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

Vol. 28, No. 9

910 Ponce de Leon Ave. NE Atlanta, GA 30306-4212 404.874.9652 www.opendoorcommunity.org

October 2009

It's About Time

By Murphy Davis

Our community has just finished our annual Planning Retreat at Dayspring Farm. It's a time we look forward to every year, because over two days we look back at the year we've just finished and then look ahead to the year before us.

In recent years, the Planning Retreat has become a longer time together, because in the week preceding the actual calendar work, we close the house at 910 and spend the week together as a community tending the land at Dayspring, repairing the buildings, planting and even harvesting a few home-grown tomatoes and other vegetables and an abundance of flowers. We eat together and play, hike in the woods, sleep, talk, laugh and even go out for a festive meal together at our favorite down-home restaurant in nearby Chatsworth.

The retreat is in many ways the beginning of our year together. Like a lot of folks these days, we operate on an "academic" calendar for our planning. Around Labor Day, as many students go back to school, we begin to plan for our Festival of Shelters, and all the celebrations and observances that come through the year.

It's a time for us to stop and reflect on the meaning of time. On Friday night of the retreat, we go around the circle and each member of the community has an opportunity to reflect on what was important for us about the year just past.

What does it mean that we have shared another year together? As each one speaks, we join in celebrating and remembering: time clean and sober, relationships restored, illnesses survived, political engagements, friends who have left prison, those who have been killed by the Georgia execution machine, people who have come through the community with blessings and, yes, sometimes even the trying relationships that we have survived.

Ralph and Ira have been in the community for 26 and 16 years respectively. Dick and Gladys have just passed 20 years, Ed and I, 28 years, and Nelia and Calvin five years. Barbara lived with us in the early 1980s and was a member of our extended community for many years before she returned to become a Partner in 2004. Tony R. has made an important place for himself in only a few months, and Mark joined us only recently. Susan, entering her final year at Candler School of Theology, joined us to reflect as a day volunteer who is drawn to community as her practice of discipleship. Lee and Rick brought supper up to share with us and reflected on the deep and meaningful changes in the life of their family since they encountered the homeless poor with us at Clifton Night Shelter 30 years ago. This is all to say that we bring many different perspectives to our reflection. But most of all we are thankful to be together and to have lived another year in community with each other.

What we do next is perhaps audacious. We plan another year. This is an act of hope, because we live one day at a time. Who knows what tomorrow will bring? Since this time last

THE CRY OF THE POOR: CRACKING WHITE MALE SUPREMACY (Part 11)

Hope Against Hope, and Possible Possibilities

By Eduard Loring

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

Back to the front yard. 7 a.m. The disinherited gather in our front yard as they do in places all over America, for the famine in the land of the fat is not only in Atlanta. Hunger stalks the land everywhere in all directions.

Wretchedness and compulsion is one consequence for many of the millions who have too easy access to food. They cannot be satisfied. They eat and eat and eat. As the prophet Micah speaks to America in the 21st century:

*"You shall eat, but not be satisfied,
and there shall be a gnawing hunger within you;
you shall put away, but not save,
and what you save, I will hand over to the sword."
(Micah 6:14, New Revised Standard Version)*

One dimension of our historical disaster in the land of the forever hungry, where craving and gut-gorging afflicts the majority of us, is the growth of adult-onset diabetes. Hannah Loring-Davis, nurse at Johns Hopkins Hospital, assesses the results of simultaneous famine and surplus food this way:

"I think that the rise in the incidence of disease related to diet and lifestyle (diabetes, hypertension and other vascular disorders, even depression, etc.) is a direct consequence of the constant over-indulgence/consumption of our culture. Indulgence and consumption have become the easiest ways to deal with our own emptiness. We use food, shopping, drugs, television and consumption in general in an attempt to fill the void that is created in the absence of deep and meaningful relationships—lives where we engage in art, culture and faith in the creation and interpretation of meaning. When we don't have meaning, we feel empty—so we consume to fill a void that cannot be filled."

Another reverberation from the land of the forever hungry: HOMELESSNESS. This is part of the famous "trickle-down theory." Hungry people with too much to eat build or renovate their houses into humongous structures or medium-sized luxurious habitats. In larders they store their snacks and gourmet provender beside the high-protein dog and cat food. "The arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends towards justice" (Martin Luther King Jr.). God will not abide her beloved who are stalked by famine or caged by compulsive eating to remain so. Today is the day of judgment. Thus the housed are in a housing crisis.

What ya' gonna do, dear friend? House the homeless? Feed the hungry? Bust apart the White Male Supremacy power which creates this hell on earth among us all? The time is at hand. Let us go to the streets and raise holy hell. Will President Obama help the hungry? Bail out the prisoner and the poor? When?

The Mustard Seed

Large coffee thermoses sit, wobbly and brown, near the maple tree. All the coffee one can drink is passed around in a place where folk feel safe for a few hours. Our yard is a sanctuary from police, Confederate flags, neo-Nazis, white teenagers hurting the homeless for humor, along with white business elites who see the future of downtown Atlanta as free from abandoned people, particularly Black men.

Not everything runs smoothly. On occasion we ask volunteers to leave. The ones, only a few, who insult by word and deed the dignity of the poor. Without regret or apology to the holy ones who are grasped by the filthy fingers of famine, we return these oppressors to their Egyptland. Usually they have no idea about what we speak. Several others seek understanding. These friends desire to undo their white racism. Most go home and later lick their wounds in public. The most difficult experience in working for freedom and equality for whites is white-on-white denial, and then, confusion and anger when our heart of darkness is revealed.

Yet here is a little mustard seed of the Beloved Community. In this resting place the taste of Jewish Sabbath and Shalom is palpable. A restroom with hot water and all the toilet paper you need squats in the basement to serve you. Benches, an Adirondack chair, a telephone, gentle lights, two beautiful maple trees dance a slow fox trot to extend welcome.

Nonetheless, we accomplish so little, hardly a mustard seed at all. Not enough; hardly anything. Out of our anguished radical politics and hopeful faith springs forth the love and compassion to keep on keeping on. We beg you to do the same. "Feed the people! Stop the killing! Do it NOW!" (Julian Beck)

We are chinking the wall of domination. To some of our guests, the Open Door Community front yard is a holy place of shared life and love. For others, what we do only adds insult to injury. These either refuse to come to our home or they give us hell. For some of our neighbors, we are the cause of homelessness and hunger in Atlanta. To others, volunteers and supporters, we are a point of light in

available now!



The Festival of Shelters

A Celebration for Love and Justice

By Eduard Loring
with Heather Bargeron
preface by Dick Rustay

Recently I was privileged to read the latest offering by Eduard Loring. I have had the pleasure of knowing the Agitator and his bride, Murphy Davis, for 30 years.

"The Festival of Shelters" is not necessarily the kinder, gentler side of my brother, because there is warmth and tenderness beneath the gruff exterior. Rather I found myself being with those marginalized, those discarded to the streets.

He redefines "homelessness." It is more than a lack of residence. He charges us to realize that it has become a lack of respect, value and dignity. Eduard, with reduced agitation, subtly challenges us to care.

Isn't it sad that giving a damn is now radical?

Eduard shares sights and sounds of holiness in the midst of negligence and abandonment. Whatever controversy may be attributed to the Hebrew God, dismissal cannot be on the list.

Walk with Eduard as he reminds you of their worth and chastises those who have forgotten. (He must agitate!)

Editor's note:

Jack was killed by the Georgia execution machine on September 16, 2008.



Jack Alderman
Georgia Death Row
Jackson, Georgia

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poetry corner

Send us your poetry!
We especially welcome poetry from people in Georgia prisons and on the streets.



Julie Lonneman

Condemned Sport

This one was inspired before the Michael Vick case, but out of reference to the same sport.

We'd offer love,
But there is nothing left,
Separated by the urge to fight 'til death,
Separated by Masters for nickels and dimes
Who call it a sport when they know it's a crime.



Burl Dees

— Burl Dees

Editor's note:

Burl Dees is a friend in prison.

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

Flower arrangement from Ed Weir & Lora Shane's wedding.

Newspaper

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Open Door Community

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Gladys Rustay: Jackson Prison Trip and Food Coordinator

Dick Rustay: Dayspring Farm Coordinator

Eduard Loring: Street Preacher and Word On The Street Host

Nelia and Calvin Kimbrough: Worship, Art, and Music Coordinators

Chuck Harris: Volunteer Coordinator and Resident Volunteer Applications

Murphy Davis: Southern Prison Ministry

Heather Bargeron: Hardwick Prison Trip Coordinator



Betty Jane Crandall

Fall Appeal

October 2009

Last week Nelia was unloading groceries in our driveway when she noticed Frannie washing up in the spigot on the side of the house. Seeing Nelia, she ran over and exclaimed, "Oh, Nelia, last night I had my feet done in the foot clinic! I feel like I have new feet! That's the sweetest thing I've experienced in a long, long time."

Like most homeless women and men, Frannie walks miles every day, so her feet will feel "old" again before long. But what a wonder to be able to help her feel like her tired and aching calloused feet are, for however long it lasted, "new."

Until the homeless are housed and the hungry have enough food to eat in their own kitchens, the work we do is a sort of stopgap. We serve food to people who are — like the rest of us — hungry again before the day is out. We provide showers and fresh clean clothes to men and women who will be tired and dirty again after another day on the streets. And as the weather begins to chill, we will hand out blankets to many who will still be cold. And so, as Mr. Willie Dee Wimberley used to say, "We gonna do the best we can till we can't."

We do the best we can to attend to some of the basic and immediate needs of our friends on the streets and in prison. But we also agitate and pray for justice. Please, as you continue to help us with the immediate needs, join us in action and prayers for justice. Homelessness is a symptom of a society sick with greed and injustice. Mass imprisonment and the death penalty are symbols of a people obsessed with violent punishment as a solution to every problem. Providing health care only for those with money is death dealing.

In the above photograph we greet you on the Sunday before Labor Day. Our residential community was joined by friends from far and near who came to worship and to help us prepare and serve a holiday picnic feast for more than 500 friends who came together to celebrate the abundance of the Beloved Community.

We are deeply grateful for your partnership with us. We depend on you for our daily life and the daily needs of our family and those who come to us for care and help. We pray that our mutual love will grow until justice rolls down like waters and solidarity like an ever-flowing stream.

With love and thanksgiving,
The Open Door Community

Murphy Davis

Nicholas Smith
Mary & Andrew Legare
Gladya
Steve & Joe Young
Jennifer
Steve & Ira
Lara & Ira
Jonathan Honey
Betty Jane Crandall
Emily
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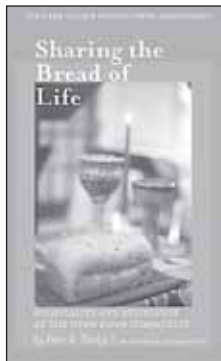
The Festival of Shelters

A Celebration
for Love and Justice

By **Eduard Loring**

with Heather Bargeron
preface by Dick Rustay

66 pages
19 color photographs
Paperback
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Hospitality and Resistance
at the Open Door Community

By **Peter R. Gathje**

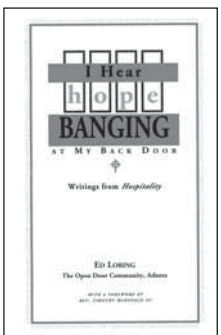
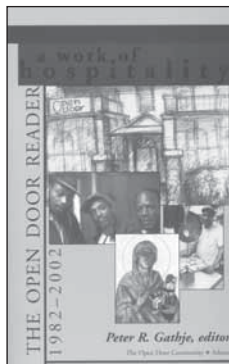
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A Work of Hospitality

The Open Door Reader
1982 – 2002

Peter R. Gathje, editor

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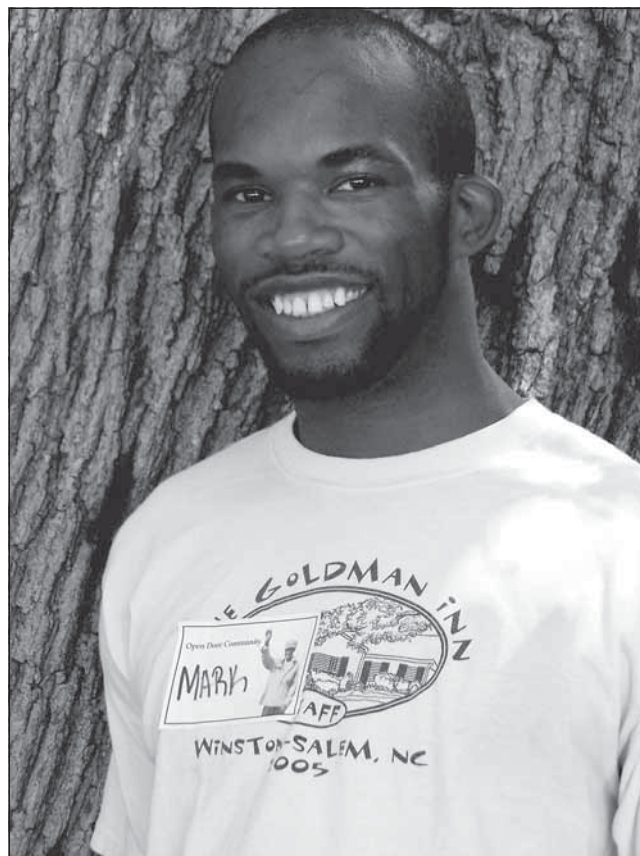
Point of View

By **Mark Merritt**

Editor's note: Mark Merritt, who recently became a resident at the Open Door Community, wrote this article while he was homeless.

I woke up this morning to a bright, cloudless and picture-perfect day, my first thought being, "Thank God for another beautiful day." My second thought, not so heartwarming, was "I pray no one stole my shoes or my backpack with everything I have inside of it." The contrast between those two thoughts is what I go through on a daily basis, minute by minute, every day.

These are the thoughts of the homeless, the point of view of this great America from one who is not living the American dream. There is no two-story colonial home with a white picket fence for me. This is to say that for me there are only dreams, nightmares and picket lines instead of picket fences.



Betty Jane Crandall

We as the homeless wake up and start our day by going to places such as the Open Door Community in search of nourishment, showers, medicine and a safe space. The latter parts of our days are spent searching for work or at the library. Yes, we do know how to surf the Net. Some evenings we spend at Mercy Community Church for a hot meal and a good, encouraging word. Next there is nightfall, when we search for a safe place to sleep. With all the shelters in the city of Atlanta, you probably think, "Why is this a problem?" Unfortunately, most of the shelters have a waiting list a month long, while the others are deemed unsafe by the homeless community. Sad but true.

This is all said to hopefully change your point of view and open your heart. The homeless are not lazy beggars taking advantage of the system. We are honest, hardworking and, if given the chance, genuine; we are generally good people who at some point in life fell on hard times. What happens then is that we are thrown into a system where we become a census count, a number instead of a human being. You tell me: since when has a number been able to write?

A Family Made Whole

By **Gladys Rustay**

Most of the day Janet Bauer would sit on our stoop near the sidewalk. She was such a permanent presence in our front yard, in fact, that it seemed natural to use her photo as one of several pictures that graced the cover of the book Pete Gathje wrote to celebrate the first 10 years of the Open Door.

A few years later, Janet disappeared from 910. Rumor had it that she'd gone to Alabama.

Not long after we last saw her, a couple appeared at our door. The man was pushing a woman in a wheelchair, who identified herself as Janet's sister. They were looking for Janet. Several years ago Janet had disappeared from their hometown in Michigan. They had heard that Janet might have left with a truck driver and headed to Atlanta. Had we seen her?



Gladys Rustay

Janet Bauer (left) with her sister (center), brother-in-law (right) and their three children.

Yes, we had, but we didn't know where she was now. Her brother-in-law left his phone number and asked us to get in touch with him if we saw or heard of her.

Janet's folks came by about twice a year after that. Her brother-in-law had even invested in an 800 number to call if there was any news from anyone about Janet. There was none that we heard of. The visits slowed to about one a year. The 800 number was disconnected. So much for the knowledge of a former homeless woman whom we had known.

Then up comes our hero Ira Terrell, the famous runner of the Peachtree Road Race. "Guess who I saw today, Gladys?" Ira had seen Janet in the doctor's office and had gotten her phone number and where she was staying. This only confirmed what folks say about Ira... that he knows everybody in Atlanta!

I had lost Janet's folks' phone number, but a few weeks later I got a voice-mail message from them that they were in town with the phone number where they could be reached. I called with Janet's phone number only to have to leave it as voice-mail. Now what?

Two weeks later, Nelia Kimbrough called me to say there was someone outside to see me. It was Janet's sister, her brother-in-law, her brother and two teenagers. Good news—they had gotten in touch with Janet. They were to have dinner with her that night at her place, but they didn't know how to get there and Janet didn't know how to direct them. Enter David Christian and his computer skills, with a map for them.

Two hours later Nelia called me outside again, and there was Janet with her family! What a wonderful happening. She had also gotten in touch with her daughter.

It is so special when families are reunited. Janet's family hadn't seen her for 30 years! Yes, it takes a whole community to reunite a family.

Gladys Rustay is a Partner at the Open Door Community.

Who Is an 'Abomination'?

By Aelred Dean

Editor's note: Brother Aelred Dean is a member of the Episcopal Brotherhood of St. Gregory and is on the staff of the Episcopal Church of the Epiphany in Atlanta. He is a weekly volunteer at the Open Door Community and cooks for our holiday meals

"Abomination." How easily this word passes the lips of racists, bigots, sexists and homophobes.

After years and years of dealing with such people in both the political and religious arenas, I think I now know why it flows so easily and so quickly. It is not because they actually believe that a person is an abomination. It is because they cannot stand those who speak with a prophetic voice that tears down societal norms of power and privilege and upholds the lost, least and lonely as the holy people of God. Because these prophetic voices comfort the afflicted while afflicting the comfortable, the comfortable become upset and angry that their privileged way of life is threatened.

Because of how this five-syllable word is tossed around, I decided to go to Scripture to see when it was first used. To my surprise, this was not in the so-called holiness codes in Leviticus, but in the early history of the Jewish nation when they were in captivity in Egypt. In Genesis 43:32 the word is first used:

"And they set on for him by himself, and for them by themselves, and for the Egyptians, which did eat with him, by themselves: because the Egyptians might not eat bread with the Hebrews; for that is an abomination unto the Egyptians." (King James Version)

The Amplified Bible translation reads:

"And [the servants] set out [the food] for [Joseph] by himself, and for [his brothers] by themselves, and for those Egyptians who ate with him by themselves, according to the Egyptian custom not to eat food with the Hebrews; for that is an abomination to the Egyptians."

The word "abomination" is used here to separate people and cultures. It is the age-old problem of "us" against "them." The Egyptians could not imagine moving from their place of respect, honor, wealth and privilege to eat with a slave, even though that particular slave was second in command over the empire. Cultural norms blinded the Egyptians to the daily realities the Hebrew slaves endured under their tyranny. The dividing walls had been built up brick by brick by hate-filled brick, so the Egyptians were no longer in relationship with the work force, the poor and marginalized. The Hebrews were objectified as below the Egyptians, less than human, so any wrong committed against them was of no account because of their inferior status.

After reading this I had to admit to myself, "So what's new?" The dividing walls are always being built up to separate the rich from the poor, African-Americans from other races, Christians from Muslims, Christians from Jews, Jews from Muslims (in this case we have a literal wall dividing the Holy Land creating a Palestinian ghetto), heterosexuals from homosexuals — "us" against "them," whoever the "us" and "them" happen to be.

If this is the case where the word "abomination" is used against a marginalized group, I say to all who have been marginalized by other groups, political systems and religious beliefs, stand up and reclaim the power of that word and say with all boldness, "I am an abomination." The word is sown by the powerful in hopes to dishonor the poor, marginalized and others who don't fit into their pristine world view. But if we resurrect the word for honor it loses the negative power for which it was intended.

When you claim the word "abomination" for your own, you stand in good company with the prophets, both ancient and contemporary, and with Christ, who was and continues to be the greatest abomination and threat to society and the church.

Ephesians 2:14 reads, "For He [Jesus] is [Himself] our peace (our bond of unity and harmony). He has made us both [Jew and Gentile] one [body], and has broken down (destroyed, abolished) the hostile dividing wall between us." (Amplified Bible) If Christ is the reconciling peace that tears down the walls of ignorance and hate that separate people from one another, who are we as disciples of Christ to place one brick upon another to rebuild a wall to protect our comfort? This passage in Ephesians can be expanded to read, "Jesus is our peace, for the savior has made one body of heterosexuals, homosexuals, bisexuals, transgendered, rich, poor, Africans, Caucasians, Latinos, Asians, female, male, young and old into the Beloved Community: the literal hands, feet and body of Christ on earth to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, visit the sick and those in prison, and to love others in the same manner we claim to love God."

But I can hear critics saying that I am not addressing, and am only romanticizing, the issue they want to discuss, which is how the word "abomination" is used against homosexuals, one of the last groups to be hated by both church and state.

The Hebrew word translated as "abomination" is הַבְּטוּחַ, or tow'ebah. Though there are many interpretations of this word based on how it is used in context, the premise of its use to control others remains the same. The heterosexual majority, in wanting to secure its position and sexual orientation, pronounces tow'ebah on all who do not toe the line. To claim that "God

When Conscience Meets the Inferno of War

Packing Inferno: The Unmaking of a Marine

by Tyler E. Boudreau
Feral House, 2008
360 pages

Reviewed by Steve Clemens

Editor's note: Steve Clemens and his wife, Christine, are former partners at the Koinonia Community and old friends of the Open Door. They now live in Minneapolis, Minnesota, where they are a part of the Community of St. Martin. Clemens' blog can be seen at www.mennonista.blogspot.com, and Tyler Boudreau's Web site is www.tylerboudreau.com.

Former Marine Captain Tyler Boudreau begins "Packing Inferno: The Unmaking of a Marine," his excellent book about his experience in the Iraq War, by telling us that the old canard "War is hell" isn't true. Rather, he tells us that war is the foyer to hell; hell is when you come home from war and have to deal with what you've done and what you witnessed in war. And while the Marines can teach one how to kill, who helps the veteran learn how to heal?

I had the advantage of hearing Tyler tell his story on a hot Saturday afternoon in August 2009 at Mayday Bookstore in Minneapolis. He was bicycling from Seattle to Boston, stopping on the way to tell his story as part of a do-it-yourself book tour. He had the build and look of a Marine, but his demeanor was one of urgency within a gentle, earnest-but-caring style. He spoke with conviction, but without the hard edge I've experienced with some vets who've returned from this ongoing war.

Part of this might be due to his point of view. As an officer in Iraq in 2004 and 2005, much of what Captain Boudreau experienced was secondhand. He spent more time in command centers, writing reports and coordinating activities for his infantry battalion, than out on patrol, at roadblock checkpoints and on house-to-house raids. He participated enough to write about those experiences, but he also gained a vantage point one seldom hears about this war.

Let me share just a few of his powerful observations that I underlined in my copy of "Packing Inferno":

"... Desensitization [in one's training] doesn't eliminate morality from the consciousness. It merely postpones cogitation. Sooner or later, when a man's had a chance to think things over, he will find himself standing in judgment before his own conscience.... Soldiers desensitize themselves in war ... they must in order to survive.... They push the humanity out of the enemy and out of themselves.... One's humanity can be quite difficult to recover once it's been evicted."

"In 2005, after 12 years of active service in the Marine Corps and with

growing reservations about the war, I relinquished command of my rifle company and resigned my commission. It struck me that, in our headlong pursuit to deliver freedom and democracy and to expel an oppressive regime and combat terrorism, we had inadvertently lost sight of the very people we'd been deployed to help."

"The civilians were the same as they were, but the Marines [who had just returned home] they hugged and kissed were not the men they had once known.... Our identities were altered [by war]."

"I was a rifle company commander.... I didn't have the capacity to believe — not in that role. To believe that there could be psychological injuries sustained from the violence we inflicted would be to acknowledge its inherent immorality."

"... Every [combat wound] rates a Purple Heart. Yet never once has a veteran been awarded a Purple Heart for combat stress.... Only through genuine acknowledgment that combat stress is an injury, not a disorder, can we ever give uninhibited affection to our wounded."

Until I heard Boudreau discuss his book, it wasn't obvious to me that each of his nine numbered chapters corresponds to one of the nine circles of hell in Dante's "Inferno." Boudreau does point out that the lowest circle or layer of hell is reserved for "traitors," and I found this section of the book most compelling. The first subheading of this chapter is "Loyalty." The mantra of the Marines has always been, "Never leave a brother behind." So when Boudreau resigned his commission, while his "brothers" were still "in harm's way," it was an act of betrayal according to the Marine code. He was a traitor to that system.

In Minneapolis, in explaining this new growing consciousness within him, Boudreau read from that section of the book. This is the part that stuck with me:

"Support for the troops can never be exclusively support for the human being inside the uniforms; it must be, to some extent, support for the institution inside them as well. Real severance of those two can only be effected by the soldiers themselves. And that can be a lonesome proposition."

It is readily apparent in his book, as it was in his talk, that Boudreau retains a deep love and compassionate concern for the men he commanded. His resignation from his commission was personal — he could no longer ignore the immorality of the war — but it was also collective — he could no longer "spend the lives" of the Marines he commanded on a mission that was

In, Out & Around 910

The Faces of Labor Day

Compiled by Thomas Monahan & Murphy Davis
Photographs by Betty Jane Crandall



Mark Harper (above) lived at the Open Door as a Resident Volunteer from 1986 to 1988. Now he returns for every holiday meal, and sometimes in between, with his children (that's **Gabriel** in this picture) and members of Covenant Presbyterian Church in Athens, where he is pastor. At right: Covenant member **Gilberto Fonseca** carries freshly cut, juicy watermelon to the tables. His wife **Paula Mellom** and their daughter **Aurora** also served.



Dearly beloved former community member **Betty Jane Crandall** always drives down from Pendleton, South Carolina, for our holiday meals — and she's been known to produce about half a ton of coleslaw! This time she brought three friends who are also part of the North Anderson Community Church, Presbyterian: (from left) **Ben** and **Joe Smith** and **Orlando Speed**. We're also grateful for Betty Jane's wonderful photographs on these pages.



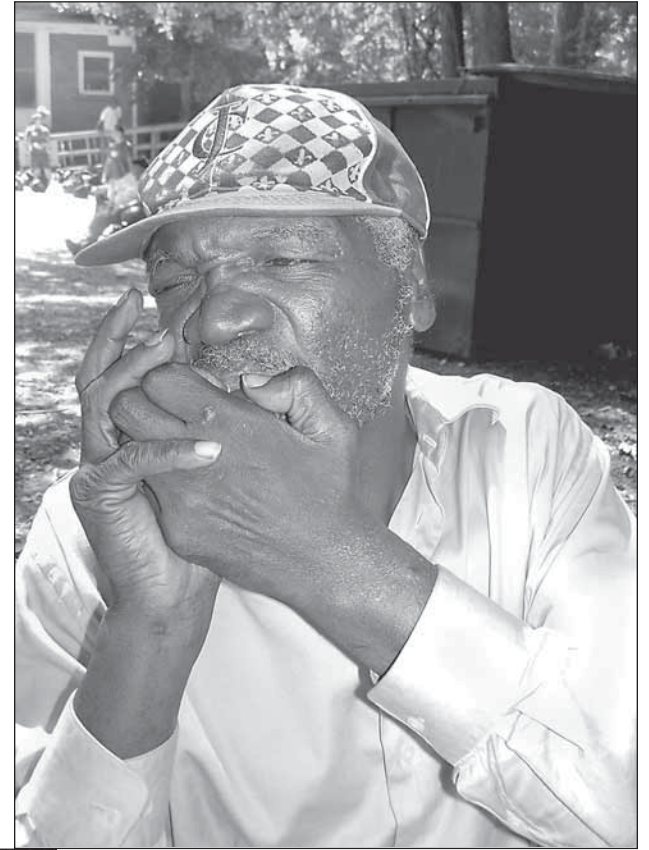
Haley Maness and **Ryan Foster** join with former community member **Valerie Johnson** to replenish the seemingly endless supply of food on the tables.



Emily and **Rebecca Smith** came from the Jubilee Community to spend their day off serving our friends a picnic lunch. They were accompanied by their brother Nicholas and their parents, **Brad Smith** and **Jennifer Drago**.



Donald “Bluesman” Barriner (right) visits us regularly, and his blues harmonica is always ready. After enjoying his own meal, Bluesman stayed around to provide swinging music for the rest of the guests and volunteers.



If it's time for a holiday meal, **Emily Winship** is here! Emily (left) is a longtime volunteer, and though she continues to fight leukemia, she never misses a chance to help get the food on the table and to greet each guest with extravagant hospitality. Please join us in prayers for the health of our generous and loving friend.

Regular volunteer **Vanessa Alston** (center) brought along her husband **Eric** (left) and family friend **Gamial Gono** to help serve. The presence of so many children and young people was a special joy to all the community and our guests.



Wilma Wolf (standing left) from the Cathedral of Christ the King, **Bill Miller** and **Stephanie Graves** helped with the festivities with six students from Saint Pius X Catholic School: (from left) **Thomas Shevlin**, **Ryan Foster**, **Berlin Sewell**, **J.P. Graves**, **Cole Grishman** and **Matthew Angulo**.



Photo by Murphy Davis

On August 31, we were gifted to have our old friend **Connie Curry** (above right) come for a Clarification Meeting to talk about her history as the first white woman on the executive council of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, or SNCC. It was a thrill for us all when Professors **Susan** and **Clayborne Carson** from Stanford University joined us as well. Dr. Clay Carson, who is a visiting lecturer this year at Morehouse College, is the editor in chief of the Martin Luther King Jr. Papers Project, and Dr. Susan Carson is consulting editor of the King Institute. Six volumes of the papers have been published, and the Carsons are working on eight more. Not insignificantly, Dr. Carson's first book, "In Struggle: SNCC and the Black Awakening of the 1960s," remains the definitive history of the civil rights group.

Cry of the Poor, continued from page 1

the dark night of White Male Supremacist housing patterns and food distribution. We carry on, do what we can do, and wait for the crumbling of the USA's Berlin Wall.

Inside the House

10 a.m. Our breakfast menu has been cooked, along with 30 to 40 gallons of coffee brewed. The Sorting Room sorted. Thirty-six places set at six tables, and the eggs, cheese grits and coffee will be put out in 40 minutes. Thirty chairs are arranged in a circle, filled with loving, disciplined, justice-working volunteers.

Time for Bible Study. We study the Word for a word toward the Way, the Truth and the Life. We reduce the distance among ourselves and the holy ones. We journey in place and imagination toward the margins, seeking solidarity, building the Beloved Community of God. We stretch to touch the mantle of the old and ancient Hebrew prophets. We follow the peasant Jew barn-born without house lust. We follow Yahweh-Elohim, the God of the oppressed. We study and strive to emulate our ancestors in the radical movement for abolition. We work to tear down the dividing walls constructed with steel and hate and named the White Male Supremacy system.

The slow pace of truth (3 mph) walks on. Liberation and redemption are coming. The end of white supremacist America is on the horizon of imagination and justice for all. We have seen and heard: "Let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an everlasting stream." (Amos and King)

Once every six weeks we wash one another's feet. Our circle often includes people from the street.

From 11 a.m. to noon we serve 150 hungry holy ones orange juice, two boiled eggs, three slices of turkey sausage and a multivitamin, plus all-you-can-eat grits fortified with milk and cheese, coffee, peanut butter, bread, jelly and orange slices. In addition, all the food you can carry out in your two hands (no containers till you get to the door).

We also have a phone available for anyone who wants to use it, a bathroom, a medicine cart and a clothes closet for shirts, hats, gloves, socks, sweaters and sweatshirts. Hygiene products are joyfully handed out upon request. Often we help with needs for local transportation.

Partner Ira Terrell has a "specialized work of mercy." Nelia Kimbrough named this act of service "special needs." Ira takes folks in dire need for pants, tampons, shirts or underclothes to the clothes closet, a resource generally available to folk who take showers at our home. He also guides men and women with holey shoes to our shoe closet. A person just released from prison is provided with a full set of clothes and a carry bag. We are blessed to welcome captives set at liberty in this city and state, thus making substantial the promise of God, "liberty to captives."

Unless there is a crisis or extreme weather, one of us can slip away and talk with a person

in need or evident pain. Often our friends weep from the fear and misery of the night and the day to come. Sometimes folk are overcome by having all the coffee and food they can consume. Occasionally we listen to a panegyric for toilet paper, soap and hot water in the bathroom with no police threat and no manager coming to give a lecture that without being a consumer you cannot use the restroom. "Can't you read the sign, you lazy fool? 'Restrooms for Customers Only!'"

At noon we give a bag lunch to everyone who has arrived for brunch but did not get an "inside ticket." As many as 60 sisters and brothers receive this "meal to go". An increasing number of our guests are Latinos from the nearby "catch-out corner." A dark reflection of America as a white supremacist system infects our yard as the tensions between African-Americans and Latinos mount. As the current spate of children bullying children reflects our imperial designs in Iraq and Afghanistan, so too does the racism and prejudice of our country spread among minority groups. This is, of course, a tool to "divide and conquer." A tool well honed by the elite, the wealthy and, most unfortunately, poor whites.

Along with the bag meal we give socks, razors, vitamins, apple juice and peppermints.

**What Is Going On?
Table Talk**

All our life in the Open Door Community is rhythm around the circle. The circle, the Eucharist Table, the crucifix nailed on the wall of the dining/worship room and the footwashing basin which Nelia will shortly reveal are the symbols of our life and work. At 12:20 p.m. the tables are reshaped into a long rectangle—we call it a circle. The floors are swept.

Over the next hour those who have served the meal eat what we have served, as Calvin Kimbrough likes to say. Gladys Rustay, Dick or Nelia calls us to table: "Welcome. Come and eat." We serve our bowls and plates. We sit. We listen. We pray.

Now we return to study the Word of God or a writing that brings light to the Word and the Way. We have served the brunch and listened to the cry of the poor in conversations in the yard and in our home. We come to table around our shared meal and reflect upon the Works of Mercy in light of the Word of God and our experience. We share our stories of the day. We have served and been served.

Our hopes and prayers are that we will learn from our work in light of the Word and that we will learn from the Word in light of our work. Our aims and purposes are a deeper spirituality, a more mature life, an agitating fire for the poor and disinherited, a more compassionate love for the Way and the earth. And, by damn: JUSTICE.

By the suffering of the hungry and the compassion that got us up and here in the first place, we are pushed by love and anger toward a radical political action: tear down this White Male Supremacist system. End

prison slavery. Silence mealy-mouthed moguls lying in Mammon's bed.

We never, no never, forget that we are serving the poorest of the poor in the midst of a historical disaster and an ecological catastrophe. One of the primary organizing questions that we bring to our Table Talk is this: What can we DO (ACT), beyond all this talk, preaching, prayer and writing, to build the Beloved Community of God, to fight hunger, to war with White Male Supremacy? How is Jesus leading us to break those values, transform the people, institutions and policies that are the root causes of hunger and poverty? The people, ideas and structures that through their wealth, power and surplus create the disinherited and abandoned holy ones? How? How long? How long?

We end our meal with prayer for others and thanksgiving to our God. What else can we do? ✦

*Next month in Part 12: What can we do?
Love in action.*

Eduard Loring is a Partner at the Open Door Community

**Abomination, continued from page 5**

said homosexuality is an abomination" is cowardly at best and presents an inconsistent theology.

In the Genesis myth, after God created all things, "God looked over everything he had made; it was so good, so very good!" (Genesis 1:31, The Message) And nowhere in Scripture can we find that God took away the created and inherent goodness in our being. To hold that God created humanity and pronounced us "good," while actually pronouncing only heterosexuals as good and the rest bad, is to present a crack in the omniscience of God—for if God is all-knowing, God would know that there would be abominations and would not give the seal of "good" to all creation. What does make sense, however, is that people were trying to codify their cultural norms while placing their stamp of approval on them and claiming that God made these rules, in order to make people comply to those norms.

"Abomination" is a word of power; there is no denying that. But it is a word to be used to fight the powers that be in order to bring about a just society. Thank God that I am an abomination... are you one too? ✦

Inferno, continued from page 5

impossible. He concluded, on the basis of his experience and analysis, that one could not "win the hearts and minds" of the Iraqi people with men who have been trained to resolve "problems" with killing and violence.

It is somewhat ironic that Tyler Boudreau was bicycling across America as part of his healing therapy from the war. The Bush administration was fond of the biking analogy early in the war: Iraqi democracy is like learning to ride a bicycle; we have to "keep the training wheels on" for a little while; we then must be willing to "let go" to allow Iraqi democracy to flourish on its own.

An important insight the book gave me is that veterans need to be able to tell their stories without being lionized. Being called a "hero" does not give a returning vet the space to process and heal from what he might have already rejected, and it makes the shame harder to be released. Boudreau credits the anti-war movement and groups like Veterans for Peace with creating the space to tell stories the general public might not want to hear. But if those stories stay bottled up inside, they continue to eat at and destroy the ex-soldier holding on to them:

"Either we allow ourselves to feel that veteran's pain, truly as our own, and share his consternation about war; or, in an effort to support the troops, we deny the significance of his tragedies and, by definition, we deny his pain as well."

In my copy of "Packing Inferno," it is hard to find consecutive pages that aren't underlined or highlighted. It is well written, insightful, and gives the reader a glimpse into the troubled but healing soul of an ex-Marine.

I read the book over three days while vigiling in front of the Air Force base where the command for all American nuclear weapons is housed. This was during the 64th anniversary of our atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Clearly, Captain Boudreau is not the only one of us who needs healing from the denial and destructiveness of our past. And with him, we need to lay down all our weapons and find a new way to solve the "problems" of our world, this time without the violence that dehumanizes us in the process. ✦

Tolstoy's Last Message

The present effective war against capital punishment does not need forcing; there is no need for an expression of indignation against its immorality, cruelty, and absurdity—every single thinking person, everybody knowing from youth the Sixth Commandment, needs no explanation of its absurdity and immorality; there is no need for descriptions of the horrors of executions as they only affect hangman, so men will more unwillingly become executioners and governments will be obliged to compensate them more dearly for their services. ✦

Published in the Dec 3, 1910 issue of The Progressive magazine, shortly after Leo Tolstoy's death.

It's About Time, continued from page 1

year, our great friend Jack Alderman was executed with a killer needle after 33 years on death row. Joe Miller, brother beloved who had been living with us, died of AIDS and cancer. Our dear Geraldine was hit by a car speeding down Ponce de Leon Avenue and her dying mangled body thrown into our front yard. Robert was cruelly beaten to death on the streets of downtown.

Since this time last year, I have survived a fourth round of cancer treatment, so I remain (along with my loving and faithful community) especially conscious of the gift of each day, each week, each year. This year I have confronted my new status as a person "living with cancer," rather than being in remission as a cancer survivor as I have for 14 years. Because the disease has taken up residence in my body in a new way ("indolent lymphoma" as opposed to the high-grade fast-growing lymphoma I have battled in the past), my medical treatments will be for the purpose of keeping it at bay, with less likelihood of a real cure. So now I am living with dormant fungal pneumonia and cancer. This means living with the limitations of needing so much sleep that I have a very short day. I am inclined to remain frustrated over how little I can get done. But I am more than thankful for the diagnosis of the cancer as "stable" and the pneumonia as dormant, and I was especially thankful to be in the circle one more year to look forward again.

Structuring Our Time, Structuring Our Life

Every culture defines the meaning of time by its celebrations, anniversaries, holidays and memorials. The culture of Imperial America proclaims celebrations that emphasize primarily conquest and military domination: July 4, Memorial Day, Columbus Day, Veterans Day and, in Georgia, even Confederate Memorial Day (Lord have mercy!). We were stunned, on the first official federal celebration of the birthday of Martin Luther King Jr. in January 1986, when the local parade was led off with a military band and flag corps and fighter jets flying over downtown Atlanta. (Never mind that Dr. King was spinning in his grave over on Auburn Avenue!) It was a time to reflect that when a celebration is owned and approved by the Empire, it will celebrate Empire before all else. Authentic celebrations of the Radical King must happen on other turf. Imperial celebrations and "remembrances" function to dull the mind, remind us that systems based on violent domination are just "the way things are" and keep us shopping, watching television and otherwise bored and immature.

It follows that if we are living in resistance to the culture of the Empire—what Paul called the Powers and Principalities and what Dr. King delineated as the giant triplets of racism, materialism and militarism—then we must structure and define our time differently. So, for instance, while some will attend a military parade on Veterans Day, we are more likely to be remembering one of our sisters or brothers executed by the state of Georgia. This helps us to be clear: the ultimate power of Empire is the power to kill its own citizens. Each of the victims of this abuse of imperial power is a human being—created by God and, however flawed, redeemed by Jesus, who also took this final blow of the Empire.

We structure our year with what is called the lectionary. The "Common Lectionary," which is accepted by many of the major Christian denominations around the world, gives us a cycle of Scripture readings for each week of the year. The readings rotate in a three-year cycle, so every three years, we cover major portions of the Hebrew and Greek texts. It has been for us, over the years, a fruitful way to structure our worship life. Though we practice a good bit of flexibility in our worship and preaching texts, we all read and study the same texts from week to week that are being used by

disciples around the world. We are self-conscious about leaving out some of the texts (such as some of the Psalms that celebrate military victory) and including some that are not included, but this is one of the first ways that we structure the passing of time, knowing that this discipline builds a unity with worshipping communities all over the world.

The lectionary readings have recently led us through the text of the pastoral letter to the Ephesians. With the exception of most of Chapter 6, it's a wonderful letter filled with wise advice about life together for the growing community. Chapter 5 was a particularly fruitful reflection for our thinking together about time.

"Your life must be controlled by love.... You used to be in the darkness, but since you have become God's people, you are in the light. So you must live like people who belong to the light, for it is the light that brings a rich harvest of every kind of goodness, justice, and truth...."

"Wake up, sleeper, and rise from death, and Christ will shine on you...."

"Be careful how you live. Don't live like ignorant people, but like wise people. Make good use of every opportunity you have, because these are evil days. Don't be fools, then, but try to find out what the Holy One wants you to do." (Ephesians 5:2-17, Today's English Version, adapted)

This is a wonderful reflection on the discipline of being intentional about the use of our time. If we just drift from one day to the next and "go with the flow," we give our passive and silent assent to the reality of the "evil days": war, oppression, violence, crushing poverty, mass imprisonment, executions, the destruction of the earth. But it is easy enough to move through our days asleep at the wheel. Count on this: the Powers and Principalities—the forces of death and oppression—are not asleep at the wheel. They are organizing, strategizing and mobilizing, morning, noon and night. And they are effective. Efficient. Well-funded.

That is why so many Scriptures (like the first Sundays of Advent) shout at us: WAKE UP! Watch. Wait. Be attentive. Stay awake. Discern the signs of the time. And pray without ceasing.

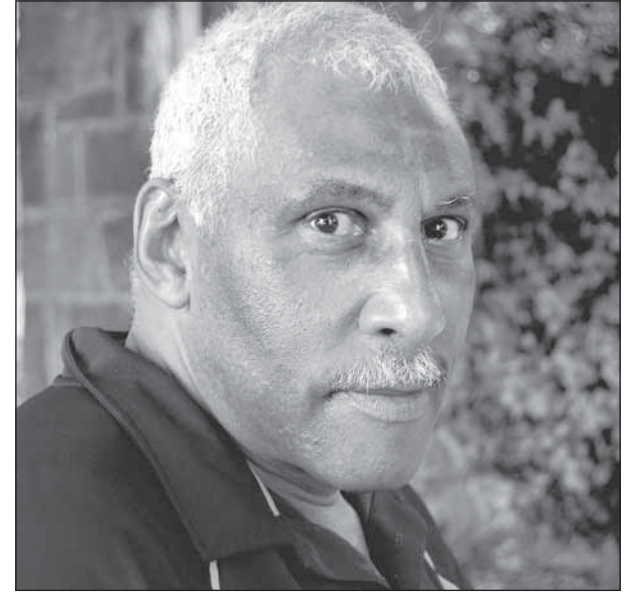
A Time That Demands Action

As people of the faith of Jesus, we live with a specific mandate. When Jesus visited his hometown and the proud homefolks handed him the scroll, as we find in Luke 4, he read purposefully from the Prophet Isaiah:

"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because I have been chosen to bring good news to the poor. God has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set free the oppressed and announce that the time has come when the Holy One will save the people." Jesus rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant, and sat down. All the people in the synagogue had their eyes fixed on him, as he said to them, "This passage of Scripture has come true today, as you heard it being read." (Luke 4:18-21, Today's English Version, adapted)

Jesus declared specifically and from the beginning that he had come for the fulfillment of the prophetic vision of good news to the poor, liberty to the captives... He said in all of his preaching, "The Reign of God is here—among you, within you." And "Seek first the Beloved Community and God's justice, and all these things will be added to you." (Matthew 6:33) The time of fulfillment has arrived: this "has come true today."

Join us as a Resident Volunteer



Amanda Petersen

Tony Rust has come to us as a gift! As a guest, he had no plans to stay long. But as he entered into the life and work of the community, he found a place with us. Now he is our newest Resident Volunteer. We invite you to come work with Tony and our other volunteers and community members.

Live in a residential Christian community.

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

Join street actions and loud and loving non-violent 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!



We need gently used running and walking shoes for our friends from the streets. Men's shoes sizes 11-14 are especially helpful.

Thank You!

this year give
HOSPITALITY

A \$10 donation covers a one-year subscription to *Hospitality* for a prisoner, a friend, or yourself. To give the gift of *Hospitality*, please fill out, clip, and send this form to:

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

___ Please add me (or my friend) to the *Hospitality* mailing list.

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

___ I would like to explore a six-to twelve-month commitment as a Resident Volunteer at the Open Door. Please contact me. (Also see www.opendoorcommunity.org for more information about RV opportunities.)

name: _____

address: _____

email: _____

phone: _____



volunteer
needs
at the
Open Door Community

Please note our new schedule for Monday & Tuesday: Volunteers for Monday showers (6:45-9:30 a.m.) and Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday Soup Kitchen (9:45 a.m.-1:30 p.m.).

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

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.

For more information,
contact Chuck Harris at
odcvolunteer@bellsouth.net
or 770.246.7627

It's About Time, continued from page 9

So we who claim the faith of Jesus are living in the time of fulfillment, even as we wait for the ultimate fulfillment. This is a decisive time: a particular time that demands action. Anything that is not good news to the poor is not of the gospel. Any time that the captives are not being set free and the blind are not recovering their sight, we are promoting rather than resisting the "evil days." We are faced with crisis moments that demand a response: as long as we tolerate oppression, war and standing passively by as the poor and sick and marginalized are hounded, harassed and hurt, we are specifically resisting the Reign of God instead of resisting evil.

To follow this "different drummer," our time must be structured and intentional for conscious and engaged living. Without engagement, one day just slips by to another and the evil around us threatens to paralyze us.

The letter to the Ephesian church urges that through relentless engagement, we are to discern the times. What is going on?

Today we would have to answer that what is going on in the world is war, global poverty, hunger, torture, homelessness, the warming and destruction of the earth and its precious resources, sickness and the rationing of health care, food and all other resources that are necessary for life on the basis of the global market and the protection of the profits and privilege of the elite few.

At the same time, we discern that life is still stronger than death. Grace, generosity, joy, Resurrection, hope and healing miracles are not stopped by the power of greed and evil. The letter suggests that we are given the gift of time in order to cast our lot on the side of the good and the just. We are to use the days we have to do good work: to act, to engage, to "make the most" of the time we have. In other words, we are called to redeem the day—redeem the time. We are to do with our time what God has done for us: "perform" redemption—act it out! We are led to freedom, but not as an end in itself. We are free and alive to the power of life and hope for the sake of the dying world. Redeem it! Make the most of it. Turn hatred and apathy into love; turn the world upside down by doing good to our enemies, refusing war and actively waging peace. We are to share what we have; when everybody begins to do this, nobody will have too much and everybody will have enough.

We support our engagement with community prayer, several times each day. We share the concerns of our hearts: who is sick? Troubled? Struggling with mental illness or addiction? Who is dying? Suffering? Who has a birthday or another celebration? Karl Barth said, "To clasp the hands in prayer is the beginning of an uprising against the disorder of the world. Prayer is a crucial part of our discipline of resistance."

We also root ourselves in this discipline by the celebration of the Eucharist every week. Communion helps and assists our discernment, because through the Eucharist we are filled with the Spirit of Life and Hope. Eucharist redeems the time, because when we offer our ordinary days—just as we take ordinary bread and wine—we "receive them back" as holy time, just as we receive the bread and cup as the Bread of Life and the Cup of Liberation. The Eucharist nurtures our faith and hope that things as they are are not things as they must be. A new world is coming, and we have a part in building this new world in the shell of the old.

We also celebrate different times and seasons. The beginning of our year this year will be Sunday, November 29. This is the First Sunday of Advent, and Advent is the beginning of the church year. This too helps us to remember that we are operating in an alternative system: "in the world but not of it."

The last Sunday of the year is traditionally called the Sunday of Christ the King. We at the Open Door have begun

to call this the Sunday of Jesus Christ the Servant Leader. This moves us away from the traditional concept of Jesus as the patriarchal dominator whose "kingship" was fitting for the pro-slavery theologians and whose maleness has provided an excuse for the exclusion of women and gays from church leadership. Jesus tried so hard to help his followers understand that he came not to dominate but to serve. But the church of the Domination System understands best—what? Domination! Does not referring to Jesus as the "Servant Leader" come closer to what he wants us to understand about him?

'Dangerous Memory'

Along with tweaking the Christian tradition, we have also added to it as an aid to our engagement. Many years ago, Ed was studying the Hebrew Scriptures and came across a much-neglected subversive text: the annual Jewish festival called Sukkot, the Festival of Shelters. A harvest festival in the fall of the year, this festival lends itself beautifully to the liturgy of remembering the homeless poor "because we ourselves were homeless wanderers." There is an understanding in the Hebrew texts that living in a house and sleeping in a bed makes us forgetful. So we must go out of our homes every year to live in a temporary shelter.

The precariousness of a shelter made of sticks and branches reminds us that all we have is a gift given to us not for accumulation but in order to share with others. The ancient Hebrews built into their liturgy a practice that reminds us in our mind and flesh that homelessness and poverty can exist only in a society whose common life is unfaithful to the mandates of the Torah. This becomes for us "dangerous memory," because it calls into question every assumption of market capitalism and the structure of the American economy. And, as always, the liturgy demands action. Isaiah the Prophet spells out the action plan. God does not want empty worship, but living a life of action for justice:

"The kind of fasting [worship] I want is this: Remove the chains of oppression and the yoke of injustice, and let the oppressed go free. Share your food with the hungry and open your homes to the homeless poor. Give clothes to those who have nothing to wear, and do not refuse to help your own relatives.

"Then my favor will shine on you like the morning sun, and your wounds will be quickly healed. I will always be with you to save you; my presence will protect you on every side. When you pray, I will answer you. When you call to me, I will respond.

"If you put an end to oppression, to every gesture of contempt, and to every evil word; if you give food to the hungry and satisfy those who are in need, then the darkness around you will turn to the brightness of noon. And I will always guide you and satisfy you with good things. I will keep you strong and well. You will be like a garden that has plenty of water, like a spring of water that never goes dry. Your people will rebuild what has long been in ruins, building again on the old foundations. You will be known as the people who rebuilt the walls, who restored the ruined houses." (Isaiah 58:6-12)

We are blessed to have a year before us. We pray that we will make the most of it. ✠

Murphy Davis is a Partner at the Open Door Community.



Julie Lonneman

Grace and Peaces of Mail

Dear Open Door Community,

Please change my address so that I can continue to receive your thoughtful newsletter. I also want to comment on the April article "The Death Penalty: Deterrent or Legalized Murder?" Though it is probably too late for the letters page, I hope you might share these thoughts with the author, Ellis Roberts.

It is certainly valid to refer to hungry prosecutors who are gung ho about the death penalty. One needs no clearer example than what happened in Oklahoma in the 1980s and '90s. While Oklahoma City and Tulsa are somewhat similar in population, there were hardly any death penalty cases from Tulsa, while the vast majority in the state were from Oklahoma City. The reason was that Bob Macy, the Oklahoma City county attorney, notched his belt with every case in which he obtained the death penalty.

But the problem of our legal system is much deeper than these cowboy-type prosecutors, who are not necessarily in the majority. The system militates against fairness in the use of the death penalty because no one along the way, from state appellate courts to the U.S. Supreme Court, wants to allow evidence of mistakes and deliberate misconduct to be admitted. To admit these flaws and miscarriages of justice would be to throw the entire criminal justice system into disarray. Every legal system is fallible but relies on the conviction of the legal system administrators to deny fallibility.

Thank you for this article on the abhorrent practice of the death penalty, which at last is losing ground and becoming less used in many states. It is important, as you noted, to keep this issue above ground and before our faces.

Peace and All Good,
Patricia A. Keefe
Stanchfield, Minnesota

I thought the June issue of Hospitality was one of the best in recent times. The story by your mentor Anthony [Granberry], Ed Loring's piece and Murphy's all fit together like a three-fisted glove. Thank you for all you keep on doing.

If you haven't heard it, you might like a piece from Onion Radio News (www.theonion.com/content/radionews). It's the July 8, 2009 item titled "Georgia Decriminalizes Public Urination."

Blessings and much love,
Wes Howard-Brook
Issaquah, Washington

Hi Murphy,

Just wanted to say thanks for the wonderful, moving articles about forgiveness and reconciliation regarding the Blacks' journey with "Boris" ("A Long Journey of Forgiveness and Reconciliation," June and July 2009). They are powerfully written and have meant a lot to me. I intend to share them with a friend who lost a son due to violence and is struggling with how she feels about the offender. It is such a complicated journey and I cannot presume to know how she feels, since I have not lost a loved way in this way. I trust this will be food for thought for her as she tries to find a way to forgive/accept.

Please know that I hold you and the Open Door in my prayers.

Blessings,
Gail Crouch
Seattle, Washington

Gail Crouch is a retired pastor in the United Church of Christ.

Dear Murphy,

Your articles "A Long Journey of Forgiveness and Reconciliation" were very touching and really moved me. It is such a tragic story. The most moving part about the story, as tragic as it is, is seeing Hector and Susie Black forgive the man for killing their daughter. It's not often in this hateful and strange world that we find people like Hector and Susie Black. It is the most incredible thing I've seen in a long time. The Blacks were able to forgive the man who killed their daughter because it was his addiction to crack cocaine that made him do what he did. The world needs more of that. Can you imagine the kind of world we would live in if half the world were like Hector and Susie Black?

And of course I read Part 10 of Ed's continued surge on "The Cry of the Poor," and I'm looking forward to the next part.

Please give my love to Ed and all the wonderful and kind souls at the Open Door Community.

Love,
Elijah Beck
Georgia Prisoner



Julie Lonneman

Dear Friends,

We continue enthralled by your God-blessed energy and fortitude. Please remember us all in prayers as we sincerely do for you, dear friends.

Peace, Love, and Blessings,
Jerry and Carol Berrigan
Syracuse, New York

Dear Open Door Community,

I can't begin to tell you how my life has been enriched by your community. For the past month or so I have been reading Ed Loring's "I Hear Hope Banging at My Back Door" during my lunch breaks at work (thanks for publishing this on your Web site). It has offered me encouragement, support and hope as I seek to understand the terror and injustice that is homelessness in Los Angeles. However, I have quickly learned that the beautiful individuals I have the privilege of knowing are not "cases" and that the last thing they need is someone to manage them.

The example of your community and the monthly articles in Hospitality are teaching me the importance of love, compassion and justice for our friends. I am daily striving to "do justice, love kindness, and walk the streets together." May God give us both the strength and the courage to continue the hard but rewarding work of seeking justice. Thank you for inspiring and encouraging me with your commitment to hospitality.

Peace,
Rachel McCrickard
Los Angeles, California

Bro. Eduard and Murphy,

May God's grace shine in your heart for the Blessing you bring to others on God's behalf. Keep being driven by faith, because mountains are being moved each day. How are you, Murphy? Never let your health bring you to a halt, because God is already carrying you. Give God the praise and watch the Blessings pour out.

Thanks for everything.
Loving you always,
Bro. Troy A. Davis
Georgia Death Row
Jackson, Georgia

Dear Anne Wheeler,

I am writing to let you know my change of address. My old and new addresses are enclosed.

I was released from the Massachusetts Treatment Center on July 7, 2009. I was incarcerated for 33 years. The world is so different. I would like to continue receiving the Hospitality newspaper, which I enjoy so very much.

I send my regards and prayers to all, and thank you for your prayers.

Peace Always,
Eugene Barbaro
Central Falls, Rhode Island

Dear Friends,

Here's a little check for you – wish there were more zeros in it! My hope is that the multitudes whom you have loved and disciplined all kick in big time.

It makes me sad that the poor are always the first to feel the crunch. What gives with the wealthy not being willing to give up tax deductions so that all can have health care? Even if you don't fear God, I agree with Joe Biden – it's patriotic.

I love you, Open Door. I hope Murphy continues to do well. You are all in my prayers.

Mary Schlech
Halifax, Nova Scotia

Dear Calvin, Nelia and all the other wonderful folks at the Open Door,

Enclosed is a small donation. We'd like it to be more and are striving toward that in the future, but both Zadia and I are looking for work at the moment. We think of you often and hope you're well.

We believe strongly in the work you're doing and send you the energy and strength and love to continue your important service.

Love,
Anie and Zadia Zimmerman
New York, New York

Dear Friend,

Thank you for the years of dedicated expressions of love, mercy and justice you've provided through Hospitality.

Please be advised that I have been transferred to another prison. If you recall, I'm serving a life sentence without parole.

For years I have been receiving your newspaper. During those times I have managed to gain strength and inspiration through the many scriptural references, stories, etc. I would greatly appreciate if you could add my new address to your mailing list. Thank you for your kindness!

Cordially yours,
Ted Knox
Menard, Illinois

Open Door Community Ministries

Men's Showers: Monday, 7 a.m.

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

Womens Showers: Monday – Wednesday by appointment

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

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

Retreats: Five 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 **Worship** at **5 p.m.** and for
supper following worship. We are open from 9 a.m. until
4 p.m. for donations.

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

Friday and Saturday: We are closed. We are not able to offer
hospitality 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.

- October 4 Worship at 910
 Eucharist Service
- October 11 Worship at 910
 Murphy Davis Preaching
- October 18 Worship at 910
 Festival of Shelters
- October 25 Worship at 910
 Eucharist Service
- November 1 No Worship at 910
 (Eucharist service on Monday)
 Eli Witt's Album Release Concert
 Callanwolde Arts Center—Join us

Join us Oct 18–21 to celebrate
Festival of Shelters! For schedule of
events go to www.opendoorcommunity.org.



Katy Quigley

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 looking for
volunteers to help staff
our Foot Care Clinic
on Wednesday evenings
from 6:45–9:15 p.m.!**

Needs of the Community



we need **blankets!**

Living Needs

- jeans
- work shirts
- belts (34" & up)
- men's underwear
- socks
- reading glasses
- walking shoes**
(especially sizes
11–15)
- T-shirts**
(L, XL, **XXL**, **XXXL**)
- baseball caps**
- Prayers**
- trash bags
(30 gallon, .85 mil)

Personal Needs

- shampoo (all sizes)
- lotion (all sizes)
- toothpaste (all sizes)
- combs & picks
- hair brushes
- lip balm
- soap (small sizes)
- multi-vitamins
- disposable razors
- deodorant
- vaseline
- shower powder
- Q-tips
- used prescription
containers for lotions

Food Needs

- fresh fruits &
vegetables
- turkeys/chickens
- hams
- sandwiches:
meat & cheese
on whole wheat
bread
- Special Needs**
- backpacks
- MARTA cards
- postage stamps
- Futon sofa
- single bed
mattress & box
springs

From 11 a.m. until 2 p.m. Wednesday and Thursday, 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 a.m. or after 2 p.m., it would be helpful. THANK YOU!