



Vol. 2, No. 1 Spring 2009

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“Reshape Your Lives, for God's new Order of the Spirit is Upon You”: A Tribute to Millard Fuller

by Amanda Moore

Pictured: Clarence Jordan and Millard Fuller at Koinonia Farm in the 1960s



In 1965, a tall skinny young fellow, this wife and two children came to Koinonia for what they thought would be a short visit, perhaps an hour or so. Little did they know or expect that their entire lives were to change in that next hour or so; in fact, millions of lives all around the world would change as a result of that short visit.

Instead of staying for an hour, Millard and Linda ended up staying for a month. At Koinonia, they found a loving fellowship and a guide on their path to a new life. Koinonia



The Fuller family at Koinonia Farm.

Co-founder Clarence Jordan often spoke and wrote about living a reshaped life, and thought of Millard as the rich young ruler. As Millard later said many times, Clarence would

become the most influential person for him, and the spiritual mentor who would help him and his wife redirect their lives

In 1968, Millard and Linda moved their family to Koinonia. Clarence and Millard sought to demonstrate how God calls us to be in partnership with Him and one another. They were looking for something with a broad scope, something that people could

be involved in wherever they were.

They proposed the establishment of a Fund for Humanity, through which land could be purchased and made available to people by virtue of usership rather than by virtue of ability to pay. The

houses would be built using volunteer labor and no-interest loans to be paid off over 25 years. It would begin right here at Koinonia Farm with 192 houses for their friends and

neighbors who desperately needed adequate housing.

The project would grow to become Habitat for Humanity International, building over 300,000 houses in more than 90 countries around the world in just 33 years.

In 1969, while the first house was under construction, Clarence died from heart failure. At the burial, Millard read passages

“At Koinonia, they found a loving fellowship and a guide on their path to a new life”

from the “Cotton Patch Version,” Clarence’s translation of the Greek New

Testament into South-Georgia vernacular. The words seemed a fitting way to sum up Clarence’s life and ministries. Here are a few sentences from those passages:

“In order that you all too might be our partners, we’re plainly telling you about something that’s real, something that we ourselves have heard, that we have seen with our own two eyes. It’s about the idea of

See FULLER TRIBUTE Page 6

PEACE THROUGH RECONCILIATION

by Amanda Moore

A lot changes in 50 years, even in small towns like Americus, Ga. In the late 1950s, the South was already moving into the battle that would become the Civil Rights Movement. Koinonia was at the heart of that battle in Americus, and was asked to leave several times, even by Chamber of Commerce members. This year, nearly 50 years later, the Sumter County Americus Chamber of Commerce presented Koinonia with the Agri-business of the Year Award, and thanked us for being such a wonderful local attraction in this area.

Since 1942, Koinonia has sought to demonstrate qualities of the Kingdom of God, including brother/sisterhood of all humanity. Anyone is welcome, regardless of skin color or nationality.

For many years, this acceptance only caused discomfort to the local community, but beginning in the late 50s, discomfort

boiled into hatred. The violence came to a head in May 1957, when a store-front in downtown Americus was blown up. It was the first act of violence not specifically directed toward Koinonians, but a local vendor who dared to do business with Koinonia in the midst of the boycott.

Following the bombing, a delegation of citizens from Americus including the Chamber of Commerce implored Koinonia to leave Americus. Here is what one Chamber member said during that meeting.

“Unfortunately your experiment has not [made brotherly love in the community]. It has set brother against brother; it has created bitterness; it has created hatred; it has created every emotion that is contrary to my concept of Christianity.”

The member continued, “We want to appeal to your good judgment to pray over

it and think over it and see if you don’t think you’ll be serving the best interests of the community and certainly the best interests of your Lord to move and leave us in peace.”

In the years to follow, Koinonia sought economic relief through a direct mail-order business. Gradually, boycott began to subside in the mid-1960s. Today, we enjoy a variety of business ventures, from painting Christmas scenes on the windows of downtown businesses, selling our blueberries to the Windsor Hotel and our produce at the Farmer’s Market, and working closely with local coffee roastery Café Campesino and several other businesses.

We’re honored that the Chamber of Commerce chose to recognize us with this award and for the reconciliation it signifies. We are eager to work in partnership with the local community demonstrating how to better care for the land using a farming and gardening technique called permaculture.

To learn more about this, read “A Community of Biodiveristy” on page 5.

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Longing for
a Presence

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A Community
of
Biodiversity

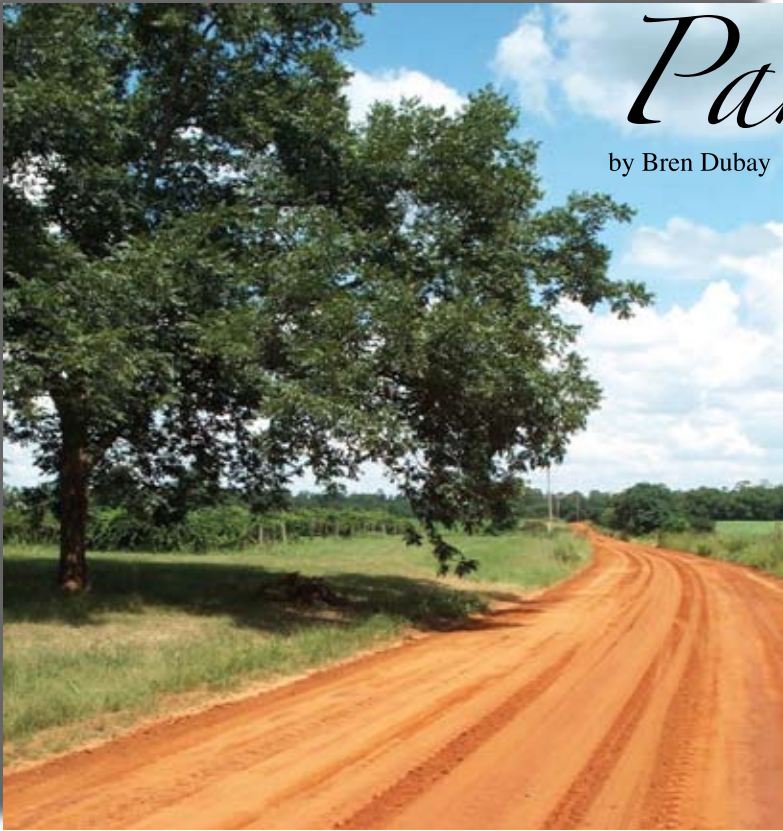
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Fuller Center & Habitat to
Rebuild Burned Home

page 6

Partner With Us

by Bren Dubay



Left: The clay road behind the chapel leads to the grape and blueberry orchards. Right Goats and Clarence, our Irish Dexter bull, graze in our pecan orchards.



God is a God of abundance.

Walk this farm and you'll see demonstrated over and over again what an abundant place it is. Koinonia is beautiful. It is a feast for the eyes, especially, right now as we enter springtime. Flowers stretch up and out of the rich Georgia clay dazzling us with an array of colors. The grass is a deep, deep green — you swear you can see it growing. Walking around the farm on these cool spring evenings, the world's economic crisis doesn't loom so harshly.

But, like just about everyone, we're feeling that economic crisis. We don't despair, though. Koinonia is blessed with wonderful bounty — trees, chocolate, animals, pecans, one another and friends around the world. No, we don't despair; rather we look at the abundance God has

given us and trust that in that abundance is the answer.

Simply put, we need to sell in products and/or raise in donations \$100,000 by June 30, the end of our fiscal year, to meet current budgetary needs. If we look only at ourselves, \$100,000 is a daunting figure. If we look to God, you, and ourselves we have faith that it isn't an impossible task. Will you partner with us to get it done? How?

• Buy. You buy our products in great numbers October to December each year, but what about for your every day use throughout the year? Do you drink coffee? We have it. Do you eat cereal? We have it. Join our Nut of the Month Club and we can even send you a monthly shipment of your choice of goodies. Remember, too, that our products make wonderful gifts for other holidays and graduations, weddings, end of school, birthdays, back to school,

retirement, thank you gifts, etc. Call us or order directly from our Online store. Ask your friends to do the same. (www.koinoniapartners.org).

• Donate. Give a tax-deductible unrestricted gift or designate a gift for the Adopt-A-Tree project or any other Koinonia project: Summer youth camp, Circle of Friends, hospitality, etc. Clarence and Florence Jordan and Mabel and Martin England purchased this farm with a donation from a friend and donations from friends continue to help us do the work God has called us to do.

• Invest. Our pecan orchards serve us well, but we realize the benefit and necessity of diversifying. We're in the process of getting into the business of raising and selling grass fed beef. Part of our education effort is to raise awareness of organic food and healthy eating. Grass fed beef is a better option for our friends who eat meat. You invest the price to purchase a steer and after we raise it and take it to market, you will be repaid either with or without interest — your choice. This project will create another income stream to insure the future. Call Sanders Thornburgh at 229-924-0391 or e-mail him at info@koinoniapartners.org if you'd like more information.

Clarence wrote that "Jesus loved the feast" and that if we ask God for bread, he will not give us "a little grudging

crust." Koinonia's focus as the 21st Century has gotten well underway is to feed the hungry. Our education projects help feed hungry minds; the hospitality we offer helps to feed hungry spirits and our efforts in agriculture work to feed hungry stomachs. God has given us a vision and we know the resources needed to accomplish this vision are within our reach. All we have to do is ask. So, we are asking you to buy, donate and/or invest. We pray that you will say yes.

Wish List

Many thanks to those who have responded to previous wish lists. We've received numerous gifts from our readers, including frequent flier miles, child-size furniture, microwaves, many interested interns, Montessori material, and a scanner. We're grateful for whatever you have to share! Here's a current list:

- Mattresses
- Manure Spreader
- Wood Chipper (grinder tub)
- Back Hoe
- Dishes for Dining Hall
- Bedding for Twin & Queen beds
- Hybrid Vehicle
- Golf cart for interfarm transport

Bulletin Board

- We're excited about yet another issue of *Koinonia Farm Chronicle*. We appreciate all the support we've received. And we'd love to hear from you! Send us your feedback, suggest an article you'd like to read or let us know what you don't enjoy reading about.

Send them to news@koinoniapartners.org or mail them to the Farm.

- Please send address corrections to info@koinoniapartners.org or call 229.924.0391 and ask for Amanda Moore. She'll fix everything.
- The love bug has hit Koinonia! We'll celebrate three upcoming weddings: Elizabeth Dede & Jerry Nelson, Nichole Del Guidice & Seth Schroerlucke and Ana Navarro & Bryan Knowlton. Look for more info in upcoming e-news publications.
- The local Sumter County High School was selected to play in one of the inauguration day parades, and our own Jessika Williams was able to go! Despite the freezing cold weather, they had a great time!
- Ellie Castle will be moving in May to Sherwood Oaks, a retirement community near Pittsburgh. For more information, read "Passing on the Baton" on page 4.

"A Well Balanced Diet is Chocolate in Both Hands" by Adam Gullede

Since the 1950s, our mail-order business has largely sustained the community. This year, though, we've been hit with economic woes just as other businesses, and we're looking for ways to earn the necessary income for increasing budget needs. One solution is for each of our readers to order just \$25 worth of our products each year. With our Nut of the Month Club, various monthly specials, and new products on the way, we provide several ways to experience the wide array of products we offer.

As we attempt to increase our sales year round, we're looking for local businesses interested in our products. We've received our first order from Callaway Gardens, a vacation resort in West Georgia, and we're hoping to create more of these partnerships. Perhaps a Bed and Breakfast would be interested in our granola for continental breakfast or snacks? Maybe a coffee shop would like our Fair Trade Espresso Bean Bark? Does your business send individual Christmas presents to customers and supporters? We've served many businesses through the years with these special needs. If you're interested in using or selling Koinonia products in your business, let us know!

Don't forget to visit the This Month's Specials page of our Web store for monthly specials and to get great deals on our overstocked items. And take advantage of the Chocolate Meltdown before May 15. During the Chocolate Meltdown, all chocolate products are 15% off, while supplies last. Try our Pecan Bark or Peanut Crunch, available in milk- and dark-chocolate, Fair Trade Dark Chocolate or our new Espresso Bean Bark. Don't miss this great opportunity to try our products and to support Koinonia.

Also be sure to check for new products, like our no-oil granola available beginning in June. And, as always, we'd love to hear from our customers. Feedback is crucial for us to provide our customers with what you want. Call Adam Gullede at 229-924-0391 or e-mail products@koinoniapartners.org to give us your feedback.

Longing for a Presence: The Search Within

by Amanda Moore

“Wherever you are on the earth, you wish to perceive the mystery that lies at the heart of your heart: do you sense within you, even fleetingly, the silent longing for a presence. This simple longing, this simple desire for God, is already the beginning of faith.”

-Bro Roger Schutz

This longing for a presence calls us to the chapel early each morning and at the end of our work day each evening. It leads us to join in prayer as a community when the prayer bell rings at 10:30 a.m., 3:30 and 8:30 p.m.

We are constantly inviting the Creator to enter our lives, permeate our days. We recognize that as a community earnestly seeking to live in the God’s kingdom, we must intentionally listen for God to speak, to celebrate God’s presence, for God to move and to create among us His community.

Each Wednesday at evening prayer we hold a Taize service in the chapel. The altar glows with the light of hundreds of candles, spreading a familiar yet mysterious shadow that gently beckons us from the chaos of our lives. The air is infused with incense, representing our prayers as they rise before God in the presence of dear friends.

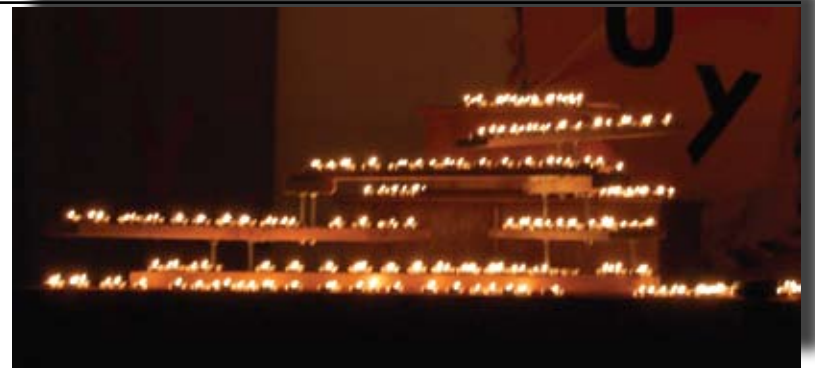
The simple songs provide words for the prayers of our heart. Often with few words, these meditative songs express some basic reality of faith, such as “It is good to trust in the Lord our God, trust and hope in the

Lord our God.” As the words are sung over and over many times, this reality gradually permeates our whole being and we begin to relax into that reality.

Then in silence, we are invited to explore this depth of communion we are offered with God. Brother Roger of Taize writes that “the voice of God is often heard only in a whisper, in a breath of silence.” With an almost Quaker-like time of sitting together in silence and deep stillness, we wait

expectantly to experience the presence of God’s Spirit.

We draw great strength from these prayer services each week and from the ecumenical community in France where they began years ago. As we seek to intentionally celebrate a life nourished by God’s spirit and God’s presence among us, these times of deep communion with one another and with our Creator compel us to explore more fully God’s presence deep within our being.



This altar used for Taize services was hand made by Elizabeth Dede and Jim Marble.



Economics of the God Movement

-excerpts from Clarence Jordan

surely will not give you a stone.” If we ask him for bread, God will not give us a little grudging crust. Jesus said your father is filled with abundance. Trust him for it so that you can be free from anxiety for your own welfare; you can be free to seek the God Movement.

** How did it happen that there wasn’t a needy person among these people [the early church]? Had more food, clothing, and shelter been miraculously created? No, but a new way of life had been adopted. Need, not greed, had become the principle by which they lived. By partaking of the spirit of Jesus, they became new citizens of the kingdom of God. Sharing completely with one another in love and unity and making distribution according to the new standard of measurement, they took the assets which God had already given them and cared for those in need.

This is a vivid illustration of the Christian principle of love, of concern for

When God first made humanity, he made provision for all our needs. This has been true ever since. God has already “added all these things.”

the needs of others, and of stewardship of the possessions God lends to us. People through all ages since Jesus lived on earth, and through differing economic systems, have been Christian. The one who makes Mammon god drives out love and refuses to live by the principles of the kingdom.

When God first made humanity, he made provision for all our needs. This has been true ever since. God has already “added all these things.” There is enough in the world today to meet all our needs. The problem is not in supply but in distribution, not with God but with us. Poverty and riches are the result of human rebellion against the will of God. When his kingdom comes, when his will is done on earth, both poverty and riches will go!

[Editor’s Note: *Taken from “The Substance of Faith: The God Movement”; **Taken from “Sermon on the Mount.”]

A Brief Reflection

by Bren Dubay



Living in community for five years has taught me something about change. People of faith rightly want change. Changing war into peace, eradicating homelessness, hunger, the death penalty, abortion, racism, mistreatment of the alien, imprisonment of the mentally challenged, the abandonment of the child or the elder, and on and on. These are all noble causes.

Wanting to change wrong to right is indeed good, but ... if it is all about exterior change, if it is all about doing rather than being, if it is all about happiness coming from without, where’s God? The “cause” becomes the god. And we make those standing in the way the enemy.

“I march for peace, but I don’t have time to spend 15 minutes in prayer.”

Peace is the god and the Prince of Peace is all but forgotten. And we’re exhausted, likely dissatisfied and perhaps cynical because the war rages on.

Living in community has taught me the necessity of interior change. We’re told from time to time that those who seek life in a community such as Koinonia or in a convent or monastery or some other intentional community are those who want to escape from the real world.

Perhaps that’s the intention of some, but if you come and truly give yourself over to the practice of this common life, what you come face to face with is the real world and it is close and it is scary. You may arrive with aspirations to work for a cause, but living here day in and day out, you can’t escape the darkness in yourself or others ... and you come to realize that change is needed within.

I’ve seen a pattern at Koinonia. People arrive and are swept off their feet by the inexplicable holiness of the place. They go through what we call the “honeymoon phase.” Then comes the recognition that there are all sorts of flaws, bumps and bruises here. The next is “I am going to change everything that is wrong with this place” phase.

We’ve learned this is especially the time to gently encourage our brother or sister to look within. We do this by attempting to create an environment where prayer, work, study, service and fellowship are in balance and flowing throughout the day. Many can only focus on the exterior change they desire and if it doesn’t happen quickly enough, and it seldom does, they leave and go on to the next “cause.” Some come face to face with the monsters within then the true work for change may begin.

This change is a shift within. We fall in love. Living with people, staying put and loving them day in day out despite all those times we don’t even like them, giving up the idea that we can change them by making them over into our own image, gives birth to an interior change that, in turn, can give birth to a whole new way to work for exterior change.

Working for a cause coming from a place of love is far different than working for a cause against a sworn enemy. I’ve come to believe that Jesus shows us there are no enemies. Yes, I know he told us to love our enemies, but something has happened since I’ve changed and gotten better at loving others. Perhaps a story from Abraham Lincoln’s life best illustrates what I’m trying to say.

When a cacophony of voices called for the destruction of the enemies of the South, Abraham Lincoln responded, “The best way to destroy an enemy is by making him my friend.”

Chasing causes or looking for exterior change is not where happiness lies. Changing on the inside and learning over and over again to love God, neighbor and self that’s where happiness lies. Then no one is the enemy. Everyone becomes neighbor.

* I don’t think Jesus was taking a monastic or ascetic viewpoint or attitude towards possessions. I don’t think he was an ascetic. John the Baptist was, but I don’t think Jesus ever shared much in John’s philosophy along this line. Jesus loved the feast and the word for feast means “abundance.” He loved to go to them, he loved to tell about them. I think he loved abundance, maybe because he grew up in blinding poverty, I don’t know. But he was not an ascetic. On one occasion when a woman came with high-priced perfume and poured it on his feet, one of the disciples with a rather ascetic bent said, “You know, that’s a waste of that perfume. Why didn’t we just say, ‘Well, madam, don’t open it up. Don’t break the seal on it. Put it in the collection plate Sunday morning and we’ll trade it in.’” Jesus said, “No! Let her break it. Let her use it.”

When Jesus fed the multitudes, he would start with nearly nothing—with just two boxes of sardines and three boxes of saltines—but when they got through, they picked up great big baskets of uneaten food of the abundance.

That isn’t asceticism. Jesus never took this attitude. He took the attitude of abundance. But at the same time, he rebuked those people who set their eyes on possessions. It seems to me that he is asking us to repose our lives in the greatness and goodness of God. He says, “If you, mortal as you are, ask of your father for bread, he

Shoes to Fill

by Sarah Prendergast

During my three years at Koinonia, I've carried many different work responsibilities. Now I find myself with some very big shoes to fill. Or maybe I should say small shoes. In preparation for Ellie Castle's transition to Sherwood Oaks in Pittsburgh in May, I've risen to the challenge of taking her place as the coordinator of our ministry of hospitality.

One of the highlights of working in hospitality is that I get the opportunity to share the history of the farm with so many people, and then I get to invite them to be part of making history today.

I get to learn what brings people to our small patch of heaven nestled in the red clay soils of Georgia, and then I get to share with them the many ways in which Koinonia remains a revolutionary witness as a demonstration plot for God's kingdom on Earth.

It's not always smooth sailing. For example, the first night that the groups from James Madison University, and the Universities of Florida and Georgia arrived for a week of alternative spring break, the pump on our well went out and our 20 guests had to spend their first day with no running water. We fetched basins of water from KCOC to wash the dishes after potluck, and everyone met the challenge with a spirit of adventure and flexibility.

The same two groups made a huge contribution during their week with us, collecting sticks and leaves from the main campus lawn to be used as mulch for the garden, planting a rose bush as a haven for our honey bees, digging swales—ditches to assist with rainwater collection—in our recently converted garden and fruit orchard, and planting countless fruit trees and shrubs.

We couldn't thank these young folks enough for all of their help, but the humbling part is that their gratitude ran at least as deep as ours. It's something that can't fully be articulated, but what happens to people when they come here is nothing short of transformation.

I've heard it said so many times that stepping onto Koinonia soil feels like walking on holy ground. God's presence here is almost tangible, and when people head back to their everyday lives, they carry a small part of that with them.

As we like to say in the South, "Y'all come!" Come and see for yourselves what's happening in this little corner of the kingdom. Visitors are welcome year-round, so if you've never been, or if it's been a while, drop me a line or give me a call.

We host individual visitors, group retreats and work weeks, conferences, tours, and many other events. We'd love to host you whether for several hours or several days.

For more information on how you or your group can schedule a visit, call the office at 229-924-0391, visit our Web site, or e-mail hospitality@koinoniapartners.org.

A BLESSED HOMECOMING: STORIES ENOUGH TO SHARE

by Amanda Moore

We're blessed by the many visitors who come to our corner of creation. Since last fall, we've had numerous friends come to spend time with us and share stories about the community at the time they lived or were involved here. You can always read stories from a history book or watch a documentary, but there's something special about tradition and history passed down orally. We love hearing stories.

When **Al Zook** visited, we gathered in the museum for "story time." Community members, neighbors, and visitors came to hear Al share about the time he spent here from 1968 to 1976, partnering with our neighbor Bo Johnson to do the farming and pecan processing.

Al told us that Clarence didn't like for the new tools to go missing or be left out in the fields or in the rain. So, even though he believed in and lived a life of holding all things in common and was a man of great generosity, he would hide the new tools under his bed!

Al also shared about Clarence's death and burial. They worked on his grave from 4 p.m. to 2 a.m. the next morning digging it with the very



Al Zook gathers with long-time friends during a recent visit.

Photo by Kurt Morrow

same tools used to plant the pecan trees. The next morning, they finished the grave and buried Clarence in a shipping crate. As they filled the grave with dirt, 2-year-old Faith Fuller—Millard and Linda's daughter—stepped to his graveside and sang, "Happy birthday to you." Thank you for passing on these stories, Al.



Former residents including Don Moseley, Jim & Lenny Jordan, Jan Jordan-Zehr, and Coffee Worth return for Millard's Feb. 4 burial. Photo courtesy of Lenny Jordan

Jim Jackson shared with us during lunch devotions how he ended up at Koinonia in the 1970s after being dismissed by his all-White congregation in Alabama because he favored allowing Blacks to join. Following lunch at Koinonia, Jim said, the entire community would sing songs, then go outside for a volleyball game, but not the typical game. With 20 people on each side, you had to return the ball on the third tip or any number that contained three or a multiple of three.

Elizabeth Ann Hay first came in the 80s, when she brought a group of students from King College in Tennessee

to visit Koinonia and Habitat. After that initial visit, Elizabeth Ann immediately got involved in the local chapter of Habitat in her area. She was so touched by the life at Koinonia that she remained involved, serving on the board of directors in the 80s and early 90s.

Beverly England Williams shared during lunch devotions her memories as a 6-year-old when the farm first began in 1942. Her parents are Martin and Mabel England, one of the two founding couples. She told about how the neighbors who worked at the farm were invited to lunch,

since it made more sense for them to eat at the farm than walk the long distances home for lunch. Beverly and her two siblings caught measles, mumps, and chickenpox during their year here. Their mother, a city girl trying to learn country ways, became ill with mumps, too, and all their dad knew how to cook was his famous cocoa and "Muckaloochee Creek Special" made up of whatever concoction of food he could put together. That year was a special time for Beverly, and she's remained connected to Koinonia through the years, serving on the board and visiting.

Several former residents and long-time friends came to the service we held for Millard. Among the group were three of the **Jordan children: Jim, Jan, and Lenny**. Jan shared with us the story about Margaret Wittkamper pouring out Clarence's homemade Muscadine wine. The Revenue Service came to the farm unexpectedly, and not wanting to get in trouble for Clarence's wine, Margaret ran back to the shack where he kept it and poured it all out. Later she realized it wasn't the Revenue Service but the IRS! She had poured the wine out for nothing.

We continue gathering stories for our archives. We can't wait to store them in our new archive office. If you have stories to share, please write or record them and send them to Amanda Moore at info@koinoniapartners.org or at the farm's address: 1324 GA Hwy. 49 S.

Passing on the Baton

by Amanda Moore

She's welcomed thousands of visitors over the past ten years, made just as many beds and prepared just as many rooms and meals, given countless tours of the farm, participated in hundreds of community meetings and study sessions, witnessed many comings and many goings, and now she passes on the baton to those of us following in her somewhat smallish, although steady and strong footsteps of stewardship.

Those who have been to Koinonia in the past 10 years most likely have received a warm Koinonia welcome from our Hospitality matriarch Ellie Castle. When her husband David died last August, Ellie had the difficult task of discerning where God was calling her. She was covenanted to Koinonia and yet, at 80 years old, she desired to be closer to her children and grandchildren.

After considerable prayer and conversation with both the community and her son and daughters, Ellie decided to move up North to Sherwood Oaks, a retirement home north of Pittsburgh, near her eldest daughter and her beloved Chautauqua, New York. She will make the move in May.

She's committed to coming back to the farm each fall, though, to spend products season with us and help out with preparation for Christmas. We're glad she will only be a phone call away, allowing for her to continue offering wisdom and guidance to our community.

Ellie and David moved to Koinonia at a difficult time for Koinonia, jumped right in to help out however they could and remained through all the ups and downs. Ellie fit naturally with Hospitality, giving tours, welcoming groups, pointing out sites as groups rode through the farm in the Joy Wagon, hosting interns and visitors to watch the "Cotton Patch Gospel" musical, and being an absolute delight.

Lighting our peace candle each day at lunch, Ellie leads us in a short prayer for peace in our world. She's also become the infamous poet of our "worse verse," a poem written for visitors when they leave. Often the worse verse creates words to follow a rhyme scheme based on the person's name. Known for being a true energizer bunny, Ellie often has more energy and excitement than many of the younger adults in the community.

Ellie is a true treasure to us, and we'll surely miss her physical presence in our daily lives, especially her insightful Tuesday morning chapel and joyful spirit she brings to our gatherings. Please pray for Ellie and for us as we adjust to this major change.



Photo by Amanda Moore

Ellie gives a worse verse during our lunch devotions to visitors leaving after a three-week visit.



Koinonia Farm: A Community of Biodiversity

by Sanders Thornburgh

The birth of Koinonia's organic garden goes back decades and has evolved into multiple forms with different leadership over the generations.

The oral tradition of story-telling passes along the memory of Koinonia's first organic gardener, Will Wittkamper, and the fascinating discussions he had with Clarence Jordan about farming in the God-Movement.

In more recent history, Koinonia's organic mantle was worn by former community resident, Bob Burns, until he moved away in 1998, and then Michael Grainger in the early 2000s.

Now, over the course of the last year or so, Brendan Prendergast has fully entered into his calling to restore the visionary work began by those who dressed and caressed the trees and soil before him. I am convinced that Brendan is the one who is now called by God to lead us into a renewed commitment to care for the environment which sustains us.

From the very beginning of Koinonia, there has been recognition of how important a responsibility it is to be good stewards of this corner of creation that God has entrusted to us. Clarence Jordan described his relationship to this land 51 years ago. When asked why he didn't want to sell the property during the years of intense persecution, Jordan poetically responded:

We bought that old, run-down piece of land. It was sick, there were gashes in

it, it was sore and bleeding.

I don't know whether you've walked out over a piece of ground and it could almost cry out to you and say, 'Heal me, heal me!'

I don't know whether you feel the closeness to the soil that I do. When you fill in those old gullies and terrace the fields, you begin to feel the springiness of the sod beneath your feet and you see that old land come to life...when you walk through a pine forest and see [the trees] reaching to the sky and hear the wind through them...

Men say to you, 'Why don't you sell it?'...they might as well ask you, "Why don't you sell your mother?"

As Clarence understood, Koinonia is like a nurturing mother to all of us who live here. It is our Christian duty to protect her as she protects us. God designed her to provide us with food, shelter and spiritual rejuvenation.

When anxiety and stress overwhelm us, a sure remedy can be found in a prayerful walk along Koinonia's forested Peace Trail. Walking into the Cathedral of Nature, the undeniable presence of the Holy Spirit balances the psyche and heals the wounded heart.

God has designated us humans to be the caretakers of this sanctified place. We are standing on holy ground; home not only to us, but to an entire bionetwork. If you think about it, Koinonia is a communal habitat not only to people but to a multitude of



Above:
Strawberries
growing in the
spring garden.
Right: A duck
pond built by
students from
Warren Wilson
College.
Photos by Kurt
Morrow &
Amanda Moore



interconnected species of life all the way down to the microbes flourishing in the top-soil.

Koinonia predates all the humans who now live here, but the same Spirit of God which was here in the beginning still unites us all in Christ's love. This Love weaves

us together into one fellowship of believers who are linked beautifully into a dense web of interrelated life forms. Comprehending what a blessing it is to be on this hallowed land compels us to fall on our knees in awe, giving thanks to the Creator for the gift of life.

Responsible stewardship of Koinonia's ecosystems takes on the following interdependent cooperative expressions. Roof rainwater catchment and diversion toward the garden saves water and reduces erosion. Poultry birds foraging in the orchard have a symbiotic relationship with fruit trees by eating pest larvae and keeping down the grass.

✿ We are in the process of cultivating a "food forest" with a series of dug-out swales to capture and store water in the soil. In this area we have planted berry trees such as Blueberry, Elderberry and Cranberry interspersed with Nitrogen-fixing trees such as Mimosa which will later be slashed back to mulch the swales.

✿ Cattle and goats graze in the Pecan groves, providing meat and milk while fertilizing trees. Our four hogs are fed entirely on discarded groceries gathered from local waste stations. Cardboard and paper are used as sheet-mulch and we recycle as much plastic, aluminum, steel and glass as possible.

✿ Even the gardeners themselves contribute their own body-fertilizer through a carefully controlled Humanure program. We seek to operate in a system which makes the most responsible use of the Lord's resources (God doesn't like waste, which is evident in the Earth's design).

Porching: A New Word for an Old Way of Life

by Jo Knox



Photo by Amanda Moore

The front porch of Jubilee house often turns into a spontaneous musical haven for community members and guests alike. Come on and join us someday; there's always room for another chair.

Porching is a new noun / verb we coined for our evenings sitting on the screened in porches at Koinonia. We mellow ourselves from a day's work on the farm with a little banjo and guitar music, and a genuine desire to remember the lyrics which somehow escape us in the middle of a song!

But we laugh and make up words because we don't want to stop and end the porching or the song. If we start in the early evening when the sun just begins its fiery display, we can watch the hummingbirds make their final trip of the day at the feeding stations. Life is good.

I feel as though I were in a time warp, bringing into this moment the simple pleasures Clarence Jordan and his family and friends experienced back in Koinonia's early days. Considering the troubles and chaos bouncing around our planet, we count ourselves fortunate to have rediscovered a pastime as simple and fulfilling as porching. Come on over and join us one evening, bet you know the words.

EXTREME MAKEOVER: PERMACULTURE STYLE

by Amanda Moore

The first Permaculture Design Course held in SW Georgia was a success! And we held it right here at Koinonia Farm. Thirty one students and four teachers came for the 11-day course filled to the brim with study, reading, design, class, and a little fellowship, too. As part of the course, students split into five groups and proposed a permaculture design for various sections of the farm. These designs were presented to the community members at a special afternoon session. What wonderful plans they drew up

for us! As a final project, students had to return to their homes and, using the techniques and skills they just learned, create and implement a Permaculture design. Kurt Morrow and our farm coordinator Brendan Prendergast took the course, and for their final project, they will draw up a plan for the entire farm using permaculture design principles. Koinonia introduced innovative farming techniques to this area back in the 1940s and we have come full circle to do it once more.

Permaculture
Design Course
students and
teachers
Photo by Kurt
Morrow



FULLER TRIBUTE



Participants in Millard's funeral walk through the Pecan orchards to Picnic Hill for the burial. Photo courtesy of Lenny Jordan

life which we looked at and even felt of with our own hands." 1 Jack [John] 1: 1-2

Forty years later, we read these same passages aloud again, this time at Millard's grave. The number of similarities between Millard's and Clarence's death are uncanny. Like Clarence, Millard died suddenly, without warning, and in the midst of a new project, the Fuller Center for Housing. He wanted to be buried in a similar fashion as Clarence, on Picnic Hill in a simple pine

box with no significant marker for his grave, which was dug using shovels and bare hands.

Unlike the small gathering at Clarence's burial, nearly 600 people came to Millard's, walking through the pecan groves and up the clay road to Picnic Hill for a short, simple celebration. TV crews and reporters captured the scene with great interest. A circle several layers deep surrounded

the family and others in the seats. As the service began, Linda placed a yellow rose and a hammer on Millard's casket. During the brief, simple service, their daughter Georgia and granddaughter Sophie sang "Happy Birthday to You," reminiscent of Clarence's funeral 40 years before. Their son Chris shared a few words, and Judge George Peagler officiated. Concluding the service, Peagler invited any who wanted to shovel dirt into the grave.

A later service was held in March in Atlanta and then again at the gravesite at Koinonia for those unable to attend the Feb. 4 burial. The Atlanta service included a storytelling time for the children. Linda called all the kids to the front altar and told a story from her and Millard's travels. A small child stood next to them with a palm outstretched. A close

look showed that the girl was not asking for money, but had brought money for Millard to build a house for a family in need. She had saved all her money to give him so she could help someone have a home.

Millard was admired by so many around the globe. His ministry through Habitat for Humanity and the Fuller Center for Housing touched millions of lives and has helped shape generations of servant-leaders.

Millard and Linda are true examples of



The crowd at the service circled several layers deep surrounding the family of Millard Fuller. Photo by Amanda Moore

a reshaped life, a life based on caring for God's creation and giving glory to God, the creator of all mankind.

Please continue to pray for Linda, their family, the Fuller Center, and the countless friends across the world celebrating Millard's rebirth. If you'd like a copy of the Atlanta memorial service or other memorabilia, visit the Fuller Center Web site, www.fullercenter.org or go to the Koinonia Web store and click "Fuller Center Online Store."

Hopes to Break Ground on Meeting House in Summer 2009

by Bren Dubay

With a few more dotting of the "I"s and crossing of the "T"s, we may be able to break ground for the new addition to and renovation of the dining hall/guest house this summer. The new space will be 2,300 square feet and serve as a meeting space and dining hall. The renovation of the 4,350 square feet existing space will allow for a new kitchen, archive and library downstairs and a complete overhaul of the upstairs guest quarters.

The farm is a big and rambling place, but we have no place to accommodate large gatherings inside. As more and more groups come to Koinonia and as our course offerings grow, this project will be a blessing.

It's been exhilarating to work on plans for the building with LeRoy Troyer, Bill Barnard and Andrew Roche of The Troyer Group. LeRoy is the chair of the Fuller Center for Housing Board of Directors. The plan calls for all sorts of sustainable strategies as we continue efforts to "green" the farm, making it a demonstration for environmental stewardship.

Thanks to the Castle Building Fund, established in the honor of Dave and Ellie Castle, to an anonymous donor who gave a matching challenge grant of \$50,000 and to all of you who sent in gifts to match it and meet the challenge, we continue to move toward the \$600,000 overall goal. We could wait until all the money is raised before beginning construction, but we walk in faith knowing that the remainder of what is needed will be given.

We're going to have an ample amount of work for many, many volunteers on this build. Watch for an announcement. For more information about contributing to this project or volunteering, please contact Amanda Moore at 229-024-0391 or e-mail info@koinoniapartners.org.

Making a Gift to Koinonia - Reply Form

- ☐ I would like to subscribe to the bi-annual newspaper, \$5 a year.
- ☐ I would like to receive: (monthly e-mail updates, annual catalog.)
- ☐ Enclosed is a gift of \$_____ to be used where most needed.
- ☐ Enclosed is a gift of \$_____ that I would like to be directed specifically to (name project or fund):
- ☐ Castle Building Fund
- ☐ Meeting House
- ☐ Adopt a Tree, orchard upkeep
- ☐ Bakery renovations
- ☐ Other: _____
- ☐ Please contact me about planned giving opportunities.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Country: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ E-mail: _____

Credit card information, if applicable: check one: ☐ Visa ☐ MasterCard

Number: _____ Expiration date: _____



While "Bud" Style is at church, firefighters return to the house, putting out lingering flames as Koinonian Craig Martindale searches for Bud's Bible. Photo by Amanda Moore

Late one night, we were startled to hear sirens and to see a bright glow in the Southern sky. By the time we reached the burning house, it was engulfed in flames, sparked by an electrical fire. This Koinonia farm house stood on the Sunny Acres lot, where "Bud" Style lived about a half-mile up from the main campus. We're so thankful that Bud is OK. He has been a part of the Koinonia family and lived in the house for decades. What a relief to see Bud standing outside unharmed and in his work clothes and slippers. The house and its contents are a total loss, though.

As the volunteer county fire department called for back-up, Bud's greatest concern was that he would not be able to go to church the next morning, since all of his clothes were burning in the house. God continually provides, though, and Bud got some new clothes and attended church the next morning.

Just after the fire, Bud said one of the things he cared about most was his Bible. There are two reasons why he wanted to find his Bible: It's a family Bible, and is important to him, and it also held what little bit of cash he kept in his home.

The next morning, as we were trying to salvage a few things, we found the Bible. It was a bit charred and wet, of course,

Koinonia Loses House to Fire, Fuller Center & Habitat To Rebuild It

by Amanda Moore

but the money inside the Bible was perfectly intact. What's most amazing, though, is where the Bible opened to: Jesus and the Rich Young Ruler. Some of you will remember that Clarence Jordan referred to Millard Fuller as the rich young ruler. It's as if Clarence and

Millard were sending us a sign.

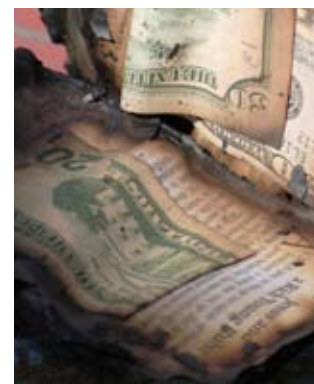
Just a few days after the fire, we were delighted to learn that the Fuller Center for

Housing and the local Habitat for Humanity affiliate New Horizons will be coming together to rebuild the house Koinonia lost. It's one of the first joint projects of a Habitat affiliate and the Fuller Center.

It seems appropriate, given recent events, that Koinonia would be the grounds for such a coming together.

We hope to begin construction on the new house before Summer. If you'd like to help with the build, contact us at info@koinoniapartners.org and we'll let you know as the details unfold.

We can't say with certainty that this is a sign from Clarence and Millard, but we know that they believed the power of unselfish partnership to be a visible sign of the Kingdom of God.



Bud's Bible, found morning after the blaze. Photo by Amanda Moore

Community of Learners and Teachers

by Seth Schroerlucke & Nichole Del Giudice

"Community is a group of people who share a certain oneness and who contribute to the growth and development of one another... [Our responsibilities are] to be mindful of others' feelings and thoughts, to learn, to teach, and be a good role model, to share insights and experiences, and above all to love."

—Mary Thornburgh (Responding to the question 'What does community mean to you and what are your responsibilities to it?' posed in Community Building class)



At a recent School Community Meeting, students and tutor Seth Schroerlucke clap for tutor Nichole, who facilitated the meeting.
Photo by Amanda Moore

It is transforming for us to be a part of this community within the community, to see these ideals attempted on a daily basis. Since the second semester began, we've enjoyed abounding involvement from visitors and members sharing their expertise and experiences with the students.

A few highlights have included a field trip to the Andersonville POW museum and hearing about the realities of war from Koinonia apprentice Jerry Nelson. The students conducted a study of our carbon footprint on land here, and participated in this year's Lego League competition with the coaching of Cori Lyman-Barner and assistance from apprentice Dan Truesdale. More recently, they worked with the Art Miles Mural Project, a 12-year international project that combines the effort of children and adults to promote global peace and harmony through mural art.

We were honored by visits from our SOOP (Service Opportunities for Older People)

visitors Anne, who helped us make quilts, and Lester, who shared stories of growing up during the Great Depression. We also enjoyed a bike repair class with visitor Ben, a rocket launching with Jim Dubay, and Emma Sue Clay, a long time neighbor and friend, leading our centering time one morning.

We are truly blessed to have such a wealth of resources here on the farm to enrich the lives of these students.

We've just begun a journalism class with apprentice Amanda Moore and fellow-faculty member Jimmy Foglio; look for articles from the students in upcoming e-news and newspaper publications. We are especially excited about an upcoming Permaculture study and the building of a low ropes course with apprentice Craig Martindale.

We are still a work in progress, but we are amazed by how we all have helped each other grow.

Words of Poetry are works of the soul ...

Pantoum*

by Ben Thornburgh (12 years old)

The sky is beautiful
Green, Blue, and Red
as I look up
over my head

Green, blue, and red
So glorious and fun
over my head
for the day is almost done.

So glorious and fun
as we play in the field
for the day is almost done
but that would not make me yield.

As we play in the field
I laid down in an ant hill
but that would not make me yield
for the ants I wanted to kill.

I laid down in the ant hill
my arms started stinging badly
for the ants I wanted to kill
and I drooped my head down sadly.

My arms started stinging badly
and my mother called me in
and I drooped my head down sadly
The ants threw my day in the bin.

The ants threw my day in the bin
and now I've had no fun
and my mother called me in
for now I see no sun.

[Editor's note: Pantoum is a form of poetry with the second and fourth lines of each stanza repeating as the first and third lines of the next until the final stanza.]

The Beauty of Green was Ne'er so Blue

by Mary Thornburgh (16 years old)

One winter I set my eyes to the ocean.
The beauty of green was ne'er so blue
Now the sand is littered with glistening tan bodies
And I know that they haven't a clue.

The beauty of green was ne'er so blue
The wash of the waves ne'er sounded so smooth
And I know that they haven't a clue.
Their eyes close behind shields of dark plastic.

The wash of the waves ne'er sounded so smooth.
But buds in their ears block but the shore's music.
Their eyes close behind shields of dark plastic
And I only wish they could feel the breeze.

But buds in their ears block out the shore's music.
How I long that they too could see
And I only wish they could feel the breeze.
Maybe next winter when the sun's left their skin

They'll set their eyes to the ocean
and see that the beauty of green
was ne'er so blue.
Maybe they'll feel it too.



The lego league team "Polar Bears" made it all the way to the State Tournament in this year's competition. Pictured l to r: Mary Thornburgh, Luke Lyman-Barner, Sol Pomeroy, Levi Lyman-Barner, Ben Thornburgh, Adrian Navarro, and their coach, Cori Lyman Barner.
Photo by Amanda Moore



Drawing by 4-year-old Ida Prendergast



Brendan Prendergast sits with his daughters Kellan (2 years old) and Ida (4 years old) during lunch devotions.
Photo by Amanda Moore

In a Nutshell: The Story of Koinonia

Koinonia was founded in 1942 to be a "demonstration plot for the Kingdom of God." Our name comes from the Greek, meaning "loving community." Following the example of the early Christians, we share in a life of prayer, work, study, service and fellowship.

We seek to embody peacemaking, radical sharing and brother / sisterhood among people. In the 1950s and 60s, Koinonia was fiercely challenged for these beliefs—reviled by many for our racial integration, pacifist actions, and supposed Communist lifestyle. We endured beatings, bullets, a boycott, and other acts of sabotage. We survived with God's provision, a sense of humor, nonviolent resistance, and the start of our mail-order pecan business.

Koinonia is also a haven of down-to-earth theology. Founding member Clarence Jordan was a farmer, Greek scholar, writer and preacher. From his writing shack in the pecan orchards, he penned the "Cotton Patch Version," a translation of the Greek New Testament into the rural South Georgia vernacular. His books and lively sermons are still beloved and well-known today, and his version of Matthew has been produced on stage as the "Cotton Patch Gospel" Musical.

As a community, we seek to respond to the needs of the times through various acts of work and service. This has taken different shape over the years. We've farmed for our livelihood, exchanged friendship with our neighbors (in the early days, mostly sharecroppers and tenant farmers), and welcomed guests from all over the world. Habitat for Humanity was born here, beginning in 1968 as Koinonia Partnership Housing, a project to help neighbors buy decent, simple homes built with volunteer labor and no interest loans.

Our current works include affordable home repair, events for youth and elders, sustainable gardening and ecology, educational offerings and, as always, welcoming people to visit, intern, learn and walk with us on this journey.

The Glory Man: A Tale of the Tremendous Story

by Amanda Moore

We were pleased this year to witness the world premiere of our friend Dennis Hassell's "The Glory Man," a play about the story of Koinonia, our co-founders Clarence and Florence Jordan, the inspiration behind Habitat for Humanity, and Clarence's ground-breaking approach to Christian service.

The actors and actresses did a phenomenal job capturing the spirit of Koinonia, from its early formative days during Clarence's childhood to the days filled with shootings, beatings, bombings, and the boycott, and to the productive and flourishing days that ultimately begot Habitat for Humanity International.

Alma Jackson was able to make the trip to Virginia with the group of Koinonians. He lived and worked at Koinonia when the violence and boycott began in the 50s. Once the boycott gripped the farm, Alma

chose to give up his paycheck, since he knew the farm couldn't afford it, and he sought to join the community and become a partner.

In an intense scene from the play, Alma is called to testify before the grand jury. Ironically enough, Koinonia is being investigated for mistreatment of African Americans. Alma testifies that Koinonia no longer pays him for his work.

"And what kind of pay did Koinonia give you for your labors," asks the prosecutor.

"Nothing," Alma responds. "They gave me nothing."

The courtroom fell silent.

"But they gave me everything," Alma continued. "They gave me a place to live,



Alma Jackson stands between Gene Gray and Philip Wrencher. Gene portrays Alma today and Philip portrays Alma as he was in his 20s at Koinonia.

Photo by Amanda Moore

food to eat, a warm bed to sleep in, my first indoor plumbing. But most of all they gave me friendship. They gave me everything."

Congratulations, Dennis, and good luck with the play as it gets off to a great start!

Koinonia on Tour

by Amanda Moore



We held the first Friends of Koinonia Gathering in Eugene, Or. hosted by our sister community, Church of the Servant King. We had a great time meeting local friends of Koinonia, and we were even able to offer a sampling of our products. Following a showing of the "Briars in the Cotton Patch" documentary, we answered questions and shared news about the community today.

These events provide an opportunity for Koinonia's friends to connect with others in their area, learn more about Koinonia, and bring new people to learn about the community. The next Friends of Koinonia Gathering will be hosted by St. Catherine's Montessori School in Houston, Texas on Saturday, September 19, 2009.

We'd love to take our community "on tour" to all 50 states this year! If you're interested in hosting a Friends of Koinonia event in your area, contact Amanda Moore at info@koinoniapartners.org.

Come Walk with Us

There are three ways to come and walk with us for a while: As a neighbor, a visitor, or a seasonal intern. The seasonal intern program lasts roughly three months, introducing the individual to the prayer, work, study, service, and fellowship of the community.

Neighbors, visitors, and seasonal interns who desire a longer period of time to serve and learn more about community living may petition to become a community intern. Individuals may be invited for a specified length of time, usually one year, to serve in this capacity.

Through petitioning and by affirmation of the community, a community intern may become an apprentice, or exploring member. The apprenticeship lasts for a minimum of one year and is for those who desire to discern whether they are being called long-term to this way of life in the koinonia.

After completing the apprenticeship, a person may be invited to deepen his or her involvement in the community by becoming a provisional member, called a novice. The novitiate is a final period of time to demonstrate by ones action his/her readiness to become a full member of Koinonia.

When ready, the person may be invited to pass from provisional membership to full membership, becoming a steward. One becomes a steward because one feels called by God to this way of life. To show this, the steward freely, joyfully, and lovingly commits to the set of covenants held by Koinonia.

For those interested in supporting and being a part of Koinonia's mission and vision through a role focused more on their work rather than through stewardship, we invite them to become a partner. Partners are full members and sign an annual letter of agreement.



Photo by Amanda Moore

Prayer, work, study, service, and fellowship guide our life together.

Koinonia Farm Chronicle

Editor in Chief:

Amanda Moore

Contributing Editor:

Bren Dubay

Production Editor:

Ana Navarro

Web site: www.koinoniapartners.org

E-mail: info@koinoniapartners.org

Ph: 229.924.0391

Fax: 229.924.6504

1324 GA Hwy 49S

Americus, GA 31719



Two-year-old Kellan Prendergast sits under a campus tree with Fall interns Kailee Hirsche and Barbara Williams

Photo by Amanda Moore

Vision Statement

Love through service to others
Joy through generous hospitality
Peace through reconciliation

Mission Statement

We are Christians called to live together in intentional community, sharing a life of prayer, work, study, service, and fellowship. We seek to embody peacemaking, sustainability, and radical sharing.

While honoring people of all backgrounds and faiths, we strive to demonstrate the way of Jesus as an alternative to materialism, militarism, and racism.

Wild Edibles

at Koinonia

May 8 & 9, 2009

Learn how to identify, collect and prepare wild foods. Also learn about medicinal uses of uncultivated herbs.

Workshops, Meals, Lodging: \$75
Workshops only: \$30 each
Registration Deadline: May 1

For more information, e-mail sarah@koinoniapartners.org or call 229-924-0391.