constructs of my mind—nothing more. It is at this point that I stop to feel the comfort from my brother, mother, and aunt who have travelled from out of state to stay with me during this time. I also feel comfort from the holy innocence on Tamara's face, and from friends and concerned others. I attended the Open Door Community's worship service and cherished every life-giving hug.

I rest in these comforts and-I conclude that this comfort is what love is. And this love is the bottom line reason for me to carry on. It makes carrying on OK."

Today, eight months after the accident, Tamara has recovered well—I have my friend back. I am left to conclude that there is no thrill in painful experiences. A love commitment is more than mutual give and take. It was Tamara's idea to put in my wedding vows the statement, "I promise to stand by you during life's tough and joyful times..." I neglected to include in those vows my need for friends, family, and community in order to make my relationship work. I know now that my partnership takes more than three (Tamara, God, and me)—for love to survive in me, I need my whole community of support.

Michael Galovic is Managing Editor of *Hospitality* and a former Resident Volunteer of the Open Door Community.

The Hospitality of God

Exodus 2:15b-20; Leviticus 19:33-34; Revelation 3:14-20

by David Liddle

(Editor's note: David Liddle is Pastor at First Presbyterian Church in Columbus, Indiana, and friend of the Open Door Community. The following piece is a sermon he gave this past winter. We welcome Rev. Liddle's words of wisdom to the pages of *Hospitality*.)

The readings from the Hebrew Scriptures are voices from the past. In the Exodus text, a Midianite priest is surprised when he learns that his daughters have failed to invite an Egyptian—a stranger—to come and eat at their family table. You can hear the incredulity in his voice when he says to them, "Where is he? Why did you leave the man? Invite him to break bread!"

The Leviticus text is one injunction among many in the so-called "Holiness Code" that describes what it means for Israel to lead a life holy to God: "Do not mistreat foreigners (aliens, sojourners) who are living in your land. Treat them as you would an Israelite, and love them as you love yourselves. Remember that you were once foreigners (aliens) in the land of Egypt."

The voices reflect the practice of hospitality in the ancient world. To receive or entertain strangers as honored guests, to provide them with food, shelter and protection, was regarded as a sacred obligation by Greeks and Romans. The Egyptians claimed it as a praiseworthy deed. For the Bedouins, it was a concrete expression of righteousness.

You don't find the word "hospitality" in the Old Testament, but its elements are recognizable, and its motivation simple: hospitality to the stranger was enjoined on Israel because they themselves were once strangers and exiles in the land of Egypt.

There are similar voices from the recent past. Peter Maurin, a co-worker of Dorothy Day in the establishment of "Houses of Hospitality" for the poor, spoke of "the Duty of Hospitality" in an address to a group of unemployed workers in New York City in September, 1933. Maurin said,

People who are in need and are not afraid to beg, give to people *not* in need, the occasion to do good for goodness' sake . . . God commands hospitality . . . but the duty of hospitality is neither taught nor practiced in Christian countries . . . People no longer consider hospitality to the poor a personal duty . . . they are given the hospitality of the "Muni" at the expense of the taxpayer. But the hospitality that the "Muni" gives . . . is no hospitality because what comes

from the taxpayer's pocketbook does not come from [the] heart. We need Houses of Hospitality to give the rich the opportunity to serve the poor.

Dorothy Day herself, in much of her writing, insisted that hospitality means more than serving a meal, more than offering a bed, more than opening a door; it means opening your heart



to the needs of others.

While in Atlanta recently to continue my doctor of ministry studies, I spent some time—as I usually do now—at the Open Door Community. The stated mission of that urban, residential Christian community is to provide "hospitality to the homeless and to those in prison, through Christ's love." On the Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday, I helped other volunteers and members of the community serve a hot meal of ham, black-eyed peas, rice, and greens to 189 homeless men and women. On two other occasions I helped serve the "Butler Street Breakfast," a ministry that feeds about 250 homeless people a day, five days a week, from the basement of the Butler Street C.M.E. Church in downtown Atlanta, across from Grady Hospital.

After one of those breakfasts, we who had helped serve it, sat down together around a table to share cheese grits and conversation. There were Columbia Seminary students and one faculty member, a student from the Candler School of Theology at Emory, several students from a college in North Carolina doing a mission week at the Open Door, members of the Community itself, and a homeless man named Rolly who helps with the breakfast on Mondays and Thursdays.

The topic of the conversation was

hospitality. Why has the Open Door gone to the trouble to serve the Butler Street Breakfast five days a week, holidays included, for thirteen years? Why do they offer a soup kitchen four days a week, showers and a change of clothing three afternoons a week? Why do they provide a place for homeless people to sleep at night in relative safety, to use a bathroom or a telephone, or receive mail? The answer is *hospitality*.

But what is hospitality? People have asked me about the Open Door. "Yes . . . but do they do anything to change the situation of homeless people in the long run? Do they help them get jobs? Do they assist them in finding a permanent place to live? Do they offer treatment for drug and alcohol addictions? Do they teach them skills that will get them off the streets and enable them to be productive members of society? Are there some of them who aren't eligible for the Open Door's ministry, or who just aren't welcome there?"

The answer to all these questions is "No." The Open Door is not a social service organization. It is not an employment agency or life-skills training center. It is not a hospital for the treatment of addictions. It is a Christian community. Its ministry is one of hospitality and welcome. At the breakfast that day I had to begin to rethink my own understanding of what hospitality means.

"Why are you here today?" The question was pointed, serious, and aimed directly at me. "Well, it's . . . I was . . . it gives me . . . it allows me to . . . I guess . . ." The answer I mumbled was something less than satisfying. It did not occur to me to say, "To offer hospitality." The ensuing discussion revealed that I had a lot to learn.

Friends visit in your home and you offer them coffee or tea or lemonade, or maybe something stronger. Is this hospitality? Yes . . . but.

You invite business associates to dinner and serve a lavish meal on your best china, accompanied by fine wine and a rich dessert. Hospitality? Yes . . . but.

A family new to town comes to worship on Sunday morning and you greet them warmly, help them find the nursery or the bathroom, maybe invite them to informal time or an adult class. Are you practicing hospitality? Yes . . . but.

Fifty years ago John Cogley wrote an article for *The Catholic Worker* entitled, simply, "Hospitality." In it he discusses what he calls the "ideal" of hospitality, which he says is the following:

...being sister to sister, brother to brother, children of the same Parent. Not scientific social work—hospitality. Not haughty superior dealing with “problem cases”—hospitality. Not condescending judge dealing with errant accused—hospitality. No, hospitality is derived from the Latin word for “guest.” It expresses a relationship between [equals] . . . It is bound by the rules of courtesy and human companionship, and ruled by the law of charity.

Think of it this way. We all need hospitality. We always need it. “In this imperfect world of imperfect men and women,” Cogley says, “there are always those who need a calling back to life.” Around the table in the church basement, Joe Dan, a member of the Open Door Community, tells how his life was going nowhere until he discovered the welcome—the hospitality—of that community. He experienced a literal “calling back to life,” a life worth living.

Then there are always those who need what Cogley calls a “restoration of personality.” When I first volunteered at Butler Street, the 250 or so men and a few women who shuffled through the line all seemed more or less the same—dressed in mismatched and ill-fitting clothes, disheveled, unshaven, smelly, hollow-eyed, carrying their earthly belongings in plastic trash bags or stained, fraying backpacks.

But when you serve someone food, when you sit and talk and—more important—listen, you soon discover that, while they may be homeless and penniless, they are not nameless or faceless. They are people with names and faces. They have personalities and identities, histories and stories. They have feelings and fears, dreams and desires. “They” are like me. They are me. Hospitality turns nobodies into somebodies.

There are always lonely people too, in all times, in all places, who need only to be acknowledged as human beings and respected as persons created in God’s image in order to live with some semblance of dignity. All of us know what loneliness is. To be lonely is not necessarily to be solitary, but to be without any *connection* to other human beings, which is why you can be lonely even in a crowd of people—even in church. True hospitality acknowledges and respects our common humanity. It makes connections.

There are always people who need to share their burdens—burdens too heavy to carry alone. Hospitality puts an extra shoulder under the weight of past and present mistakes, regrets, worries and

fears that encumber all our lives. It lightens the load by offering a listening ear, an open heart, a helping hand.

But it does it another way too. A way to shed our own burdens is to help others carry theirs. Hospitality gives people a chance to do that. In reminding us that we are all brothers and sisters and children of the same Mother/ Father God, hospitality for its own sake says that we not only depend on one another, but that we are capable of being depended upon by others. It



says: you are forgiven; you are gifted; you are able.

That morning in the church basement I was challenged to think of hospitality in relation to Jesus’ words in the third chapter of Revelation: “Listen! I’m standing at the door, knocking; if you hear my voice and open the door, I will come in to you and eat with you, and you with me.” I had never thought of his words that way before.

The context for Jesus’ statement is a scathing indictment of the church at Laodicea—a proud and wealthy city on the Mediterranean in what is now Syria. The church is accused of

being “neither cold nor hot,” but only “lukewarm” in its witness, arrogant and self-righteous instead of humble. Jesus’ words are both a call to repentance and an invitation to share the joys of the Messianic banquet in the age to come, when God’s dominion is finally realized.

But they are also words that call us to rethink our notions of hospitality now, in this present age, where the dominion of God for which we pray each Sunday in the Lord’s Prayer has yet to be accomplished. When Jesus knocks and asks to come in—to our homes or our hearts, to our lives—and assuming, of course, that we hear him—will we offer him hospitality? Will we invite him in? Will we even open the door? These are important questions, because we see the face of Jesus in the face of every person who needs hospitality.

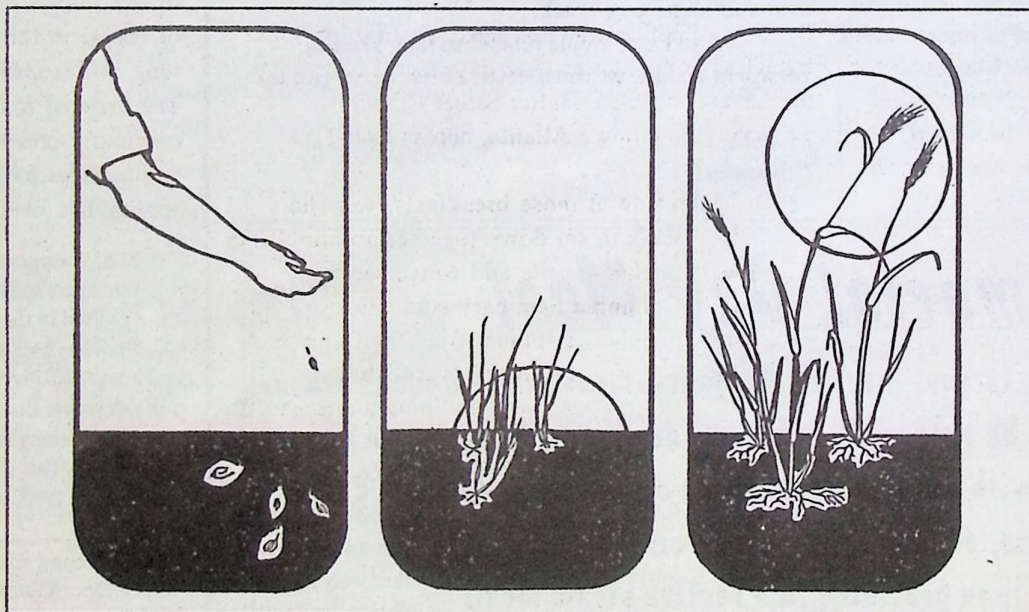
And if we offer him hospitality, will we do it grudgingly or gladly? Will we treat him as an equal or a subordinate? A brother or a bother? A somebody or a nobody? Will we embrace him or keep him at arm’s length? These are important questions, for how we treat those who need hospitality is how we treat Jesus.

My guess is that we don’t want to be a church that is cold, unfeeling and aloof. We certainly do not want to be lukewarm milquetoasts when it comes to our mission and ministry. What Jesus wants us to be is hot with a passion for the gospel and hot with compassion for the least of those among us. “Hospitality,” says John Cogley, “is not a specialized work requiring scientific training. It’s something for everyone to practice according to the measure they are able to do.”

Today we come to a table, not for cheese grits and conversation, (as in the Butler Street Breakfast), but for bread and wine. Jesus is our host. We come as guests invited to be recipients of divine hospitality. He opens his arms to embrace us, we who are finally wretched, pitiable, poor, blind, and naked. He welcomes us as brothers and sisters. He reminds us how he gave himself in the ultimate act of

hospitality on a cross. At this table he calls us back to life; he restores our personhood; he connects with us and assures us we are not alone; he says, “you are forgiven; you are gifted, you are able,” he lifts the heavy burdens we carry. He offers us the hospitality of God.

So it should not be surprising that, often, God uses the hospitality we give each other as an instrument of God’s all-encompassing grace. ♦



Patsy Morris

(continued from page 2)

Patsy also loved the trial transcript excerpt she found from one *voir dire* in a death penalty case:

One of the lawyers asked a potential juror, "Is your opinion so fixed that it could not be changed by the evidence or the charge of the court upon the trial of this case?" The juror responded, "May I say something?" The lawyer said, "Why, yes ma'am." And she said, "The questions you're asking are not fitting my answers."

How we will miss Patsy's stories, her laughter, her wisecracks. But what a good gift she has left us for the journey.

Patsy inspired a whole generation of lawyers and non-lawyers to work against the machinery of death. Steve Bayliss has reflected that she was like the hub of the wheel of this work. Other people would come and get on the wheel for a while and help and work, and most eventually spin off to other jobs. But Patsy stayed, providing the center and the strong connection for all of us to the work and to each other.

The day after Patsy died I spent a wonderful evening—a remarkable evening—with her family: John, Anne, Chris, John, Jr., and Ellen. We remembered and told stories and laughed and cried together. They told of growing up on civil rights' picket lines with little miniature signs and sometimes even being pushed in a stroller; of learning to work the Xerox machine at the ACLU office, of collating, and stuffing mailings. And Chris remembered playing on the floor of one campaign headquarters and being dispatched to deliver a paper from one desk to another on his shiny, red fire engine.

Patsy loved her family. Nothing got in the way of the month she set aside every summer to spend with her mother in Maine. And for all the urgency of her commitment to her work, she was always available to her children: whether it was getting up at 4:30 a.m. to drive the girls to an ice skating competition, or getting the kids all over town for school and activities, or standing up for them when they were pressured for, shall we say, their "various non-conformities." She supported them in every important way as they grew, learned, developed, and launched their own lives, seeking good work and meaningful commitments. There was nothing she was more proud of than these four adult children raising their own children and making their own commitments to a just world and to those people who suffer because of injustice and poverty and illness. As Ellen said, "She taught us by the way she lived her life."

And how proud she was of the mutual support and the witness in which she was a partner

for 45 years with her friend and husband John Morris.

Not long ago a number of us gathered to honor Patsy on the occasion of her retirement. Jack Boger, long-time friend and anti-death penalty advocate, reflected (as many of us whose children Patsy has nurtured) on realizing that among his son Peter's prized possessions (and most of the few that had lasted from childhood) were Christmas presents from Patsy. Patsy loved Christmas, and all year long she shopped for presents for all the many children on her list. Then she wrapped them, more meticulously than any package you ever saw. Most of the gifts were beautifully crafted, sturdy wooden toys and puzzles—thick plexiglass with bright colors. They were engaging toys, keepsakes, practically indestructible gifts. These toys and the hefty childrens' books are symbols of the many ways Patsy leaves us now with indestructible gifts.

We will be a long time measuring the depth of our loss in her death. (I am quite aware personally that I have only begun.) But she has left us great gifts, indestructible gifts, for life and the justice journey: the gift of hope rooted in faith and memory; the gift of compassion that keeps our hearts open to the least of our sisters and brothers; the gift of generosity that reminds us to open our hands and arms to each other in mutual care and support; the gift of tenacity to keep our feet on the long-haul path, to keep our eyes on the prize; the gift of commitment that reminds us that this justice journey demands that we do our homework, and do it thoroughly, and work hard and persevere, even when it is hard, and we grieve and weep and lose again and again and again; the gift of perspective, showing us how to keep one keen eye on the machinery of death and oppression, and one eye on the children; the gift of care that reminds us that in working very hard we also need to rest and celebrate and laugh and be together and honor our friendships; the gift of faith to remember that we can be certain that nothing can separate us from the love of God. That neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor the power of oppression, nor things present, nor things to come, nor malicious judges, nor death-hungry mobs, nor heights, nor depths, nor harsh sentences, nor execution chambers, that nothing in all creation can separate us from the loving, creative Spirit of God, who is known to us as our Advocate.

If Patsy were here this afternoon she would tell me to stop being long-winded, and she would send us on our way with a smile, a twinkle in her eye, and some wry crack.

And Patsy would remind us that, like the persistent widow, we must never, never, never give up.

Murphy Davis is a Partner at the Open Door Community.

Prison Facts

Georgia currently locks up nearly 40,000 prisoners on any given day. The state prison system is admitting 200 - 450 prisoners each week who have been sentenced and are in county jailhouses. Another 15,000 prisoners are locked up in county jails awaiting disposition of their cases.

In recent years, Georgia has expanded its prison capacity by nearly 15,000 beds. Despite this incredible growth rate—which has made Georgia one of the nation's leading incarcerators—this state still has a shortage of prison beds! In fact, Georgia will have to build five 1,000-bed prisons a year—at a cost of more than \$25 million each—to stay ahead of the burgeoning prison population. In the last half-dozen years, Georgia has spent over \$150 million to add thousands of new prison beds.

Georgia's prisons and jails are filled with the young, people of color, the poor, the addicted, the mentally ill, the uneducated and the unemployed. More than 70% of those in Georgia's prisons are African American. 60% of those in Georgia's prisons never made it into the 12th grade. 46% read on a level lower than grade six. Another 23% have reading levels in the 6th through 8th grade range. 85% of prisoners were unemployed at the time of their arrest. The average age of a Georgia prisoner is 32. The majority of Georgia prisoners are non-violent offenders; drugs account for the majority of arrests and imprisonment in Georgia.

Our jails and prisons serve as warehouses for the poor and unlucky. Little if anything is done to restore lives, to instill responsibility in individuals, or to encourage a person to turn his or her life around. Instead of spending money to prevent crime and truly change behavior, we have chosen to pour precious resources into building more prisons—a costly and ultimately ineffective solution to the state's crime problem.

Reprinted from the newsletter of the *Prison & Jail Project*, Americus, Georgia

A Twice Told Tale: Race in America

by Nibs Stroupe

In this book, Nibs summarizes the history of racism in this country from the beginning of Reconstruction to the present. The material is a compilation of articles previously presented here in *Hospitality*, and includes footnotes, an index, and a reading list for further study.

Nibs Stroupe was born in 1946 in Memphis, Tennessee, and has spent his life deeply involved in the struggle for Civil Rights. His work has been reported on by Time Magazine, NBC News, CNN News, and various talk shows around the country. Nibs is author, along with Inez Fleming, of *While We Run This Race*, published by Orbis Books in May, 1995, now in its third printing.

For your copy, please send a \$5 donation to:
Open Door Community
910 Ponce de Leon Ave., NE, Atlanta, GA 30306

Memorial Day Meal

Memorial Day is our largest meal of the year--most soup kitchens are closed. We need to be prepared, and so we need over 320 pounds of ground beef, along with adequate quantities of hamburger buns, cabbage, baked beans, condiments, and ice cream. We would be grateful for your help in providing this festive picnic meal.

Letters

Hi Everyone,

Another great and very moving issue of Hospitality—the February 1997 one. Derek's story by Jennifer Lee (page 9) hit me very hard. Will someone please tell Derek that he is in my prayers and thoughts, and that he must be especially blessed by Jesus who had such special love for so many other "untouchables."

Also, I would like a copy of the Francis Pauley book—thanks a whole bunch.

Things are OK here. Each day I learn a bit more about caregiving and how love plays such an immense role in it.

Take care all of you, and keep doing all that gutsy loving you do so well.

Adios

Vaya con Dios,

With love, hope and courage,

Jerry Robinett

Tucson, AZ

Dear friends,

Would you please send me a copy of the Frances Pauley book—she ranks right up there with Dorothy Day in my opinion. And would you please send a subscription of Hospitality to my granddaughter (12-years-old). We can't begin too early with inspiration!

Thanks for being there.

Carolyn Manley

Decatur, GA

Folks:

Please send me a copy of the Frances Pauley book.

My wife Linda, worked with her on Christians Against Hunger in Georgia some years ago. We were thrilled to see your book.

Thanks.

In Christ's service,

Bruce Wilson Berry
Executive Presbyterian
Missouri Union Presbytery
Jefferson City, MO

Dear Editors and all,

In prayerful stance I read, re-read, and pass on Hospitality. Thanks for keeping me on the mailing list. Please send the book, Frances Pauley: Stories of Struggle and Triumph. We need more of her model in today's society. Our world is full of good folks like her. We need to hold them up like high beacons, as Jesus!

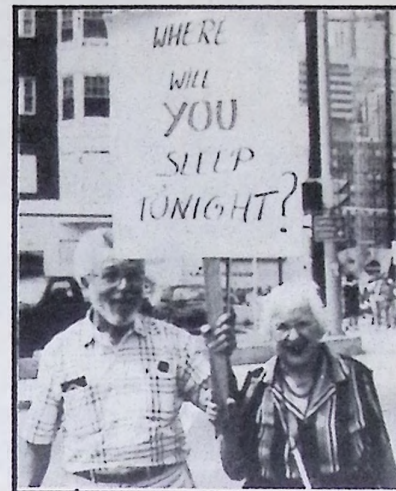
Thanks and my prayers,

S. Dorothy Droessler
North Freedom, WI

Now Available...

Frances Pauley

Stories of Struggle and Triumph



GLADYS RUSTAY

Edited by Murphy Davis

Foreword by Julian Bond

Afterwords by

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

- An Open Door Community Book -

Donation \$10

Join us as a Resident Volunteer!



GLADYS RUSTAY

Open Door Resident Volunteer Jennifer Lee giving a ride to Damien Lee during Holy Week in the streets.

Spend 6 to 12 months as a Resident Volunteer

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

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

April 3, 1997

Dear Ed:

Thank you for your letter regarding the progress of our public toilet project. I want to inform you that this program has been moving, but extremely slow!

As you are well aware, the toilet project did not work out last year because of the proponent's unwillingness to relocate the placement of advertisements, which were to pay for the program, from state highways to city-owned property. Because we are bound by state law, the project simply could not work in the manner in which it was proposed.

However, this year, the business community has expressed an interest in raising some matching funds to lease toilets and to place them in strategic locations, without advertising. This idea certainly sounds promising because the cost will be split with the business community. Advertising on the public rights-of-way will not be used as a means to pay for the program.

The Downtown Improvement District and Central Atlanta Progress are the two organizations with which the Department of Planning has been holding discussions. These organizations are investigating the toilet manufacturers who can provide us with the highest quality services for the best price. Please know that we are still committed to making this project happen. I regret the length of time it has taken to come just this far, and I wish that the toilets could be installed as quickly as possible. However, please bear with us, as other critical members of the "toilet team" gather their resources to make it happen.

Yours for Atlanta,

Marvin S. Arrington
Atlanta City Council President

One response to Ed Loring's question #9 in our last issue:

Can one experience the Word of God from a sermon on T.V.?

(Editor's note: In the last issue of *Hospitality* (page 9), Ed Loring asked some questions for our readers to ponder. The following is one letter in response to question #9 which read, "Can one experience the Word of God on TV?")

Dear Ed:

Yes, I believe one can experience the Word of God through a sermon on TV. But your question begs the question of how you define "experience," "Word of God," and "sermon." I think we can grant the definition of TV.

When I think about experiencing something, I think first about taking it in the form in which it is presented. I experience a baseball game by watching the progress of the game, either in person or on TV or radio, or by playing the game myself. Likewise, I experience a sermon by listening to it and watching the preacher in person or on TV or by listening to a tape or a radio broadcast. Some would say I experience it by reading it in print but Fred Craddock, for one, would probably disagree! By that definition of "experience," yes, one can experience a sermon on TV.

If, however, I define "experience" as something which requires a response, it is tougher to answer "yes" to your question given the distance inherent between preacher and viewer of TV. (And given that response is not guaranteed for experience in person either!) There are external responses to sermons on TV—go out and find a church to join—the one you saw on TV or another, do good works or otherwise get involved in the world as challenged to do by the sermon; or even respond by crying or laughing or verbally talking back to the preacher. There are also internal responses such as making a conviction to do better, or making vows to deepen one's relationship with God. These responses can't be forced, but if they are the validation of "experience," they can't be measured unless the TV viewer writes in and indicates that it happened (another response). By that definition of "experience" as response, yes, one can experience a sermon on TV.

James White in his book *Protestant Worship: Traditions in Transition* points out that much of Protestant worship today is based on the frontier model which developed in the 18th and 19th centuries in America, in which the order of worship basically included a warm-up portion, a sermon, and then reaping the harvest generated by the sermon, i.e. conversion of those in attendance. He goes on to explain that TV worship has evolved into basically the same model insofar as it focuses on one preacher and his (and I mean his) personal charisma. The anticipated response is generally money.

Defining "Word of God" is even more difficult. Jesus himself was the Word of God according to John, and the Bible is the Word of God according to tradition. The Reformers went on to say that the sermon was also the Word of God as it interpreted and proclaimed the message found in Scripture. Zwingli went even further and said the people gathered together as the Body of Christ "became" Christ at communion instead of anything

happening to the elements themselves. So in that sense, the people gathered are the Word of God by extension and can be experienced by TV viewers, at least by watching them and hearing them.

"Sermon" is generally defined as interpretation of the Word as found in Scripture. We most commonly know it through a preacher standing before the people and speaking. But "sermon" can also be more broadly defined as other forms of interpretation of scripture—a liturgical drama, a dance, a song or cantata. It depends on what faith tradition formed you and to which you most readily respond today. If that is the case, many things on TV can be called sermons if interpreted as contemporizing a message from God as found in Scripture.

Having said all that, our most common experience of the Word of God through the sermon as presented on TV is an individual congregation's worship service centered on a sermon following the reading of scripture. Can you experience the Word of God in that form?

Yes, but there are several conditions which have to be met by the TV preacher and the church presenting the preacher on TV for such an experience to happen. First, I believe the sermon itself has to point outside itself and the walls of the church building, encouraging viewers/listeners to go out and respond to the sermon, to the Word they have heard. I believe God speaks a Word through sermons as one of many ways to proclaim the Word. If the sermon is ingrown to the extent that it focuses solely on "me and my problems" without speaking to me and my place in the Body of Christ, and consequently in the world, which requires that I go out in gracious response and do my part to further the Kingdom of God, then to me, as a liberal Presbyterian minister and sometime preacher, it isn't as full a presentation of the Word as it could be and therefore can't be said to be fully experienced.

Second, the Word is more than the words of the sermon and this comes across on TV. The Word of God is also contained in the passion and the person of the preacher and if those two qualities are fully present and engaged, then the Word can be experienced on TV. And those things come across on TV if the people producing the program know that's what they are doing. TV is a cool medium says Marshall McLuhan which means that TV by nature demands involvement from viewers. So by its nature, TV draws you in. If you're drawn into a preacher's words and gestures and voice, and the preacher is passionate and fully engaged in saying something worth hearing, then the experience can indeed be dynamic and profound.

I also believe that the technical people behind the cameras and in the control room have to be in tune with the Word, on some level, to enable the Word most clearly to come across on TV. There is a mystical kind of difference in TV that is produced by neutral crew members, and TV that is produced by those who are willingly part of the experience of the Word attempting to be proclaimed.

Third, the Word of God, to my mind, reveals itself in a community's worship, not just an individual's message. So if the community is presented faithfully on TV with the sermon being but one part of the community's worship, albeit a central one in Protes-

tant circles, then the Word of God can be experienced on TV not only in the sermon but in the liturgy of the people gathered to praise God.

Fourth, worship on TV is not and never will be complete worship, just as seeing and hearing a sermon on TV will never be as complete an experience as that which happens in person. For there are no smells and no tastes, no touching and being touched, no three dimensional presence for TV worshippers. The best that a TV church (and sermon) can do is to invite people to become part of an actual worshipping part of the Body of Christ. Then they will most fully experience the Word of God in action.

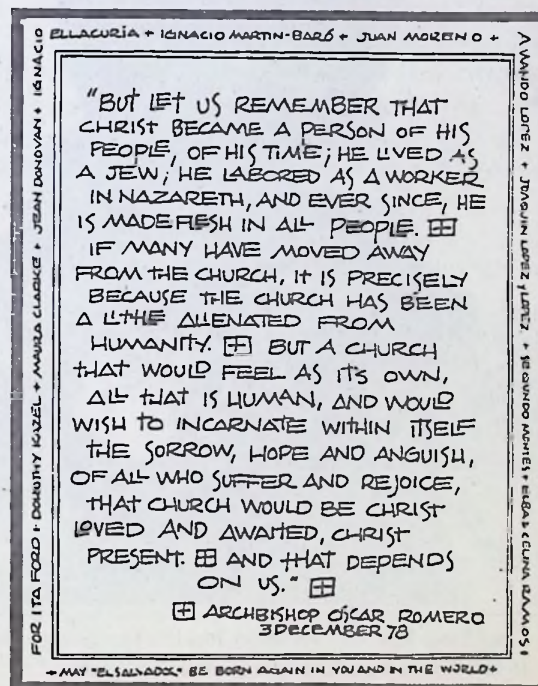
On the other hand, there are those who are unable to actually go to a church and to experience in person the Word of God through a sermon. TV is often the closest they can come to such an experience. In that case, the care with which the television crew presents the preacher, and the preacher's personal presentation of the Word of God through the sermon, are key to the experience of the Word. It's not an easy experience to facilitate electronically, but it is one that evangelically does its part to spread the Good News of Jesus Christ, and engage those who participate in a way that is as close to personal as it can be made to be with the producer's creativity, energy, intelligence, imagination, and love.

I didn't mean for this to turn into a tome but obviously your question was intriguing and challenging. It really sparked me to respond to you. Such a challenge must be the Word of the Lord, thanks be to God!

Sincerely,

Rev. Cheryl Gosa
Parish Associate
Broadcast Ministry
First Presbyterian Church
Atlanta, GA

P.S. First Presbyterian Church has never asked for money on TV and never will!



Dear Open Door Community,

Hospitality brings people to the Open Door every day. They come for food, clothes, a place to sit or sleep. They come for a greeting, a handshake or a hug. In the words of John Cogley—a calling back to life, a restoration of personality.

I was brought to the Open Door by Hospitality, the publication, in 1994, while doing research for a class at the University of Alabama at Birmingham. I found some copies of Hospitality at my Presbytery Resource Center. After that, I got my own subscription and followed the work and philosophy of the Open Door for the next year.

When I came to Atlanta to attend Columbia Seminary, 910 Ponce de Leon was the second address I found after locating the Seminary. During my first semester, Fall '96, I became a regular volunteer at the Butler Street Breakfast. I am grateful to have had more opportunities since then for service and worship at the Open Door—to seek the Christ “who comes in the guise of a stranger.”

I was introduced to the Open Door by Hospitality, the publication. As a white male with a privileged family background I have known a calling back to life, by the grace of God, in hospitality as it is extended to me when the sisters and brothers gather for table fellowship, and as I am able to extend hospitality by serving grits, coffee, and eggs to our friends at Butler Street.

Shalom,

Joe Hinds
Columbia Seminary
Decatur, GA

Dear Ed and all,

Many thanks to you, to Murphy, and to others who may have been helping from time to time for all the stamps that the Open Door sends.

To date we've raised over \$36,600 to help feed the hungry, using what is ordinarily just trashed.

Thanks also for what you and others write in Hospitality. I always read it cover to cover.

Sorry our paths don't cross, but I stay away from city traffic these days; but I pray for all of you daily.

Love, joy, and peace,

Arthur M. Field
Americus, GA

(Editor's note: Arthur Field collects used postage stamps to raise money to feed the hungry in the U.S. and abroad. Large commemoratives, foreign stamps, and collections can be sent to Arthur M. Field, 148 S. Village Dr., Americus, GA 31709. We thank him for his work.)

Dear Open Door Gang:

I am most pleased to read about “Miracle on Peachtree St: the Reopening of the Imperial Hotel” [Hospitality, February 1997]. It truly is a miracle—a miracle that began with guts and faith.

I'm always advocating help for the homeless and I was so proud of you all when you took over the Imperial back in 1990. Now it's becoming reality! Praise God!

The story was a burst of hope and happiness! I'll be visiting Atlanta soon and I look forward to perusing the “Miracle on Peachtree Street.”

God bless you all,

Christopher Crisp
Lexington, NC

Gentle Friends,

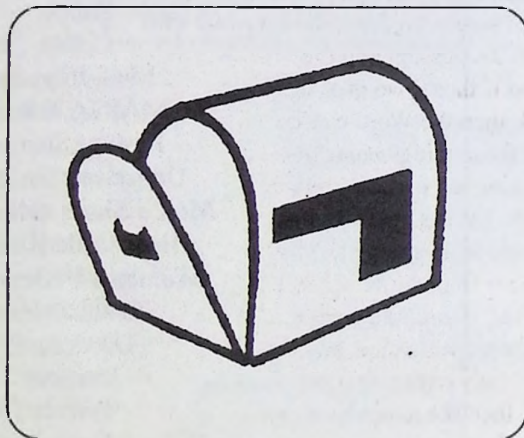
It was wonderful for Sister Maria and me to be a part of the Eucharist at the Open Door on the Sunday commemorating Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday. To sing, pray, listen, cry, laugh, and break bread with you holy folks in that sacred place reminded us of why we feel such solidarity with your struggles.

The best part, of course, was that sense of reunion with so many of you whom we have known over the years, either through common struggles or the vivid writings in Hospitality. Once again, as in previous gifts of visits, you gave “open door” and “hospitality” a clear declaration of incarnation.

Congratulations to all for the splendid spirit and hard work you offered, to bring the resurrection of the Imperial Hotel to fruition. And beyond that, blessings and thanks for courageously continuing to do the work—day after day, year after year—that the Christ so obviously calls us to do.

Namaste,

Fr. Tom Jackson
Abbot
The Order of Christian Workers
An Ecumenical Spiritual and Charitable
Community
Tyler, TX



Dear Hospitality,

Have read a few of your newspapers, and think they're great. Keep up the Godly work.

Sincerely,

Cheyenne Yakima
Pelham, GA

twenty seven years ago. By now it consists of two fifteen bed shelters, one for men and for women, a center which provides food, clothing, furniture and financial aid when funds permit, plus a meal program where a hundred meals are served twice a day.

It is now time for us to head home and we'd like to recruit some folks to help with the wonderful work being done here...to join Sr. Margaret in this effort. The needs are great and it would be wonderful if some people could come to afford sister some respite.

Please share this letter in your community. Long and short term folks are needed.

Pat and Mary Murray
Christian Service Program
Shreveport, LA and
Peninsula, OH

Dear Rev. Loring,

I read in the last issue of your paper the article about slavery in prison (Hospitality, “Slavery Revised” page 8, Feb. 1997). It was mentioned about the prison industry. Do you know that all the desks, bookcases, and other office furniture is made mostly here at Dodge State Prison? I load out two semi truck loads a week out of here.

When I first started at Prison Industries, we were given, as an incentive, five sodas a week, and every three months a big cook out. Also, we received a free-world meal if we worked over 40 hours.

But since Wayne Garner came, all of this was cut out. Just think, about 70 to 80 prisoners, turning out about 60 to 70 thousand dollars worth of office furniture a week. And, if we were getting paid for this at \$2 per hour, we might have a little money once we were released instead of the \$30 we get now. Also, we are charged \$5 for everytime we see a doctor at sick call. A lot of prisoners don't even get money from anyone like I do, but I work 40 to 60 hours a week when needed. And I won't receive any help on finding a place to parole out to. I just want to start a new life.

I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,

(Editor's note: we run this letter anonymously to protect our friend in prison.)

Dear Murphy Davis,

Thanks very much for saying plainly and convincingly about the homeless in our community (“Sharing Space with the Poor,” Hospitality, Jan 1997). It needs saying in this way.

I find it hard to understand why there is so much happy assent to cruel untruths. It is, I suppose, so much easier to be content with the status quo if one is assured over and over that the poor or deprived are to be blamed for their fate: then we can all be comfortable!

My best to you and your community.

Elizabeth Stevenson
Decatur, GA

Dear Open Door Community,

Let us first introduce ourselves to some Workers who may not have met us. We are Pat and Mary Murray, a couple of old Workers going back to the '50's, when we had a farm in southern Ohio. In the '80's we had a Catholic Worker house in Waukegan, IL, and more recently “Joe's Place” near Cleveland, OH, as a respite for tired workers.

Now the reason for this correspondence. For the past several months we have been “snowbird” volunteers at Christian Service here in Shreveport, LA. Christian Service is a center for the poor there that was begun by Sr. Margaret McCaffrey

WE ARE OPEN. . .

Monday through Saturday: telephones are answered from 9:00am until noon, from 2:00 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 noon prayers and lunch break from 12:30 until 2:00). Please call in advance if you need to arrange to come at other times. **On Sunday we are open from 7:00am 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 9:10, 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, 2:00pm-5pm

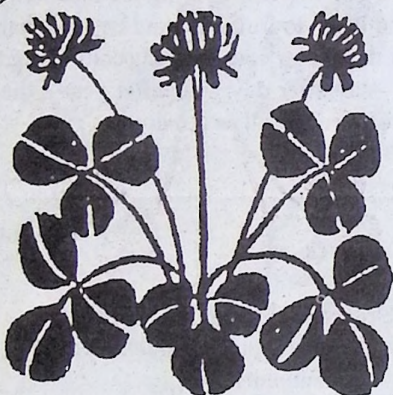
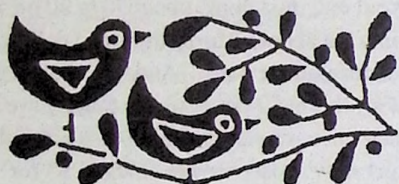
CLARIFICATION MEETINGS: Alternate Tuesdays, 7:30-9pm.

WEEKEND RETREATS: Four times each year (for our household and volunteers/supporters), next retreat is our summer retreat, June 27 - 29.

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

Moving?

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



Hita Corbin

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

____ Please ADD to the *Hospitality* mailing list.

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

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

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

Name _____

Address _____

City _____, State _____ Zip _____ + _____

Phone _____

Open Door Community Worship

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

Please join us!

- | | |
|--------|---|
| May 4 | Worship at 910;
John Bartley, preaching |
| May 11 | Worship at 910;
Peter Gathje, preaching |
| May 18 | Worship at 910;
Nelia and Calvin Kimbrough,
preaching and leading music |
| May 25 | Worship at 910;
Will Coleman, preaching |



Open Door Community Needs

JEANS
T-Shirts
Men's Work Shirts
Quick Grits
Carpeting
Cheese
Coffee
Multi-Vitamins
MARTA Tokens
Postage Stamps
Underwear for Men
Men's Shoes (all sizes)
Disposable Razors
Women's Underwear
Toothbrushes
Deodorant
Vaseline
Towels
Socks
Shampoo
Men's Belts
Washcloths
Sandwiches
Soup Kitchen Volunteers*
Butler St. Breakfast Volunteers*
phonograph that plays 78rpm records

* contact our Volunteer Coordinator, Brenda Smith at 404-874-9652

From 11am til 1:30pm, Monday through Saturday, our attention is focused on serving the soup kitchen and household lunch. As much as we appreciate your coming, this is a difficult time for us to receive donations. When you can come before 11 or after 1:30, it would be helpful. **THANK YOU!**