

# KOINONIA PARTNERS

SOUTHERN BAPTIST HISTORICAL  
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*"We seek a new spirit..."*

WINTER NEWSLETTER -- JANUARY 1973

There is a danger that a place like Koinonia with a dramatic and courageous history will become suspended in the past. Looking back at the old days is easier than facing the growing pains of the future. But the majority of us now at Koinonia had nothing to do with bombings and phone threats. Our life is no longer characterized by exterior pressure from townspeople, but by an inner struggle for direction. We want to know what it means for a group of Christians to be committed to one another, what does it mean to be vulnerable and open to others, how do we combine work with our spiritual growth so that we become whole persons? Endless questions have emerged which only long hours of talking, meeting, praying, and being together will answer.

This Fall, during several days with Alan Howe and Virgil Vogt of Reba Place Fellowship in Evanston, Illinois, we began to discuss our present situation as a body of believers. Here is part of a proposal which evolved from that time together:

*"Since the inception of Koinonia Partners in 1968, we have always acknowledged the need for a healthy and growing fellowship engaged both in the process of discernment and application of God's will. We have assumed that fellowship would be a natural outgrowth of our life and work together as Christians. But in the last few months we have been discovering that while we have been deliberate about defining our outreach ministry (partnership housing, farming, industries, etc.), we have not been deliberate enough about our life together as a fellowship."*

*Our life and work together in partnership must be strengthened and nurtured by a healthy and vibrant fellowship. In fellowship we commit ourselves through worship, dialogue, prayer, and study to the continual process of discernment of God's will for us as His people. We enter into fellowship believing God will speak to and through us if we earnestly and prayerfully seek His will. We also acknowledge that He speaks to each of us through the brothers and sisters gathered."*

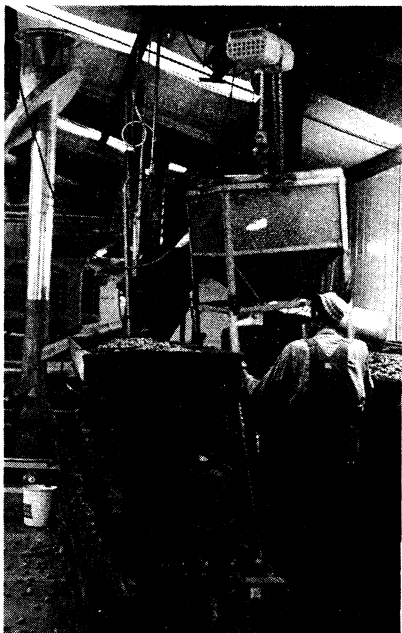


*Just add soap and water...*

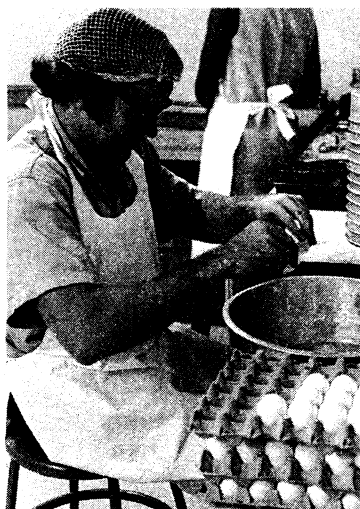


So, for the past few months the Resident Partners have been engaged, in addition to our work in the areas of partnership, outreach, and communication, in a process of recommitment to each other in fellowship. The Partners since September have been coming together in small groups of 8 - 10 people on Tuesday nights. The purpose of the small groups is to explore in more depth the

*... a spirit of partnership with God and our fellow man."*



*Pecan Plant in full swing*



*Ted Swisher takes a crack at the fruitcake kitchen.*

various issues that preoccupy us as Christians, to deepen our relationship to God and one another. On Thursdays then, the whole group gathers to pool the various issues, insights, conflicts, resolutions for corporate consideration.

In this time of reflection we have sought to identify and encourage various spiritual gifts which members of the fellowship bring to our common life. We have honestly questioned ourselves and each other to discern where and how each of us is called to be faithful. Koinonia is but one expression of God's work in history, and we believe at any time residents of Koinonia may feel called to seek other situations to live out their life of faith.

two-year leave of absence. They will move to Zaire, Africa, where Millard will be doing development work with L'Eglise du Christ au Zaire. They have been appointed to this assignment by the United Christian Missionary Society.

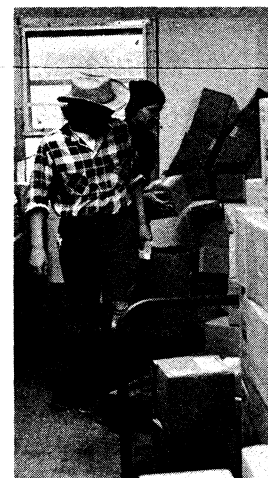
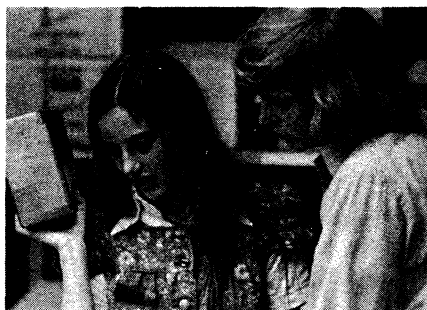
The Fullers left Koinonia early in January, to go to the Missionary Orientation Center in Stony Point, New York. On February 1st, they will move to France for four months of language study. They should arrive in Zaire in mid-1973. Their addresses are as follows: L'Accueil Fraternel, Le Chambon-sur-Lignon-43, France; and Eglise du Christ au Zaire, B.P. 178, Mbandaka, Republic of Zaire, West Africa. They would be pleased to hear from you.

In the Spring, a number of people are coming to spend time with us in dialogue and study. In January, Graham Pulkingham of the Church of the Redeemer in Houston, Texas, will conduct a seminar on the ministry of the Holy Spirit. James Douglas (author of The Non-Violent Cross, and a personal friend to a few of us and a kindred spirit to us all) will be stopping by Koinonia in February.

William Stringfellow (author and lawyer) will be spending time with us in March, and Robert Bratcher will return in April to conduct a biblical study like the one he did last Christmas.

We are certain that the wisdom and insight of these men will lead us many steps more in our search for clarity.

We earnestly ask your prayerful support as we struggle together to discern God's will for us as a fellowship and as individuals -- for without that struggle and questioning, pecans and new houses don't make much sense.





*A friend is someone you  
can lean on...*

asking what it means to be a peacemaker, but we haven't found any easy answers.

We received a joyous Christmas newsletter from George and Clara Theuer -- friends and partners engaged in exciting community development work in Osaka, Japan. They report the ground-breaking for a child care center and the building of a four-story community service center. They say:

*"The name JAPAN KOINONIA COMMUNITY SERVICE CENTER is appropriate in that a sizeable gift for the center has come from Koinonia's Fund for Humanity, and also because the staff is committing itself to the principle of accepting only a subsistence level income for their living, which will be in community."*

In a letter from Mrs. Shinobu Kobayashi, a nurse at the child care center: *"To have received life in this world and to have been blessed by the Lord means that we cannot just stand by doing nothing. And as for those who back us up...? Yes, there are those, even far, far away, who pray for us. How wonderful."*

We support and rejoice in the important work of the Theuers and the Koinonia Community Service Center in Osaka, Japan.

Since the Spring of 1971, we have refused to pay the 10% excise tax on telephone bills because it is used entirely for military expenditures. By the Spring of 1972, the Internal Revenue Service was putting increasing pressure on Koinonia to pay the tax. Knowing that the IRS is able to take the tax money from our bank account anyway, we concluded that it might be a healthy experience to try living without telephones. Although not a final solution, we felt at least we would not have to pay the tax and we felt that denying ourselves in that small way would increase our awareness of the suffering of the Vietnamese and others. The telephones were removed within a few days. Only the Sewing Industry telephone was retained, since the employees there decided not to participate in the action.

Now, the question of reinstalling the telephones has come up again. The Pecan Industry has installed a phone for business purposes only, but will continue to refuse paying the excise tax. Some individuals in the Fellowship choose not to use telephones at all and will personally abstain; several individuals have installed a telephone in their name, believing its importance to their work justifies the taxes they pay; and another telephone will be installed shortly by a group of others who will personally refuse to pay the tax. Each of us is



*The kitchen and child-care  
rooms are busy at the  
Community Center...*



*Debby and the children  
are involved in indivi-  
dual and group activities*



Our own Child Development Center has been echoing with the sounds of twenty energetic children for a year and a half now. Debby Boggs says, "With our pig, rabbits, turtles, and fish in residence we look more like a zoo than a school. Our main purpose, however, continues to be to provide an atmosphere for growth, learning, and love for pre-school children. Along with our goal of working in partnership, we are looking ahead to next year when we expect to add two full-time teachers from the local community to our staff, possibly mothers of some of the children. These new people will replace two people from the fellowship who now receive only a living allowance. Therefore, we will need an additional \$8,000 to cover their salaries. Possibilities are opening up locally to help train our teachers as well.

We want to extend our thanks for your generous response of many orders for this last pecan season. We are sorry some of you received orders late, but because of the late season, short pecan crop and demand for nuts, we were delayed in shipping. However, all Christmas orders were shipped before the 25th. We appreciate your support and patience.

On the enclosed flyer you have the unusual opportunity to buy some Georgia red wigglers (those are WORMS). After a slow Fall season, Arthur Laster is ready again to ship you good bait or aerators for your garden (if you live in the north, perhaps the wild birds would enjoy a rare winter treat). Send your order now.

ALL OF US AT KOINONIA WISH YOU A JOYOUS AND FAITHFUL NEW YEAR.