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The Open Door Community – Hospitality & Resistance in the Catholic Worker Movement

Vol. 28, No. 6

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June 2009

A Fire in My Bones

By Anthony Granberry

Editor's note: Dr. Anthony Granberry is a Black Baptist minister, a clinical pastoral counselor and the former clinical director of St. Jude's Recovery Center in Atlanta. Since 2000 he has worked lovingly and helpfully with the Open Door Community, where he preaches regularly at Sunday evening worship. He preached this sermon in February.

"If I can help somebody as I travel along,
If I can cheer somebody with a word or a song,
If I can show somebody that they are traveling wrong,
Then my living shall not be in vain.
Then my living shall not be in vain.
Only then shall my living not be in vain.
If I can help somebody as I travel on,
Then my living shall not be in vain."

This song was a favorite of my mother's. It became a seed that she planted within me that I will talk a little about today. This seed that she planted is largely responsible for me being here today and my desire to be of service to God and the Open Door Community.

Our text tonight comes from Jeremiah. Let me be clear that my sharing this evening will not be a homiletical exercise or an exercise in exegesis, but rather a talk about how I understand my spiritual formation and development.

The Jeremiah text includes a verse that really speaks to my spiritual formation experience. It sums up my experience of becoming who God would have me be — which happens to be ongoing. I would like to read Jeremiah 20, Verses 7-13, hearing with particular emphasis Verse 9:

"7 You fooled me, Yahweh, and I let myself be fooled. You were too strong for me and you triumphed. All day long I am an object of laughter; everyone mocks me.

"8 Whenever I speak I must cry out proclaiming violence and desolation. The word of Yahweh has brought me derision and reproach all day long.

"9 I said to myself, 'I will not mention God, nor will I speak in the name of Yahweh anymore.' But then it becomes like a fire burning in my heart, imprisoned in my bones. Shut up in my bones, I grow weary holding it in. I can not endure it.

"10 Yes, I hear the whispering of many, terror all around. 'Denounce him. Let us denounce Jeremiah.' All who were my friends are watching, for any missteps. They say, 'Perhaps he will trip up, then we can get the better of him and take our vengeance on him.'

"11 But Yahweh is with me, like a mighty Champion. My persecutors will trip up. They will not triumph, they will be put to utter shame, to lasting unforgettable disgrace.

"12 Yahweh, omnipotent You, who test the just, who probe both the mind and the heart, let me witness the vengeance You take on them. For to You I have entrusted my cause.

"13 Sing to Yahweh praise to Yahweh, for God has rescued the life of the poor from the power of the corrupt."

From this passage I want to talk for a few minutes about my spiritual formation. I emphasize that it is a process that has been going on, is going on and shall continue to go on. I am very welcoming and open to what God wants to do through me. But I don't say that in any kind of boastful way. God has recently put something on my radar screen for which I have little appreciation. I am beckoning God to make the message plain so I can be clear about what God is asking of me. Whatever it is, I will do it. I will attempt to be obedient if what God is asking of me goes against my agenda or doesn't go along with my plans.

Trying Not to Scream

Those of us who are familiar with Jeremiah know that his life was not going according to his plan. He is a very interesting prophet, whom people refer to as weak and confused but who did the will of God and said what God would have him say, despite his own weakness and confusion. Jeremiah struggled with the prophecies that God laid upon his heart. People did not want to receive them.

Some here in the Open Door Community know what it means to speak truth to power that is not received with open arms, that's not welcomed at City Hall or the Capitol. But, like Jeremiah, we have to speak truth to power in order that we might compel the powerful to become more Christ-like and to live lives that honor all life, not just their own.

Jeremiah may have been confused and weak by some measure, but he was one of God's most faithful and obedient prophets. When God called him to do things that were strange and unusual to illustrate how God viewed the children of Israel, Jeremiah did strange and unusual things in spite of the backlash he received. He wanted God to respond on his behalf, or rather to offer retribution to those responsible for the backlash. Vengeance is a prevalent theme in the Jeremiah text. When you read Jeremiah in its entirety, you see that he struggled with people who were unwilling to receive the prophecies God revealed through him.

So here is a man, a prophet doing God's will, yet struggling with God's will. I suggest that any prophet of God who doesn't struggle with carrying out God's will isn't much of a prophet at all. I would suggest that today's prophets, contemporary prophets, have a problem. They don't struggle



The Epiphany of the Lord

Rita Corbin

with God's will because many of us are not interested in hearing God's will and carrying out God's will in a manner that is truly pleasing to God.

So I stand as a prophet before you today, attempting to qualify for at least the minor-prophet category, and it all started in a small Baptist church in North Florida. I am amazed each time I tell this story about an 11-year-old boy sitting in a Baptist church service, and the songs, and the preaching, and the movement of what I came to know as God's spirit, which I sought not and had little experienced. I was more concerned with talking to the pretty girls when church was over. I was more concerned about eating the chocolate chip cookies I had stowed away in my suit pocket. I had an agenda. My plan was laid out. The goal was to survive the worship service. Many of the adults were "feeling the spirit." People were shouting and the preacher was preaching. It was pretty clear that something dynamic was going on.

So there I was, this 11-year-old boy in the midst of all this dynamism yet working my own agenda, and something in me begins to boil. I am not trying to hear God or to find God, I am not even trying to get in tune with what is happening in the service. Yet something in me that is beyond my control is just about to make me scream. I am dumbfounded. What in the world is this? I had heard some of the older church members talk about fire shut up in their bones, and this is a perfect description of what I felt that Sunday morning.

The pretty girls were watching. My thinking was that

A Fire in My Bones, continued on page 8

The Open Door Community's July 4th Picnic Needs You!



Calvin Kimbrough

*Baked beans served up
by Ronald Williams.*

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to cook and serve**

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The Children Are in Prison

By Catherine Meeks

Editor's note: Dr. Catherine Meeks is retired as the Clara Carter Acree Distinguished Professor of Socio-Cultural Studies, professor of social science and director of the Lane Center for Community Engagement and Service at Wesleyan College in Macon, Georgia. She is also executive director of Aunt Maggie's Kitchen Table Inc., a resource center for low-income families. She is a newspaper columnist, a radio commentator and the author of several books, including "Standing on Their Shoulders: A Celebration of the Wisdom of African American Women."

"How are the children? The children are in prison."

It has been said that if you want to learn about a society, visit its prisons. In the case of American society, a visit to the prisons speaks to the attitudes that are held toward African-American males and the manner in which that part of the population has been abandoned by family and the social institutions that should be helping them to learn how to live and survive in the world.

We know that there are states basing their number of needed future prison beds on the number of third-grade children who fail

According to Becky Pettit, a University of Washington sociologist, one in every 100 Americans is behind bars, which is about 2.4 million people. More than 45 percent of

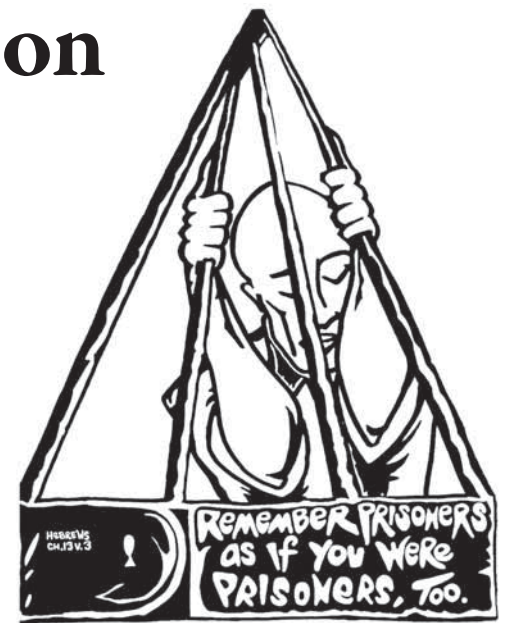
them are African-American, while the overall black population is around 12 percent. The rate of African-Americans being imprisoned is increasing, largely because the legal system has become more punitive than it was 30 years ago and more custodial sentences are being given for victimless crimes, according to the Pettit study.

For many years there has been a large disparity between the black prison population and the total black population. Many factors can be cited to explain this, but they primarily have to do with the way we have constructed our race relations around a system of inequality and prejudice.

But the disparity is less critical at this point than whether we have the will to change the pattern of using young African-Americans, mostly male, and other young people of color to maintain the industry that the prison system has become.

"Do you want to be healed?" This profound question, asked all those years ago by Jesus to the man at the Pool of Siloam who lamented that no one would help him into the pool, sums up our dilemma at this moment as to how we choose to resolve this huge issue. When we take a close look at our prisons and the prisoners, we can see what it says about us. We have designated this group of folks as dispensable and set about to lower our expectations, withhold resources from them and make sure they stay on the path that leads to the place that has been designated for them. We are all complicit in this matter, and all of us need to step back and take a good look at what we are saying about ourselves and our world as we continue to participate in this very immoral and unproductive enterprise of locking people up for decades at a time.

Since we know that there are states basing their number of needed future prison beds on the number of third-grade children



Chad Hyatt

who fail that grade, it is clear that we need to refocus the lens. Our culture needs a new set of glasses through which to view this matter. Let me be clear: I am not for opening prison doors and sending everyone home. But this discussion does not need to degenerate into that kind of nonsense discourse. It needs to stay at the level of what we are going to do with the children in their early life, perhaps before birth, but certainly from birth through high school, that can help keep them from going to prison. The money required to keep thousands in prison each year could be used for very innovative and productive means of working with the folks we keep sending to fill the prisons.

I doubt that anyone reading this article believes that people of color have some character flaw that makes them the largest number of incarcerated. There must be other explanations. Those explanations have to do with family structures, mental health needs, educational systems that begin to exclude children before they have a chance to find out how to survive the system, and economic systems that did not make any space for them because they are not expected to show up except to support the prison industry. ♣

HOSPITALITY

Hospitality is published 11 times a year by the Open Door Community (PCUS), Inc., an Atlanta Protestant Catholic Worker community: Christians called to resist war and violence and nurture community in ministry with and advocacy for the homeless poor and 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.

A \$10 donation to the Open Door Community would help to cover the costs of printing and mailing **Hospitality** for one year. A \$40 donation covers overseas delivery for one year.

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Calvin Kimbrough

After three years of drought, the rain has returned to Georgia!

Newspaper

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A Long Journey of Forgiveness and Reconciliation (Part 1)

By Murphy Davis

Ed and I have been blessed to know Hector and Susie Black since 2002, but last year we had the great privilege to go with them to a state prison in South Georgia and accompany them as we met with the man who murdered their daughter. It has been a miraculous journey: one that has taken 7½ years.

Patricia Nuckles came into the Black family at the age of 5. Before then, she had lived in desperate poverty and neglect. But from that young age, Patricia became a part of Hector and Susie's family and grew up along with their three biological daughters. She was and remains a deeply beloved daughter, sister and friend.

She went to college and earned a master's degree, but Patricia always knew that she would go back to the Summerhill neighborhood of Atlanta where her life had begun. And that she did. She worked for many years as the children's librarian in the neighborhood public library, and she poured herself out for children who were growing up in poverty and for her struggling community. She remained close to her parents, who live in Cookeville, Tennessee, and her three sisters for 35 years. In November of 2000 Patricia Nuckles was brutally murdered in her home in Summerhill, a neighborhood just south of Turner Field baseball stadium.

Susie has had rheumatoid arthritis since the age of 25, and now she gets around only with the aid of crutches or a wheelchair. The arthritis is painful and seems almost to imprison Susie in her body. She has two artificial hips, two artificial knees, has had breast cancer and a double mastectomy and two surgeries for skin cancer. But you will never hear a word of complaint from Susie Black; she is one of the most joyous, compassionate and loving people we know.

Hector is a Harvard-educated organic farmer in the hills of Tennessee. The family lived for part of the 1960s in Atlanta's Vine City neighborhood — the only white neighbors in that area of the city — and they were active in community organizing and the Black-led freedom movement. Stokely Carmichael mocked Hector by calling him the "white Jesus" of Vine City.

They are members of the Friends Meeting in Cookeville.

The man who killed Patricia is from Atlanta and will spend the rest of his life in a Georgia prison. I will call him "Boris Jackson," but that is not his real name. We met him last spring in the state prison where he is serving his sentence. He is serving four 20-year sentences, one life sentence and one sentence of life without parole. He was sentenced for the murder of Patricia Nuckles, and he knows that he will die in prison.

After the initial news of Patricia's murder, Hector and Susie found out only in bits and pieces what had happened to her. When she arrived home after work that night, she surprised "Boris," who had burglarized her house. He tied her up and they had a conversation. She urged him to get help for his crack cocaine addiction. He advised her to install burglar bars on the back windows of her house. He asked her for sex, and she said, "You'll have to kill me first." He did.

'I Deserve to Die'

Hector did not at first want to forgive Boris. In fact, he wanted to kill him with his bare hands — a feeling that I think we can all understand. He wanted this man to hurt; he wanted him to suffer as much as Tricia had suffered — as much as they were suffering from her death. What kind of monster must he be? How could anybody do this to Tricia, who was

so beloved by all who knew her?

They thought the man who had committed such a vile act could not possibly be human. They felt as if God had abandoned them during this time and that God had abandoned Tricia in her need. For all their efforts to comprehend this suffering, they could not experience God's presence. And they were angry that this stranger had such power over their lives. It was a deeply perplexing and troubling time for the Blacks, because they had no idea what to do.

The one thing they were very clear about was that they did not want Tricia's death to cause any more suffering than it already had. They knew that surely this death would continue to cause suffering for the rest of the natural lives of everybody who had known Tricia, and that was more than enough.

So Hector and Susie went to speak with the district attorney of Fulton County, Paul Howard. They asked him not to seek the death penalty against Boris Jackson. They explained that it would just mean more pain, one more death that would draw others into the circle of needless suffering. Paul Howard was upset and annoyed. "Well, yes," said Hector, "Mr. Howard was 'ticked off.'"

District attorneys generally see themselves as representing victims, but they sometimes expect victims to behave in a certain predictable way. Hector and Susie were not playing by the rules. They were supposed to be filled with revenge and hatred. They were supposed to want blood in return for their suffering. Behaving as they did made Paul Howard mad. It was an "ideal" death penalty case: the murder of a highly respected member of the community by a "lowlife crackhead." He was angry that his office could not have the support of the victim's family to seek the death penalty. So Hector, with the help of Charlotta Norby, an attorney friend of theirs and of Tricia's, wrote to the trial judge to be clear about their wishes.

By this time, Hector had also written to Boris Jackson and had gotten a response. Boris' first letter said, "I don't want your forgiveness. I deserve to die and I'm going to die for this crime."

Paul Howard told Hector and Susie that Boris Jackson's fate was "none of their business," and that if they had any further contact with him, Howard and his staff would consider them members of "the other side." At that point, there would be no more help and no more information from the DA's office available to them. Hector said, "I don't understand why we don't have some privilege of knowing who it is who killed our daughter and why our questions were dismissed."

As devastated as Hector and Susie were, they continued to try to learn about this man who had careened into their lives to cause such horrible damage. Why? How? Gradually, they began to learn about Boris Jackson's life.

They learned that Jackson was born in a mental hospital. When he was about 11 years old, his mother took him and his brother and sister to a swimming pool and told the children that God was ordering her to destroy them. Jackson and his brother escaped, but his mother succeeded in drowning their sister in the swimming pool while the brothers watched helplessly from a distance. From that time, Boris was raised



Calvin Kimbrough

Hector Black, Murphy Davis, Susie Black and Eduard Loring at the Open Door Community in April 2008.

primarily by his grandmother. His chemical addictions began to twist his already chaotic life at a young age.

A Change of Heart

When the time came for the hearing in Fulton County Superior Court, the Blacks were allowed time for what is called a "victim impact statement." Patricia's cousin got up first and made her statement. She wept and screamed and vented the full measure of her anger. She said, "Boris Jackson, I hate you, I hate you, I hate you! I hate you with all my being, I hate you for taking away my dear friend, I hate that my tax money will support you for the rest of your life. I hate you, I hate you, I hate you!"

Hector was next. He had prepared a statement because he did not feel that he could speak if he left himself to his own devices in the pressure of the moment. But he looked up as Boris was brought in. When Boris stood for his sentencing, he was not able to stand up by himself. His two attorneys, on either side, literally had to hold him up through the proceedings. Hector knew that he was looking at, in his words, "a great wreck of a man." Boris was completely despondent. "He looked like the picture of a soul in hell," Susie said. "When I saw him in the courtroom, my anger just melted. He was the most pitiful human being I ever saw. When his two attorneys had to hold him up, I just wanted to put my arms around him."

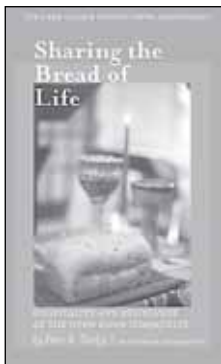
Hector found that he could not meet Boris Jackson's eyes. It was too much at that time, so he began to talk about Tricia's life. He brought a picture to the courtroom of Tricia and asked the judge if he could put it on the judge's bench; he wanted her to be present and he wanted everyone to know who it was they were talking about. "Patricia was not our child by the bonds of blood, but she was our daughter by every bond of love," he said. He told about her life, how she had grown up in their family, and that Annie, the youngest of their three biological daughters, had never known a time when Tricia was not a part of their family. Then Hector said, "I do not hate you, Boris Jackson, but I hate with all my heart and being what you did. I wish God's peace for all of us who have been wounded by this crime, and I wish it for you, Boris Jackson."

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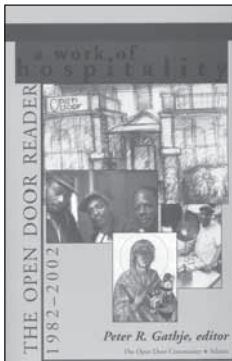
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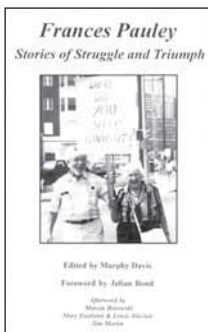
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poetry corner



Julie Lonneman

St. John, Evangelist

Machinations run amok,
the innocent
swept like debris aside?

A narrator
sober, clear of eye, labors
toward birth of truth.

And lo! another generation
learns, mourns
perfidy, dishonor,
so
exorcising their leaching power.

Learn as well –
memorising, pacing
the heart's native ground –
nobility, high honor, self donation.

We call him "inspired"
a lofty sentiment
brought rude to earth –
truth, immediacy,
conturbation of spirit.

So we learn at length
act, consequence,
vainglory's chariots,
victory's victims –
bones dry bones.

And at center eye
One
possesses His soul,
dies then,
the tomb sealed, outlawed
against lawless mischance –

then
the violation
we name resurrection.

Say it plain. Faith violates.
Say it.
Credo quia impossibile.

Faith rolls the stone aside,
timorous enters the tomb
resonant with the (sworn) word –

what could not be
and is.

– **Dan Berrigan**

Hospitality welcomes poems from people in Georgia prisons or living on the streets in Georgia. Send submissions to Eduard Loring, Open Door Community, 910 Ponce de Leon Ave. N.E., Atlanta, GA 30306-4212 or by email to hospitalitypoetrycorner@gmail.com.

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volunteer
needs
at the
Open Door Community

Please note our new schedule for Monday & Tuesday: Volunteers for Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday Soup Kitchen (9:45 a.m.-1:30 p.m.); Thursday showers (7:45-10:30 a.m.) and bag lunch (7:45 a.m.-12 noon).

Individuals to accompany Community members to doctors' appointments.

Groups or individuals to make individually wrapped meat and cheese sandwiches on whole wheat bread for our homeless and hungry friends (**no bologna, pb&j or white bread, please**).

People to cook or bring supper for the Community on certain Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday evenings.

Volunteers to help staff our foot clinic on Wednesday evenings (6:45-9:15 p.m.).

**For more information,
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or 770.246.7627**

The Cry of the Poor Cracking White Male Supremacy – An Incendiary and Militant Proposal (Part 10)

By Eduard Loring

Editor's note: This is the tenth in a series of articles based on a lecture Eduard gave at Stetson University as part of the Howard Thurman Lecture Series.

The cry of the poor is a call to reduce the distance among us into the solidarity of shared life for the common good. This cry calls us into the goodnews of the gospel of Jesus the Human One. The badnews is that most white people respond to the cry of the poor with a simple and inhuman question. Particularly males and male-dominated women, most Christians, most conservatives and most rich people reply this way: "Why should I give a damn?" Some folks don't say it that way, but they live it.

Certainly not all rich folk. The Open Door Community would not exist without the generous and justice-seeking gifts and love of a multitude of wealthy people.

"Why should I give a damn? Why should they get any of my tax money? I work for mine. Why should I give a beggar a dollar? He will just get drunk. The poor are poor because they're lazy and want a free ride. They don't give a damn. Blacks are the sorriest. Won't work. There's plenty of work. That's why there are so many illegal aliens [sic] in America today. Mexicans are taking over our schools. Blacks just bellyache about slavery and lynching and take drugs and kill each other. Hell, I didn't have anything to do with slavery. Let them get a job like me. Give me an illegal Hispanic any day. No skin off my white ass. To hell with them."

Agitator: "Any day, anywhere, anytime, anyone, rich or poor, black, white, brown, yellow or red, who confesses the confession of despair "I don't care" or "I don't give a damn" or "It doesn't matter to me" is a dead one walking. This confession so plenteous across the majestic land of the U.S. is the work of domination, "the blank appetite," the loss of passion and imagination. Moral death is resident, centered, active, alive and well in the unhappy bodies and public life of the United States. Why? Greed turns inward and eats the greedy alive while they grow in greed and greedily get more and love less. Oh, sisters and brothers, can't you hear the cry of the poor? Can't you see the death of America through the mirrors at the stock market? The corruption in high places? The hedge funds? Calamitous mortgages? The earth howls silently. The polar bear drowns, the hummingbird is motionless in air, the child dies under the bridge, the prisoner hangs herself with her shoelaces, the child spits at his mother, the student kills 32 classmates. Do we hear the cry of the American Indian

praying at Wounded Knee?"

Why care? Most folk cannot care. This is the rub. The death of compassion. This is the limit for this writing. This is the boundary line, the fence at our border for the Peace and Justice Movement, for the Discipleship Movement. *Hope* for the poor, for the breaking apart of White Male Supremacy, remains in our day an impossible possibility. President Obama could not address the institutional nature of White Male Supremacy or poverty in his campaign. He would not be in the White House today had he done so. (See Obama's speech "A More Perfect Union," March 18, 2008.)

Dying While Entertained

Despair eats those who bellow for the end of poverty and the end of White Male Supremacy. Maimed are the lives of the victims. Unrelieved anguish, like greed, brings death of soul. This way of dying, soaked in "quiet desperation" (Thoreau), puts inordinate entertainment, from baseball to pornography, at the center of our cultural lives.

Entertainment is a legal drug numbing us to neighbors and need. Like a diamondback rattler coiling in our hearts, numbness festers as the sour grapes of wrath are now embedded in our entertainment. Michael Vick, renowned, expensive quarterback for the Atlanta Falcons, revealed a link between football entertainment and dogfighting. Battling on to the end, perhaps his pit bulldogs barked, "Give me liberty or give me death!"

Why can we not feed the hungry? House the homeless? Be kind and compassionate to one another? Provide medical care for all? Guarantee a minimum wage that is enough for "the pursuit of happiness"? What in the hell is wrong with us? When it comes to justice for poor people or White Male Supremacy, we are the same people whether the stock market is at 12,000



or 6,000. Why? Is there a way we can turn things around? Can we find hope that is a possible impossibility instead?

Goodnews: Yes, we can. Let us go, then, to the streets, prisons, courtrooms, jails and lockdown mental wards in public hospitals. Here we hear the cry of the poor for the death of injustice and murderous white supremacy.

Let us go then, you and I,
When the evening is spread out
against the sky
Like a patient etherised upon a table;
Let us go, through certain half-
deserted streets,
The muttering retreats
Of restless nights in one-night cheap
hotels
And sawdust restaurants with oyster-
shells:
Streets that follow like a tedious
argument
Of insidious intent
To lead you to an overwhelming
question . . .
Oh, do not ask, "What is it?"
Let us go and make our visit.
— T.S. Eliot, "The Love Song of
J. Alfred Prufrock"

What has caused the death of compassion? The declension of Dr. Martin

Luther King Jr.? The idolatrous use of Christianity for the aims of empire? The padding of bank accounts while claiming that Jesus was a prosperous businessman? Why? Why cannot the vast majority of American people care for the poor, the homeless, the hungry and the prisoner? Why do hard-core Christians and mainline Americans believe the stercoraceous lies of the American Way of Life?

Fear. Fear has frozen our hearts. Fear has metastasized from our hearts, through our bloodstream into our brains. We live on "red alert." Strangers are enemies. The government under President George W. Bush was filled with crooks, sexual predators slinking through the chambers of Congress, and killers of the environment. Preachers and priests are out for grabs, be it money or body parts. The terrorists want to kill us; the stockbroker wants to milk us. We look in the mirror. In truth, we are afraid.

Greed. Most folk in America, the silent majority, Republican activists, shepherds who devour their own flocks, the land and the people (Ezekiel 34), are so greedy that nothing can satisfy us for long. We eat and eat and are ready to chomp and chew again in a couple of hours. We want more and more, better and better, faster and faster.

The earth is dying. History is weeping, dropping sewage from her tear ducts. If we do not want war, at least we want a war economy. Jobs, even work that kills, are among our most cherished values. The "work ethic" is the measuring rod, irrespective of the common good and the souls of workers. "Build bombs and land mines! Join the military, there is no work in your community. Become a prison guard. Design private prisons. Purchase stock in a stockade." Death and greed eat each other all day long like a wolf chewing off its frozen leg in a steel trap. As fear demands the death penalty for the poor, greed demands a minimum wage of half of a living level.

God Bless America

If God were to bless America,
What would become of the
Warmongering Christians?
Those who birthed a heresy
to justify,
In Jesus' name, white people
Twisted into monsters,
Buying and selling girls and boys, women
And men as chattel things?
Or would the spirit of love and
Mercy heal their horrid hearts,
And out the window would
Fly their hate-stained American

Cry of the Poor, continued on page 10



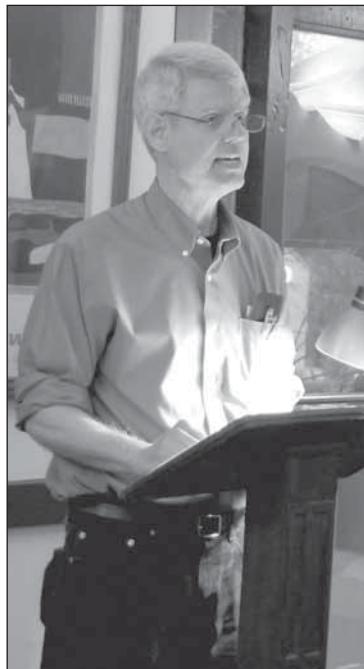
Amanda Petersen

Shoes

In January a group of students from Martin Methodist College in Pulaski, Tennessee visited the Open Door while on a trip to Atlanta. After the visit, they began a drive to collect shoes for our friends from the streets. On March 26, Leslie Fralix, one of those Martin Methodist students, brought a huge carload of shoes. Haley Maness, Leslie, Clark Hand (*in back, left to right*) and Sybbie Bryson (*in front*) unloaded all the shoes into our basement storage room. Thank you, Martin Methodist College!

In, Out & Around 910

Compiled by Calvin Kimbrough



Poems

Steve Rhodes gave a poetry reading at the Open Door on April 2 (*left*). His poem “Colonoscopy” — from his new book, “The Time I Didn’t Know What to Do Next” — appeared in the April *Hospitality*. Steve is a long-time friend and supporter of the Open Door Community. He was for several years the Academic Dean at Memphis Theological Seminary and is now a farmer-poet living with his wife, Ann, in Berea, Kentucky.

Photographs by Amanda Petersen



100 Days Campaign

For 100 days following the inauguration of Barack Obama, a coalition of groups and individuals has taken part in demonstrations, educated Congress and the public, and engaged in nonviolent direct action seeking to close the Guantanamo prison. On April 30, 61 Americans, dressed in the orange jumpsuits and black hoods that have become the symbol of Guantanamo, were arrested in front of the White House during a nonviolent demonstration. Included in that group were Chuck Harris, a Partner at the Open Door, and Mike Vosburg-Casey, a weekly volunteer and former Resident Volunteer. Chuck is holding the far right end of the banner (*right*), and Mike is back in the group facing the White House. They will return to Washington in June for trial and possible sentencing.



David McReynolds | 100 Days Campaign

Vigil for Life at the Death of Mark Mize

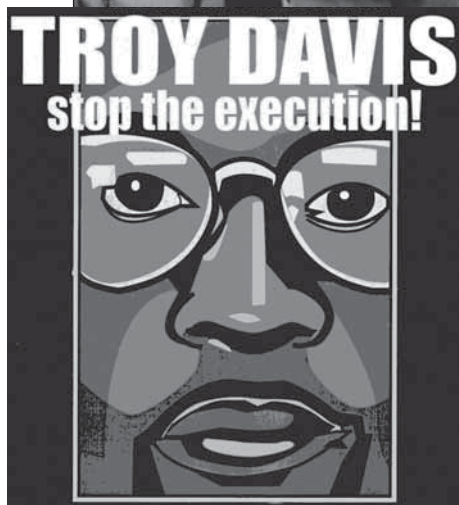
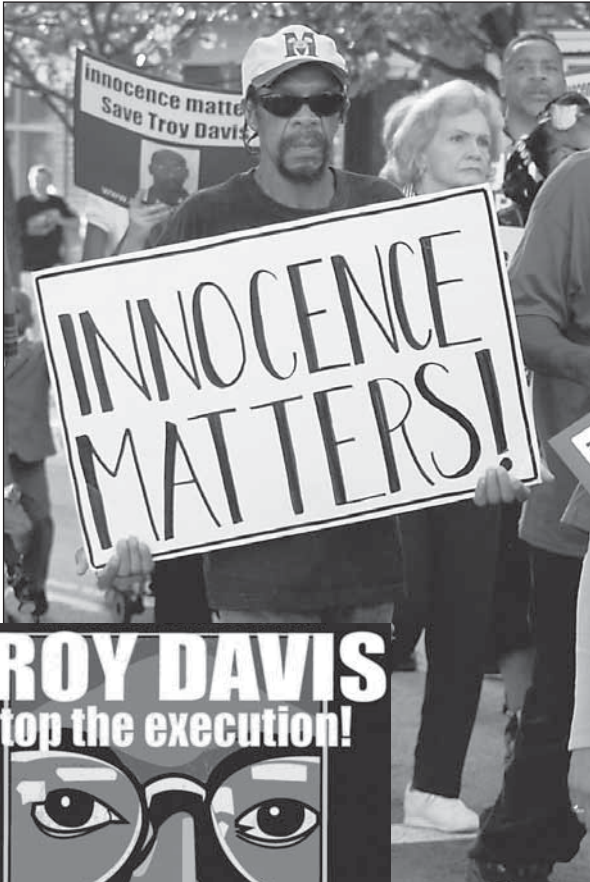
Mark Mize was executed by the state of Georgia on April 29, and the Open Door hosted a vigil at the Capitol to call for the abolition of the death penalty. Gladys Rustay (*below right*) reads from the list of names of the 45 men executed in Georgia since 1983, following the reinstatement of the death penalty.



Photographs by Calvin Kimbrough



Amanda Petersen



Amnesty International

Troy Davis

Troy Davis was sentenced to death in 1991 for the murder of a white police officer in Savannah. There was no physical evidence, and seven of nine witnesses against Troy have recanted or changed their stories. One of the witnesses has been implicated as the actual shooter. In May, 27 former judges and prosecutors from across the political spectrum filed an amicus brief with the U.S. Supreme Court in support of Davis. Please check for continuing information at www.amnestyusa.org/troydavis or www.deathpenaltyinfo.org. Open Door Community Partner Ira Terrell (*left*) marches at a recent rally in Atlanta.



Photographs by Calvin Kimbrough



May Day

May 1 was the day Professor Pete Gathje's Memphis Theological Seminary class arrived at the Open Door for their week of living, working and studying at 910. The first activity was joining a local May Day Celebration and March. Eduard Loring (*above*) leads the group and Open Door residents down the street. Pete Gathje (*left, left to right*), Andrew Horvath, Jonathan Hovey, Karen Morris, Linda Upchurch, Duke Williams and Kevin Alspaugh hold banners at the rally.

A Fire in My Bones, *continued from page 1*

I would lose cool points if they saw me “happy in the spirit.” I had an image to maintain. Remember, Jeremiah also had an image he wanted to maintain. I sat there almost shaking. I thought about excusing myself, because I wanted to let it out, but I couldn’t just walk out without having to provide my mother with an explanation later. I came to understand what I experienced as God within me beginning to deal with me, in a way that left little doubt that God was real and had plans for my life.

My family attended church every Sunday, so we returned the following Sunday. The choir sings, the preacher preaches, the good sisters begin to “get happy in the spirit,” and there I am again almost trembling. I guess I am “getting happy in the spirit” too.

‘God, What Is This?’

What is amazing to me is that I didn’t ask for this wonderful feeling. I recall thinking, “I don’t even know what this is, but it must be God because we are in church and it happens in the midst of worship. It doesn’t happen on the playground, at school, or in basketball practice; it happens in worship.” And the only metaphor that seemed to fit was fire shut up in my bones.

I continued to do my best to subdue the feeling. I was embarrassed to talk about it, even with my mother. So I would go to church each Sunday for the next five years until I became a teenager, and I was over there in that deacon’s corner burning up. But no one knew it but me.

I began to have conversations with God about these experiences. “God, if this is You, what is this?” It was the most wonderful experience I have ever experienced. It was clear to me that the feeling was not of this world. God was dealing with me from afar and sending me a message that God was within me with power. And it felt *so good*. I want to emphasize that it was a wonderful feeling, but I was not comfortable sharing the experience with others, so I kept it to myself.

I was encouraged to participate in church functions, so I joined the music ministry. After hearing me sing, people began saying, “That boy is going to preach one day.” That was also a no-no. I had no desire to become a preacher. As a matter of fact, I wanted to get as far away from preaching as I could. So my response was, “Yeah, we’ll see, but I doubt that.” I suspected that these people arrived at their conclusion by watching me and realizing that something was going on within me. I couldn’t hold it all in. Jeremiah said he “grew weary holding it in.” I did too, but I did for years. I couldn’t afford to lose cool points with the pretty girls.

I left my hometown to attend college here in Atlanta. With so much going on as I acclimated to the city, I hadn’t felt the Holy Spirit in a while. There were many pretty girls and a whole new world to discover.

One day I happened to attend a theatrical production at the college. The production included a church scene in which

the preacher offered a fervent prayer. I was sitting in the balcony, and as the prayer reached a crescendo, my insides began to boil, and it’s fire, twice as hot, in my bones. I didn’t know what to do. I ran out of that balcony all the way to my dorm, where I called my mother. I didn’t know what to say, since we hadn’t discussed these experiences before, so I just asked how she was doing, told her I was doing fine, talk to you later, bye.

I couldn’t find the words. I wanted to share my experiences, but I couldn’t find the words. I believe she knew that I wanted to say more. I was not ready to release the knowledge or information to others that there was something in me that I understood as the power of God and that it was the most wonderful thing I have ever experienced. It made me want to run, scream and shout.

Making Meaning of the Fire

I want to talk about the process known as spiritual formation, because during my graduate studies I learned that I could have made a different meaning of the experience I have described. I could have associated the experience with something or somebody other than God or God’s spirit. I could have, but I didn’t. I identified the experience as God calling me to be and do something in this world.

Now the question was whether I wanted to be and do what God was calling me to. I needed to figure out what God wanted from me. This is the important part, I think, of how we make meaning of our experiences, our spiritual experiences. It was clear to me that God hadn’t given me this fire-in-my-bones experience just to provide me a thrill. God was empowering me to do something that would show honor.

Both of my parents were involved in church ministry and both reached out to others, in their own ways. Their reaching out to help others proved to be powerful lessons for my sisters and me.

I want to talk a minute about Ms. Ephraim and her groceries. Ms. Ephraim was a 75-year-old woman who walked two miles, each way, to the grocery store. Now here we were with our Chevrolet driving back and forth to the grocery. Ms. Ephraim walked at a fast pace even with a bag of groceries in each arm — that is, until one day when my mother noticed her and stopped and picked her up. Ms. Ephraim never walked to the grocery store again.

Something about my fire-in-the-bones experience and my mother reaching out to Ms. Ephraim connected. God seemed to connect the fire in the bones with reaching out to those who had less or were less fortunate.

One day on the way back from the grocery store, I was eager to get home because my mother had purchased some of my favorite food items. But as we were riding along I saw Ms. Ephraim up ahead. I knew that if my mom saw her, we were going to have to pick her up, load up her groceries and take her home. And I would

have to take the groceries into her house and she and my mother would visit for a while. This would delay my getting my favorite foods — a significant inconvenience.

Unbeknownst to her, my mother was teaching me what the fire shut up in the bones really meant. It was more than just a spiritual experience. God was saying, “I am real and I have a life I want you to live, and I want you to stand with those who are poor, who are marginalized, who are oppressed and who need your prayers and your help. I don’t want you to make your life about you; I want you to make your life about Me.”



Tom Lewis

I have not reached this goal, but I am working on it. My mother’s sensitivity to the needs of others connected with the fire I felt. God says, “Love My people, love the widows. [Ms. Ephraim was a widow.] Love the orphans, love everyone, love your neighbor as yourself.”

One of my issues with people of faith is that many of us love to have church, love to shout, love to get happy, love that feeling. But in my humble opinion, if the fire in the bones doesn’t move us to reach out to those in need, then it’s just a feeling, not a pathway to the ultimate manifestation of God’s will. I am grateful today that the fire I felt and continue to feel in my bones became associated with reaching out to the poor, the marginalized, the forgotten.

The Spirit Calls Again

My father never said anything to me about God or Jesus when I was a child or teenager. But every Sunday he took my sisters and me to Sunday School. He taught an adult Sunday School class for several years.

One rainy Sunday morning after my sisters had moved away to attend college, my father and I were headed to church. Our church was on an unpaved road that was muddy from rain. We approached a car that was stuck in a ditch. The driver was frustrated. The more he tried to maneuver his way out of the ditch, the deeper his car sank into the mud. My father had a plan.

The risk was that if we used our car to push the other car out of the ditch, we might end up in the ditch as well. We would have been better off calling a tow truck. But my father gave me directions: “I want you to guide me so that I can place my bumper on his bumper, and I am going to give it just enough gas while turning my wheel outward so that we push him out of the ditch and avoid getting stuck ourselves.” It worked like a charm.

It’s a simple story, but it reminds me of some folk who were a little upset with Jesus because he helped someone on the Sabbath. Those folk were more into the Sabbath than they were into helping others. Jesus made a splendid point that day: “Were people made for the Sabbath or the Sabbath for people?”

I gave you an example from my mother and one from my father to help you understand my spiritual formation. God played the ultimate role by putting fire in my bones. My parents played supporting roles by sending me a clear message that we are not just churchgoers, we don’t just sing hymns, we don’t just hear good preaching and go back home. We reach out and try to help someone. And because of God’s fire and their lessons, I was able to make a connection, to connect the dots between the fire in my bones and what God would have me do.

Now it’s 1987, and I am in graduate school and living the wild life. I hadn’t felt God’s spirit in a while, and can’t say I was really open to it. I reconnected with a hometown friend. All we did was drink liquor and run the streets. I know you find it difficult to imagine me in this way, but believe it. But in spite of my rowdy living, I recalled my mother’s words: “No matter how far you go in life or what you do, always go to church.”

One Saturday night, up until Sunday morning, my friend and I had been out drinking. We were intoxicated when we arrived home about 7 a.m. But we were both raised in the church so we felt we should go to church. So we got cleaned up and went, but we were still mildly intoxicated. There we were, me and one of my best friends, sitting on the back row of the church, and we were not with the Holy Spirit, but lesser spirits. Yet when the pastor preached, here comes God, burning through my drunkenness, burning through my worldliness with the same fire that Jeremiah felt shut up in his bones. What kind of God would look beyond all my faults, stir the spirit within me, and call me again?

I joined that church that day. And a few Sundays later I joined the music ministry, and a few years later I stood before that same congregation and announced my calling into the Christian ministry.

Now God is teaching me about faithfulness. God has allowed me to go through what I had to go through while remaining faithful to me and re-issuing the call on my life.

What Jesus Had in Mind

In 1987, I preached what we refer to in the Baptist Church as a trial sermon. The term "trial" is funny to me, because it's as if you don't know whether you are called or not, so you get a trial sermon. I followed the Baptist tradition: you minister and you teach or you find something else to do on God's behalf. You go to convalescent homes, you visit the sick or the incarcerated, you involve yourself in Christian ministry in some way.

Eventually I was called to pastor a church. This was my first opportunity to pastor others, and I had a lot to learn. I was naive and just wanted to do God's will — an even greater manifestation of the fire in my bones. Most of the people in the church were supportive, but a few were distrustful and suspicious. But I knew they were all God's people and that God had a reason for sending me to them. There were lessons I needed to learn.

After being treated harshly, somewhat like Jeremiah, when I was only trying to do God's will, I became like Jeremiah, saying, "God, you need to get these people. They have mistreated me." And God said, "Wait a minute. Didn't I say, 'Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake'? Didn't I say, 'Love your enemies, bless those who curse you'? I sent you here so you could understand what it means to die to yourself, to be crucified. I sent you here so that you can know My son better. I let you experience My spirit. I want you to understand the price Jesus paid, that you might have life and have it abundantly and eternally."

As I prepared to move to God's next assignment, I prayed, "God, I understand that there is no perfect church, but please show me a more authentic expression of the body of Christ if there is such a thing." Around this time, one of my pastoral care and counseling instructors approached me. He said, "I got a call from a friend of mine who is looking for someone to come and be a pastoral presence in their church community. I am going to give him your name and number and have him call you." So this guy named Ed Loring called me. He had this distinct voice — like a movie star or something. He said, "I want you to come and meet with us." He shared some of the things going on in the community. God was answering my prayer. He introduced me to the Open Door Community as an example of the body of Christ.

During my years with the Open Door, I have learned that it is not perfect by any estimation, yet I believe that it represents something really close to what Jesus had in mind when He conceived the body of Christ — black and white, wealthy and poor, popular and marginalized, men, women and children, serving the poor together, standing in solidarity with the oppressed together, breaking bread together, sharing the love of Christ together, singing "Keep your eyes on the prize, hold on" together.

So the span of time from sitting in church with a pocket full of chocolate chip cookies and pretty girls on my mind, to feeling the fire in my bones for the very first time, to having someone named Ed Loring call me with a request for a pastoral counselor, represents a part, at least, of my spiritual journey thus far. The fire still burns.

As I close, I want you to know that I continue to strive to be what God has called me to be and to do. In my striving, the same words that inspired my mother inspire me: "If I can help somebody as I travel along, if I can cheer somebody with a word or a song, if I can show somebody that they are traveling wrong, then my living shall not be in vain." If I can use this fire shut up in my bones as power, as energy, to help somebody, then my living shall not be in vain. ✦

A Long Journey, continued from page 3

When he looked at Boris, tears were streaming down Boris' face and he looked entirely bereft. Then the time came for Boris to be led out of the courtroom. He stopped and asked the judge if he could speak. The judge said yes, and he went to the microphone. Weeping and brokenhearted, he said, "I am so sorry for the pain I have caused. I am so sorry. I am so sorry. I am so sorry." And they led him away, bent over with shame and remorse.

It was an extraordinary moment for the family. Hector said, "Here is a man who knows he will die in prison: he was being led off to live the rest of his life in captivity and to die there. And at that moment he was thinking about others. He was thinking about us. I began to understand how self-centered I had been. People lose loved ones every day, and I was thinking only of my own pain and my own anger." At that moment, Hector began to think more about Boris.

Hector couldn't sleep that night, "because I really felt as though a tremendous weight had been lifted from me ... and that I had forgiven him."

The Fatal Night Recalled

The anger, however, did not go away on that day. Hector kept writing letters to Boris. "I guess what I'm asking here is for you to talk with me and for you to help me find a way to forgive you," he wrote. And so began their regular correspondence. Boris wrote to Hector and said, "I hope you don't take this in a way that I don't mean it. I mean it with all respect. I derive a real strength from Miss Patricia. She is a part of my life as I try to find a way to witness for God in prison."

Hector began to encourage that and to encourage Boris in his walk and witness in prison. "If there is anything you want to know about what happened that night I will tell you," Boris wrote. "There is nothing I will not tell you. I will answer any question that you have."

Yes, they wanted to know. So he described the evening to them in detail.

Boris had burglarized the empty house and left. He got a hit of crack, about \$120 worth, and then came back to the house. This second time was when Patricia came home from the library. He heard her come in, and he jumped into a closet. He was hoping that she would go back to the front of the house and he could jump out the back window. But she came to the closet and opened the door. He pushed it open, she fell backward and he tied her up.

This was when Patricia and Boris had a long conversation. She expressed her concern for him and urged him to find help for his crack habit. She told him there was food in her refrigerator if he was hungry. He expressed his concern for her. He told her that the reason he burglarized her house was that there were no lights on and no burglar bars on the windows. "Please," he advised, "leave a light on; please get burglar bars on your back windows."

They had this conversation and he left the house again. This time he took more stuff with him and he got more crack and he got higher. He went back into the house the third time, and that was when he asked Patricia for sex. She said, "Why do you want to do this to me? You haven't hurt me; we've talked together like two human beings. Why now?" He insisted. "To have sex with me," she said, "you'll have to kill me first."

By this time, Boris was very high on crack. And of course we all know that there is a point in a crack high beyond which there is no further reasoning. Boris did something he never intended to do when he went into Patricia's house the first time, the second time or even the third time. He strangled her and had sex with her. ✦

Part 2 will appear next month.

Murphy Davis is a Partner at the Open Door Community.

Join us as a Resident Volunteer



Amanda Petersen

The Graduates: Jonathan Hovey, Peter Crooke, Heather Barger — Jonathan and Peter graduated from Columbia Theological Seminary. Both have been Student Resident Volunteers at the Open Door this past year. Jonathan will continue as a Resident Volunteer. Peter and Amanda Petersen are getting married and are headed to Portland, Oregon to live and work. Heather graduated from Candler School of Theology at Emory University. She has been a Resident Volunteer and a frequent writer for Hospitality. She is now an administrative assistant at the Open Door and teaches theology at Metro State Women's Prison.

Live in a residential Christian community.

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

Join street actions and loud and loving nonviolent demonstrations.

Enjoy regular retreats and meditation time at Dayspring Farm.

Join Bible study and theological reflections from the Base.

You might come to the margins and find your center.

Contact: Chuck Harris

at odcvolunteer@bellsouth.net

or 770.246.7627

For information and application forms visit www.opendoorcommunity.org

Please Help!

The Open Door needs **2,000 sandwiches** to serve each week!

We need **meat & cheese sandwiches** (no bologna, pb&j or white bread, please) individually wrapped on whole wheat bread.

Thank You!



Cry of the Poor, *continued from page 5*

Flags as the Dove of Peace
Flies in and perches
On every human heart?
“Oh Peace, oh
Peace, we shall not hurt or
Destroy on God’s holy mountain,”
Would sing from every
White Christian lip in praise
And resistance to America’s
Nasty battles.

If God were to bless America
Behind the gated gold-drenched
Concentration camps of high-hog living,
Would not the gates unfurl?
The locked doors spring wide open?
The golf courses metamorphose into
Free land for American Indians?
Would not the rich put up
WELCOME signs
Along the gates and walls?
“Something there is that does not love a wall.”
These captives released from their
Godless materialism would invite
Homeless brothers and sisters to
Join them at supper. And
Just after God’s blessings
Blasted America, they would not be
Afraid of the poor who is Jesus
The Human One.

If God were to bless America,
Would not Billy Graham practice
The way of discipleship and George W.
Bush teach the Beatitudes?
If God were to bless America,
My SUV would turn, unlike
Cinderella’s chariot, into a
MARTA bus for all to ride
Free at last.

If God were to bless America,
Thirty-five thousand captives
Would be set free (only 5,000 remaining
For violent crimes) from our crazed
Catastrophic cages and they be filled
For one week with preachers, prosecutors,
Judges, wardens, police and bankers who
Would cry and wail, “No more death
penalty forever and ever!
Amen.”

If God were to bless America,
There would be no hunger in the land,
No homeless on the streets,
No military aid to Israel,
No child born into calamity,
No old person would die alone,
All houses in the whole wide world
would be built by Habitat for Humanity.

Therefore: Hear ye, Hear ye,
Beware, watch out, stay alert,
Sing and pray with extreme caution.
Do we really want God to bless America?
“Yes” (according to the latest WRFG Poll).

Well, then:
Step One:

“Open your homes to the homeless poor” (Isaiah 58).

Step Two:

“Turn your swords into plowshares,
Your spears into pruning hooks,
And study war no more.” (Isaiah 2:4)

Wounded by God’s Judgment

There is hurt among a minority of us who believe in Yahweh-Elohim and our partnership with God making history. This pain comes from the most blasphemous slogan current in our culture: “God Bless America.” This rotten slogan is idolatry, second only to capitalism’s moneyed theology: “In God We Trust.” From Puritans of old to theocrats today, the stolen and unjust privileges of the U.S. are baptized as blessings from God. The truth is that they are curses from God. Big and expensive housing, for example, is not a blessing from God. It is a basic cause of homelessness, which is a sin and for which we are suffering in this land of ours. Homelessness is the crisis, rotten mortgages the result.

The belief and idolatry that God is blessing America is a fundamental cause of our fear and greed. This lie has malignant side effects. Children cannot play outside. Diabetes and cancer are raging through the population like a California wildfire. Our wealth and financial collapse, our military budget and our bombs, our traffic jams and drug culture, our medical practices and lack of medical care for all — these bleeding wounds are all evidences of God’s judgment of the way of life in the United States.

Let us radicalize our lives into King’s nonviolent revolution. Do justice. Love mercy. Walk as a humble, free, fully human woman or man. Hear the cry of the poor calling us to liberation and redemption from the American Empire and its Domination System.

The goodnews is that we know what it takes and how to get there. The badnews is that we are too afraid and too greedy to go. We have so little personal and political will. We care so little for each other, the people of Iraq, Afghanistan, Gaza, and children under the bridges near downtown. When did the Common Good become the Extraordinary Good? We are prisoners in our comfort zones. We are too silent. Silence = death. What can we do? How may we live? ✠

Next month in Part 11: Back to the front yard.

Eduard Loring is a Partner at the Open Door Community.

Jesus Did Feet

By Celia Lett, CNP, RN

Editor’s note: Celia Lett is a volunteer at the Open Door Foot Clinic and one of Murphy Davis’ nurse practitioners at the Emory Winship Cancer Institute. Come join Celia, our other volunteers and Jesus in “doing feet” on Wednesday nights at the Open Door.

How can I get any closer to God than to wash someone’s tired feet? How more humbling can it be than to scrub dirty feet, cut misshapen toenails and massage cracked heels? And in doing so, to touch someone in a way Jesus would have touched them.

These are feet that walk the streets all day in extreme heat or cold, often with wet, dirty and poorly fitting shoes. Many have developed bunions, calluses, even deformities. I am sure I speak for many of my fellow foot caregivers in asking, how better to show Jesus’ love for each other than to care for each other’s feet? How wonderful to feel that human touch that they may so seldom experience.

“Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another’s feet.” (John 13:14)

Not everyone is called to foot care. I encourage you to find your calling and to serve one another in whatever way you can.

Dear Grandmothers for Peace:

Yesterday Sgt. 1st Class Bryan Hall, 32, came home to Elk Grove, Calif. The war is over for him, killed in Iraq. He arrived at Sacramento Executive Airport from Dover Air Force Base. His flag-draped coffin was picked up by an Elk Grove fire truck. A procession of cars and motorcycles accompanied him down Highway 99, and on several overpasses various groups stood at attention. On Elk Grove Boulevard, people lined this main street as Bryan went by. Then he was taken to the funeral home, where an honor guard moved him inside.

The veil of secrecy is lifted. We can see the reality of war, the flag-draped coffin of a 32-year-old man. This has happened 4,274 times after deaths in Iraq, 679 times in Afghanistan, mostly in the dead of night, the coffin transfer unseen. In the early ’90s the coming home was not for public view because “it might make people against war.” Now we can see what war looks like. You can see it on the news, or see a picture in the paper. I saw it in person yesterday, and it tears your heart to pieces. Some people are forgetting that the wars go on. Regardless of who is now in office, the wars continue!

Did I know Bryan Hall or his family? No. Do I care? Yes. He was one of ours, they ALL are ours, and we all have someone in Iraq and Afghanistan. We must bring them home. We must find diplomacy and help from other countries.

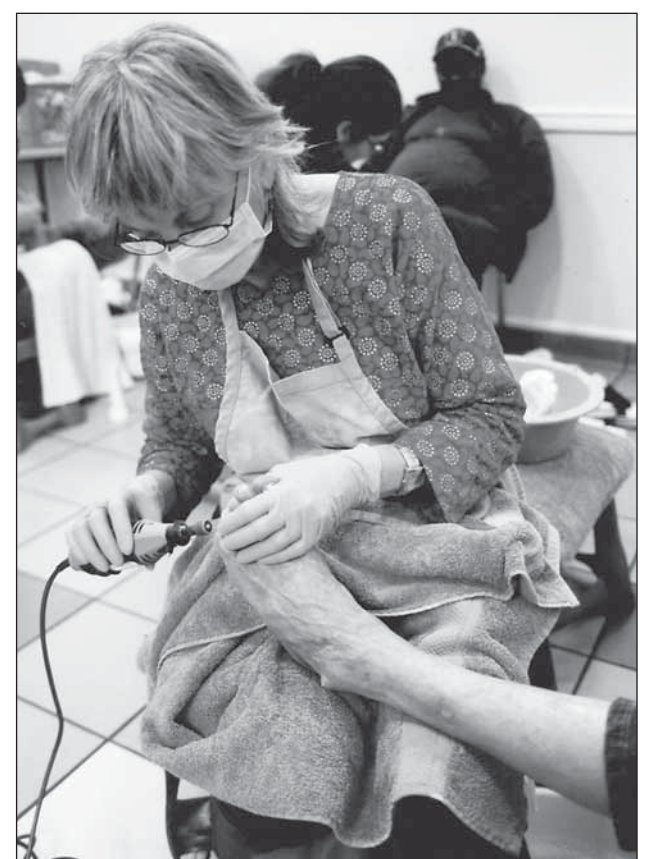
Please continue to write to President Obama. He needs to hear from us. I believe he is trying to make a difference. Some things have changed, but there is so much more to do. I could say have patience, but I don’t want to see another flag-draped coffin come home. Yet I know they will continue until the troops come home at last. The circle of creating enemies must stop. Our policies must change.

Peace to all of us,

Lorraine Krofchok

President, Grandmothers for Peace

Editor’s note: Lorraine Krofchok is director of Grandmothers for Peace International (www.grandmothersforpeace.org). She lives in Elk Grove, California.



Calvin Kimbrough

Mary Jo Strickland “does feet” on a recent Wednesday night.

If your calling is foot care, we would love to have your help at the Open Door Foot Clinic on Wednesday nights. ✠

Grace and Peaces of Mail

We're back and in full swing here. The evening after our return we participated in a small vigil in protest of Karl Rove, who was scheduled to speak at Denison, guest of Denison's College Republican Club. After his speech, I made sure I was first at the microphone to confront him. When he saw what I was about, he cut me off before I finished my line of questioning. A noisy, very conservative crowd, mainly from the outside, applauded him loudly, but I had already questioned his unwillingness to engage with me. He told me to wait until the Q and A session was over.

Lo and behold, he kept his word. After he had spoken and the audience had mostly dispersed, two security officers came to me and told me that Mr. Rove wanted to see me. So I was escorted into a private room behind the stage, where I was able to talk to him eyeball to eyeball. I frankly questioned his honesty, focusing, in the time he apparently had, on the Valerie Plame case and the firing of the U.S. attorneys. He tried to exonerate himself, support Bush, and strongly endorse Alberto Gonzales. Nothing new: he's a slippery, arrogant, self-serving smartass. His parting line to me as he left for his waiting car was, "Next time don't you ask the questions, let the students do the asking!" — even though one-third to two-thirds of the audience were non-students.

Things have been non-stop, but that has included choral performances, philosophy coffee discussion, etc. And I am happy to say that I was able, this a.m., to give the Open Door's greetings to our congregation and tell them a little more about our visit there. I ended my short (at the minister's request!) account with a challenge to our church: first, that people need to stop viewing homeless people as "bums" and start viewing them as full-fledged fellow human beings, and second, that the church, much more than it has, needs to go out to the streets! My challenge was applauded.

So thank you!

Yes, indeed, THANK YOU! Margo and I cherish the time we had with all of you at the Open Door, with the homeless on the streets and in various venues, with all in Holy Week Eucharists in public places, and the time at Dayspring Farm. What an amazingly satisfying and spiritually energizing way of spending five days of Holy Week and then 2 1/2 days following Easter. Each year we learn more and more from you and the community, make new friends, and feel more and more that we are members of the beloved Open Door Community. Thank you immeasurably for allowing us to be a part. As we walk, talk, pray and eat with the homeless and a community at work and prayer with them, we feel that we come to know Jesus, His call to his disciples, and His way better and better.

And oh, Murphy, how gratifying it was to see you regaining your strength and delivering your prophetic gifts so magnificently again! May the Healer continue to look over you and care for you.

We love you!

PEACE!

Ron and Margo Santoni
Denison University
Granville, Ohio

Folks of the Open Door,

You inspire, uplift and encourage me endlessly. I cannot thank you enough for everything. I have learned more than at my school, met God more than at any church, been loved more than by any friends, and worked more than any job (just kiddin'!). You each mean so much to me. Individually and collectively, you are priceless.

Thanks for helping this pilgrim along her way! I look forward to meeting you all again soon.

Yours for the Revolution,
Sybilla Bryson
On the Road



Rita Corbin

Dear Murphy,

We were so glad to hear the joyous news of your good health! I trust that continues. I appreciate so much your writing, as well as Eduard's — I anticipate the arrival of *Hospitality* each month and then enjoy devouring it. I sure wish we could get down your way for a visit some day.

Thanks be to God for all the wonders that emanate through the Open Door!!

Much love to you and all there,

Rachel Gross
Death Row Support Project
Liberty Mills, Indiana

Dearest Friends,

Every day I think of you and pray for you. And now that we are in the midst of Holy Week, I need for you to know that I am holding you individually and collectively to the Divine Light. Every year my intention is to come back to see you and take part in your Holy Week mission. And every year I give first place to my family of origin. The lure of my darling grandsons is too strong. Before too long, they will be all grown up.

Know that you are my family of rebirth, and know that you have carved a uniquely beautiful and special place in my heart. I love the woman that I have become, and I am grateful for the role you played and continue to play in my life's journey. My life was redefined every bit as much as my vocabulary and understanding of language was redefined, as I worked the daily rotations and attempted to do my part in your mission of compassion and agitation and advocacy when I lived at 910 back in 1998-99.

The door to my heart opens wider on Sundays at 5, and I imagine that I am singing with you all, and breaking the bread and drinking the juice and passing the peace.

With abundant love and abundant gratitude this Holy Week and as long as I breathe.

Betty Jane Crandall
Pendleton, South Carolina

Please don't think all public defenders are bad actors.

I am sending a gift in the name of Curtis Osborne.

[Curtis Osborne was executed by the state of Georgia in June 2008.]

Amy Yanni
Assistant Public Defender
Pennington County Courthouse
Rapid City, South Dakota

The editor replies:

Dear Amy,

Of course not!! Without the countless courageous public defenders we would be in so much worse shape. We know that you, like many, work at a personal sacrifice for the cause of justice, human dignity, and fundamental fairness. We are deeply grateful!

Murphy Davis

Dear Ed and Murphy,

God was good to me by giving me time to read your entire March issue from beginning to end, and I wanted to tell you what I am doing with it. But first of all, I thank God with you, Murphy, when I read the good news about your cancer report. May the news continue to be positive. I cut out the articles in the paper.

I wanted to keep your poetry, Ed; it's superb. Have you ever sent them someplace else for publication? More people should read them.

I'm sending the photo of your German volunteer to my friends in Germany.

The letter from Rev. Laura Kirkpatrick of Martin Methodist College in Tennessee, telling about her students who did that great volunteer work at the Open Door, how it affected them and their follow-up activities to help with the shoes, is so inspiring [please see photograph on page 6]. I'm sending it to our Ursuline schools in Kirkwood, Missouri, and New Orleans to see if any of them could come to the Open Door. I know the students in Kirkwood have helped out in N.O. after Katrina, and there is still much work to be done there. But it's still a good idea. I also want to write a letter of thanksgiving to the volunteers from that college. I can probably get the address from the Internet.

As for the review of the book "The Catholic Worker After Dorothy," I am going to see if I can get a copy from the public library. We have a bookmobile that comes here every two weeks, and they try hard to get what we ask for. So wish me luck.

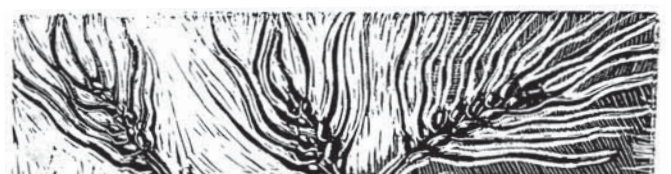
Ed, your articles on "The Cry of the Poor" make me wonder whether (and HOPE that) you're putting all these talks together in some kind of book. Are you? I should have kept them as they came out, but I never realized how good they would be and that I would want to keep them for prayer and reflection and sharing.

So thanks for another great edition of *Hospitality*. And may God bless you as you welcome Jesus as he arrives at the Open Door in his homeless, hungry, shoeless, phoneless brothers and sisters who come. And Jesus imprisoned, who is visited and loved and made to feel worthwhile in a place where they usually would not feel that way.

So may you all be blessed and strengthened to continue this beautiful ministry. Know how dear you all are to our loving God, or as you say, the Human One.

Love,

Mary Jude Jun, O.S.U.
St. Louis, Missouri



Daniel Nichols

Open Door Community Ministries

We're Making Some Big Changes

Please note our new schedule for Mondays & Tuesdays — **Volunteers** please see the needs list on page 4 for the new schedule.

Soup Kitchen: Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday,
10:45 a.m. – 12 noon.

Women's Showers: Wednesday, 8 a.m.

Harriet Tubman Medical and Foot Care Clinic:
Wednesday, 7 p.m.

Men's Showers & Bag Lunch: Thursday, 8 – 11:30 a.m.

Use of Phone: Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday,
9 a.m. – 12 noon.

Retreats: Four times each year for our household,
volunteers and supporters.

Prison Ministry: Monthly trip to prisons in Hardwick,
Georgia, in partnership with First Presbyterian Church
of Milledgeville; monthly Jackson (Death Row) Trip;
pastoral visits in various jails and prisons.

We are open...

Sunday: We invite you to join us for our **Peace Vigil** from
11:55 a.m. until 12:30 p.m. and for **Worship at 5 p.m.**
with supper following worship. We are open from 9 a.m.
until 4 p.m. for donations.

Monday through Thursday: We answer telephones from 9 a.m.
until 12 noon and from 2 until 6 p.m. We gratefully accept
donations from 9 until 10 a.m. and 2 until 8:30 p.m.

Friday and Saturday: We are closed. We are not able to offer
hospitality or accept donations on these days.

Our **Hospitality Ministries** also include visitation and letter
writing to prisoners in Georgia, anti-death penalty
advocacy, advocacy for the homeless, daily worship,
weekly Eucharist, and Foot Washing.

Join Us for Worship!

We gather for worship and Eucharist at 5 p.m. each Sunday, followed by supper together.

If you are considering bringing a group please contact us at 770.246.7628.

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

| | |
|---------|--|
| June 7 | Worship at 910 Anthony Granberry preaching The Spiritual Journey of Addiction & Recovery, Part 3 |
| June 14 | Worship at 910 Eucharist Service Music by Yes Virginia! |
| June 21 | Worship at 910 Eucharist Service followed by a Celebration of Dick Rustay's 80th Birthday |
| June 28 | Worship at 910 Edward Loring preaching |
| July 5 | Worship at 910 Eucharist Service Music by Elise Witt & Friends |
| July 12 | Worship at 910 Anne Lister preaching |
| July 19 | Worship at 910 Eucharist Service |
| July 26 | Worship at 910 Ron Lister preaching |



Bruce Bishop

Clarification Meetings at the Open Door

We meet for clarification
on selected Monday evenings
from 7:30 - 9 p.m.

Plan to join us for
discussion and reflection!



Daniel Nichols

For the latest information and
scheduled topics, please call
404.874.9652
or visit

www.opendoorcommunity.org.

Medical Needs List

Harriet Tubman Medical Clinic

ibuprofen
lubriderm lotion
cough drops
non-drowsy allergy tablets
cough medicine (alcohol free)

Foot Care Clinic

epsom salt
anti-bacterial soap
shoe inserts
corn removal pads
exfoliation cream (e.g., apricot scrub)
pumice stones
foot spa
cuticle clippers
latex gloves
nail files (large)
toenail clippers (large)
medicated foot powder
antifungal cream (Tolfanate)

**We are also need volunteers
to help staff our Foot Care Clinic
on Wednesday evenings
from 6:45 - 9:15 p.m.!**

Needs of the Community



Chad Hyatt

Living Needs

- jeans
- work shirts
- belts (34" & up)
- men's underwear
- socks
- reading glasses
- walking shoes
(especially 9 1/2 and up)
- T-shirts
(L, XL, XXL, XXXL)
- baseball caps
- MARTA cards
- postage stamps
- trash bags
(30 gallon, .85 mil)

Personal Needs

- shampoo, soap,
lotions & toiletries
for showers

Special Needs

- backpacks
- 2 adult bicycles
- single bed, box
spring & mattress
- queen size bed, box
spring & mattress
- sofa
- queen size futon sofa
- small tables
- lamps

Food Needs

- fresh fruits &
vegetables
- turkeys/chickens
- hams
- sandwiches:
meat & cheese
on whole wheat
bread

From 10 a.m. until 2 p.m. Monday through Wednesday our attention is focused on Bible study, serving the soup kitchen, reflection and household lunch. As much as we appreciate your coming, this is a difficult time for us to receive donations. Please come before 10 a.m. or after 2 p.m. THANK YOU!