

KOINONIA PARTNERS

"We seek a new spirit..."

SUMMER NEWSLETTER 1973

And the seasons, they go 'round and 'round. Koinonia in the early summer is a reminder of the constant life cycle that renews itself to the glory of God. The corn and peanut crops are on their way up; the garden, with radishes, carrots, kale and strawberries, provides nourishment for new ideas; new houses -- three under construction -- will soon become homes for our neighbors. The Dohertys and the Gausses have new babies, Catherine and Jeffrey; and the Wittkamper sons all returned for a visit, along with daughter-in-law Kathy and first grandson Wesley.



Harry, Cathy & Corrie



Jeffrey & Kit

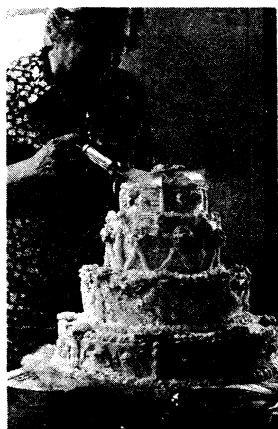


Robert & Deborah

Robert True (who's been caring for the vineyard the past two years) and Deborah Boggs (director of our Child Development Center) married each other in March. We all shared their joy in this event. Deborah says: "God has been very good to us this spring! The reality of His love and His presence with us has been manifested in new ways. This is a springtime of life, full of new growth and discovery for us. We pray that God in His faithfulness will continue to guide us through our wintertimes as well. Only as we die to ourselves can we experience growth and newness in our life together."

We at Koinonia continue to ask questions about how the Kingdom citizen should live. We are seeking a balance between energetic outreach and deep fellowship with each other; we want to relate genuinely rather than superficially to the dispossessed people around us; and we want to discover a healthy level of material life which is neither martyrish self-denial nor extravagance which overlooks the needs of our neighbors.

We sometimes have help in living out these questions. Bob Bratcher, the principal translator of Good News for Modern Man, participated with us in a three-day study in April. Using passages from Luke 12, 14, and 16, Bratcher dealt with the question: Why was Jesus so insistent about our attitude toward wealth and possessions? One point the scriptures make is that because amassing



Florence &
the cake



The Celebration

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



Greg, Will, Wesley, Kathy & David,
Margaret, Bill, and Danny Wittkamper

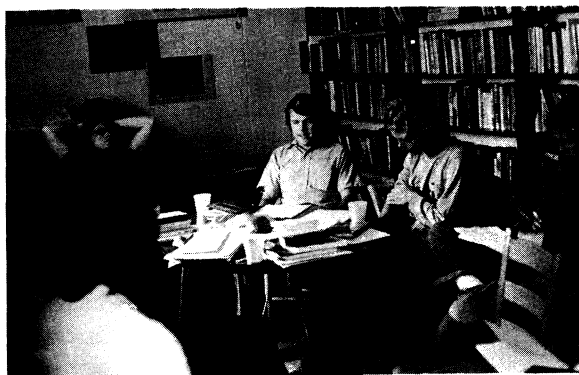
material wealth requires time and energy, it denies us the freedom the Father wants us to have. Acquiring anything beyond our material need uses up time that could be spent living creatively in the Spirit, because this excess has to be earned, repaired, stored, and worried over. Another side to consider is our relationship to those who have nothing. We should identify more and more with those in need.

The answer seems to lie not in anti-materialism, but in compassionately sharing our total selves. Many of you have already found part of that answer in channeling some of your resources through us to our neighbors. Our lives here would be impossible without

your sharing support in our efforts. Please be reminded, we're constantly in touch with human needs around us that far exceed our ability to respond. Every day we have to set priorities as to where to spend time and money. Our FUND FOR HUMANITY is the main source of meeting these needs, and it has to be continually replenished.

One of the major areas where Koinonia Partners places a lot of energy is in spreading the ideas of God's Kingdom in response to invitations throughout this country and Canada. Where groups cannot pay our travel expenses, but where we sense a genuine need, the FUND FOR HUMANITY provides the necessary funds.

In the past six months, individuals or a team of persons have shared their understanding of discipleship in God's Kingdom with college groups, various conferences, and churches from Florida to Idaho and from Cape Cod to California. For example, in February Ted Swisher and Ladon Sheats met with Methodist clergy and laymen in mid-Illinois while Peggy and Bill Londerée were meeting with Episcopal laymen in South Carolina. Recently, a team of persons went to the Furman University campus for five days of dialogue with student groups. They made a presentation at a college chapel service (with co-founders of Koinonia, Mable and Martin England, in attendance), spoke in a class, and made a slide presentation which contrasted the values of the dominant American culture to the teachings of Christ. Ladon Sheats went on an extensive trip to Indiana, Idaho, California, Arizona and Texas for a time of dialogue with small groups of individuals, college and seminary communities, a weekend of discipleship studies. He addressed a large gathering at All Saints Episcopal Church in Pasadena



The Work/Study group-with Bill
Londerée



Ladon speaking with
Furman students

Nettie King began a "Trip Around the Mountain" shortly after Christmas and has almost completed it. The "Trip" consists of about 1700 squares pieced together in a color design. Nettie learned quilting from her mother who also sold quilts she made. Nettie pieces quilts in her spare time, then when she has an order for one, she completes the backing and quilting process. During the day Nettie helps her husband on their small farm. She rises early, stokes the old Home Comfort wood stove, attends to the butchering of their hogs and chickens, and even grinds and stuffs their own sausage. Nettie, 59, and her husband, 67, were both children of sharecroppers and they are rightfully proud of owning their farm. Their children are grown and living elsewhere, but a granddaughter, who is a junior in high school, lives with them. Nettie remembers doing field work when she was a child and laughingly refers to one of her quilting patterns as "cotton-row, corn-row." It consists of two narrow rows of stitches followed by one big row. We were treated to a rare sight when she opened the quilt trunk and showed us the work she had completed. Her designs are original, colorful, pleasing to the eye, and as warm as their originator.



It was a very cold day in Sumter County when we visited our HANDCRAFT artists, but we soon forgot the weather when we entered Lela Hick's home. At 62, Lela's happiness and good will have a way of spilling out to those around her. We forgot the time and the outside world as Lela brought out her quilts. She showed us designs called French Fan, Sunflower, Four Point Star, Flower Basket, and The Spool. Each design seemed to remind Lela of different periods of her life. Her eight children live in New York, Florida, and other parts of Georgia, but Lela still has a granddaughter to raise. The affection that is evident between them speaks volumes about Lela's capacity as a mother.

Lela was also the daughter of a sharecropper and remembers having one pair of shoes per year -- "when those wore out, we went barefoot." She said her father provided food and livestock for the family, paid dearly for use of the land, and had nothing left over. She added, with a twinkle in her eye, "just like now." Lela made her first quilt when she was nine years old. She said, "I loved my mother so much I'd do anything to be like her. All those patterns she helped me make are still keeping us warm." Until

recently, Lela did domestic work, but she is no longer employed. She hopes to sell some of her quilts now. Each one represents two or three months work, but "I picked a hundred pounds of cotton to get a quarter when I was little, and I guess I can keep on working awhile longer."

The trip back to the farm was quiet and reflective. I returned to my warm house and nourishing supper with a new determination to share what I have with our friends in Sumter County. Their needs are obvious to all those who read this newsletter, but sometimes we neglect to communicate to all of you how much we benefit from our fellowship with our neighbors in Sumter County. Some of these friends live in shacks that are literally pasted together. One house has a paper wall. Wind courses through inch-wide cracks. Poverty is not pretty, but cold poverty is a devastating experience. The people we visited turned on their gas heaters to warm us, the visitors -- as if they knew we'd be chilled by something they conquered even before they were born to it. It's a funny thing -- rural blacks smile a lot and are gracious, almost courtly. They don't complain very much and are generous with the

little they have. Even though they are poor, they seem to own something that is worth a smile. Their cold houses are warm when they talk and their soft voices assault the senses with wonder at the courage they exhibit. We thank God for what they give to us.

The purpose of KOINONIA HANDCRAFTS is to encourage autonomy. The women take responsibility for actual production. Laurie limits her supervision to concentrate on designs, staffing, advertisement, buying, batiking, shipping, and 'filling in' during rush periods. Carol, who has many other responsibilities at Koinonia, does the tie-dyeing and book-keeping. The only thing needed now is a steady influx of orders to keep HANDCRAFTS in operation twelve months every year!



KOINONIA HANDCRAFTS was the incentive for the forming of the KOINONIA SEWING INDUSTRY. (Please see attached flyer.) Though feeling some growing pains, this industry, too, employs local people at livable wages.

The recent visits of Graham Pulkingham and James Douglas started many discussions and questions among all of us here. As you might expect, response was varied. But both men brought us valuable insights about our individual lives as Christians, our common life together, and our relation to the social structures with which we must live. One of the residents described our present situation this way:

"The struggles we described in the last newsletter still exist. But I see our confusion as a Wilderness period -- a cleansing perhaps. Once we confess our brokenness, our spiritual immaturity, our inability to carry out effective programs, and ask God to fill our emptiness with His Spirit -- He can then use us as instruments of healing for the world. It is a humbling but exhilarating time for us."

All five of Clarence Jordan's records are available on cassettes for \$4.50 each. If you would rather have a record, order it now, since our supply of JUDAS and JESUS THE REBEL will be gone soon and will not be re-pressed.

NOW AVAILABLE -- two new pamphlets by Bill Lane: THE RADICAL CHURCH and THE CHRISTIAN AND MATERIALISM. (See page 13 of the brochure.) Bill and his wife, Sybil, live in California where Bill is working on his Master of Divinity at Fuller Theological Seminary. The Lanes have been deeply influenced by Koinonia and Clarence Jordan and are close friends of many Koinonia residents. ORDER NOW.



Jonathan Maendel (left) repairs a road grader while his brother Solomon (right) clears brush in Forest Park. Both men, who are from Forest River Hutterite Colony in North Dakota, visited Koinonia last month.

Linda and Millard Fuller's address in France is no longer applicable. Please continue (till June) to write to them at: MISSIONARY ORIENTATION CENTER, CRICKET TOWN ROAD, STONY POINT, NEW YORK. 12878. After that, please use the address in Zaire.



Koinonia's Pecan Industry continues to employ eighteen local people, though orders have slowed down considerably since Christmas. We want to remind you all that the deadline for shipping food products is May 15 ! So -- get out your calendar, decide how many gifts are up-coming for summer (don't forget to include your own needs!), check your freezer space and send us those orders! Full employment for our neighbors depends on a high volume of sales. Your orders for Koinonia Products help keep people at work. PLEASE remember that when you place your order. Your orders also help provide a living for partners in residence at Koinonia who are involved in our various outreach programs. Also, our products treat you all to quality food items at the same time.



Pecan products...halves, smoked nuts, candy, fruitcake, etc...will be shipped until May 15. We will, of course, continue to ship books, records, tapes, pamphlets, pecan cook-books, handcrafts, pottery, and ladies' slacks and shorts throughout the year. We regret that some prices have had to be increased. Because of increased freight and postage charges, higher wages to our employees, higher pecan prices, as well as a short pecan crop, it has become necessary to increase our own prices, effective March 31, 1973. Please refer to the enclosed catalog for details. Not all prices have changed, but you should take note of those which have.



Georgians were surprised to be struggling through 8 inches of cold white stuff in January...

In the event that your own needs for products have been filled, please remember those who are less fortunate -- those whose needs are rarely diminished -- and send what you can to Koinonia's FUND FOR HUMANITY, either as a gift or a non-interest loan. The FUND is constantly depleted in order to construct houses, instruct volunteers, and aid in spreading the radical ideas of Christ. We do not seek government support or foundation grants since our hope -- and the message of the Gospel -- is to create a spirit of sharing and partnership between individuals.

We do not seek merely a "money" relationship with anyone, but rather, we ask that you continue your prayerful support for everything that is happening at Koinonia. We have faith that through your prayers and ours, our ministry in Sumter County will proceed according to God's Will, through which the inexhaustible fund for all humanity is accounted.
